

THESES FOR THE RE-CONSTRUCTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

(English-language text)

VOLUME TWO

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C H A P T E R T H R E E

Intervention in Revolutions

in order to go forward to

the Victory of new October Revolutions

THESIS XVIII: GUERRILLA WARFARE AND ITS OPPORTUNIST LEADERSHIPS

1. The most dynamic and important revolutions, those richest in lessons since World War II, such as the revolutions in China, in Vietnam and in Cuba, have experienced the development of different forms of mass guerilla warfare. In the Chinese Revolution, the guerilla war led to the construction of the Red Army, which was later, in 1948 - 49, to co-operate with the guerillas. The same was partly true in Vietnam. Guerilla warfare has also accompanied the processes which have at least resulted in political in dependence in many colonial and semi-colonial countries without going as far as the expropriation of capital (e.g. Algeria, Angola and Mozambique).

Our perspectives for the post-war period did not take into account guerilla wars, at any rate on the scale and with the importance which they have taken on. This was due partly to the false parallel which we drew with the situation after World War I. In the Russian Revolution the civil war came only after the October victory. In February and October 1917, the armed struggle had taken the form of insurrections in cities. No other revolution in this period, such as the revolutions in Germany and in Spain, experienced guerilla warfare. The only exception is the Chinese Revolution of 1925 - 1927, which experienced guerilla warfare mainly after the defeat of 1927.

This is what led us to the erroneous conclusion that there would not be guerilla wars after World War II, but only urban insurrections of the type of February and October. We must stress that the Russian civil war came only after October, and the presence of the Bolshevik Party at the head of the masses gave the civil war a consciously socialist character, as an extension of the October Revolution.

After World War II, on the contrary, armed actions came before revolutions of the February type, as we defined them earlier. The victory of these revolutions was made possible by the armed struggle. This was principally due to the violent methods with which the exploiters confronted the mass movement in this period of insoluble imperialist crisis. These methods can, of course change and will change in the future.

Imperialism and its agents have resorted whenever they could to methods of utterly pitiless civil war, and employed for this purpose not only their "official" armed forces, but also para-military and fascist gangs. In the light of the methods and successes of the counter-revolution, guerilla warfare can develop as a sign that the mass movement feels the need to resort, in self-defence, to the same violent methods.

Guerilla actions and other forms of armed struggle, therefore, which confront the pro-imperialist governments and dictatorships and are wholly with the revolutionary movement of the oppressed, take on a mass, proletarian character.

This is due to ^{their} class-dynamic and to the social forces which they express. The aims and the programmes of guerilla leaderships have always been Popular Front-ist. No guerilla leaderships has ever consciously faced up to the problem of making the socialist revolution. But when the mass movement takes up the method of guerilla mobilisation, the latter is transformed into proletarian civil war and tends to destroy the armed forces on which the bourgeois state is founded.

The guerilla wars which take on the character of civil war are, therefore, extremely progressive. They are yet another product of the convulsive, revolutionary character of the epoch in which we live, of the decay of the imperialist regime of the monopolies and of the methods of war to which it resorts against the masses. They demonstrate at the same time that the petty bourgeois, bureaucratic leaderships have retained their strength.

2. The petty bourgeois, opportunist leaderships have in fact done their utmost to confine actions of this kind to popular, democratic and nationalist programmes, which are essentially not socialist and which oppose developments of the permanent revolution. Yet, by a process which is contrary to the wishes of the leaders, a process of which the masses who provide its driving force are largely unaware themselves, the movement none the less takes the road of destroying the bourgeois army and the bourgeois state by the methods of civil war. We have already seen that the process which led to the February Revolution was unconsciously that of the socialist revolution. In the same way, the process which the civil war expresses when it relies on mobilising the masses is that of a proletarian, revolutionary civil war, unconsciously or semi-consciously.

The movement which carries forward the guerilla war in the first phases of the revolution take as their target the highest expression of the counter-revolution, the fascist or semi-fascist dictatorship. The petty bourgeois leaderships claim to draw from this the conclusion that these revolutions have a purely democratic nationalist character.

But our epoch has no room now for any more "democratic-bourgeois" revolutions. This is what the collision of the social forces in movement objectively demonstrates with precision. The guerilla war can end only with the victory of one of the fundamental classes of society, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

The decay of imperialism and the methods of civil war to which it resorts against the workers affect the "people" as a whole. This imperialist bourgeois counter-revolution arouses the resistance and even the revolt of the peasantry, of the students and of the working class, but also that of sectors of the petty bourgeoisie and, sometimes, of the bourgeoisie.

All these sectors can be led to mobilise en masse and even to resort to methods of

armed resistance against the bourgeois state and imperialism. This movement can be expressed most powerfully in the activity of nationalities and ^{oppressed} nations. In Ireland, in the Basque country or in the case of the Palestinian resistance, recourse to actions of a "terrorist" kind has its place in the struggle of these nationalities and oppressed nations. Even though the petty bourgeois orientation of the leaders of these struggles leads to diversions like those of Santucho or, on occasion, of Baader, such actions form part of the struggle of oppressed nationalities or nations, and must be unconditionally defended against any attack by imperialism or the oppressor nation. Our criticism of the tactic must be done within the framework of the defence of these movements.

Recent developments in guerilla warfare or other forms of armed struggle reveal in combination the popular character of these movements, especially in the struggle against the dictatorships, and, at least up to the present, the obstructions which the petty bourgeois leaderships, including the Stalinist leaderships, have piled up to prevent the full development of the independent class action of the proletariat.

There are circumstances in which the advance of the counter-revolution leaves no choice other than that between self-defence, arms in hand, or extermination. The bureaucracy of the workers' parties and even the Stalinist bureaucracy may find themselves obliged to resort to guerilla methods or armed struggle. The opportunist leaders of the guerilla wars have their social base in these petty bourgeois, bureaucratic and sometimes even bourgeois sectors, which are forced against their will to take up arms. That the opportunist leaderships can exercise control is clearly connected with the absence of revolutionary Marxist mass parties. Here is another example of the crisis of the revolutionary leadership of the world proletariat.

Of course, the elements which are lifted into the leadership in the guerilla war do not abandon their political ideas when that happens. They politically oppose the permanent mobilisation of the masses and organising them democratically. On the contrary, when they intervene in the struggle, they do so not merely to secure their own defence against the counter-revolution, but also to brake, to canalise and to crush the permanent mobilisation of the mass movement, which presents the greatest potential danger threatening them as apparatuses.

Their need to justify this position has given rise to a variety of theoretical meditations and political revisions of Marxism. This is how the Mao-ist theory of the prolonged popular guerilla war came on the scene, and the Guevarist theory of the "foco". The common denominator of both is to over-estimate the importance of the technical and military aspect of the guerilla war, and to under-estimate that of the permanent mobilisation of the mass movement, of its being democratically organised and of the political independence of the proletariat and its allies.

These petty bourgeois and bureaucratic layers which lead the guerilla movement or the civil war do their utmost to control firmly the movement of the masses, to enclose it

in the strait jacket of military discipline, to prevent it from taking any initiative, to divert it from any process of permanent revolution and deprive it of any democracy. An exclusively military organisation provides the means to deprive the civil war of its revolutionary class dynamic. Moreover, this is why they have a theory according to which class differences disappear in a people's war and all classes unite in giving birth to a "new man". The military hierarchy, which is indispensable for a struggle of this kind, is reproduced on the political plane. The mass movement, which intervenes in the guerilla war, has a rigid, bureaucratic structure imposed on it.

The petty bourgeois currents see that this kind of war enables them to impose rigid control on the revolutionary masses. They want to prevent the masses from raising the level of their consciousness. For this purpose, they cultivate the illusion of a limited, bourgeois-democratic or "nationalist" revolution. Their concern is to prevent the masses from going further when the dictatorship has been overthrown.

This is why the petty bourgeois leaderships call for unity with the bourgeoisie, which they divide into "progressive" and "reactionary" sectors. In other words, they try to transform the guerilla front into its opposite, into a front which, far from fighting the vital point of the bourgeoisie, its state apparatus, only fights certain sectors of the bourgeoisie and makes a bloc with others. This socialist civil war is directed in this way towards a combination of the worst kind of Popular Frontism with the guerilla war.

3. These petty bourgeois leaderships therefore conceive of the guerilla war as having the aim of imposing Popular Front Governments. Their opportunist, reactionary politics consist of condemning the initiative and revolutionary organisation of the mass movement to being imprisoned in the strait jacket of military discipline. But it becomes much more dangerous still when groups of petty bourgeois elitists take over this policy and express it in a theoretical form, because these people are expressions of declassed layers of society, which feel themselves to be powerless before the treachery of the traditional leaderships of the mass movement and launch desperately into their own activities. The urban terrorism which has raised its head especially in Germany and in Italy has this character, that it substitutes itself for the mass movement or is frankly provocative. The theoreticians and politicians of the "foco" of rural guerilla war are the expression of revolutionary substitutism typical of the petty bourgeoisie. Their orientation towards a guerilla operation or towards acts of terrorism carried out by small "vanguard" groups is disastrous for the mass movement. Our sections must combat it as such. It is no less disastrous than the counter-revolutionary line of the opportunist leaderships of the mass guerilla formations. We are absolutely opposed to any adventurist activity, even "audacious" activities, by groups isolated from the mass movement.

The guerilla fighting and the forms of armed struggle which we support are those that enjoy the support of the mass movement. We support them in spite of the opportunist character of their leaderships. We denounce these leaderships as counter-revolution-

ary and for their politics, which consist of braking and disciplining the mass movement in order to prevent it from effecting its permanent mobilisation. At the same time we denounce the pocket-size "civil wars" which are carried on by small groups of what claims to be a "vanguard" entirely cut off from the mass movement. This petty bourgeoisie attitude which the guerilla-ist and terrorist currents adopt is symmetrical, from the side of ultra-leftism, with the Popular Front-ist orientation of the bureaucratic and petty bourgeois leaderships.

We combat these "vanguard" guerilla-ist currents no less when they adopt their policy as a means to call into question the opportunist leaderships of the mass movement. They have this in common with the counter-revolutionary opportunists of the mass guerilla movements, that neither the one nor the other has the slightest confidence in the permanent mobilisation of the workers' movement, and that both alike fight against it. They share a paternalistic conception of the mass movement. They try to persuade it that it is powerless, with its mobilisations and its independent organisation. Their sole purpose is that it shall make way for either the "exemplary" actions of a small group of terrorists or for actions entirely controlled by the military apparatus of the bureaucracy or the opportunist leaders of the mass movement. This is why the opportunist leaderships of the guerilla forces and what claims to be the guerilla-ist "vanguard" which denounces them are equally counter-revolutionary, irrespective of the intentions of their members.

THESIS XIX: WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENTS

The process of forming the bureaucratic workers' states which appeared immediately after World War II is the same as Trotsky had begun to analyse by means of the category "worker and peasant". We must now stop, both to establish that this category is valid and to proceed to extend it, given the extreme importance which it has acquired in recent years.

Three different questions are concealed behind the formula "workers' and peasants' government". It is a formulation intended to popularise the class relations under the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is a political tactic in relation to the bourgeois-workers' parties and the petty bourgeois leaderships, a tactic which is situated on a line of cleavage with the bourgeoisie and tends to un-mask them in the eyes of the masses. Finally, it is a historical category which the Transitional Programme posed as a theoretically improbable hypothesis, when it forecast that, in exceptional cases, these parties could be compelled to go beyond their own programme.

Let us examine these three questions in the following order:

1. As the Transitional Programme reminds the reader:

"The formula, 'workers' and farmers' government, first appeared in the agitation of the Bolsheviks in 1917 and was definitely accepted after the October Revolution. In the final analysis it represented nothing more than the popular designation for the already established dictatorship of the proletariat. The significance of this designation comes mainly from the fact that it under-scored the idea of an alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry upon which the Soviet power rests."

Far from possessing the bourgeois-democratic content which the Stalinists and the advocates of Popular Fronts gave to it, this formula meant that we were dealing with a government of the two exploited classes, united in the government under the leadership of the proletariat against the exploiters. It has been useful in countries with large peasant populations, to point out, in the same way, the political alliance to be brought about, within the dictatorship, between the peasantry and the proletariat, under the hegemony of the latter. In countries which have a large urban majority, but also a powerful middle class, it is necessary to develop the way in which we popularise the slogan "workers' and peasants' government", by explaining how the proletariat in its struggle for power takes upon itself the defence of the rights and the demands of all the masses which are subject to the attacks of decaying capitalism.

2. The slogan of "workers' and peasants' government" has a decisive tactical role, given the growing number of situations like those which resulted in the February Revolution. In the political line which the Bolsheviks advanced in relation to the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries between April and September 1917:

"... the chief accusation which the Fourth International advances against the tradit-

ional organisations of the proletariat is the fact that they do not wish to tear themselves away from the political semi-corpse of the bourgeoisie. Under these conditions the demand, systematically addressed to the old leadership, 'Break with the bourgeoisie, take the power!', is an extremely important weapon for posing the treacherous character of the parties and organisations of the Second, Third and Amsterdam Internationals".

To which we may now add, "... of the bureaucratic apparatuses and of the petty bourgeois leaderships."

This is why the Transitional Programme teaches:

"Of all parties and organisations which base themselves on the workers and peasants and speak in their name, we demand that they break politically with the bourgeoisie and enter upon the road of struggle for the workers' and farmers' government. On this road, we promise them full support against capitalist reaction. At the same time, we indefatigably develop agitation around those transitional demands which should in our opinion form the programme of the 'workers' and farmers' government'."

The "Workers' and farmers' government" slogan, if it is understood in this way, must always be put forward in a concrete form; this will consist of combinations and of alliances of parties, excluding the bourgeois parties. It gets its extreme importance from the character of the early stages of the revolutionary process. It is an instrument of struggle against the policy of class collaboration of both the leaders of the bourgeois workers' parties and of those petty bourgeois leaderships which may control the mass movement in oppressed countries.

The purpose of the tactic is to prepare the ground for the masses to break with the opportunist party in the basis of their own experience. This experience is fostered by the work of the revolutionary party. It is in order that they will follow the revolutionary party as the only means of maintaining their permanent mobilisation until victory is achieved and the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat introduced. This means that the tactical employment of this slogan in no way contradicts our understanding that an effective political break with the bourgeoisie, or even expropriating it, in no way change the petty bourgeois or bureaucratic character of the opportunist party. As Lenin and Trotsky said in 1917, when they envisaged this possibility, our struggle against them must be implacably maintained. During the Russian Revolution, after February, the Bolsheviks called on the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries to break with the bourgeoisie and take the power, as a transitional step towards the dictatorship of the proletariat. They called on them to form a workers' and peasants' government. The Bolshevik leaders undertook only to defend this government against any attack whatsoever from the bourgeoisie. They refused, at the same time, to give to it the slightest political support, because they intended to continue to wage an implacable struggle against it, as the sole guarantee

that the development of the revolutionary process ^{would} not be interrupted. The Russian opportunists refused to break with the bourgeoisie. This possibility which the Bolsheviks envisaged at that time was, therefore, not fulfilled.

3. We know, however, that a hypothesis of this type, as an improbable variant, was formulated as a possible future development in the Transitional Programme:

"Is the creation of such a government by the traditional workers' organisations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However, one cannot categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that, under the influence of completely exceptional circumstances (war, defeat, financial crash, mass revolutionary pressure, etc.), the petty bourgeois parties including the Stalinists may go further than they wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie. In any case, one thing is not to be doubted: even if this highly improbable variant somewhere at some time becomes a reality and the 'workers' and farmers' government' in the above-mentioned sense is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat."

This variant, which Trotsky regarded as improbable, is none the less the only one to be produced in the last thirty-five years, and the only one which enables the post-war revolutionary conquests to be explained. The outcome of this process has been the creation of new workers' states and their character as bureaucratic from their origin. Each one has its specific features, but they all fall within the hypothesis which Trotsky formulated, as "exceptional". It was the petty bourgeois and bureaucratic Stalinist parties - like that of Mao, Tito, Enver Hodja and Ho Chi Minh, or petty bourgeois democrats, like the Movement of July 26 in Cuba, which formed workers' states bureaucratic from their origin, when they found support in the revolutionary activity of the masses, which was to take them to the point of breaking with the bourgeoisie and imperialism, against their intentions. Up to a certain point, the same was true in Poland, in Hungary, in Romania, in Bulgaria, in East Germany and in Czechoslovakia. The Stalinist parties were in the presence of the collapse of all the bourgeois state structures, following the victories of the Red Army and as a result of the revolutionary activity of the masses. The Stalinist parties - directly subordinated to the particular needs of the Kremlin bureaucracy and facing internationally the extreme crisis of imperialism, were taken to the point of forming "satellite" governments, /^{of} breaking with the bourgeoisie and imperialism and introducing bureaucratic workers' states.

4. This range of historical experience allows us to make a certain generalisation about the possibility that there can exist, between the political break with the bourgeoisie and the completion of the tasks of expropriating the bourgeoisie, a transitional stage, which would represent nothing but "a short episode on the road to the ^{actual} dictatorship of the proletariat".

In the case of the Russian Revolution, the process of creating the working-class bases of the state was governed by the character of the leadership. That leadership sought its support in a revolutionary way in the formation everywhere of Soviets. At the time of the October Revolution, there was a first phase when there was a government which had broken with the bourgeoisie, had expropriated the banks and the large-scale means of production controlled by Russian and foreign finance-capital, while at the same time it permitted important sectors of the economy to continue in private ownership without expropriation under workers' control. Meanwhile the peasants were proceeding to divide up the land. This was the government of the Bolsheviks, in alliance with another party, the Left Social-Revolutionaries.

Trotsky was able to point out that the dictatorship of the proletariat was in operation from the beginning, because power had been seized by the Soviets and the first measures of socialisation were being taken, but that it reached its full potential and acquired the whole of its social bases only in the autumn of 1918, when the capitalist means of production were completely expropriated.

Up to the autumn of 1918, therefore, there existed a special combination, with the government of the dictatorship of the proletariat retaining the transitional character of a workers' and peasants' government.

The completely transitional stage of a "workers' and peasants' government" took on other concrete forms where a bureaucratic force controlled the process of expropriation. The petty bourgeois or bureaucratic leaderships in those cases drove back or prevented mass organisations of a soviet type from becoming general or politically centralised. They also prevented the dictatorship of the proletariat from being politically realised in the revolutionary form of the Soviet state. Yet these leaderships were obliged to break politically with the bourgeoisie despite their programme, which was wide open to class collaboration.

It follows that two conflicting elements exist together in the category of workers' and peasants' government. What is the character of the party that leads this government? Is it a revolutionary Marxist party, like the Bolsheviks, or is it bureaucratic and opportunistic, like Stalinism, Castro-ism or the Social-Democratic parties?

The first two years of the Cuban Revolution provide a clear example of the break with the bourgeois parties opening a highly unstable and contradictory phase, if it is not followed immediately by measures of expropriation. Only the victory of one class over the other can close this phase, be it a successful counter-revolution on the part of the bourgeoisie or of imperialism, or their expropriation. This extremely transitional phase is characterised by the fact that the government no longer includes bourgeois forces, that it is made up of forces breaking with the bourgeoisie, ^{and} going beyond their original intentions, social relations meanwhile

retaining their capitalist nature. Such a "workers' and peasants' government", "exceptional" in the sense of the Transitional Programme, cannot co-exist with the bourgeois social bases which the state maintains. Either it will be driven out by the bourgeoisie, or it will have to lay the foundations of a workers' state, albeit a bureaucratic^{one}. This intermediate situation is the exact opposite of a degenerated workers' state, which has a governmental apparatus similar to that of the bourgeoisie, on a working-class base in transition, but always resting on the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.

5. It is against all the principles of our movement to characterise the Government National Reconstruction (G.R.N.) in Nicaragua as a "workers' and peasants' government" - as the Castro-ite leadership of the S.W.P. characterises it. We cannot support politically, as "our" government, a government which has not effectively moved towards a political or social break with the bourgeoisie. Its composition is that of an un-disguised coalition with the bourgeois forces. Its programme is for "reconstruction" of the state and the bourgeois economy. The elementary principles of the struggle for class independence and for the workers' government mean that, on the contrary, we must tirelessly call on the FSLN to break its political links with "the semi-corpse of the bourgeoisie", and to take the power into its own hands, at the same time as we demand that it apply a programme of transitional demands.

Furthermore, historical experience proves that we cannot exclude in advance that an opportunist leadership may be forced against its intentions and its^{initial} programme to break politically with the bourgeoisie, to form a workers' and peasants' government and even in the end to set up a bureaucratic workers' state. Even on this hypothesis, Trotskyism will continue to preserve its complete political independence of the government and of the party which stands at its head, even though it called for the break with the bourgeoisie and even though it defends the government against any attack by reactionary forces. It will continue tirelessly to mobilise the masses in the direction of forming their independent Soviets and for the full satisfaction of their demands, for which a complete break with the bourgeois order and the destruction of capitalist social relations of production is necessary. The revolutionary vanguard could take part in or support only a revolutionary workers' government, in the sense which the Fourth Congress of the Communist International gave to the term, that is, a government which, without yet being the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat "can form a point of departure for achieving this dictatorship". To be sure, while we are well aware that "a real proletarian, workers' government... in its purest form, can only be physically made up of the Communist Party", yet:

"In certain circumstances, the Communists must declare that they are ready to form a government with non-Communist parties and organisations. But they may do so only if guarantees are given that these workers' organisations will really carry on the struggle against the bourgeoisie."

Evidently the hypothesis with which we are dealing in this passage is a highly improbable one, as long as qualitative advances have not been made towards overcoming the crisis of leadership and the crisis of the Fourth International.

THESIS XX: THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS, DUAL POWER AND THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS
THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT

Our party must recognise the maturation of a revolutionary situation, even if it opens up under the control of an opportunist leadership. At that time, it must advance a programme of slogans, which includes democratic slogans which are in harmony with the aspirations of the masses and with the democratic tasks which the proletariat has to accomplish. These slogans are to make ^{it} possible to pose in practice the need for the opportunist leaderships to break with the bourgeoisie.

We struggle in this way for unity in action of all the oppressed behind the working-class. We call for the unity in action of all the organisations which claim to represent the toiling masses. Our purpose in doing so is to make easier the opening of the proletarian revolution. We have to understand that this phase is inevitable, and not to try to jump over it. This is the only way in which, in practice, we can oppose the petty bourgeois leaderships, who, in order to betray the proletarian revolution, even if they find themselves forced to make a "February Revolution", will try to contain the movement, to give it an exclusively democratic character and to imprison it within national boundaries.

The most important aspect of our activity, from the very outset of the revolutionary situation, must be to defend, to develop and to bring together the different embryonic forms of dual power which emerge. The situation may develop towards the formation of organs of power separate from those of the bourgeoisie (state, army and police) and may tend towards a more developed dual power - the beginning of the proletarian revolution.

In this way the vanguard opens up in a practical way the road towards the workers' and peasants' government, as a transition towards the dictatorship of the proletariat. It seeks support on the movement of the masses and the upward thrust of the mass organisations which brilliantly express the revolutionary aspirations which this movement nurtures. It fights against illusions in the opportunist leaderships in an appropriate way. It fights for the workers' united front and for the independence of the organisations which claim to represent the working class and the oppressed masses. It calls on them to break with the bourgeoisie.

This means that we must decisively distance ourselves from the collaborationist politics of the opportunist leaderships. The axis of our orientation in a revolutionary situation is the struggle for the political independence of the proletariat and its organisations, for the development of revolutionary workers' mobilisation and organs of power. It is ever more so when the proletarian revolution opens. This is also the axis which marks us off clearly from the opportunist leaderships, which try by every means to subject the activity of the masses to their class-collaborationist

policies and to prevent the mass movement from reaching its own revolutionary-democratic decisions or being politically centralised.

To abandon this fundamental political axis would mean capitulating before the opportunist leaderships. It would mean abandoning the working class to its fate. We shall be able to reach out a bridge towards the victory of new Octobers, which is our real object, only if we struggle for the political independence of the proletariat and of its organisations and for the development of the organs of workers' power.

THESIS XXI: THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE OF DEMOCRATIC SLOGANS AND TASKS: THE
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

The profoundly totalitarian tendencies which imperialism and the bureaucracy alike have developed give greater and greater importance to democratic slogans and tasks.

1. In the capitalist countries, the control exerted over the state by the monopolies and by finance-capital, as well as the putrefaction of the mode of production and of the whole of society, combined^d with the open or latent revolutionary crisis to strengthen continually the tendencies to the formation of totalitarian, Bonapartist governments, which call into question the past conquests of the workers and of democracy and lead to the development of the most decomposed and violent forms of the political domination of the bourgeoisie.

The economic "boom" has allowed these tendencies in bourgeois governments in our period to be disguised under a mask of bourgeois democracy, in the capitalist countries. The relative stability of the economy and the super-profits which the bourgeoisie have been taking over more than twenty years have forced its governments to concede democratic forms to the masses. These forms disguise their Bonapartist, totalitarian content. The bourgeoisie exploit these democratic forms, point the contrast between them and the totalitarianism of the USSR and use them to justify their international policies.

These democratic forms have their importance, indeed. None the less, Bonapartist totalitarianism is advancing in every imperialist country, and in entering into crisis there under the impact of the revolutionary offensive of the masses.

Totalitarian Bonapartist shows its real face, without democratic make-up, as a direct agency of ruling imperialism, in the backward countries, which are undergoing and will continue to undergo a chronic economic crisis. Here we have to deal with a counter-revolutionary Bonapartism of a special kind ("sui generis").

The Governments of Somoza, Chiang Kai-Shek and Sygman Rhee are of this kind.

The governments in some of these countries resist imperialism to some extent or experience conflicts with it in some of these countries; these governments also have the character of Bonapartism of a special kind, but "of the left". Under the pressure of the mobilisation of the masses, these Bonapartist regimes tend to seek support from the workers' and peoples' movement, without, however, (as Trotsky explained), ceasing to deal with imperialism in order to get better conditions from it. To this type of government belonged Mossadegh in Iran,

Nasser in Egypt, Ibanez in Chile^(1952, p. 58), Perón in Argentina and Lumumba in the Congo.

Today the governments of Angola, Mozambique, Grenada and Iran are like them.

Then there are the countries where capitalism has been expropriated, where the parasitic bureaucracies can preserve their privileges only by appropriating the monopoly of political power and defending their monopoly by the most totalitarian measures, in particular by suppressing the most elementary democratic and working-

class liberties. These regimes take on Bonapartist forms of a specific kind which we shall consider later.

In these conditions, the great democratic slogans which are of interest to the whole population, acquire greater and greater objective effectiveness and revolutionary leverage, not only in exploited capitalism countries but no less in the imperialist countries and in the bureaucratic workers' states, where they form an integral part of the proletarian programme for the political revolution.

In the countries which imperialism oppresses, democratic rights and aims form part of the solution of the national question, which is an essential constituent of the proletarian revolution. The fact is that, in the epoch of imperialism, the solution of the agrarian question and the abolition of national oppression, which imply the solution of tasks of a bourgeois democratic character, can be carried through only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, under the leadership of the proletariat, and by the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The treacherous bureaucratic leaderships claim that what is at stake is not a proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie, and that the revolution can stop at the stage of a struggle "against the monopolies" in the advanced countries, and "against feudalism" or "against imperialism" in the oppressed countries. They appeal for justification to the fact that imperialism, "reaction all along the line", gives a new acuteness to democratic demands and liberties.

2. The slogan of the Constituent Assembly, under various names and in various tactical formulations, has great significance in this general framework.

Of course, this slogan plays a central role in the oppressed countries, where it is the concentrated expression of the agrarian, democratic and national tasks which it is the task of the proletarian revolution to solve. But it can also acquire relevance in certain imperialist countries, as Trotsky observed in 1933, against the dictatorial, semi-dictatorial and Bonapartist forms which governments take on because the control of the monopolies and the revolutionary upsurge bring about the ~~political~~ decomposition of the bourgeois states.

In the stage of preparation of the opening of a revolutionary situation against the regimes in power, determining the relation between the various democratic slogans - that of the Constituent Assembly or those of "Down with the Dictatorship" or "Down with the Government". In Portugal, in Iran and in Nicaragua, before the crisis opened, the central slogan was: "Down with the Dictatorship!", "Down with Caetano!", "Down with Somoza!".

Such a slogan as "Down with Somoza!", in a country ferociously dominated by a dictatorship such as Nicaragua, appeals not only to the working class but to the whole population to overthrow this government. Once this goal has been reached, the slogan of the Constituent Assembly can acquire its full agitational value, as the highest expression of the democratic struggle, and be combined with all the

other democratic and transitional slogans, in the framework of the struggle for the political independence of the masses and the development of their own political organisms.

In other situations, the slogan of the Constituent Assembly can be combined directly with the appeal for the dictatorships to be overthrown. We saw this in Peru during the struggle to bring down the Morales Bermudez government. It can contribute to centralising politically the mobilisation of the masses, as has already happened in Algeria, and can serve the Palestinian Resistance.

In any case, we do not forget for a single minute that we are handling an essentially bourgeois slogan. We use the slogan of the Constituent Assembly in a revolutionary way, but it is a bourgeois slogan because it calls for the Constituent Assembly to be called on the basis of universal suffrage. We use it as a slogan for mobilisation, in order that the social forces which it helps to set in motion will give it a practical influence distinct from its intrinsically bourgeois democratic character. This is valuable especially in countries where there is a large, principally peasant, middle class.

When we understand the slogan of the Constituent Assembly in this way, the slogan transforms itself into a slogan of opposition to the bourgeoisie, one which educates the mass movement and develops the unity of the working class and the peasantry. But if it is to be successfully used in this way, it has to be part of a larger whole. It can be linked to the demand for the formation of a workers' and peasants' government, to that for the satisfaction of the demands of the masses or to that of the defence of the organisations which the masses themselves bring into existence, or to other demands. This may lead us to advancing the slogan of the Constituent Assembly by defining as its task that it is to give the land to the peasants, that in it the arming of the proletariat will be voted, the sliding scale of wages and hours of work or the expropriation of the monopolies.

3. The solution of the agrarian question is part of the tasks of the proletarian revolution in our epoch. Imperialism, the progressive integration into the world market of all countries, and the export of capital, have brought about a complete crisis of the backward forms of production in agriculture. The "penetration" of capitalism into peasant economy has meant, in the majority of cases, that the producers who work the land have lost their rights in it. None the less, this has not resulted in all the units of production being transformed into units such as are found in industry, based on wage-labour. In colonial or semi-colonial conditions, capitalism tends to reproduce archaic forms of peonage, of personal subjection. For this reason the agrarian question remains relevant. For this reason the struggles develop for the land and the resistance, in violent forms, to the development of capitalism in the countryside, which the small, independent cultivators undertake on questions of prices,

credit and so on. The Marxist revolutionaries follow Lenin and Trotsky in encouraging the agrarian revolution and the alliance of the workers and the peasants. The poor peasants are firm allies which the proletariat possesses in the country. The Trotskyist support their mobilisation for the land, and against the landed proprietors and the bourgeois governments which protect them. We try to unite the activity of the peasantry with that of the proletariat and with the struggle for a workers' and peasants' government as the sole means of satisfying their aspirations. Our programme is the elimination of the monopoly of property in land, so that it can be taken into national ownership and placed at the disposal of society. We fight for the expropriation of the large landed estates. We believe that the real solution of the agrarian problems which bear down on the peasants lies in seeking co-operative or state forms of property, which replace the private property of the landlords. This will ensure the full development of the productive forces. At the same time, we defend the right of the organisation of workers in the countryside, of the peasants' committees and councils, to decide against the landed proprietors and the capitalist states what is to be done with the lands.

In most imperialist countries the agrarian question, as a democratic question, has been resolved by the transformation of peasant economy into capitalist agriculture, with the formation of agro-industrial complexes or in combination with the development of the farmers. Even so, sharp contradictions continue to exist between independent peasants - family farmers - and the monopolies, in such countries as Portugal or Spain, or in certain regions of Italy. The crisis of capitalism attacks these peasant undertakings. Different factors drive them to ruin. The producers are condemned to poverty and unemployment. To encourage the struggle of these peasant sectors to resist and to support their demands for credit and for reduced prices of raw materials forms part of our tasks and of our encouragement of the democratic struggles, including in the countries where the (bourgeois) agrarian revolution has long since been completed, such as France, Belgium and Britain. The crisis of the bourgeois relations of production weighs heavily on the small peasants, who tend more and more to be crushed by the banks, by debt and by the competition of the agro-industrial trusts. This tendency is stronger now because agriculture is now fully in the embrace of the world market and, therefore, in the setting of the international economic crisis. The problems which the crisis of the Common Agricultural Market has raised bear witness to the depth of the crisis which finds the peasant masses in a state of disguised mobilisation, which periodically breaks out into explosions.

But none of the democratic slogans must obscure the essential axis of every revolutionary period, which is that of the advance towards the workers' and peasants'

government, as a transition towards the dictatorship of the proletariat. It would be a betrayal of Trotskyist politics to advance the slogan of the Constituent Assembly, in a revolutionary stage, in such a way as to strangle the proletarian revolution with the noose of the so-called "democratic revolution". This is why all the slogans must be combined together, with the supreme objective of developing the workers' power, so that the socialist revolution may win. This is the way in which we advance and apply democratic slogans as a whole in the mass movement.

THESIS XXII: THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND OUR STRUGGLE FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF NATIONAL STATES

One essential element in our democratic demands in general is that we are for the national liberation of the colonies, semi-colonies and dependencies. We take this position because of the survival of imperialism and of the totalitarian character of the regimes in the bureaucratic workers' states.

In the first place, this means complete political independence for the colonies. We declared ourselves in favour of the independence of Angola and of Mozambique, as we declare ourselves today for that of the French Antilles and of the other directly-ruled colonies. Likewise we declare ourselves for the liquidation of all survivals of colonialism and semi-colonialism, such as Spanish rule of Ceuta and Melita. We are in favour, not merely of the right of colonies to self-determination, but of every colony effectively using this right in relation to the empire of which it is part.

This means the exercise by the semi-colonies and dependencies of complete national sovereignty. It means denouncing all the treaties of a colonial or semi-colonial type, which bind the backward countries to imperialism, such as the Organisation of African States and the treaties which subordinate its former colonies to French imperialism.

In the second place, the national liberation of all these countries means that the imperialist capital, which is the foundation of their subordination to imperialism, is expropriated. The struggle for national liberation is at one and the same time a democratic and an anti-capitalist struggle. This is why it can be carried through to the end only by the socialist revolution.

Marxists believe that slogans must relate to the objective relations between the classes in the concrete situation, and not to what Lenin called "abstract general principles". We have analysed our concrete situation, in the preceding theses, as the period of the imminence of the revolution. This means that in every struggle of the exploited and oppressed masses it is workers' power that is at stake.

To take the example of our position in relation to the national struggle of the Basque and Catalan people against the monarchic, Castilian state, we start from what Trotsky wrote in 1931:

"The separatist tendencies present the revolution with the democratic task of national self-determination. These tendencies were accentuated, to all appearances, during the period of the dictatorship. But while the "separatism" of the Catalan bourgeoisie is only a pawn in its play with the Madrid government against the Catalan and Spanish people, the separatism of the workers and peasants is only the shell of their social rebellion. One must distinguish very rigidly between these two forms of separatism. Precisely, however, in order

to draw the line between the nationally oppressed workers and peasants and their bourgeoisie, the proletarian vanguard must take the boldest and most sincere position on the question of national self-determination. The workers will fully and completely defend the right of the Catalans and Basques to organise their ^{state} life independently in the event that the majority of these nationalities express themselves for complete separation. But this does not mean, of course, that the advanced workers will push the Catalans and the Basques on the road of secession. On the contrary, the economic unity of the country with extensive autonomy of national districts, would represent great advantages for the workers and peasants from the viewpoint of economy and culture." (From "The Spanish Revolution: (1931 - 1939)", by L. Trotsky, publ. by Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973 ed.: the quotation is from the article "The Revolution in Spain", dated January 24, 1931, pages 77 - 78).

These lines, written in 1931, summarise and adapt the positions of Lenin on the national question. They remain valid expositions of the kernel of principles such as enable Trotskyists to know how to pose concretely the problems of free national self-determination in the situation in Spain in 1980.

Here are the principal factors which characterise this situation:

1. There have been forty years of the dictatorship of Franco. These have reinforced the national oppression of the oppressed nationalities in Spain in a monstrous fashion.

Under Franco the Castilian state implemented a policy of reaction all along the line. The feeble Spanish bourgeoisie has never been able to put together a Spanish nation. The "separatist tendencies of the workers' and peasants", which "are the envelope of ^{their} social rebellion" have been strengthened by Franco-ism. The Catalan and the Basque bourgeoisie, however, have given up their separatist movements to submit, first to Franco, then to the monarchy and now, evidently, to the Castilian state.

2. In this way the right of self-determination, along with the other class slogans, has become an indispensable lever in the struggle against the centralist monarchy of Juan Carlos, which maintains intact the essential institutions of Franco-ism, the army, the police and the courts. These are instruments of state violence against the free determination by the Catalan, Basque and other oppressed nationalities of their national will. At the same time, they are instruments for the exploitation of the whole Spanish proletariat.
3. We can say correctly that the right of a people to self-determination can take the most varied forms, and certainly not necessarily that of a distinct state. But we assert that we are for the right of peoples to self-determination, up to and including separation. We say: it is for the oppressed peoples to decide

freely. The Castilian state, the Catalan and the Basque bourgeoisie, the monarchy and the treacherous leaderships of the workers' movement, the Communist and Socialist Parties, all oppose the Catalan and the Basque people freely saying what they want. All these forces refuse to put the ^{choice} clearly between "for" or "against" separation, between "for" or "against" a Basque Constituent Assembly. It is our duty to denounce the organised violence of the Castilian state, which denies to the Catalans and the Basques the right to organise their independent national life, in the event that the majority of these peoples declare for complete separation.

On the one hand, we unconditionally support the right of the Basque and Catalan peoples to self-determination, including independence if they wish. On the other hand, our policy is "not to push the Catalans and the Basques into independence" and to struggle for "economic unity" in a Spanish Federation. This is what Trotsky outlines in 1931, but today the Trotskyists need to take account of the ferocious national oppression under Franco, and of the consequences of forty years of it.

This problem of nationalities is complicated by the division of the Iberian peninsula into the two states of Spain and Portugal. Portugal is geographically, linguistically and culturally united with the Galician nationality; the revolutionary process declares itself to be one process in Spain and in Portugal.

4. There would be no contradiction between the fact that the majority of the Basque people come out in favour of separation - which it would be the duty of the Trotskyists to defend unconditionally - and the fact that we declared ourselves in favour of the economic unity of the country. Trotsky had already explained in 1931:

"Our programme is for Hispanic federation, with the indispensable maintenance of economic unity. We have no intention of imposing this programme upon the oppressed nationalities of Spain with the aid of the arms of the bourgeoisie. ... If Catalonia separates, the communist minority of Catalonia, as well as of Spain, will have to conduct a struggle for federation." (From "The Spanish Revolution: (1931 - 1939)", by L. Trotsky, publ. by Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973 ed.: the quotation is from the article "The National Question in Catalonia", dated July 13, 1931, page 155).

5. In 1913, Lenin laid down "the unconditional recognition of the struggle for freedom of self-determination, including the right of separation and of the formation of an independent state, does not oblige us to support any and every demand for national self-determination". He went on "It is only in the special, exceptional cases what we can develop and actively support demands tending to the creation of a new class state, or replacing the total political unity of the

of the state by a federal union."

But, when Lenin was attacking Dzerzhinsky, who was defending the positions of Rosa Luxemburg on the national question, at the conference of the (Bolshevik) Party in May 1917, he declared:

"We seek the fraternal alliance of all peoples: mutual confidence and reciprocal links will be all the greater if there is a Ukrainian Republic and a Russian Republic."

There was no contradiction in that. We have here one of the "exceptional cases" in the solution of the national question. It is like these "exceptional cases" in which the type of workers' and peasants' government which Trotsky discussed in the Transitional Programme could possibly be formed. However, the delays in the proletarian revolution, the decay of imperialism, the counter-revolutionary force of the petty bourgeois leadership and the weakness of the Fourth International have given an infinitely increased importance.

6. The starting-point in our analysis of events and, therefore, for our active intervention in the class struggle, is the method which Lenin and Trotsky used to study "exceptional cases": "The purpose of a Marxist prognostication is to help to focus thinking on the general direction of the facts, and to see clearly into their 'unexpected' developments." Trotsky adds that "Marxist prognostications" have nothing in common with "predictions"... about the date when the events will happen and the turn which they will take. Marxism is the unity of theory and practice in the construction of revolutionary parties, the sections of the Fourth International which we have to reconstruct. It is the programme which establishes fundamental principles, which have to be applied in concrete situations.

In this case of the nationalities question in Spain, the fundamental principles are:

First: the unity of the Spanish proletariat, with all its Basque, Catalan and other components; its political independence to confront the bourgeoisie and, at the present moment, the centralist, imperialist, monarchical state. The right to national self-determination is subordinate to our struggle to bring about the unity and the political independence of the Spanish proletariat. This is why, in Spain, we struggle for the construction of a single revolutionary party, the section of the Fourth International, and reject the division of the Spanish proletariat into "nationalities".

Secondly, we declare ourselves in favour of the right of free self-determination, which can take very different political and state forms, according to the concrete circumstances, and which the oppressed people must decide freely for themselves.

Trotsky developed his thought on the problem of the "Balkanisation" of Spain, which he opposed, in a letter to Nin, dated September 1, 1931:

"You describe how one might unintentionally aid Madrilenian liberalism by proclaiming that the Balkanisation of the Iberian Peninsula is inconsistent with the aims of the proletariat, and by proclaiming it without further elaboration. You are quite right. If I have not underscored it sufficiently in my preceding letter ("Maurin and the National Question") I am prepared to do so ten times over right now.

The analogy between the two peninsulas really needs to be completed. There was a time when the Balkan Peninsula was unified under the domination of the Turkish gentry, the militarists and the proconsuls. The oppressed people longed to overthrow their oppressors. If our opposition to partitioning the peninsula had been counter-posed to these aspirations of the people, we would have been acting as lackeys to the Turkish pashas and beys. On the other hand, however, we know that the Balkan peoples, liberated from the Turkish yoke, have been at one another's throats for decades. In this matter, too, the proletarian vanguard can apply the point of view of the permanent revolution: liberation from the imperialist yoke, which is the most important element of the democratic revolution, leads immediately to the Federation of Soviet Republics as the state form for the proletarian revolution. Not opposing the democratic revolution, but on the contrary supporting it completely even in the form of separation (that, supporting the struggle but not the illusions), we at the same time bring our own independent position into the democratic revolution, recommending, counseling, encouraging the idea of the Soviet Federation of the Iberian Peninsula as a constituent part of the United States of Europe. Only under this form is my conception complete. Needless to say, the Madrid comrades and the Spanish comrades in general should use particularly great discretion with regard to the Balkanisation argument." (Ibid. p. 163).

We are aware that:

- (a). it is necessary to support unconditionally, at one and the same time, the right to self-determination of the Basque people, up to and including separation, and the struggle to preserve the unity of the Spanish proletariat:
- (b). the Basque bourgeoisie has completely capitulated and joins with the Castilian state in total opposition to separatism:
- (c). forty years of the rule of Franco have considerably strengthened the longing of the workers and peasants for separation, which is "the shell of their social rebellion":

- (d). while we remain firmly supporting in principle that it is for the Basque people to decide freely for themselves, we denounce the fake referendum imposed by the Castilian state and the Basque bourgeoisie:
- (e). it is necessary to struggle to guarantee the economic unity of the whole of Spain on foundations other than those of violence against and oppression of the oppressed nationalities.

All these considerations lead us to believe it to be necessary to express their relation in the following way, without at the same time formulating our slogans in an ultimatum or formalistic way:

1. Down with the Monarchy! For the Republic! For free and sovereign Constituent Cortes!
2. The right of the oppressed nationalities to free self-determination, up to and including the formation of the free Republic of Euskadi, the free Republic of Catalonia, and so on.

We shall decide in the light of the circumstances whether to include the slogan of the Union of Free Republics of Spain in a combination of these slogans, in the struggle against the centralist monarchy and in the setting of the slogan of the Republic, in relation to the right of the oppressed nations and nationalities to independence.

The combination of slogans itself, of course, must be linked to the transitional slogans of the workers' and peasants' government, the land to the peasants and the Soviet Federation of the Iberian Peninsula as a constituent part of the slogan of the United Socialist States of Europe. Lenin argued that "the unconditional recognition of the struggle for freedom of self-determination... does not oblige us to support any particular, or every, demand for national self-determination". None the less, he did not hesitate to declare in 1913:

"This is the programme of workers' democracy in national questions: absolute suppression of every privilege for any nation or any language, whatever they may be, solution of the problem of political self-determination of the nations, that is to say, of their separation and of their formation into an independent state by a perfectly free and democratic route, absolute unity of the workers in total fusion of the workers of all nationalities in all the workers' organisations, the trade unions, the consumers' co-operatives, the educational institutions and others, contrary to what the bourgeois nationalists preach."

Let us repeat: there is no contradiction between the principled position and its concrete application.

This means that in Canada we fight for the unity of the whole Canadian proletariat and against the whole bourgeoisie, whether it be English-speaking or French-speaking. The principal task of the workers' struggle is located there, and the

struggle for the self-determination of Quebec is subordinated to it.

The political and state form of the national oppression of Quebec and of the whole Canadian proletariat - a form, moreover, which the USA does not wish to destroy - is the link with the British Crown, which is the foundation of all the Federal institutions.

We should, therefore, advance the following slogans:

- Unity of the whole Canadian proletariat, English-speaking and French-speaking!
- Break from the British Crown!
- For a Constituent Assembly which can satisfy the right of the oppressed people of Quebec to self-determination, including independence if they so decide, in the form which they have freely chosen.

These slogans cannot be separated from the other aspects of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat, especially the struggle in Quebec, for an independent workers' party based on the trade unions, as an integrating part of bringing about the unity and political independence of the whole Canadian proletariat. That is the line of the Canadian Trotskyists, who struggle for the Socialist United States of North America.

In Ireland the Irish people has undergone national oppression for centuries. The "national" bourgeoisie and imperialism have reached an agreement to partition the country against the desire of the Irish people for unity. We must support unconditionally the national struggle for the unity of Ireland, for Northern Ireland to break from the United Kingdom and for the whole of united Ireland to break with Britain. We declare our opposition to the solution of putting Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland together in a federal state. We declare ourselves for a single National Assembly for the whole of Ireland, for a single, secular Republic with local democratic representation. We are for the separation of the whole of Ireland from Britain, for the establishment of an all-Ireland state independent of Britain, for the absolute unity of the workers of the whole of Ireland, "Catholic and Protestant", as the condition for establishing free connections between Britain and Ireland in a federation.

This was the position of Marx and Engels, of Lenin and Trotsky. It in no way counter-poses itself to the struggle to maintain economic unity between Ireland and Britain. Marx was talking about the Irish national question when he declared that a people which oppresses another can never itself be free. The struggle for a free, independent, united Ireland is an absolute duty for the British proletariat. It is a duty which forms part of its struggle against imperialism and the monarchy, one of the principal buttresses of which is, precisely, the oppression of Ireland.

We support unconditionally the right of the Palestinian people to nationhood, even

though the majority of the Palestinian people are dispersed through a considerable number of countries. We are for the destruction of the state of Israel, which is an instrument of imperialism and of the bureaucracy against the national aspirations of the peoples of the Near and Middle East. We support the demand for a secular Palestinian state which brings together the Jewish and the Arab components of the Palestinian nation. We declare our support for the Socialist United States of the peoples of the Near and Middle East.

These few examples show how we must utilise Marxism, which is not a dogma but a guide to action, for the revolution.

The objective of the historic struggle of the working class is to constitute society without classes and without a state, freed from all exploitation and oppression. The transition from capitalism to socialism passes by way of the construction of the workers' state, of workers' states, of the Federation of workers' states. In the construction of socialism, these must spread out and wither away in the free and fraternal union of men who control nature and their own social nature. "Politics is concentrated economics", said Lenin.

Proletarian politics are the absolute necessity for the advance towards a socialist and communist economy. Everything must be subordinated to politics because, as Engels said, humanity, in building socialism, will take a leap from the realm of necessity (politics) into the reign of freedom, without a state, without exploiters, without oppression, without politics, where the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all, and vice versa. In getting from here to there, we shall have to face a whole number of contradictions which can determine, for example, whether the free development of the productive forces in an oppressed country passes through its separation as a workers' state, since any separation, any formation of a new capitalist state represents historically a retreat in the development of the productive forces.

But we do not raise our programme for the workers' state as a condition for the struggle of oppressed peoples and nationalities for the right to self-determination. We integrate the slogans of self-determination of the peoples and nationalities as transitional demands in our struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the United Socialist States of the World, freed from the chains of exploitation and oppression.

THESIS XXIII: THE WORKERS' UNITED FRONT AND THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST UNITED FRONT

In our movement the word "front" has become identified with the expression "workers' front", and this has given rise to confusion in our movement which revisionism has skilfully exploited in order to smuggle its positions into our ranks. This was done by putting an "equals" sign, from the point of view of their importance and their character, between the workers' united front, which expresses the class independence of the proletariat, and the various "fronts" which we may decide to form, to carry out anti-imperialist or democratic activities.

It is not by chance that Trotsky never called for the formation of anti-imperialist fronts in his 1930's writings. The only past reference to this question in Marxist literature is Chapter IV of the well-known "Theses on the Eastern Question", which were adopted by the Fourth Congress of the Communist International in November 1922.

The national bourgeoisie in backward countries is at one and the same time an exploiting and a half-oppressed class. These characteristics give rise on many occasions to the need for temporary agreements with the bourgeois-nationalist mass organisations, in the framework of the anti-imperialist United Front. Such a front can only be to meet specific circumstances and for a limited period. If it were prolonged beyond the circumstances which justified its formation, this would imply an adaptation to bourgeois nationalism and that the proletariat was being subordinated to the national bourgeoisie. In no case can a Front of this kind aim at the formation of a government in common with bourgeois forces.

We are in favour of ^{united} anti-imperialist activity even in an imperialist country, where we can agree to and indeed seek common action with bourgeois personalities in order to extract this or that democratic right against a Bonapartist government, or even a bourgeois democratic one, as for example for the withdrawal of the troops from Vietnam or for the right to free abortion. Thus understood, the anti-imperialist united front is completely the opposite of Popular Fronts or other fronts and coalitions for collaboration with the bourgeoisie which the Stalinists or the petty bourgeois leaderships promote under cover of the anti-imperialist struggle and in which the working-class must surrender its political independence and subordinate itself to the bourgeois forces and to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

The necessity to develop actions against dictatorial and repressive governments, to struggle for full democratic rights and individual liberties, frequently impose upon us the duty to establish tactical agreements with petty bourgeois and even bourgeois sectors of society and with their parties. We put this unity of democratic action into practice for specific objectives. It is in order to encourage mobilisation, and we maintain the most complete independence and make no agreement at the level of government with the bourgeois sectors.

This does not suggest that there are not progressive struggles against imperialism and the great landed proprietors for the overthrow of dictatorial regimes, in which every sector of the population is in a position to take part. The duty of the Trotskyists is to combine the permanent and systematic struggle for the working class to win its independence in relation to all the other sectors of society and for the independent organisation of the working class, with the support and participation of the Trotskyists in every progressive struggle even if, at least at the beginning, it is of a purely democratic character.

If we do not act in this way, the working-class will never take the leadership of all the oppressed layers of society and - what is more serious - our parties will never take the leadership of the working-class. The party supports every united action for a struggle of a progressive character. But the utilisation by revolutionaries in countries dominated by imperialism of the front with other sectors of society takes on necessarily a precarious character. It is subject to the precise tasks which we allot to it, and is without our accepting the least political subordination whatever. The only discipline and continuity which we accept is that of the freely accepted progressive activity, which could be a demonstration, a military action against the dictatorship or a petition. The proletarian organisation never surrenders its independence or agrees to subordinate itself to class collaboration.

The organs of the workers' united front are organs of the class. The norm is to belong to them over a long period and to accept their democratic discipline, so as to win the masses. As class organs, they are our organs. We demonstrate the most consistent class patriotism in respect of them. This is the opposite of our relationship with every organisation in a non-working-class "Front". There our aim is that the working-class shall break with it and effect its independence.

From this point of view, if Trotsky said that the Soviet is the highest form of the workers' united front, which gives it a permanent character, the anti-imperialist united front could, on the contrary, be only a unity for limited activity. In fact, it is the proletarian revolution alone which can accomplish the democratic and national tasks in the dominated countries. The proletarian revolution cannot be accomplished except in the complete independence from the bourgeoisie. This is the perspective within which the party of the proletariat puts forward the organising of united front committees to serve as Soviets, for the organisation and the struggle of the toilers, within the unity of action and the struggles of the anti-imperialist united front.

In Russia in 1917 the petty bourgeois party of the Social-Revolutionaries participated in the Soviets. This orientation cannot be confused in the slightest with the policy of Stalin and Bukharin, who placed themselves in opposition to Soviets and to the revolution when they subordinated the proletariat to the Kuomintang and to the national bourgeoisie.

The existence in colonial and semi-colonial countries of national, democratic and anti-imperialist tasks, on the one hand, and, on the other, the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism and the crisis of the Fourth International, have produced a situation in which numerous petty bourgeois nationalist organisations have appeared and play an active role in the struggle against the dictatorships and imperialism, such as the BPR, the FAPU and others in El Salvador, the FSLN in the struggle against Somoza, the MIR in Venezuela, etc.

It is our duty to struggle systematically to bring about the anti-imperialist united front with these organisations, on the basis of a programme of class independence, with the object of taking the struggle of the masses forward and of demanding systematically of all the organisations which claim the support of the workers and peasants that they break with the bourgeoisie and take the road of the workers' and peasants' government. Our struggle must enable the masses to break with these organisations, as the result of their own experiences.

Mass bourgeois nationalist parties, which have attracted the majority of the proletariat, have arisen in a number of colonial and semi-colonial countries, thanks to the crisis of leadership of the proletariat. These parties raise the banner of anti-imperialism. There are occasions on which they wage real struggles against imperialism, under the pressure of the mobilisation of the masses.

Our task is to support every action directed against imperialism and, at the same time, to struggle for the working-class to break with bourgeois and petty bourgeois nationalism. An effective tactic must be utilised for this purpose. It can include entrisms into these organisations, while, of course, maintaining the existence of the independent Trotskyist press. At the same time it must be pointed out that the majority of these bourgeois nationalist parties have entered a period of deep disarray and have lost influence, in the present period of the imminence of the revolution, such as the APRA in Peru, Peronism in Argentina, Varguism in Brazil or those who today claim to represent it.

When there are direct military confrontations or a large-scale guerilla war, it becomes urgent and obligatory to bring about united activity, despite the opportunist character of the leaderships of the masses.

We join in the battle against imperialism and dictatorship, but we un-ambiguously state where we stand, by denouncing class collaboration and proclaiming the necessity for the independence of the working class.

That is our general line. We determine our tactics in each case from that starting-point, in El Salvador, for example, in relation to the Revolutionary Co-ordination and to the FDR. In El Salvador we are for our party to enter the Co-ordination (CRM) and at the same time to accept the military discipline of the FDR. At the same time, we defend our class independence. We do not ask to join the FDR, because its polit-

ics are those of class collaboration. Its nature is expressed, not only in its programme, which is like that of the CRM, but in the fact that bourgeois forces form part of it.

Guerilla warfare against a dictatorship or a repressive government, against imperialism or an army of occupation, can be the source of democratic or anti-imperialist united action, in which we participate with petty bourgeois sectors of society or organisations, including bourgeois organisations, under a common military discipline. The objective on which the unity of action is founded in this case is the overthrow of the armed forces of the regime and of the government which they support. A common action of this kind within the framework of a guerilla war cannot in any way ~~restrict our~~ programmatic or organisational independence. The clearest examples of this tactic are to be found in the Trotskyist brigades in Spain and, very recently, in the participation of the Simon Bolivar Brigade in the struggle against the dictatorship of Somoza.

Political colitions for class collaboration with the bourgeoisie are as disastrous in imperialist countries as in backward countries. In backward countries, however, the existence of imperialist oppression can give rise to Popular Front type governments and other varieties of coalition governments, such as the GRN in Nicaragua. Under the pressure of the mobilisation of the masses, these are capable of advancing anti-imperialist or progressive democratic measures, which lead to friction reaching the level of confrontations, in certain circumstances, between these governments and imperialism, the landed proprietors or other sectors of the bourgeoisie.

We unconditionally defend, against a fascist coup or imperialist intervention, the gains which the masses have won under such governments. But we fight politically against such governments, which are essentially governments of a Popular Front type. We denounce them as enemies of the masses and as the last political resort of imperialism against the revolution. We do our utmost to liberate the masses from their illusions in these governments, in such a way that the masses break with them and with the bourgeois or opportunist parties which make them up.

We cannot recommend such coalition governments. Even less can we participate in them or support them, even though the leaderships which broad masses follow do so. But it is important for us to draw the distinction between what has just been said and what is our elementary duty throughout the struggles against the dictatorships. It is to take part in the struggles of the masses, accepting in action the discipline of the organs of this struggle, even when they are led by an opportunist leadership. There can, of course, be no question of our accepting and political discipline whatever.

In the same way we systematically take part in every concrete, anti-imperialist or democratic struggle, without any sectarianism. We raise the question of unity in action (for example, in the form of united demonstrations) in order to demand that some neo-colonial treaty be denounced, that the imperialist enterprises be expropriated or the prisoners of a totalitarian regime be released, etc. At the same time, it

is our duty to denounce any front which puts the working class under the control of organisms which belong to another class, any front which transforms the anti-imperialist united front into its opposite, or any other variant of class collaboration.

To conclude, let us repeat that the Fourth International unconditionally supports the struggle of the oppressed country in every conflict between imperialism and the oppressed nations, independently of the leadership of the struggle. But it is our duty in all circumstances to preserve the/^{class}independence of the proletariat and to struggle for it in the common struggle against imperialism.

THESIS XXIV: THE CENTRE OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

Nothing demonstrates the ultra-reactionary character of the collaboration between imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy in their struggle against the revolutionary upsurge which followed World War II than the division of Germany and the resulting division of the German working-class. The real purpose of this division was to prevent, at all costs, the German working-class from recovering, in the heart of Europe, the historical tradition which had made it the best organised in the world and that possessing the greatest Marxist tradition. The general conditions of development of the political situation and of the relation of class forces - analysed in the preceding theses - in which the counter-revolutionary collaboration of imperialism and the bureaucracy sought to achieve this object, let them no other means but dividing the proletariat.

The unification of Germany, carried out "from above" though it was, had been a historic advance of the first importance. Though it was not complete, Austria remaining outside, this unification of all the small German states allowed a great development of the productive forces and of culture. The division of Germany means a retreat even from the conquests of the bourgeoisie when capitalism was on the ascendant. It means the violation of the fundamental rights of the German people and the German nation to self-determination, to unity, to sovereignty and to independence. These are the reactionary methods and means which imperialism and the Stalinist bureaucracy have used to prevent the German proletariat from carrying out its revolutionary tasks.

The division of Germany and, therefore, of the German working-class, is expressed in the completely artificial formation of the German Democratic Republic. This created the conditions for and continues to exist as a basis for the reconstruction of capitalist production relations and of the German bourgeois state on West German territory.

The process of the European Revolution is concentrated in Germany in the fusion of the social and political revolution in the united socialist revolution of the united German proletariat. The German proletariat is one, the German revolution is one, or it does not exist. This is the way in which the German proletariat alone takes responsibility for the aspirations of the German people for national re-unification, and the only guarantor of a new, unified Germany.

This is why the slogan of the un-conditional unity of Germany is at the centre of our struggle in Germany. This slogan is the slogan of the struggle of the European proletariat as a whole for the Socialist United States of Europe.

In fact, this struggle in the centre of divided Europe and in the key-position of the counter-revolutionary order established at Yalta and Potsdam, acquires special importance, because it concentrates the struggle of the whole of the European prolet-

ariat for the liberation of the peoples of Europe from the shackles of national frontiers and for them to be harmoniously and organically united in the framework of the Socialist United States of Europe. There is only one road which leads in that direction; it is the combination of the political revolution in the East with the social revolution in the West.

This is why, when the German proletariat resumes its place as a vanguard, it will crystallise the process of the European socialist revolution, of which it will be the driving-force.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Bureaucratic Workers' States

THESIS XXV: THE ORIGIN OF THE NEW BUREAUCRATIC WORKERS' STATES

The period following World War I gave birth to a phenomenon which Marxism had not foreseen - the degeneration of the first workers' state, the USSR. This impelled Trotsky to identify a new category, and to analyse the characteristics of the USSR as those of a degenerated, bureaucratic workers' state. He reached this conclusion by relying on Marxist theory and developing it. Similarly, we start, in the new period following World War II, in which we must and can explain and characterise the new bureaucratic workers' states, as well as the process of their origin, from the ideas which were already assembled in the Transitional Programme and especially in In Defence of Marxism in relation to Poland and Finland.

The theoretical difficulty lies in the fact that these new states appeared in the period of the very great revolutionary upsurge, whereas the bureaucratisation of the USSR resulted from the victories of the counter-revolution. In appearance, two opposite situations gave birth to identical phenomena. What has happened is that, in both cases, revolutionary conquests have been combined with expressions of counter-revolution. The first workers' state, a revolutionary conquest, degenerated following the victories of the counter-revolution between the two wars. The post-World-War-II states were produced by the revolutionary upsurge, but were asphyxiated at birth by the bureaucracy, an expression of counter-revolution. This is the origin of all the new, bureaucratic workers' states.

Trotsky analysed in The Revolution Betrayed the unprecedented historic process by way of which the counter-revolution in USSR had not led purely and simply to the destruction of the workers' state, but had led to a highly contradictory combination, in which the counter-revolutionary ^{domination} of the government by the bureaucracy is combined with the maintenance of the workers' state. We are dealing with a counter-revolution which has not reached the point of being a social counter-revolution, but only a political counter-revolution. It has not reached the point of destruction of the workers' state, but only that of its degeneration. It was a highly unstable combination of the counter-revolution with the maintenance of the social bases of the workers' state.

Today we have a combination of the revolutionary upsurge with the survival of the counter-revolutionary apparatuses, which have shown themselves to be much stronger than we expected. We expected that the first phase of the revolutionary upsurge would displace the counter-revolutionary apparatuses, and that there would be no expropriation of the bourgeoisie, and no workers' state, except by overcoming the crisis

of the leadership of the proletariat. The revolutionary upsurge, we thought, would destroy the apparatuses and would lead to power revolutionary parties which would expropriate the bourgeoisie. It did not work out like that. Just as during the period following World War I there was an advance of counter-revolution on the workers' state which did not change its character, there has been an advance of the revolution, against the wishes of the apparatuses, even though it has been unable to get rid of them.

The February Revolution was historically the prologue, the way in to the October Revolution. In other words, it is the October Revolution which explains the February Revolution. Rather as the Bolsheviks used to say in relation to the USSR and the counter-revolution: either the revolutionary workers' state continues, or the bourgeois counter-revolution wins.

Historically, taking the full course of history as a whole, the Bolsheviks were right, and are right. For our part, we say, on the subject of processes such as those of the February Revolution and the forward movement which it started: if the February Revolution does not transform itself into the October Revolution, the bourgeois counter-revolution is inevitable. That too is correct on the historic scale.

But the complexity of the passage from capitalism to socialism has produced hybrids, which are neither one nor the other pole of our epoch, neither the victorious revolution nor the complete imperialist counter-revolution.

In the USSR there has not been a social counter-revolution, but the pressure of the world bourgeoisie has resulted in the political expropriation of the masses by the bureaucracy, which forms the spear-head of world counter-revolution at the heart of the workers' state.

Similarly, the revolutionary mobilisations which followed World War II were not transformed into October Revolutions in any country, but in many countries the bourgeois counter-revolution did not triumph either; on the contrary, they succeeded in expropriating the bourgeoisie. The result was the same as in the USSR, a bureaucratic workers' state, but bureaucratic from its origin. The processes are distinct, though the result be the same. In the case of the USSR, it is a revolutionary workers' state, the degeneration of which was provoked by the counter-revolution. In the case of each of the bureaucratic workers' states which arose at the end of World War II, we are dealing with an obstructed revolution, a revolution deformed by the counter-revolutionary leaderships, an October Revolution strangled in the egg by these leaderships. In every abortion, the foetus already bears some of the features of the being which could have been born. This is the place which the expropriation of the bourgeoisie occupies in these aborted October Revolutions. The dates of the national festivals in these different countries give a remarkable confirmation of our definition. In the USSR, the national festival is always the anniversary of the insurrection of October 1917. In all the other, new bureaucratic workers' states, it is the date when they

came into existence, the date of their liberation, of their February Revolution. In China it is the date of the fall of Chiang Kai-Shek and in Yugoslavia it is the date of victory over the Nazi armed forces, as in all the countries of Eastern Europe. In Vietnam, North Korea and even Cuba, it is the date when these states came into existence and when they were liberated. Not one of them celebrates the day when capital was expropriated!

We should be surprised by these distinct processes which have resulted in identical phenomena. We see the same thing in the formation of workers' parties or mass trade unions. These mass organisations are always the direct or indirect products of a great mobilisation of the workers' movement, even though today they are bureaucratic, having reached that state through different processes. They can have become bureaucratic after having been revolutionary, as, for example, the Communist Parties or the Third International. Or, they can always have been bureaucratic, can never have reached the level of being revolutionary, being the products of an important upsurge and great victories, but victories won within the strait-jacket of the bureaucratic, petty bourgeois apparatuses, without being able to free themselves.

Three cases can be distinguished, three processes distinguished by their circumstances and by the nature of the counter-revolutionary leadership in each case, but fundamentally identical:

The first case is that of the countries of Eastern Europe, excluding Yugoslavia. There the leadership was in the hands of the Kremlin. It occupied these countries militarily in a situation of revolutionary mobilisation of the masses and collapse of the bourgeois states.

The second case is that of Yugoslavia, China and Vietnam. The leaderships were bureaucratic leaderships, reared in the bosom of the Stalinist apparatus. They were intimately linked with the Kremlin, but there was no occupation by the Red Army, nor direct control by the Kremlin, with which these leaderships were in the process of breaking.

The third case is that of Cuba, where there was a petty bourgeois nationalist leadership which was not of Stalinist origin.

All these leaderships were petty bourgeois. Despite their differences, they all had the same fundamental politics: to prevent an October Revolution, to try to maintain themselves within the limits of a democratic, national revolution, up to the point that they found themselves obliged to expropriate the bourgeoisie.

THESIS XXVI: THE BUREAUCRATIC WORKERS' STATES: THE CASE OF CUBA

The bureaucratic workers' state which have arisen in countries dominated by imperialism have been produced by an ^{exceptional,} national combination of world phenomena: the acute crisis of imperialism, the weakness of the foundations of the national bourgeoisie itself, the strength of the Stalinist apparatuses, a colossal revolutionary upsurge and the weakness of our International.

In the places where parties connected with Stalinism did not directly control the process, it was the counter-revolutionary policy of the bureaucracy, and not some necessary law of so-called "colonial revolutions", which really explains the role which the petty bourgeois, nationalist formations played.

In Cuba, for example, the guerilla war was combined with the mass movement. They were under the guidance of a petty bourgeois leadership of this kind. The result was that a workers' and peasants' government was established, then the bourgeoisie were expropriated and, then, a bureaucratic workers' state was constructed. The movement of the masses was militarily disciplined by its leadership. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie, in the absence of a revolutionary party, resulted in the formation of a workers' state, bureaucratic from its origin, without the petty bourgeois nature of the Movement of July 26 being changed, for all that, nor the nature of the Communist Party, nor that of the party which emerged from the bureaucratic fusion of these two organisations.

On the contrary, it was the guerilla movement which put its impression on this new workers' state, with the characteristics of its leadership. Because the revolution had petty bourgeois leadership, it took place without the masses being able to develop and to bring together centrally the revolutionary democratic organisations by means of which they could have sustained their mobilisation and established a dictatorship of the proletariat.

Cuba has not been exceptional. It was like all the new workers' states, placed under a petty bourgeois leadership. even though this was of a particular type. That the party of Castro was not a Stalinist party does not in any way affect the function which it performed in relation to the mass movement, controlling it militarily and politically and destroying every possibility for it to organise in an independent, democratic and centralised way. This is what made Cuba a bureaucratic workers' state from the beginning, in the same way as the workers' states which the Stalinist parties control. This does not mean that there are not incidental and specific differences between them.

These differences result from the fact that the Castro-ite movement was petty bourgeois, nationalist, anti-imperialist and democratic when it began. It therefore tended to support the Latin American nationalist and democratic movement, though by petty bourgeois methods, with the "focist", guerilla conception, taken to the point of separation from the masses.

The voluntarism of Che Guevara - in his economic policy - comes near to the voluntarism of Mao Tse-Tung and to the Stalinist voluntarism of the years of the "Third Period"

(1928 - 1934), i.e. typical petty bourgeois voluntarism. The political economy of Guevara was marked by his wish to escape from the control of the Stalinist bureaucracy and from its grip on Cuba.

His conception of the "new man" goes back to petty bourgeois humanism. It is based in a profound mistrust of the working class, of its struggles, of its initiatives and of its democratic organisation.

That the petty bourgeois, Castro-ite movement lead a workers' revolution, which expropriated the bourgeoisie, that it was not Stalinist in origin, could not in any way change its class nature. It is precisely this petty bourgeois class nature which explains how Stalinism could attract forces within this movement and could to a large extent assimilate the Castro-ite bureaucracy to that of the Kremlin, the latter enjoying in this way the benefit of the "revolutionary image" of Castro. These processes developed progressively from the beginning of the Cuban Revolution, and went through a series of crises, such as the arrest of the anti-Stalinist leaders of the trade union centre, the departure of Che Guevara, the Escalante "affair" and others.

Those who claim that the ^{Cuban} leadership is revolutionary - as well as those who recognise that today it is a bureaucratic leadership, but who claim that at certain moments it has been "revolutionary" - are incorrect both in method and in fact.

The Cuban leadership has always been a petty bourgeois leadership. It went directly from revolutionary nationalism to the exercise of power, while conserving its petty bourgeois nature and its suspicion of the independent activity of the masses.

It transmitted politically the objective effects of the imperialist blockade. The orientation of "Socialism in a Single Country" and its active participation in "peaceful co-existence" - expressed in the whole of its foreign policy and in its systematic support for "left" bourgeois regimes in a number of countries subject to imperialism - resulted in imprisoning the development of Cuba in a national strait-jacket. The result has been a chronic crisis of the Cuban economy, which has given rise to growing social tensions. Imperialism can take great advantage of these in its continual attacks on the conquests of the Cuban Revolution.

The narrowly national character of the development of Cuba has resulted in making Cuba ever more dependent on the economy of the USSR, which is controlled by the bureaucracy, and, in the last analysis, subordinating the Cuban economy still more severely to imperialism, which dominates the world market. Cuba, like the other bureaucratic workers' states, is becoming more and more subject to the world market and to world-wide division of labour. Therein lies the result of its orientation contrary to the permanent development of the world revolution.

At the same time, we can see that the USSR reconstructed after the destruction in World War I, despite the imperialist blockade, on the basis of the accumulation based on the means of production bequeathed by past capitalism. As soon as the Soviet economy was reconstructed, the question of its relations with world economy and the world

market became crucial.

After World War II the Stalinist bureaucracy achieved the reconstruction of the economy in conditions imposed by the imperialist blockade, which cut the USSR off, to a great extent, from the world market and international division of labour. From that time onwards, Soviet economy, under the management of the bureaucracy, has been subordinated more and more to the imperialist market, during the "boom" as well as in the period of open capitalist crisis. The bureaucracy accepts peaceful co-existence, which leads to difficulties piling up. In the workers' states, the politics of the bureaucracy have been and continue to be expressed in an orientation completely opposed to revolutionary politics. The politics of the bureaucracy condemn the economy, in the last analysis, to subject itself more and more to imperialism. At each stage of development, the bureaucracy has provoked crises and ever-sharper contradictions. Today it produces a situation of chronic crisis and re-doubled attacks on the workers.

This situation presents a dilemma. Either these economies are incorporated in the capitalist world market and capitalist production: this would mean that the bureaucracy was preparing an immense backward step, and that, on the basis of the destruction of the conquests of October, private property would be restored in the other countries where capitalism has been expropriated. Or, the underlying movement of the world revolution and the progress of the political revolution lead to the re-conquest of economic planning, under the control of the masses, with an orientation which conforms to the development of the international socialist revolution.

The bureaucratic politics of so-called "Socialism in a Single Country" lead to a chronic economic crisis in the workers' states, and to growing contradictions which increase the risk of imperialist counter-revolution. The politics of Lenin and Trotsky are totally opposed to that course. They are directed to extending the world socialist revolution, as the only guarantee of a socialist economy in the course of its development. Nothing but the extension of the revolution can resolve the problems of the economies of the workers' states and bring their development into balance by bringing it into line with the triumph of the world socialist revolution.

THESIS XXVII: THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT AND ITS BUREAUCRATIC DEGENERATION

There are currents which seek to revise Trotskyism by maintaining that, given the bureaucratic, counter-revolutionary character of the leading party in the USSR, in China or the other workers' states, the dictatorship of the proletariat does not exist there. In particular, this is the implicit meaning of the thesis which they have recently advanced, identifying the dictatorship of the proletariat with the effective existence of "socialist democracy".

This thesis is a break with the Marxist definition of the social nature of the states, a social nature which can express itself in the most varied political forms.

Under the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie exists, whether it be under a military government or under a Parliamentary form. The same is true for the workers' state, which, as Trotsky established when he analysed the USSR as a degenerate workers' state, retains its social character despite the political degeneration which the bureaucracy has forced it to undergo.

As long as the expropriation of the bourgeoisie continues, any workers' state, be it bureaucratic or not, is a dictatorship of the proletariat, from the social viewpoint. As an economic and social phenomenon, it is a proletarian dictatorship, even though it expresses itself in a deformed way through the bureaucracy and though the working class enjoys no kind of democracy.

The dictatorship of the proletariat, which was erected by the October Revolution, has degenerated. The degeneration of the workers' state is directly caused by the monstrous growth of the bureaucracy, a bourgeois organ in the workers' state. In this highly contradictory situation, the proletariat is at one and the same time socially the ruling class and politically and economically oppressed.

The relation between the bourgeoisie and the form of its bourgeois state evidently is of great importance at the level of the political struggle and of the relations between the classes. But it is not the same as the relation of the proletariat to its state form. The social relations of bourgeois production could not be endangered by the form of the bourgeois state. On the other hand, the social relations of production established by the proletarian revolution are in great danger from the degeneration of the workers' state. The bureaucracy lives parasitically on the conquests of October and defends them only by methods which undermine the working-class bases of the state and place them in mortal danger.

This shows clearly how the defence of the workers' state and the political revolution are two absolutely inseparable tasks. The politics of the Kremlin bureaucracy re-double the pressure of imperialist counter-revolution on the country, and give rise to a sharp contradiction between the counter-revolution and the mass movement. Because the governmental apparatus is dominated by the bureaucracy, it assumes the form of a counter-revolutionary, Bonapartist government with a totalitarian regime. This

government has the task of ensuring that the bureaucracy totally controls the workers' movement and the oppressed nationalities. It feels the bases of its own parasitic existence threatened by the counter-revolutionary pressure of imperialism, which it helps to transmit and to strengthen. It is a Bonapartist government because, like any other government of that kind, it attempts to arbitrate between intolerable contradictions. In the last analysis, this government is an arbiter between the workers' movement and imperialism. At the same time, it is a transmission-belt for imperialist pressure on the workers' state.

The existence and the strength of the Kremlin strongly influence the Bonapartist character of the governments of all the present workers' states, so much so that these governments, together with imperialism itself, ^{form} a parallelogram of counter-revolutionary forces, which puts at stake the destiny of the bureaucratic workers' state.

The Bonapartism of all the governments of the workers' state, without exception, including countries which, like China, are in conflict with the USSR, has its origin, not only in the contradiction between imperialism on the one side and the ^{native} working-class and oppressed nationality on the other, but also in another extremely sharp contradiction, an intolerable contradiction, which puts the Kremlin bureaucracy in opposition to the native working-class and to the oppressed nationality.

This whole political process, of course, has a social basis. Governments of this kind, like the Communist Parties which form them, reflect the privileged interests of the bureaucracy and of the workers' aristocracy. Their petty bourgeois character permits them to play a Bonapartist role, one of oscillation and of arbitration. These phenomena combine with the social character of the dictatorship to give birth to a degenerated workers' state and to bureaucratic, deformed workers' states, in which the social dictatorship of the proletariat is combined with the monstrous political dictatorship which the bureaucracy exercises over the proletariat.

All this has a definite relation to the character of the revolution in our epoch. There are two poles: workers' revolution or bourgeois, imperialist counter-revolution. Every contemporary phenomenon is permeated with this reality. There is no third variant: in every country in the world there are dictatorships of the bourgeoisie (in the most varied forms), or there are workers' dictatorships, even when the bureaucratisation of the workers' states has dragged them down into political degeneration.

In fact there cannot be a state or dictatorship that are socially petty bourgeois, for the reason that there cannot be a dominant economy based on petty bourgeois relations of production. This is the reason why the nature of the social relations of production define the dictatorship. But there is also a political definition, which is linked to the class struggle at the national and international level. If ^{were to} we say that there is no dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR in the form of a degenerated workers' state, or in any of the other bureaucratic workers' states, we would have to fall back on the claim that there are bourgeois dictatorships there. We declare firm-

ly that the bureaucracy is a petty bourgeois layer, an organ of imperialism, but within the workers' states. We cannot fall into the confusion which would result from denying the working-class character of the existing dictatorships in the bureaucratic states. There does not exist in the USSR a bourgeoisie such that there could be a bourgeois dictatorship. The dictatorship is exercised always, and in a thousand ways, by the class which is economically dominant. In the bureaucratic dictatorships, the class which dominates in the economic and social sense is the proletariat, even though it has been politically driven from power by the bureaucracy.

The politics of the bureaucracy betray the struggle of the proletariat and the revolution on the international scale and in each country. In this way the nationalist politics of Socialism in a Single Country contradict the progressive aim of defending the conquests of October, the working-class bases of the state, and strengthening them as part of the world socialist revolution. The bureaucracy disguises its defence of its counter-revolutionary interests as a privileged caste, by means of the "theory" of Socialism in its country, and by its practice of peaceful co-existence with imperialism, in which it utilises its national agencies, the apparatuses of the Communist Parties, to crush the revolutionary upsurge of the masses.

The bureaucracy places itself in increasing dependence on imperialism by this policy, and transmits the pressures of imperialism into the very heart of the workers' state which it has caused to degenerate.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, that of Lenin and Trotsky and of the October Revolution, is the opposite of this bureaucratic caricature. It ensures that political power is exercised, not by a Bonapartist, bureaucratic layer, but by the proletariat and by the masses as a whole. Its form is that of revolutionary democracy, the organs of which are the Soviets or any other form of revolutionary, democratic mass organisation. It is the expression of the working-class base and of the oppressed masses under the hegemony of the industrial proletariat. And, what is decisive, there stands at their head a revolutionary party, which has as its supreme object the development of the socialist revolution inside and outside its frontiers, a permanent mobilisation which ensures the conditions for the workers' state to wither away in the construction of the federation of workers' states, extending the revolution to the entire world.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Political Revolution

THESIS XXVIII: THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION

The Transitional Programme defines the content of the political revolution in these terms:

"The USSR embodies terrific contradictions. But it still remains a degenerated workers' state. Such is the social diagnosis. The political prognosis has a alternative character: either the bureaucracy, becoming ever more the organ of the world bourgeoisie in the workers' state, will overthrow the new forms of property and plunge the country back to capitalism; or the working class will crush the bureaucracy and open the way to socialism...

Although it is impermissible to deny in advance the possibility, in strictly defined instances, of a 'united front' with the Thermidorean section of the bureaucracy against open attack by capitalist counter-revolution, the chief political task in the USSR still remains the overthrow of this same Thermidorean bureaucracy. Each day added to its domination helps to rot the foundations of the socialist elements of economy and increases the chances for capitalist restoration. It is in precisely this direction that the Comintern moves as the agent and accomplice of the Stalinist clique in strangling the Spanish revolution and demoralising the international proletariat."

The preceding theses have analysed the conditions and the forms in which the bourgeoisie and imperialism have been expropriated and driven out in Eastern Europe in China, in Vietnam and in Cuba. The regimes which have been established in these countries are all bureaucratic regimes, in which the relations between the masses and the bureaucracy outline very precisely the tasks of the political revolution in the very words of the Transitional Programme. It is clear that these tasks are no longer confined to the USSR, but that today they concern one-third of humanity. The Fourth International alone can completely carry out these tasks as a fundamental, integrating part of the permanent proletarian revolution.

For this very reason, the political revolution is an integral part of the solution of the crisis of leadership of the proletariat in every country. To begin with, the USSR and Stalinism are the most powerful basis of support for the counter-revolutionary apparatuses in the mass movement. The overthrow by the working masses of the bureaucracy in the USSR will provoke a cataclysm in all the bureaucratic apparatuses in the mass movement throughout the world.

In order to overcome the crisis of leadership of the proletariat, it is, likewise, a concrete and major task for us to struggle against the national bureaucratic apparatuses which are not Stalinist or linked to Stalinism, such as Social-Democracy and the trade union bureaucracies in the Western countries.

Social-Democracy, like the various trade union bureaucracies on the national scale, are agencies of imperialism in the workers' movement - just as Stalinism is - and,

for that reasons, are irreconcilable enemies of Trotskyism.

For this reason, the task of breaking the strength of these counter-revolutionary apparatuses and wrenching the masses out of their control will be a struggle in many ways similar to that which we have to wage to finish off the bureaucracy in the USSR and in the rest of the bureaucratic workers' states. It will be necessary to use revolutionary methods in this struggle, because, among other reasons, these sectors also of the bureaucracy will resort to reactionary violence to defend their privileges.

These bureaucracies, like Stalinism, are agencies of imperialism, even though their field of action is more restricted. The Social-Democratic apparatuses do not rule entire countries, but only organisation of the workers' movement of a national kind, in particular trade unions. But Social-Democracy is no less an agency of imperialism than the bureaucracy of the USSR, on a lower level though it is. The struggle to destroy these counter-revolutionary apparatuses and to wrench the masses from their control will have more than one feature in common with that to bring down the Kremlin bureaucracy. In both cases, recourse to revolutionary methods will be necessary.

The political revolution is a real revolution. It is a desperate, life-and-death struggle between social categories whose interests are irreconcilable. The fact is that the bureaucracy, the social composition of which is petty bourgeois, fulfills the function of a transmission belt for the interests of the world bourgeoisie into the heart of the workers' states. The political revolution is the revolution of the proletarian base and of the whole of the working masses against the bureaucratic caste, that overgrown bourgeois organ of the workers' state, with its parasitic privileges.

It is a political revolution and not a social revolution, in the sense that the business of the working-class is to drive the bureaucracy out of the workers' state, not to establish a new mode of production, but ^{to} restore or to introduce the control of the producers over the state and over the relations of production which emerged directly or indirectly from the October Revolution and on which the bureaucracy is parasitic.

The bureaucracy raised very serious obstacles to the activity and free organisation of the working-class when it set up a totalitarian regime to maintain itself in power and to increase its privileges. The result is that the political revolution can pass through different phases.

The Transitional Programme has already pointed this out:

"A fresh upsurge of the revolution in the USSR will undoubtedly begin under the banner of the struggle against social inequality and political oppression. Down with the privileges of the bureaucracy! Down with Stakhanovism! Down with the Soviet aristocracy and its ranks and orders! Greater equality of wages for all forms of labour! The struggle for the freedom of the trade unions and the factory committees, for the right of assembly and freedom of the press, will unfold in the struggle for the regeneration and development of Soviet democracy."

In a first phase, the insurgent working masses move towards the formation of their own organs of power (revolutionary councils) in a more or less developed form, and in this way start to restore or to establish their control over their social conquests and produce a more or less developed situation of dual power as against the bureaucracy.

The Transitional Programme continues:

"It is necessary to return to the Soviets not only their free democratic form but also their class content. As once the bourgeoisie and the kulaks were not permitted to enter the Soviets, so now it is necessary to drive the bureaucracy and the new aristocracy out of the Soviets. In the Soviets there is room only for representatives of the workers, the rank and file collective farmers, peasants and Red Army men.

Democratisation of the Soviets is impossible without legalisation of Soviet parties. The workers and the peasants themselves by their own free vote will indicate what parties they recognise as Soviet parties....

Re-organisation of the collective farms in accordance with the will and in the interests of the workers there engaged!"

Experience up to the present confirms the programme. Taking the examples of Hungary or Czechoslovakia, we see that the political revolution begins as a movement of workers and the people to win democracy in general and brings the most varied sectors together.

The political revolution will first be a movement for democracy, which brings together every sector against the Bonapartist, totalitarian government of the bureaucracy. But the content even of the apparently formal demands for democracy is derived from the will which the working masses reveal to defend their social conquests by placing or replacing them under their own control.

At the same time, there may be petty bourgeois currents born of this situation and they may ask themselves whether it is the right thing or not to collaborate with imperialism in their desire to overthrow the totalitarian bureaucracy. Given the weakness of Trotskyism, it seems excluded that the political revolution can be carried out in a single phase. Like the social revolution, the political revolution needs a revolutionary party in order to be victorious. The experience of the advance towards the political revolution in Czechoslovakia shows that the working masses tried to take this road by trying to break the bureaucratic party (XIVth. Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia). On the basis of the struggle for democracy in general, we saw arising, and shall see arise, demands for the defence of the socialist conquests and of the organs of workers' power, the Soviets and factory committees. At this same time, all the possibilities may open before the revolutionary party of the Fourth International to build itself up on the slogans of the Transitional Programme,

appeared in the programme of the Workers' Council in Budapest in 1956 and which the Polish workers have raised in 1956, in 1970 and the the struggles in which they are engaged today against the bureaucracy.

It is clear that the first stage of the political revolution in Hungary and Czechoslovakia was characterised, and that in Poland today is characterised, by the upsurge, on the one hand, of councils and workers' committees by means of which the working masses specifically express their desire to defend the socialist conquests, by placing or replacing them under their control. On the other hand, there is no Trotskyist party of sufficient strength. For this particular reason, ideological and political confusion can partly conceal the revolutionary and proletarian implications of the struggle which has been entered.

From the very beginning of the revolutionary situation, the most important aspect of our activity must be to defend, to develop and to centralise the different beginnings of workers' power which thrust themselves forward. If the situation develops towards the formation of organs of workers' power, distinct from and opposed to those of the bureaucracy, our principal task is to extend, develop and permanently centralise this pole of workers' power in order to impose the victory of the political revolution. The experience of all these processes of political revolution, up to our time, shows the imperious necessity of developing these organs for combatting the bureaucracy on the national scale, to centralise armed defence against any counter-revolutionary intervention, whether by the bureaucracy, by imperialism or by agents of imperialism, and in order that the Trotskyist party can win a leading position and can lead the process of political revolution to final victory, that is, to its October Revolution.

The Trotskyists can never agree to rely on imperialism in the struggle to re-conquer democratic and working-class liberties; they stand on the ground of unconditional defence of the conquests of the working people. They denounce every boycott of the bureaucratic workers' states, because this orientation is equivalent to entrusting the defence of democracy to bourgeois governments. They combat all the petty bourgeois, restorationist currents which spread illusions about the virtues of free trade and the demagogic declarations of imperialism about the rights of man.

These illusions can only lead them to collaborate, either with the majority sectors of the bureaucracy in crisis, or with imperialism, or with both, which puts them in the position of having to defend policies which result in strengthening all the pressures and the threats of imperialism and which tend towards destroying the conquests of October and the restoration of capital. These petty bourgeois currents desperately oppose the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. They resort, from time to time, to what appear to be democratic arguments, according to which every enterprise is to be controlled by the workers of the enterprise and transformed into a co-operative or some other "self-managerial" form. In practice this could only lead in the direction of the return to the laws of the market, inside and outside the country,

in combination with the demands of bourgeois democracy, under cover of its "democratic" pretensions or even of worker-ist demagogy, which can serve only to disguise restorationism.

The new Red October, the victory of the political revolution of the masses, in defence of the socialist conquests and of placing or replacing them under the democratic control of the masses by way of the revival of the Soviets, will therefore have to fight the restorationist front which is supported by and linked to imperialism. The construction of sections of the Fourth International, to ensure the victory of the political revolution, is therefore an all the more urgent task.

THESIS XXIX: WARS BETWEEN WORKERS' STATES: OCCUPATIONS OF ONE WORKERS' STATE
BY ANOTHER

Among the most spectacular events of the last decades have been the invasions by one workers' state of another, of Hungary by the USSR in 1956/^{and} of Czechoslovakia in 1968. These invasions and occupations were the work of the Kremlin bureaucracy, which was terrified by the opening of the political revolution and by the appearance of the beginnings of councils, which the masses might be able to use to win back their social conquests and the workers' state in the USSR. These aggressions could take on a new dimension when the next dictatorship of the proletariat raises itself up.

In these conditions we cannot exclude that the bureaucracy may make desperate attempts, including armed force, to oppose the rise of revolutionary dictatorships which would herald its liquidation as a privileged caste.

If an intervention on the part of the bureaucracy is clearly directed against the beginning of a political revolution, or if a war breaks out between a bureaucratised workers' state and a revolutionary workers' state, the Trotskyists unconditionally support the revolutionary state, whether it started the war or not.

We do not need to be involved in the discussion as to the class character of the state in Cambodia. The invasion of Vietnam by China has revealed the new phenomenon of war between bureaucratic workers' states, none of which behaves as a revolutionary dictatorship. On the other hand, the possibility of war between the principal bureaucratic workers' states, China and the USSR, cannot be excluded.

Neither the objective basis of such wars nor what is at stake in them can be correctly explained if we restrict ourselves to superficially observing the relations between the bureaucracies as such. Such wars arise from the counter-revolutionary competition which the different bureaucracies undertake between each other. This competition arises from the reactionary position which the bureaucracies occupy in the struggle between the fundamental classes - the world proletariat and the world bourgeoisie - and in the relations into which they enter in this role with imperialism, within the framework of "peaceful co-existence".

As parasites on the state apparatus and the productive system of the national workers' states, the different bureaucracies foster a criminal chauvinist politics, which can in certain cases reach the point of direct military aggression.

We must begin from the international setting and from the nature of the states which are engaged in a struggle, if we are to make our principled position clear. In China and Vietnam imperialism has been driven out. Bureaucratic workers' states have been constructed and the working masses have been excluded from the control of their conquests. In China and Vietnam alike the bureaucracies struggle desperately against councils in any form, and use counter-revolutionary violence against them.

It is ^{Quite} clear that the Chinese leaders accept the counter-revolutionary politics of "peaceful co-existence". The Vietnamese leaders accept them no less. It is true that the Chinese bureaucracy, which is directly threatened by the Kremlin bureaucracy, is frantically looking for a direct alliance with US imperialism. The Kremlin bureaucracy, however, is no less actively in pursuit of a similar direct alliance with US imperialism. This is the substance of the counter-revolutionary politics by which the bureaucracies permit US imperialism to be the axis and the driving-force of "peaceful co-existence". The Vietnamese bureaucracy has placed itself in this way in the camp of the Kremlin bureaucracy.

The revolutionary proletariat and ourselves are not obliged to choose between the different variants of the counter-revolutionary policy of "peaceful co-existence", but instead to raise, in war as in peace, the slogans of the political revolution, for the overthrow of the power of the bureaucracies, because this is the only method which can ensure the defence of the socialist conquests.

Our concrete position in relation to each case of armed aggression will be determined according to the general principles which govern the advance of the political revolution and the world socialist revolution, at the same time as we campaign incessantly to denounce the counter-revolutionary bureaucracies, which are responsible for aggressions and for the possibilities of war between the different workers' states.

THESIS XXX: ON THE FEDERATION OF WORKERS' STATES

Bureaucratic rule confronts the workers' states with grave problems, which endanger their historic existence. As the rivalry grows between the different components of the bureaucracy, these states find their contradictions and their problems growing daily. Furthermore, they are experiencing a chronic economic crisis, which is the result of the counter-revolutionary politics on the world scale of the bureaucracy, which tend to subject again to US imperialism, the dominating force which controls the world market, the USSR and the other countries which escaped from its control. The same politics directly subject the bureaucratic states of Eastern Europe to the Kremlin, which imposes organised robbery on them.

The Transitional Programme wrote in 1938 the following lines about the USSR:

"State ownership of the means of production, a necessary prerequisite to socialist development, opened up the possibility of rapid growth of the productive forces. But the apparatus of the workers' state underwent a complete degeneration at the same time. It was transformed from a weapon of the working class into a weapon of bureaucratic violence against the working class and more and more a weapon for the sabotage of the country's economy."

These lines are still more true today. Still sharper contradictions are combined with the victories which have been won over imperialism and the bourgeoisie in a series of countries.

One of these concerns the national question. The October Revolution gave a promise (which it kept in the very difficult conditions of the civil war) to set free the nations which "Great Russian" imperialism oppressed. The bureaucratic, Stalinist degeneration of the workers' state has led the Kremlin bureaucracy to re-establish the national oppression of the Ukraine, of Georgia and of the other non-Russian republics. Before the war Trotsky posed the slogan of the independence of the Soviet Ukraine as one of the central tasks of the political revolution. In the present conditions, in which the countries in which imperialism and the bourgeoisie have been expropriated and driven out are subordinated to the Kremlin, the slogans of struggle against national oppression, combined with the general slogans of the political revolution, have become a lever of the first importance in mobilising the masses for the revolution (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and elsewhere). Just as the Kremlin bureaucracy oppresses the nationalities in the Soviet Union and in the countries directly in its control, so the local bureaucracies oppress the nationalities in the countries which they control. The Slovaks and the Hungarians are oppressed by the Prague bureaucracy. The Croats, the Montenegrins, the Albanians and the Bosnians are oppressed by the Yugoslav bureaucracy. The Chinese bureaucracy, likewise, oppresses a multitude of nationalities, and the Vietnamese bureaucracy does not hesitate to tread underfoot the most elementary rights of the peoples of Cambodia and of Laos.

The bureaucratic apparatuses of the bureaucratic workers' states, then, are at one and the same time instruments of bureaucratic violence against the working-class and instruments of violence against the nationalities. The formation of the East German state, which is the material form of the reactionary division of Germany, is perhaps the most striking manifestation of bureaucratic violence against nationalities. It opened a field of manoeuvre for imperialism which the latter exploits to the full.

All these facts have the result that that the workers' states (the greatest conquest of the world proletariat) are threatened by imperialism, which the bureaucracy feeds into them. Imperialism in crisis has, none the less, to act with extreme prudence, under the impact of the developments in the international revolutionary upsurge, in which the processes of the political revolution are an integral part (Afghanistan, the decision of German imperialism to make a loan of one-and-a-half billion marks to Poland, following the recent events, etc.)

The defence of the workers' states, which the politics of the bureaucracy weaken and endanger), continues to be one of the fundamental tasks of the Trotskyists. The Kremlin bureaucracy is the principal culprit for this degradation of the workers' states and their rivalry. It is the Kremlin bureaucracy which blocks any advance towards instituting division of labour between the countries where imperialism and the bourgeoisie have been expropriated, and which formally maintains "the independence of each national state", in order to erect a counter-revolutionary barricade in defence of its own privileges. This separation of the workers' states from each other is a source of enrichment for the Kremlin bureaucracy, because it utilises the capitalist world market to exploit economically the less developed workers' states.

The Soviet bureaucracy is also at the origin of the growing rivalry with China and has made the process easier whereby the Chinese bureaucracy, itself no less in crisis, turns towards the mortal enemy of the Chinese Revolution, US imperialism.

Considering all these contradictions which are due to the rule of the parasitic bureaucracies, considering the growing economic difficulties which result from the pressure of world imperialism, and considering the rivalries and wars between workers' states, a transitional slogan needs to be discussed, the slogan of the Democratic Federation of the Workers' States. Such a slogan implies, in the first place, advancing the slogan of the right of peoples and nations to self-determination, which means integrating and linking the struggle against national oppression with the slogans and demands of the political revolution. Only such slogans as this, which expresses the aspirations and the fundamental demands of the peoples of the USSR, of Eastern Europe, of China, etc., who are subjected to the national oppression of the bureaucracy, can give a living, transitional content to the legitimate national demands.

This slogan could lead towards the political unification of all the workers' states into one single bloc against imperialism and for the overthrow of the bureaucracy. It would open the perspective of free relations, without violence, becoming possible for the

economy of the workers' states as a whole, thanks to the unity and the democratically-controlled planning by the revolutionary committees and councils. Such a slogan would naturally be linked with the transitional slogans of the United Socialist States of Europe and the United Socialist States on the world scale, and form part of them, because it is directed against imperialism and the bureaucracy. It could not be separated from the struggle for new advanced of the world, permanent revolution and of the political revolution, without a relapse into the ^{deadly} illusions about "Socialism in a Single Country" or single group of countries.

Who will rule this federation of the existing workers' states? The masses of workers and peasants, organised in Soviets, will rule, by means of the widest internal democracy.

Ours is the only International which can fight for the federation of the workers' states and for the formation of new revolutionary workers' states, which will fight on this slogan of the Federation of the existing Workers' states within the framework of the struggle for the Socialist United States of Europe and of the world.

On the basis of working-class, revolutionary democracy - the only way to establish this federation - this slogan integrates and unifies the processes of the political revolution and of the world proletarian revolution, of which the political revolution is an integral part.

C H A P T E R S I X

The Construction of Trotskyist Parties with Mass Influence

THESIS XXXI: THE TIME HAS COME TO CONSTRUCT TROTSKYIST PARTIES WITH MASS
INFLUENCE, USING ALL THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH PRESENT THEMSELVES

Throughout this period of almost forty years, which has been marked by advances and retreats, and which is identified as the period of the advance of the world revolution, our parties and the International have not succeeded in transforming themselves into parties enjoying a mass influence. The objective and the subjective reasons for this fact have been fully analysed in the preceding theses, which deal with the role of the apparatuses and with the crisis of the Fourth International.

We have characterised the present period of the class struggle as the period of the imminence of the revolution and of the struggle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International. This struggle entered into a higher phase with the formation of the Parity Committee and then of the "Fourth International (International Committee). Immense possibilities are opening for strengthening the Trotskyist parties and for transforming them into parties which can win a mass audience.

However, if our organisations are to succeed in building themselves up with such an audience before the revolutionary crisis opens, it is imperative that they learn how to implant themselves in the heart of the working-class in each country, that is, in the industrial proletariat in the large enterprises and workers' concentrations.

This central aim cannot, however, anyway be achieved by marginal, "exemplary", propagandist activity, nor by moralising, voluntarist substitutes, such as what the Unified Secretariat claims as its "industrial turn". On the contrary, it implies undertaking a consistent policy of intervening in every field of the class struggle, without neglecting any opportunities or openings which strikes, demonstrations, electoral campaigns etc. may offer. It is this overall consistent intervention in every field of the class struggle, politically centralised round the general interests of the proletariat, which can bring together into one the struggle of all the layers of the proletariat and, in particular, that of the most exploited and oppressed sectors layers, which the bureaucratic apparatuses systematically ignore, because they draw their support from the workers' aristocracy.

Our parties direct all their attention to these layers of the proletariat. Immigrant migrant workers form an integral part of the proletariat in every country and can be an important proportion of the manual labour force. In USA, the black workers and other minorities, who form part of the North-American proletariat, raise in addition problems of national oppression, like the minorities in certain African countries, for example Indians.

The victorious struggle of the proletariat on the line of the Transitional^{Programme} will be able to satisfy their needs. In many countries they will be among the best fighters of the proletariat.

The Fourth International will transform itself into an International which possesses mass influence, to the extent that all its sections, without exception, intervene in the revolutionary processes which take place in their countries. A consistent attitude of non-participation in a revolutionary process on the pretext of disagreement with the political programme or the leadership of this process is a real betrayal of the Fourth International. Our parties must work within movements such as that of the guerilla war last year in Nicaragua, independently of the fact that it is led by an opportunist organisation, the FSLN. The same is true in El Salvador or in connection with the struggle of the Palestinian masses. The first duty of our parties is precisely to intervene, in order to struggle against the opportunists for the leadership of the revolutionary mass movement. Not to do so means abandoning these revolutionary masses in the clutches of the opportunist leaderships who practice class-collaboration.

No less important is work in the workers' organisations, whatever their leaderships may be. Every Trotskyist party must give priority to working in the trade union organisations in which the majority of the workers are organised, whatever may be the origin or the present structure of these organisations. We go where our class is, in order to develop our policies and to fight against the leaderships which control these organisations. This is a matter of principle. We work actively in the trade unions, whatever may be their characteristics or their origin. This is a cardinal principle of Trotskyist politics, as Trotsky's programmatic argument categorically shows, and it applies equally to fascist trade unions.

At the same time, there should be no confusion in our analysis between the trade unions which retain their character as workers' organisations, whatever tendencies may be at work towards integrating them into the state, and the fascist unions. Fundamentally we work to destroy these latter "unions". But Trotsky has explained the attitude which we must take in practice, as follows:

"We cannot select the arena and the conditions for our activity to suit our own likes and dislikes. It is infinitely more difficult to fight in a totalitarian or a semi-totalitarian state for influence over the working masses than in a democracy. The very same thing likewise applies to trade unions whose fate reflects the change in the destiny of capitalist states. But we cannot renounce the struggle for influence over workers in Germany merely because the totalitarian regime makes such work extremely difficult there. We cannot, in precisely the same way, renounce the struggle within the compulsory labour organisations constructed by Fascism. All the less so can we renounce internal systematic work in trade unions of totalitarian or semi-totalitarian type merely because they depend directly or indirectly on the workers' state, or because the bureaucracy deprives

the revolutionists of the possibility of working freely within these trade unions. It is necessary to conduct a struggle under all those concrete conditions which have been created by the preceding developments, including therein the mistakes of the working class and the crimes of its leaders. In the fascist and semi-fascist countries it is impossible or well-nigh impossible to carry on revolutionary work that is not underground, illegal, conspiratorial. It is necessary to adapt ourselves to the concrete conditions existing in the trade unions of every given country in order to mobilise the masses, not only against the bourgeoisie but also against the totalitarian regime within the trade unions themselves and against the leaders who enforce this regime. The primary slogan for this struggle is: COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF THE TRADE UNIONS IN RELATION TO THE CAPITALIST STATE. This means a struggle to turn the trade unions into organs of the broad exploited masses and not the organs of a labour aristocracy."

(From: "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay")

As Trotsky stated, we go into the organisations where the working-class is to be found, whether they be state-controlled or not, not in order to capitulate there before the politics of state control, but on the contrary in order to struggle for the independence of the trade union, workers' organisations from all control by the state or the bureaucracy. Of course, the form and the slogans of our work in the trade unions depends on the nature of these unions. In trade unions which are led by the counter-revolutionary apparatuses but which retain their character as workers' organisations, we intervene to struggle against the opportunist leaderships, whose politics of conciliation and class-collaboration expose the trade union organisations to the interference and the increasing control of the bourgeois state. In such cases, the tendency for the trade unions to be integrated into the state, (a general tendency in the imperialism epoch, which Trotsky analysed), has not reach the qualitative threshold at which it could have destroyed these organisations as working-class organisations.

That the apparatuses which dominate the workers' parties are agencies of the bourgeoisie which, in each country, subordinate the organisations of the working-class to the state, has not been able to change the bourgeois-worker character of these parties. The same is true for the reformist trade unions. The organic integration of the trade unions into the state implies that these unions are really destroyed as workers' organisations. There lies the significance of the establishment of the fascist unions in Germany in 1933. The set-back which the working-class inflicted on De Gaulle in 1969, when he failed to destroy the workers' trade unions for the benefit of corporatism, demonstrates the same thing in reverse. This is why our task in the reformist unions, which retain their working-class character despite the bourgeois apparatuses which control them, is precisely to resist the growing state control which these organisations undergo thanks to the politics of the apparatuses themselves.

It is well understood that the national peculiarities of the class struggle in different countries are most clearly concentrated in the trade union question.

For this reason it is imperative to apply the general principles of the struggle for the independence of the trade unions by taking into account the concrete reality in each country. Between working-class trade unions - controlled by bourgeois apparatuses and therefore subject to the growing tendency to integration into the state - and fascist unions - which are the expression of the destruction of the workers' organisations - there is a whole series of intermediary situations. We have to analyse each case concretely, on the basis of Marxist, class criteria. In Argentina, for example, the struggle for the independence of the trade unions passes today through the reconquest by the workers of the CGT, through breaking off state interference in all forms and through driving out the corrupt bureaucracy.

We have, therefore, to start from the concrete reality and to seize every opportunity. To regard working in the reformist trade unions as an imperative duty should not in any way lead to idealising their independence from the ^{bourgeois} state - which is entirely relative. Can we transform these organisations into revolutionary organisations, or must we create others? That is a completely futile discussion. The reply will be given by history. The worst thing would be to take advantage of this historic perspective to propose the creation of pure, revolutionary organisations, like the "red" trade unions. That would be an ultra-left policy, and the Fourth International condemned it in 1938:

"The Bolshevik-Leninist stands in the front-line trenches of all kinds of struggles, even when they involve only the most modest material interests or democratic rights of the working-class. He takes an active part in mass trade unions for the purpose of strengthening them and raising their spirit of militancy. He fights uncompromisingly against any attempt to subordinate the unions to the bourgeois state and bind the proletariat to 'compulsory arbitration' and every other form of police guardianship, not only fascist but also 'democratic'. Only on the basis of such work in the trade unions is successful struggle possible against the reformists, including those of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Sectarian attempts to build or preserve small 'revolutionary' unions, as a second edition of the party, signify in actuality the renouncing of the struggle for leadership in the working class. It is necessary to establish this firm rule: self-isolation of the capitulationist variety from the mass trade unions, which is tantamount to a betrayal of the revolution, is incompatible with membership in the Fourth International."

The necessity of working within fascist trade unions, of exploiting opportunities to reconstruct the bases of workers' trade unions outside them and all the other tactical contrivances are questions of appreciation of concrete situations. For example, the French Trotskyists during the Occupation created illegal unions, while at the same time they tactically utilised the corporatist unions. Again, there is the example of the policy which was applied under the rule of Franco.

Revisionism abandons the class definition of parties, and offers an ideological one. It regards parties as the incarnation of programmes, not as the expression of class interests. This is to provide a theoretical justification for its capitulation to

the petty bourgeois parties.

The political parties are organisations of classes or of different fractions of classes. Their position is defined by their relation to the struggle for state power. Without classes, there is no state; without a state there are no politics, and without politics, there are no political parties. However, political parties have in general their specific, separate history of political defence of the interests of certain class fractions.

It was the great bourgeois revolutions which were at the origin of the different political parties. The class struggle had to develop fully, reaching its culminating point in bourgeois society, in order to rise to expressing itself in the formation of political parties at the level of the super-structure.

Marxism starts by distinguishing clearly between bourgeois and workers' organisations, and analyses different kinds of workers' parties.

Lenin and Trotsky insisted that there are two clearly defined types of workers' parties: there are those dominated by the counter-revolutionary apparatuses, the Stalinists, the Social-Democrats, the petty bourgeois, etc., and those who stand in the tradition of Bolshevism, that is, the Trotskyist parties. We have already established thoroughly that the counter-revolutionary politics of the different apparatuses has determinate social bases. Furthermore, there is no such thing as "natural" Marxism, contrary to the beliefs of the revisionists, the present-day successors of Stalin and Bukharin. This is why the class character of our International and of our parties needs to be defined precisely.

Our International is the only existing International, and its parties are the only parties, to struggle for the permanent revolution. That means that they are alone in struggling for a programme of transition up to the socialist society, for a workers' revolution which establishes a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and which carries on the struggle to develop the international revolution. The other existing workers' parties (Social-Democrats, Pro-Moscow Stalinists, Mao-ists or Castro-ites) will, if they find themselves obliged by objective circumstances to take power, impose a bureaucratic, nationalist, reformist dictatorship, because their programme is and will remain the construction of "Socialism in a Single Country" and "Peaceful Co-existence". Our International is the only world party which fights for the international socialist revolution. Our parties are the only ones capable of leading the struggle for an October Revolution in every country. This is why our International alone defends not only the historic interests of the proletariat but the most immediate interests of the masses. As the Transitional Programme made clear:

"The Communist International has set out to follow the path of Social Democracy in an epoch of decaying capitalism; when, in general, there can be no discussion of systematic social reforms and the raising of the masses' living standards; when every serious demand of the proletariat, and even every serious demand of the petty bourge-

oisie inevitably reaches beyond the limits of capitalist property relations and of the bourgeois state.

The strategic task of the Fourth International lies not in reforming capitalism but in its overthrow. Its political aim is the conquest of power by the proletariat for the purpose of expropriating the bourgeoisie."

This general but necessary definition of workers' parties and of our International does not mean that we deny the existence of centrist, intermediary formations, which move from one pole to another. That happened, for example, with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which under Lenin and Trotsky was a revolutionary party, became a bureaucratic centrist party under Stalin, before it was completely liquidated and the bureaucracy went over to the side of the bourgeois order. The same happened with the party of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, a petty bourgeois, reformist formation, which could make an agreement with the Bolsheviks at the time of the October Revolution and later end up in the camp of the counter-revolution. In Germany we have the example of the centrist fraction of the Independent Socialist Party, which joined the Communist Party.

Our attitude towards these forces which oscillate between reform and revolution is determined by the direction in which they are evolving. Is their centrism leading them towards Trotskyism, or on the contrary towards opportunism, nationalism or reformism? This question has to be answered for us to define our attitude towards them, and all the more if we know that a rapid process is taking place, which we must detect if we are to act in time. If this centrist current is not clearly taking its course towards Trotskyism and towards common work with our International, it will be yet another variant in the spectrum of left-ism and ossified centrism of the petty bourgeois parties, which historically are dominated by the bourgeois counter-revolution.

THESIS XXXII: ENTRISM: UNITY WITH CENTRIST TENDENCIES

In order to win broad mass movements or larger groupings of the vanguard, the Trotskyist movement has been led, in the post-war period, to use the method of entrism, which Trotsky recommended in the 1930's in relation to the Socialist Parties and which - apart from the British Labour Party - would be intended to be a short-term tactic.

In recent years a number of Trotskyist organisations, associated with the Organising Committee for the Re-construction of the Fourth International or with the Bolshevik Fraction, have operated entrism work or work of a fractional kind in the Socialist Parties when these parties were on the road, in various countries, to becoming mass parties. There was permanent or semi-permanent entrism in the British Labour Party following World War II.

All these experiences need to be summarised in order that the lessons of them may be drawn for the future. This is all the more necessary because Pablo-ite revisionism at one time defended the idea of "entrism sui generis" ("entrism of a special kind") into the Communist Parties, which was completely alien to the Trotskyist policy of entrism, because it was intended to accompany what was presented as the development of the bureaucracy into revolutionaries. The leadership of the Unified Secretariat claims from time to time that the balance-sheet of "entrism sui generis" showed a profit. Today revisionism sometimes tries to present its capitulation before the FSLN and the Castro-ite leadership as a variant of the Trotskyist policy.

The Trotskyists are in principle for an independent organisation, in order to carry on successfully a frontal struggle against the opportunist organisations within the workers' movement and among the masses. Our historic task consists of confronting opportunist politics within the mass movement and counter-posing our politics to opportunist politics. The entrism which Trotsky recommended did not infringe this principle. It was a tactical manoeuvre, to meet particular circumstances, which started from an appreciation of an objective situation and of the exceptional possibilities which it opened up to us. More precisely, Trotsky established that there was a left-ward movement of new layers on the masses joining the Social-Democratic parties and giving rise to strong left tendencies there, or at any rate tendencies stronger than we were, because we were small propaganda groups. He drew the conclusion that it was necessary to enter these parties and quickly win these left-ward moving currents for the Fourth International, on the positions of Trotskyism, so that they broke with their leaderships. He started from the proposition that any progressive, centrist tendency or organisation which does not quickly come closer to the Fourth International tends to become fixed as a centrist tendency or organisation which cannot thereafter be won for the Fourth International, or which will change the direction of its evolution by transforming itself into an ultra-left or a right-wing current. For this reason, Trotsky regarded entrism as a manoeuvre, to be undertaken in particular circumstances, in order to win hundreds or thousands of

militants to the Fourth International and to win the young workers and students who were joining the Socialist Party and who were taking more and more left positions, in order to make the revolution.

Therefore the entrism which Trotsky recommended was related to political and social reality, that is, to the appearance of very progressive centrist currents within the mass organisations. Entrism was a tactic among other tactics. The method with which Trotsky approached the problem of entrism and of the relationship to progressive centrist currents remains correct today and becomes even more important. We cannot construct ^{mass} Trotskyist parties in a straight-line way, by gradually accumulating members and slow, systematic growth. The process, rather, is convulsive, made up of unifications and splits, on the international scale as well as in each country. It will be impossible to build Trotskyist parties with mass influence on a few years, if large movements towards the Trotskyist positions or those near them do not appear when the counter-revolutionary apparatuses are in crisis and the revolutionary upsurge comes.

To put it in a practical way, Trotskyism must, therefore, have a flexible, adroit, sensitive policy, which must be aware of every current which emerges from the traditional parties, or even from the trade union movement, and which is developing towards revolutionary positions. Our open policy must start from some fundamental points in our revolutionary programme, points which can form a basis for common work and point the way to a common organisation.

For this purpose, the Trotskyists must know how to put forward revolutionary positions - not our whole programme, but its fundamental points - which enable revolutionary action to be co-ordinated with these mass currents which appear, and them to be drawn into a common front or a common party, in the process of which it will be possible to win them fully to the positions of Trotskyism, in order to build our party.

Nothing but a tenacious policy towards tendencies moving in our direction can avoid the very great danger of their crystallising into centrist tendencies. When such mass tendencies appear - they will appear, and will be a decisive factor in transforming our party into a mass party - the great task is to know how to attract them more and more quickly towards a common organisation, a common revolutionary party, precisely to avoid their reaching the point of structuring their own organisations and leaderships, which makes their later integration into our politics and our programme much more difficult.

Entrism forms part of this policy towards every centrist tendency or organisation which develops towards revolutionary positions and comes out of mass parties or organisations.

Within this general framework, fraction work, which cannot be considered without the support and control of a solid political leadership, must be carried on for a whole series of purposes, particularly that it is preparing the conditions for the later split of whole currents from the apparatuses. In any case, whatever tactics we use,

the existence of an independent political expression of the positions of the Fourth International is an expression of principle. Furthermore, entrism and fractional work call for tested political cadres. We are talking about a tactical manoeuvre, the duration, size and conditions of which must be most clearly appreciated, in the light of the opportunities which exist and the requirements of the construction of the Fourth International. The responsibility of the leadership in this connection is all the greater because it has to avoid any adaptation to this kind of work by a cadre. It has to take account of the enormous pressures to adaptation in an opportunist milieu, a political milieu which is not ours and which also is not that of the mass movement as a whole; it is adaptation to a sector of the mass movement controlled by the bureaucratic, reformist apparatuses. This is the reason why entrism must always remain a tactical manoeuvre and always be subject to the requirements of the construction of independent Trotskyist parties.

THESIS XXXIII: PROPAGANDA, AGITATION AND ACTIVITY

Plekhanov defined clearly the difference and the relationship between propaganda and agitation. Propaganda is explaining many ideas to a few people; Agitation is explaining a few ideas to many people.

While propaganda is carried out by means of articles, discussions, conferences, courses, books and general slogans, agitation is carried out by means of slogans. This does not mean that we do not explain and support these slogans by articles and even by pamphlets or discussions. But we formulate in practical terms the particular ideas which we want to express in agitation, by means of slogans which will lead to mobilisation and to activity, by means of slogans which, in a phrase, are expressed in working-class and popular language and make quite clear the idea which we want to express. Since our aim is to mobilise the masses, the most difficult aspect of Marxism lies in formulating these slogans, because formulating them has to take account of the existing relation of forces between the classes. It is a science and an art. We have to use language which the masses can understand, when we are trying to mobilise the working-class when we are going in step with its own movement and opening a revolutionary perspective to it. The counter-revolutionary apparatuses do the same. They too formulate slogans, but their slogans have the opposite purpose from ours; they are to try to dis-orient and to demobilise the masses. Immediately after the end of World War II, the Communist Party of France issued the notorious slogan: "Production First". This was intended to put the brake on the strike wave and the process of revolutionary mobilisation of the French proletariat. In the same way, Peron issued his notorious phrase: "Let go the reins until we see more clearly where we are", by which he meant "Wait and See", in order to hold back the mobilisation of the Argentine workers, when he fell victim to a military coup d'etat in 1955.

There are two kinds of slogans. Some aim at educating and mobilising the workers' movement, even though there are no immediate possibilities for the proposed purpose to be achieved. Such slogans nevertheless retain an agitational character. For example, the slogan for Soares and Alvaro Cunhal to take the power in Portugal, that is, for a "Government of Soares and Cunhal", was an indispensable slogan of decisive importance, at the time when the treachery of these parties was opposing the effective unity of the two and the formation of a Soares-Cunhal Government.

It was all the more important to express consciously the aspiration of the masses for unity, for the independence of their organisations and for driving the bourgeois forces out of power, opening the way to the political centralisation of the movement in which the masses themselves were engaged in the struggle for power. This agitational slogan contributed to mobilising the masses on this perspective and to helping them to defend and to develop the beginnings of their organs of power and to free them from the treacherous leaderships which still retained their confidence. It was

an agitational slogan which had in practice the "enormous educational value" which the Transitional Programme ascribes to it, when it was associated with the whole body of slogans.

Other slogans aim at immediate activity or enable the conditions for immediate activity to be created, for example, when we call for a strike for which the workers are preparing and when there is string pressure from them to start the strike, or for some other mobilisation of this kind. These are slogans for direct action. Every slogan must respond to the existing situation of the movement of the workers and of the masses, because it is a fusion of the immediate needs of the masses and of their level of consciousness. Whatever may be its initial aim, every slogan must be issued by us as a transitional slogan, which unalterably leads the masses, starting from their immediate concerns, to one single conclusion: confrontation with the government, the necessity for the struggle for power.

Therefore, when we are seeking a mobilising slogan, we need ~~not only to express~~ the immediate needs of the mass movement but also to start from their level of consciousness, in order to formulate this slogan. We must aim for this slogan to be a fusion of the immediate needs and of the immediate consciousness of the mass movement, with the aim of mobilising and politically orienting this movement.

This is the way in which Trotsky, when dealing with unemployment, an immediate problem, in USA, took account of the illusions, the immediate consciousness, which the workers retained in the bourgeois politician, Roosevelt, in the absence of an independent workers' party:

"... we ask that Mr. Roosevelt with his brain trust propose such a programme of public works that everyone capable of working can work at decent wages. This is possible with a sliding scale of wages and hours..." (From "Discussions with Trotsky on the Transitional Program", in "The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution", publ. Pathfinder Press, New York, 1974, page 128, dated May 19, 1938)

This action slogan, this policy, "opportunist" as it may seem, is quite Trotskyist, quite correct, from our point of view. It is the best formula for mobilising the working people, for building the bridge towards mobilisation, for the unity of the mobilisation and for going over to action.

In the same sense, Trotsky proposed the following slogan for Germany in 1933:

"Under what political slogans will this struggle take place? The dictatorship of Hitler grew directly out of the Weimar Constitution. The representatives of the petty bourgeoisie have, with their own hands, presented Hitler with the mandate for a dictatorship. If we should assume a very favorable and quick development of the fascist crisis, then the demand for the convocation of the Reichstag, with the inclusion of all the banished deputies, may, at a certain moment, unite the workers with the widest strata of the petty bourgeoisie. If the crisis should

break out later and the memory of the Reichstag should have had time to obliterate itself, the slogan of new elections may acquire great popularity." (From "Writings of Leon Trotsky (1932 - 33)", publ. Pathfinder Press, New York 1972, pages 299 - 300, dated July 14, 1933)

Here is a very good example of the struggle of Trotskyism against all forms of ultra-leftism; it shows that Trotskyism is scientific politics directed to one single concern, to mobilise the masses, starting from their present level of consciousness, whatever it may be, and from their present needs, with the one single purpose of preparing the taking of power.

These considerations are fundamental if we are to transform our parties into parties with mass influence. After the death of Trotsky and because the counter-revolutionary apparatuses retained their audience, we have had a tendency to restrict ourselves to propagandist activity and to abandon the science and art which are most important for a revolutionary party, which is that of formulating the slogans which are appropriate to each moment of the class struggle. It is urgent that we return to this art and science. We must return to the formulation of slogans appropriate to the objective and subjective conditions of the class struggle. We must get away from the worship of slogans of a general kind, propagandist slogans, timeless slogans.

The most difficult thing for a Marxist is precisely to have the speed of response necessary to change slogans as the state of the class struggle also changes. When the class struggle goes through an impetuous development, an authentic Trotskyist party in a revolutionary period combines and changes its slogans in relation to the changes in the class struggle.

The complexity of the class struggle, the needs of different sectors of the mass movement and of its allies, the changes in the situation, mean that Trotskyist politics are always concretely expressed by means of a system of slogans which acquires its revolutionary content according to ^{method of the} the/ transitional Programme. This means that a number of slogans are advanced. Some among them are dominant and determinant, but together they must make up a clear, agitational combination, which conforms to the changes in the situation.

For example, the Bolshevik Party advanced the slogans: Constituent Assembly! All Power to the Soviets! Out with the Bourgeois Ministers! Down with Kornilov! In the course of the months in which these slogans were advanced, each of them had an importance which differed according to the immediate circumstances, but its importance was always in relation to all the others and to the central axis (which was not always formulated in an agitational way): All Power to the Soviets! This outstanding example must be assimilated by every Trotskyist party. If our organisations do not turn towards the masses and towards activity, they will be nothing but propagandist sects and will never transform themselves into mass parties.

THESIS XXXIV: PRINCIPLES, STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Just as decisive for the construction of the party is a good understanding of the relationship between principles, strategy and tactics and their links with slogans. We have a series of principles, which are at the very foundations of our movement, such as our opposition to class collaboration and Popular Fronts, our struggle for the political independence of the working class, for socialist revolution, for the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, for the right of nations to self-determination, and our unconditional defence of the USSR. These principles - which are embodied in each of our activities, in each of our slogans in each of a propaganda statements and in each of our speeches - must not be confused with strategy and tactics.

Our strategy is what organises all our activity round a single axis, pushing forward a permanent mobilisation of the working class and its allies up to and including an October Socialist Revolution, and, inseparably, strengthening and developing our party so that it will lead this revolution, by transforming it into a party with mass influence. In relation to this strategic objective, our activity is organised concretely, by the use of tactics, that is, by using simple means, of greater or less importance, over periods of time which may be short or long, but which are simply the means which serve our strategy. One must never confuse tactics with strategy, or, to put it another way, the means with the final object. Revisionism in the Fourth International has a ^{tendency} to transform the means into an end in itself. For example, entrism, which is a tactical means to be used in special circumstances and exceptionally, has been transformed, through "entrism sui generis", into a whole strategy, for a period of eighteen years. Similarly, revisionism could elevate guerilla warfare into a "strategy of armed struggle", which acted as a cover for its abandonment of Leninism.

Like our slogans, our means are changed systematically. In a pre-election period, we have different means and tactics from those in a period when there are no elections. In a period in which a General Strike is possible, we employ means different from those in a period in which only partial strikes in individual sectors of industry or individual factories. If the allies of the working-class are in struggle, our means or, rather, our tactics, change. No revolutionary party can tie its hands by claiming that its permanent activity, its strategy, lies in this or that aspect of the whole strategy, whether it be the General Strike, partial strikes, factory occupations, workers' control, running candidates in elections, entrism or any other tactic.

Tactics change, just as slogans change. Means and slogans have to be adapted to the specific moment and to every change in the situation. This does not mean that a tactic does not have means which are subordinated to it. In that sense, we can, for example, speak at a given moment of an "electoral strategy" and of tactics, by which we mean the means which we use to serve this "electoral strategy". But, for the whole of the epoch in which we live, there is only one strategy. The rest is all just means and tactics, means and tactics which we use and then leave behind for ever,

as the state of the class struggle changes.

It is very serious to confuse principles, strategy or propaganda with tactics and slogans. On principle, we are for the overthrow of all bourgeois-democratic institutions, and all the more so in this period in which these institutions are being transformed into dictatorial, semi-Bonapartist or Bonapartist regimes. This strategic perspective of trying to destroy the organs of domination of the bourgeois state leaves open the question how we must act to orient the mobilisation of the masses in this direction, taking account of every objective situation and of the illusions of the masses. Without in any way defending bourgeois democracy, we may very well utilise democratic demands, when such demands mobilise the masses and turn them against the government and the institutions of Bonapartism and bring them into conflict with the politics of their treacherous leaders, who, while they claim to defend parliamentary democracy, in reality lend support to prolonging the institutions which negate parliamentary democracy, by their policy of defending the status quo. One example of this revolutionary utilisation of democratic slogans may be found in the attitude of the Trotskyists in the present political crisis in France.

We therefore take fully into account the level of consciousness of the masses, in order to decide what tactics and slogans are best adapted to mobilising them. To ignore this level of consciousness leads to confusing principles and strategy with tactics and slogans. Confining ourselves to principles, and, therefore, to propaganda represents as serious a mistake as the opposite mistake, committed by revisionism, which constantly tends to elevate tactics into strategy, because it constantly is searching for substitutes for the long and difficult task of constructing Leninist parties according to the method of the Transitional Programme.

Principles and tactics are distinct, but they are inseparably linked. Every tactic must respect principles. Every principle must be capable of being expressed by tactical means. But each of these categories has its own province. The province of tactics is like that of slogans; it is the province of what is immediate and not of what is historic; it is the province of the immediate needs and immediate consciousness of the mass movement. If the means are not appropriate to these conditions, they cease to be means, and are converted into futile, ritualistic repetition of abstract principles.

Leon Trotsky describes, in a few lines in "What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat", the whole set of historical relations which are at the basis of the workers' united front:

"The proletariat moved towards revolutionary consciousness, not by passing grades in school, but by passing through the class struggle, which abhors interruptions. To fight, the proletariat must have unity in its ranks. This holds true for partial economic conflicts, within the walls of a single factory, as well as for such 'national' political battles as the one to repel fascism. Consequently, the tactic of the united front is not something accidental and artificial - a cunning manoeuvre - not at all; it originates, entirely and wholly, in the objective conditions governing the development of the proletariat. The words in the Communist Manifesto which state that the Communists are not to be opposed to the proletariat, that they have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole, carry with them the meaning that the struggle of the party to win over the majority of the class must in no instance come into opposition with the need of the workers to keep unity within their fighting ranks." (From "The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany", by Leon Trotsky, publ. by Pathfinder Press, New York, 1971, page 164)

The united front is only a tactic. Nothing prevents the united front from being regarded as only a tactic, even though Trotsky characterised it as not being "something accidental and artificial", and even though it can be understood to be one element in the strategy of the struggle of the revolutionary party to guide the masses to the conquest of power. So, is the united front a tactic or a strategy? This is a secondary problem. The essential thing is to understand that it is not "something accidental and artificial".

The need for the united front makes the widest impression on the minds of the masses when they are under attack from the bourgeoisie. The working-class reacts sharply to the attack of which it is the target, and wants to give a united reply to it, whether it be an attack on its standard of life or its working conditions or the threat of a Bonapartist or a fascist coup d'etat. None the less, it would be a mistake to regard the united front tactic as being always a defensive tactic. After the united struggle of the masses and their organisations had swept away the coup d'etat of Kornilov, Lenin had no hesitation in advancing a proposal which amounted to calling for the united front to be extended. He invited the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries to break with the bourgeoisie and to form together, Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, a workers' and peasants' government (transition towards the dictatorship of the proletariat), in other words, proposing to the petty bourgeois leaders the formation of a "united front government".

In this way the tactic of the united front, which had been brought into existence in

s defensive situation, in order to block and to defeat the offensive of the bourgeoisie, was continued in a situation in which the bourgeoisie was itself on the defensive, after having suffered a defeat, and the masses were in the full flood of attack.

Similarly, the Trotskyists advanced the slogan "For a Blum-Cachin Government", as a governmental slogan, at the time of the General Strike in France in June 1936, which Trotsky regarded as "the beginning of the revolution". They called for a government of the Socialist Party and the French Communist Party (PS - PCF) without representatives of the bourgeois parties, a "United Front Government" counter-posed to the class-collaborationist Popular Front Government, one of the two "last political resources of imperialism against the proletarian revolution", the other being fascism.

Marxism has nothing in common with schematic reasoning. Marxism teaches us to distinguish carefully between "defensive" and "offensive" situations (in order to arrive in practice at slogans and tactics appropriate to them). Marxism is a guide for ^{fighting in} the class-struggle, in which a defensive situation can be transformed into an offensive situation, and vice versa. What gives to the united front that content of a tactic that is not "accidental and artificial" is precisely this fact, that the united front as a defensive tactic can be, and must be used as an offensive tactic. In a pre-revolutionary situation, the united front as a "defensive" tactic, is far from losing its relevance. It takes on its higher form when the masses by their own movement open up a revolutionary situation and create the Soviets (February Revolution). Trotsky wrote about the Soviets in "What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat", in these terms:

"Verbal genuflections before the soviets are as fashionable in 'left' circles as is the misconception of their historical function. Most often the soviets are defined as the organs of struggle for power, as the organs of insurrection, and finally, as the organs of dictatorship. Formally these definitions are correct. But they do not at all exhaust the historical function of the soviets. First of all they do not explain why, in the struggle for power, precisely the soviets are necessary. The answer to this question is: just as the trade union is the rudimentary form of the united front in the economic struggle, so the soviet is the highest form of the united front under the conditions in which the proletariat enters the epoch of fighting for power.

The soviet in itself possesses no miraculous powers. It is the class representation of the proletariat, with all of the latter's strong and weak points. But precisely and only because of this does the soviet afford to the workers of diverse political trends the organisational opportunity to unite their efforts in the revolutionary struggle for power." (From "What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat", in "The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany", pages 193 - 194)

With this method, which consists of bringing about the total unity of the working class for defensive action, we seek two objects. If the other workers' parties accept the united front, the working-class receives a powerful impulse, which places it on the road to further **offensive** actions. If the workers' leaderships reject the united front, we are able to un-mask them before the mass movement. This is the traditional method of the united front which the Third International worked out. However, experience has shown that, like many tactical categories, the united front is richer than the way in which the Third International formulated it.

For instance, de facto united fronts of the working-class have been formed by the organisations at the base, whether the parties liked it or not, such as factory committees, soviets and trade unions. Our International must always have the policy of setting up and developing such instruments, which may have a revolutionary as well as a defensive character, according to circumstances. Always without dissolving ourselves in them.

We do not have permanent tactics or slogans here, any more than anywhere else. At a given moment, we fight for the trade unions to be strengthened, or for their transformation into revolutionary trade unions, or we found revolutionary mass trade unions. At other times, it will be factory committees, and at others again it can be soviets or defence guards. We do not give up the battle to force the workers' parties to support these united front organisations to carry the work of the mass movement forward, we do not leave the work of forming these united front organisations to them, and we ourselves appeal to the mass movement itself to form these united front organisations.

THESIS XXXVI: THE CHARACTER OF OUR PARTIES AND OF OUR INTERNATIONAL

All our parties and the International as a whole proudly defend as examples the structures of the Bolshevik Party. This indicates that we believe that our Party must be made up of professional revolutionaries, on the one hand, and must have a democratically centralised regime on the other.

The relation between the full-timers, the general party membership and the finances has been one of the most serious problems to confront every Trotskyist party or group. It is not sufficient to declare simply that our parties must work towards transforming all the cadres into professional militants, and that while this is being done our groups and parties must have an apparatus of full-timers. This is too general. The experience of the oldest and most solid among the parties which have claimed to be Trotskyist, such as the Socialist Workers' Party of USA, the Organisation Communiste Internationaliste of France or the P.S.T. ("Socialist Workers' Party) of Argentina, enable us to draw conclusions which are helpful to younger organisations.

Two deviations have existed within the movement which claims to be Trotskyist. One was opposed to full-timers and professional revolutionaries; the other mis-uses its full-timers without taking account of finances and the general membership of our organisations. The former deviation was a characteristic of the European organisations of the Unified Secretariat during the 1960's and at the beginning of the 1970's; it gives a dilettante character to the leaders and their apparatuses. The latter existed in most of the organisations which did not share the conceptions of the Unified Secretariat and which defended formally the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky. The proliferation of full-timers led to these comrades becoming de-classed. It uprooted the organisation from the social point of view. The majority of these comrades, who were the most capable, had no fixed place in society. This deviation deprived the leaderships of these groups of proletarian solidity. Among all the old organisations, the O.C.I. managed best to resolve these contradictions. All our organisations must assimilate its experience if they are to achieve a balanced development. The proportion between the number of members and the number of full-timers needs to be fixed for each organisation in a proportion of one full-timer for every 100 - 300 members. Below this figure, there should not be any full-timers. There is an important point to be added: the healthiest tendency is the one which takes the number of 300 per full-timer and not 100.

Another problem of enormous importance is posed by this problem of the proportion of general membership to full-timers: it is the problem of finance. Every group of the Fourth International (International Committee) must learn from the OCI on this subject also. It is fundamental to have healthy finances, and to make all sorts of sacrifices to do so. The comrade who does not pay his dues is automatically struck out of the party. There can be no question of our deceiving ourselves by counting .

as members uncertain elements who do not pay their dues. On the level of organisation, every party activity must pay for itself, apart from exceptional cases. If the journal of a group or party of the "Fourth International (International Committee)" is not self-financing, its technical quality must be reduced until it reaches the size, frequency of publication and technical form which enable it to keep out of the red. One important consideration in judging the leadership of an organisation affiliated to the Fourth International (International Committee) is its ability to keep its accounting healthy, with all its activities paying for themselves and making a profit. The same thing applies to leaflets and public meetings. We should try to see how these activities too can pay for themselves. There is one single object behind all these measures - every member paying their dues, few full-timers and all activities being self-financing - it is to prevent the organisations becoming unstable, living from hand to mouth, without being able to plan their activities because the leadership is hung up with the solution of financial problems due to debt and the lack of balanced budgets. At the same time, it enables the party full-timers to be paid the average wage and ^{never} the lowest. This is because our party professionals are subjected to social and political demands which a low-paid worker does not experience, because they have to buy publications and have meetings away from home. Full-timers become "lumpenised" when they do not live a stable life, when they have to survive on wretched wages and sometimes, as happens in many parties, they do not get their pay. This means that every party which cannot pay its full-timers above the average wage should cut down their number so that it can pay them. All the full-timers must be paid the same, whatever their function may be.

These Theses have explained that we may well be facing, for the first time, the possibility that the Trotskyist parties may win mass influence.

Yet we cannot construct such parties if we do not enter forthwith into the activity of the masses and take advantage of the opportunities which the class struggle offers to us. This is the first condition, though it is not the only one, because it is intimately bound up with the internal problem of the type of party which we are constructing. We need to be conscious that the process of constructing a party is not a quick one. But we are not dealing with a process of evolution.

On the contrary, the growth of the party takes place in leaps, which are closely linked to the benefit which the party is able to draw by acting with the greatest daring in the face of all the opportunities which we are offered.

To put these points together, the first characteristic of our parties is that their development takes place as a result of intervention in the class struggle. This is what we construct them for. A Trotskyist party does not deserve the name if it retains the characteristics of a mere tendency, a propaganda group or a vague movement.

As to the structures of our parties, we claim as examples those of Bolshevism.

These can be summed up in three fundamental points:

1. The party has absolutely the character of an organised whole. The need to act in the class struggle and to organise the class to confront the imperialist bourgeoisie demands that the parties have absolutely the character of an organised whole. We defend what Lenin and Trotsky said in the First Four Congresses of the Communist International, that party members are all those who take part in a party branch, pay their dues, sell the party press and defend the line of the party in the line of activity. Party members are those who belong to a party branch, and, within this framework, carry out their duties, exercise their rights and submit to party discipline. We recall here the discussion which Lenin had with Martov in One Step Forward, Two Steps Back, where the characteristics of a party member are exactly presented. Martov argued that party members are those who agree with the political line of the party. Lenin insisted that what characterises a party member is his belonging to a party organism. We insist that the term used must be "organism" and not "institution". The term "institution", we believe, can lead to confusion, by creating the impression that a party member can belong to an "institution" (which, from our viewpoint, could consist of provisional organisms such as a secretariat or a special commission), without belonging to a permanent organism of the party structure, such as a branch, a regional committee or the Central Committee. Naturally these organisms stand in a hierarchy, and this is linked with another special characteristic of our parties, the fact that they are based on the norms of democratic centralism.

2. Democratic Centralism: in this revolutionary epoch our parties are carrying on a life-and-death struggle against the world counter-revolution, which becomes ever more centralised through the mechanisms of the counter-revolutionary united front of imperialism, of the Stalinist bureaucracy and of all the centrist and opportunist groups which which unite to obstruct the permanent revolution of the masses. The working-class requires a party to deal with this situation. This party must be firmly organised and disciplined, like an army, to ask as one man against the enemy, however powerful it may be. This is the reason why centralism is the first duty of every Trotskyist party. But here is a paradox: in order that there shall be the most complete centralism, it is necessary for the most complete democracy to exist within the party. This enables different opinions and experiences to confront each other, in order that reality and the elaboration of our politics can be best understood. It permits differences to be frankly counter-posed in order that progress can be made in the process of getting to understand reality and of drawing democratically a balance of the line for which members voted. If there is to be complete democracy, this has to be expressed through the organisms of the party, with respect for the relation of lower to higher bodies to ensure that the party is not transformed into a centre for discussion between dilettantes and that it organises discussions with the purpose of guiding the party

towards centralised activity. Nothing stands above the organisms of the party. At the same time, the party does not exist in an individual way but as the party team. In this way we prevent the elevation of leaders, who empty the organisms of their content, and who destroy the bases of democratic centralism by introducing a Bonapartist regime into the party in place of a democratically centralised regime.

The most powerful tool by which a Trotskyist party can elaborate its policies is continuous discussion in all the party institutions. The party must live in systematic discussion. The experiences of individuals or of different party bodies and of different sectors of work must be marshalled, so that the best result, a correct line, can come out of the clash of the discussion. But this virtue, permanent discussion, carries the danger of being transformed into its opposite, when the differences are of such amplitude that they give rise to organised groups crystallising in fractions and tendencies. This is even more true when such groups endure through time. When that happens, there is a great risk that that the fractions change into cliques, and that the party ceases to act in a united way in the direction of the mass movement and becomes paralysed by a parliamentary atmosphere of permanent polemic. Discussion is a fundamental and decisive instrument for our activity, but it is only an instrument. The existence of permanent fractions and tendencies indicates a grave political crisis, in which discussion threatens to become an end in itself instead of being the means to centralise and for united action in relation to the mass movement.

The election of the leaderships of the branches by the members who make them up is the only way to enable, on the one hand, new party cadres to be formed and to guarantee, on the other hand, the exercise of internal democracy, which is also based on the political confidence of the members in their leaders.

3. The backbone of the parties which we want to construct is formed by the full-time party professionals. These revolutionaries devote their lives to the construction of the party by doing whatever job is decided upon, where they may be, and live from and for the party. A permanent aim of the party should be to transform members into professionals, including paying them, so that they can overcome the degrading pressures which the capitalist system imposes and progress in their education as cadres of the world revolution. This is an extremely important policy for leading workers - who are subjected to more than two hundred hours of degrading work and have their political development held back. As Lenin expressed it in *What Is To Be Done?*, the party must base itself on professional revolutionaries, and every worker of ability must be taken out of the factory so that he can devote himself as a whole to the tasks of the revolution and of constructing the party.

The organisation of the International follows the same general laws as the national parties, but with some important specific differences. It is a party, not a movement or a federation of tendencies, fractions or national parties. Its rules

are democratic centralism, self-financing, healthy relations between full-timers and members, and the organisational character of its structure, to avoid the existence of a parliamentary regime, of cliques, of fractions or of permanent tendencies. In this sense, it obeys the same characteristics as do the national parties. These party characteristics mean result in our having differences with the Unified Secretariat ~~about international or national~~ organisation which are as deep as those which we have on political and theoretical grounds. Revisionism has completely revised the Bolshevik conception of our world party and of national parties. Under Pablo, revisionism encouraged a bureaucratic regime, which prevented discussion and stifled the national sections. The Unified Secretariat defends as democratic centralism what is a federation of national parties or tendencies and of permanent fractions. The result is that the sections of the Unified Secretariat polemicise against the lines for which the majority of the Unified Secretariat have voted, and oppose them in public, with the explicit approval of the Unified Secretariat, which declares that permanent public discussion between the national parties, and between them and the international leadership, is democratic centralism.

Furthermore, it is generally known that since 1969 there have existed two permanent fractions or tendencies in the Unified Secretariat, those led by Ernest Mandel and by Jack Barnes of the SWP. They attack each other publicly without taking any notice of majorities, and they deal with all questions on the basis of bargains. The same situation, with specific features and excesses, in each of the sections of the Unified Secretariat. Our conception of the International and of our sections is the direct opposite. Every member and section is bound by the political lines for which we vote according to our constitution. Democratic centralism is a reality, so that the whole International can go into action, without cracks, fractions, groups or permanent tendencies. The same applies to each national party.

This does not mean that there may not be qualitative differences between the application of democratic centralism in different national organisations or at the level of the International. The organisation of national parties is determined by the existence of a geographical state. One geographical state: one party. This is the absolute law on which the existence of national parties rests. One Tsarist state for the whole of Russia: one revolutionary party for the whole Russian state. One single Canadian geographical state: one single revolutionary party for Canada. This organisational form and this law clearly indicate why the Trotskyist national parties are organised, because there is one over-riding political aim. It is to destroy the bourgeois state, by means of mobilising the working masses, in order to establish another state on its ruins, the proletarian state, which can take numerous forms. This colossal task calls for a single, centralised party to confront a single bourgeois state.

The International does not confront any specific state. It confronts the imperialist regime and its agents, the national exploiters and the bureaucratic oppressors, at the world level. In each country, it is the national section and not the International, which is to take directly the power. In the relations between the national parties and the International, these two qualitatively different levels of activity have to be taken into account.

The International has the duty to collaborate fraternally and loyally with the leaderships of the sections, even if it is not in agreement with the policies which they are developing. An international leadership has the duty to take care that the principles of the Transitional Programme are respected in every country and by every section. Its task in relation to national sections is to stimulate national or international discussions on questions of importance for the life of the International itself, and at the same time to ensure that the leadership which the national section has elected is recognised and that the political discussion never gets mixed up with calling into question the national leadership which the section has elected. As far as the International is concerned, the leadership of the International on principle respects the leaderships which national sections have freely elected and the political orientations which the congresses of the national sections have laid down.

The national sections, on the other hand, must act towards the International as if they were a regional organisation of the party, to fulfill their duties: strictly adhere to the international line and the international campaigns on which the International has resolved by vote, pay their dues punctually and strictly adhere to the statutes of the International.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Revisionism is Incompatible with Trotskyism

THESES XXXVII: REVISIONISM LEADS TO THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL

The most powerful revolutionary upsurge has been developing during the last period of nearly forty years. It has led in a number of countries to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie in the course of victorious revolutions, without our International having led the mass movement to any of these victories. Furthermore, despite this upsurge and these victories, our International has undergone a permanent, dislocating crisis.

The crisis is due to the same causes as explain why the counter-revolutionary apparatuses which control the mass movement have retained their audience. Our International came into existence in the period of the retreat and of the gravest defeats - the retreat had begun well before - and it spent its early years in this period. For this reason the cadres of our movement at that time had no objective possibility of developing within the workers' movement. They retained very largely an intellectual, propagandist character and our movement could not be built by proletarian leaders. Our International was founded against the current. The counter-revolutionary apparatuses were consolidated in the period following World War II because, in a certain sense, we continued to swim against the current, to the extent that the mass movement remained under the control of the bureaucratic leaders.

Nevertheless, our International grew, developed and had possibilities of further growth and development, despite the relative strengthening of the apparatuses and our own weakness. It even had the possibility of taking power in Bolivia, which would have changed everything.

Pablo-ism has had devastating effects on our International. After capitulating to Stalinism, Pablo-ism began to capitulate to every leadership or apparatus which controls the mass movement. This capitulation was disguised by a false objectivism: the pressure of the mass movement is so strong that it will oblige all the leaderships to adopt permanently a revolutionary centrist course. This course will be always more progressive and will lead them unconsciously towards Trotskyism. In this way the Pablo-ite leadership trailed the glorious, stainless banner of our International in the mire of opportunism and betrayal.

The elements of Pablo-ite betrayal came together in action in Bolivia. The POR of Bolivia, the section of the International, under Pablo's personal leadership, committed one of the greatest betrayals of the revolution of this century, a betrayal as great^{as} or greater than that of the Mensheviks in relation to the Russian Revolution, that of the

Social-Democrats during and after World War I or that of the Stalinists in China, in Germany or in Spain.

In Bolivia the working-class had been educated by Trotskyism and at the beginning of April 1952 it began one of the most perfect workers' revolutions ever to be seen. It destroyed the bourgeois army, it formed workers' and peasants' militias as the only real power in the country and it organised the COB (the Bolivian Workers' Centre) to centralise the workers' movement and the militias. The bureaucracy which led the COB handed over the power - which was in its hands - to the bourgeois nationalist party, the MNR. Bolivian Trotskyism was powerful; it had great influence in the workers' movement and among the working masses. It had participated in the leadership of the workers' and popular insurrection which destroyed the army. The International Secretariat, under the leadership of Pablo, laid down a treacherous, reformist line of critical support for the bourgeois government. The crisis of Trotskyism in Bolivia today, the crisis of the whole Fourth International today, the strength of Stalinism in Bolivia today and of all the petty bourgeois nationalist movements in Latin America, have their roots in this criminal, class-collaborationist policy which Pablo compelled our whole International to operate in Bolivia. The revisionist, Pablo-ite principal was always the same: the MNR under the pressure of the masses would find itself obliged to make a socialist revolution.

Not satisfied with handing over the Bolivian Revolution to a bourgeois government, Pablo-ism also extended its betrayals to France and to East Germany. In 1953 a large-scale General Strike broke out in France, against the wishes of Stalinism. Pablo-ism had not only operated entrism in the Communist Party but had adopted its treachery.

It did the same when the political revolution began in Eastern Europe. When the East German workers began the General Strike in Berlin against the bureaucracy, when the Russian tanks came in to repress the strike, the International Secretariat came out against the demand for the Soviet army to be withdrawn. It thereby made itself an accomplice of the bureaucratic repression against the workers' movement in East Germany. It did the same at the beginning of the Hungarian Revolution against Stalinism.

Pablo pushed this revisionist deviation to its ultimate theoretical and political conclusions. But revisionism was not restricted to his person alone. A wider current undertook from that time to keep our International in a state of permanent crisis. Like every revisionist current, it is a front without principles, made up of different shadings and tendencies. This revisionist current, which took hold of the leadership of our International in 1951, is characterised by systematic capitulations. Through thirty years it has not ceased to capitulate to the bureaucratic or petty bourgeois leaderships of the mass movement. At the same time, it abandoned our intransigent struggle against these leaderships in order to construct and to develop our parties as the only possibility of overcoming the crisis of revolutionary leadership of mankind.

In this way revisionism, instead of denouncing the bureaucratic, petty bourgeois leaderships, characterised these opportunist currents as progressive and transformed itself into their left wing, abandoning all independent Trotskyist activity which was clearly differentiated from all these opportunist currents. Given the character of revisionism as an unprincipled front, it has had different leaders and personalities at its head in different stages of its development. But all these leaders and personalities have in common their line of capitulation before the opportunist currents, in order to divert the movements and to betray the masses. This is why revisionism capitulated in the first stage to Tito-ism, and then to Mao-ism, and then in general to Stalinism and its different varieties. This also is why it capitulated to the MNR in Bolivia.

This first stage of revisionism was followed by a second, that of the capitulation to Castro-ism.

The fact that Castro-ism ^{was} a petty bourgeois current in the mass movement, and not a directly Stalinist current, when it took power, has provided revisionism with a justification for its capitulation from 1960 until the present time. This capitulation to Castro-ism, defining the Cuban state as a revolutionary workers' state and not as a bureaucratic workers' state, went through several stages. The first stage was that of the refusal to construct the Fourth International in Cuba. Then the United Secretariat capitulated on the Latin American scale to Guevar-ist guerilla-ism. This line then was extended to Europe, with the capitulation to petty-bourgeois ultra-leftism and the so-called "new vanguards". Finally, it was the turn of the FSLN in Nicaragua. As always, there are different nuances today: there is the clearly revisionist current, the new leadership of the Socialist Workers' Party of USA, which, like Pablo in 1951, pushes its positions to their final consequences, which means capitulating not only to the FSLN but to Castro-ite politics in all their aspects, to the Vietnamese leadership and to the Stalinist bureaucracy. There are also other, shamefully revisionist currents with which we must deal at somewhat greater length.

At the heart of revisionism, there is in fact a centrist current, which follows like a shadow that wing which expresses its revisionist positions clearly and without circumlocution, as Pablo did in his time and as the SWP leadership does today. This centrist current of revisionism has developed certain of the most important theoretical points, such as the existence of "neo-capitalism" which develops the productive forces and other revisionist theoretical variants of the same kind. There are two things which characterise this centrist current - which is a fundamental component of the same revisionism.

The first is that it does not break formally with certain Trotskyist formulations. The second is that it is an integral part of revisionism, even if it carries on discussion internally with revisionism, though without denouncing it for what it is; it confines itself to assurances that tactical or "theoretical" errors compatible with the Fourth International and its programme are the issues. In other words, its formal defend of Trotskyist positions serves to let revisionist positions be more easily smuggled in.

There is in fact a division of labour between these two nuances, a relation very like that which existed between Bernstein and Kautsky from 1914 onwards.

We may summarise the different positions which have characterised revisionism in the thirty years of its history as follows:

1. Revisionism replaced the class struggle, as the driving-force of history and a single, world-wide process, with the confrontation of "camps" and "blocs" and the "theory" of sectors of the revolution. This led to denying the objective base of proletarian revolution. It declares that the productive forces of humanity continue to grow in a so-called new imperialist stage, which it defines as neo-imperialist or neo-capitalist:
2. It also states that the leaderships of the mass movement - bureaucratic, Stalinist or petty bourgeois - can adopt a centrist course which leads them to objectively revolutionary positions; more concretely, it argues from the fact that the bureaucratic/^{or} petty bourgeois leaderships have been able, in exceptional circumstances, to expropriate the bourgeoisie that these leaderships have a revolutionary mission. It gives up the direct struggle against them as opportunist leaderships:
3. Consequently, revisionism claims that there are sectors of the workers' movement and countries in which the construction of Trotskyist parties in order to defeat these counter-revolutionary leaderships is not posed as an urgent question of the first importance:
4. In particular, neither the construction of Trotskyist parties nor the political revolution are posed in Cuba.

The centrism which is within revisionism justifies its organic links with the currents which are clearly revisionist by declaring that our definition of them as revisionist is a fractional exaggeration, that "revisionist" is not a Marxist definition but a term of abuse. Centrism argues that revisionism is characterised as a current in Marxism which reflects the interests of the bureaucracy and of the workers' aristocracy, and that there has never been a bureaucracy in our International. Half of the centrist argument is correct: there is no revisionism except when, behind it, there are social forces hostile to the historic needs of the working class. Their mistake is to say that the bureaucracy and the workers' aristocracy are the only sources of these expressions of social forces hostile to the historic needs of the working class.

The revisionist currents which the history of Marxism has known were not all the product of the bureaucracy which controls the workers' organisations. The first revisionist was Bernstein, at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century; his revisionism did not find support in the bureaucracy at first or openly, but among the petty bourgeois intellectuals who had joined the German Social-Democratic Party. It was from that starting-point that revisionism provided "ideological" weapons for the bureaucracy which was then in process of formation. In our own movement, the same thing happened with the rejection by the Shachtman current of the defence of the USSR; it was

a petty bourgeois, intellectual current which called into question all the fundamental principles of our movement, because it reflected a sector of a class foreign to the movement of the workers and of its most exploited layers.

Pablo-ite revisionism and its centrist partners have their roots in these same sectors. For this reason, their method of reasoning is the same as that of the opponents of the defence of the USSR ("anti-defencists"). That has in common with revisionism that they both abandon the defence of the greatest objective conquest of the workers' movement up to World War II, the Soviet state, the USSR. They capitulate to the advancing counter-revolution, fundamentally to USA. The characteristic of modern revisionism, which it shares with the anti-defencists, is that it also rejects the defence, not of the USSR, but of the Fourth International, the greatest subjective conquest of the world proletariat. This is the way in which it expresses the pressure of the bureaucracy on the Fourth International. It ceaselessly oscillates between the conflicting forces in the political revolution, for example, in East Berlin and in the second phase of the Hungarian Revolution. It oscillates in this way in the Nicaraguan Revolution, between the petty bourgeois leadership and the proletariat, and, in Afghanistan, between the Kremlin bureaucracy and the defence of the rights of the masses.

Those who opposed the defence of the USSR were anti-defencists in the period of the rise of the counter-revolution. Those who oppose the defence of the Fourth International are anti-defencists in the period of the rise of the revolution. Anti-defencism and the revisionism of today both have the same method; they utilise the principle of identity, but apply it in different periods.

The opponents of the defence of the USSR said: counter-revolutionary Stalinism is the product of an advance of the counter-revolution. The USSR also ^{is} counter-revolutionary as a state, which means that they place an equals sign between the counter-revolutionary leadership of the workers' state which has degenerated because of the bureaucracy and the foundations of the workers' state itself, the new social relations constructed by the October Revolution which the rule of the bureaucracy threatens, but which it has not been able to destroy. Trotskyist revisionism did not see that we are dealing with highly contradictory phenomena and that, at the present time, these phenomena form part of the whole, the degenerated workers' state. Today Trotskyist revisionism places an equals sign between the advance of the revolution and the counter-revolutionary, bureaucratic leaderships. They say: as the revolution advances, the leaderships at the head of the mass movement, bureaucratic or petty bourgeois as they may be, inevitably advance with it.

From a formal point of view, this line of reasoning has profound logical implications. If the opportunist parties continue empirically to lead the international socialist revolution, why be a sectarian and try to struggle against these parties and replace them with ours? Those who reason this way reject the distinction between the two highly contradictory poles of contemporary reality, which form momentarily a unity due to special circumstances. They place an equals sign between them; the rise of the revolution

equals the transformation of the petty bourgeois leaderships into revolutionaries.

This line of reasoning leads finally to the conclusion, which may be expressed clearly or remain implied, that the Fourth International is no longer necessary and that it can transform itself into an international Fabian society for the epoch of the revolution. This is the way in which the revisionists become defeatist in relation to the Fourth International. They deprive it of its reason for existing, which is the intransigent struggle against the opportunist leaderships from the beginning of the revolutionary upsurge to the final defeat of the counter revolutionary apparatus within the mass movement or within the bureaucratized workers' state.

These two forms of revisionism, the opposition to the defence of the USSR as well as Pabloism or the centrist current which protects it, have the same social foundation; they are the work of leaders who have not been forged under test in the struggles of the workers' movement, who are not capable of adopting the viewpoint of the interests of the proletariat, who have reached positions of leadership as intellectuals. This class character of the revisionist currents explains their survival, as well as the centrist role for the benefit of revisionism which the other nuance has played. The whole of revisionism with its different nuances has in common this class basis, which exposes them to accepting the impressions conveyed by the analyses of "great events" in the press of the bourgeoisie or of the bureaucracy.

This fact in itself means that, like all petty bourgeois currents, they believe neither in the working class nor in its revolutionary struggles nor in the possibilities of the Fourth International. This is why they are always looking for short cuts and for substitutes which will relieve us of the hard, terrible task which we must undertake as intransigent fighters against the bureaucratic apparatuses of the mass movement and as the builders of Trotskyist parties in every country in the world.

This possibility has not been able to be really grasped in the course of recent decades, but this is due, not to objective circumstances, but to the disastrous role of Pabloite revisionism.

The year 1951 cuts the history of our International into two: before and after Pabloite revisionism. Starting from this date in which the leadership was taken over by revisionism, our International entered a crisis and broke up. Earlier, we had experienced another crisis, with the assassination of Trotsky, but its character was very different. His death provoked a crisis of leadership which, given the youth and inexperience of the members, prevented our International from making great progress after World War II. The removal of Trotsky was a qualitative event in the history of our International. It meant that we found ourselves in fact deprived of our historic leadership. In general our movement remembers the disastrous August 21, 1940 from the viewpoint of the biography of our master and does not lay sufficient stress on what it meant from the political point of view, for the world proletariat and for our International. Nor do we stress enough the fact that the assassination was not motivated just by revenge, but

a precise counter-revolutionary purpose, that of leaving without its historic personal leadership the post-war revolutionary upsurge and the Fourth International, and to break the thread of continuity.

If the Fourth International had not been proclaimed, Stalinism would probably have attained its object. None the less, the assassination of Trotsky left our International without the leadership forged in the class struggle and rich in experience which would have enabled it to deal with the new, terrible problems which the war and the period which followed it were to pose to us, the combination of the inter-imperialist with the counter-revolutionary war, the division of Germany and its disappearance for decades as the centre of the revolutionary process in Europe, the occupation of part of Europe by the USSR, the transformation of all these states into bureaucratic workers' states, the case of Yugoslavia and the case of China, the "Marshall Plan", the capitalist reconstruction of Europe and the economic "boom". The documents of our International after the death of Trotsky are sectarian and rudimentary. Their strong point is that they formally defend the teachings of Trotsky.

During the war the leadership and the centre of our International were to be found in fact in the hands of the Socialist Workers' Party of USA. Even though this party played a progressive role in reconstructing our International, it refused in this period to take on the role which fell to it, namely, to convert itself into the axis of leadership. Therefore, at the end of the war, the leadership fell into the hands of the new European leadership, principally that of Pablo.

Yet, because the Fourth International existed, thanks to its method and its programme and thanks to its defence of the teachings of Lenin and Trotsky, the Fourth International was none the less the only current in the workers' movement to know how to give a Marxist analysis of all these phenomena, however belatedly. All this explains our correct definition of the new workers' states, dominated by Stalinism, as bureaucratic.

We slowly got over the crisis of leadership which the death of Trotsky caused, to the extent that the new leadership of the International began to mature, especially in the French and the British sections at that period. Yet these sections had been shaken by deep crises which obstructed their development, crises which arose for the very reason that problems had been resolved belatedly. These problems were intensified by the methods of Pablo and of the ^{international} leadership who incessantly tried to replace the selection of a leadership with the orders of an International Secretariat which claimed to be infallible.

Pablo-ite revisionism sharply brought to an end this process of overcoming the crisis of leadership. The pressure of the "Cold War" and of the new, bureaucratic states, under the domination of Stalinism, on the new leadership of our International, which had not been forged in the class struggle, had catastrophic effects. The slow progress and maturation were rudely interrupted. Our International was thrown into disarray,

even though the destruction which Pablo intended was not complete.

The fact is that our international leadership was - essentially - an intellectual leadership. It was not capable of standing up to the pressure of Stalinism and of the official leaderships of the mass movement, on whom their control of the new workers' states seemed to confer omnipotence and who were confronting US imperialism in the "Cold War". Under the dual pressure of imperialism in full counter-revolutionary flood and of Stalinism, which had occupied Eastern Europe in order better to control and to try to crush the independent, revolutionary mobilisation of the proletariat of these countries and the world proletariat, Pablo completely capitulated to Stalinism and to all the petty bourgeois, bureaucratic leaderships in the workers' movement. His policy of entrism sui generis, his analysis according to which the Cold War would compel the Communist Parties to take the road towards civil war and the workers' revolution, his theory of "centuries of transition", all these added up merely to an attempt to smuggle into our ranks a global conception in the service of Stalinism, a conception which could perhaps justify his politics of betrayal and disorganisation. This form of revisionism was concretely summed up in its claim to be developing the Fourth International and its sections by abandoning the most intransigent struggle against the principal counter-revolutionary apparatus in the mass movement, Stalinism.

THESIS XXXVIII: THE PARITY COMMITTEE RE-ORGANISES THE FORCES WHICH RESISTED
REVISIONISM

Pablo-ite revisionism not only provoked the most disastrous crisis in our International but aroused a growing resistance. Unfortunately this resistance was not led by a leadership tested at the international level. For that reason, the resistance to the revisionist course was not lessened, but took on a national, regional and fragmentary character. There were different national parties or international or regional tendencies which resisted revisionism. This explains why the history of the resistance to the revisionist course is irregular and is intimately linked to the process of the class struggle.

The historical credit for having been the first to recognise what Pablo-ism meant as a revisionist current which betrays Trotskyist principles belongs to the old French section - the PCI, today the OCI (1) - which threw itself into a principled battle practically single-handed. The French comrades were quickly supported by the majority of the Latin American Trotskyists, with the exception of the Bolivian comrades, who were tied hand and foot to the International Secretariat and to Pablo-ism, with the exception of the current identified with Lora, which had an abstentionist policy.

In November 1953 the Trotskyist party with the greatest prestige and the longest tradition, the Socialist Workers' Party of USA, joined the battle against Pablo-ite revisionism and broke with it in a spectacular way. It was at this moment that the International Committee was founded, in order to defend our International against the revisionist attack of Pablo-ism.

Nevertheless, the International Committee, under the influence of the SWP, never developed into anything more than a simple defensive united front. It could not mount a strong, centralised leadership to carry on a conclusive battle against revisionism to the point of driving it out of our ranks by reconstructing our International on principled, militant bases, and the International Committee led a more or less vegetative existence.

The Latin American Trotskyists waged a ceaseless struggle against this conception of the SWP, the essence of which was a federated International or International Committee of national Trotskyist movements.

This conception held by the SWP, the leading party in the International Committee meant that revisionism could not be defeated, despite the fact that the International Committee included 80% of the Trotskyist forces fighting in the world. This nationalist political line of the SWP co-incided with a re-adjustment of the positions of Pablo-ism in the years 1956 - 1959. The SWP leadership declared that the Pablo-ite leadership substantially improved its positions when faced by the Hungarian Revolution and especially as a result of the Cuban Revolution; it made an about-turn in order to obtain a unification with the Pablo-ite International Secretariat, without re-affirming that this was clearly a revisionist tendency.

The SWP was quick to break up the International Committee and disperse its forces, provoking a serious crisis just at the moment when revisionism was weakest. The break-up of the International Committee and the re-unification of 1963, from which the United Secretariat emerged, came to the rescue of Pablo-ism.

The event in the class struggle which enabled the SWP to break up the International Committee and to play into the hands of Pablo-ism was the Cuban Revolution. This was led by a petty bourgeois, but not a Stalinist, leadership, that of Castro-ism. This event led to great confusion within the Trotskyist movement and particularly in the ranks of the International Committee. The International Committee was unable to reach a united, single position on this new, complex phenomenon, which, in its most general aspect, co-incided with the analysis of Trotsky of petty bourgeois leaderships going further than they wish against the bourgeoisie. What led to the confusion was that we were dealing with a leadership which was not Stalinist.

No one was able to make the overall, principled analysis that Cuba was transformed into a workers' state with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, but that the new workers' state was bureaucratic from its origin because the revolution had been made under the banner of a profoundly nationalist, petty bourgeois leadership, even allowing that there were progressive aspects of its nationalism at the time. It was, therefore, necessary to make a political revolution and to construct a Trotskyist party, because first the Movement of July 26 and then the Cuban Communist Party were petty bourgeois or bureaucratic leaderships. In other words, a petty bourgeois leadership does not cease to be petty bourgeois, because it is not Stalinist or even if it is anti-Stalinist.

The Cuban phenomenon is under the heading of the "highly improbable hypothesis" put forward in the Transitional Programme, like all the other bureaucratic workers' states of this period since World War II. Whether the Cuban leadership was Stalinist or not was and is only a secondary question. There were some in the International Committee, including the SWP, who underlined that the Cuban state was a workers' state and that, therefore, it was not necessary to construct a Trotskyist party. Others denied that the Cuban state was a workers' state and underlined the petty bourgeois, opportunist character of the Castro-ite leadership and of the Movement of July 26, as well as the necessity to construct a Trotskyist party to combat them. The fact that the SWP broke with the International Committee prevented a correct, principled position on the Cuban Revolution from being defined and increased the general confusion.

The Cuban Revolution provided Pablo-ism with a magnificent opportunity to strengthen and give new life to its revisionism and its denial of the necessity to construct Trotskyist parties. Revisionism found in the Cuban Revolution the opportunity to delegate to Castro-ism the task of leading the socialist revolution which it had earlier delegated to Stalinism. In other words, revisionism maintained its course on a new tack. During the 1950's, the revolution and the transformation into revolutionary

parties would be by way of Stalinism and of all the bureaucratic or national apparatuses of the world mass movement. In the 1960's, the new tack; the revolutionary parties would be constructed by Castro-ism, because Castro-ism itself was a revolutionary leadership. The break between the USSR and China led the International Secretariat, for a time, to a similar position in relation to Mao-ism.

What was most serious about this was that the SWP completely accepted this revision of the Trotskyist programme and analyses in relation to Castro-ism, even while it continued, correctly, to oppose Mao-ism as a variety of national Stalinism, in the sense which we have analysed earlier.

And so the SWP proceeded with its unification with the International Secretariat. Under the cover of many correct statements and of the correct recognition of the working-class character of the Cuban state, there were concealed a profound capitulation to Castro-ism and the abandonment of the reason for Trotskyism to exist, of the urgent necessity to construct a Trotskyist party in Cuba and in the rest of Latin America in order to combat this petty bourgeois current. The political basis of the reunification was through a revisionist agreement not to fight the Castro-ite leadership as an enemy of Trotskyism and of the workers' movement.

What was left of the International Committee after the divisive manoeuvre by the SWP was unable to reply to it by providing a global analysis and a global policy for the new phenomenon. This was fundamentally due to its Healy-ite leadership. It took him years to recognise that Cuba was a bureaucratic workers' state where the political revolution was necessary. He replied to the new, revisionist front of the United Secretariat with a confused analysis and policy which strengthened the United Secretariat instead of weakening it.

The 1960's were years of great confusion in the Trotskyist ranks. This confusion enabled revisionism to recover, because the lack of a correct, consistent global analysis enabled revisionism to strengthen its positions and its revisionist policy of not fighting in Cuba to construct the Trotskyist party which would have to lead the political revolution against the petty bourgeois leaderships.

Then the new revolutionary upsurge which began in about 1968 compelled all the forces which claimed to be Trotskyist, whether they were within the United Secretariat or within the International Committee, to respond to it.

There were: the great General Strike in France in 1968, the beginning of the political revolution in Czechoslovakia and the "Prague Spring" in the same year, the revolutionary upsurge in Latin America, especially in the southern part of South America, the struggle of the people of Vietnam against the American invasion and its repercussions in USA itself, with the big mass movement to force the withdrawal of the North American forces from Vietnam. These events polarised the forces and were the origin of very sharp internal struggle in both the United Secretariat and the International Committee.

Within the United Secretariat a struggle, at first of tendencies and then of fractions, began early in 1969 between the majority of the United Secretariat and what came to be the Lenin-Trotsky Fraction. This brought the forces of the United Secretariat to the edge of a split on numerous occasions. What began at the 9th World Congress in 1969 as a battle against the guerilla-ist strategy of the majority of the United Secretariat for Latin America, rapidly revealed that the discussion was not simply about immediate events but was one of principle, and involved all the problems of method and of programme of our International.

As always, what was at the centre of the debate was the problem of the urgent necessity to construct Trotskyist parties which would struggle mercilessly against the opportunist currents within the mass movement. As in the 1950's and 1960's revisionism continued to capitulate by abandoning the struggle to construct Trotskyist parties, but this time in order to support Latin American, Guevar-ist guerilla warfare, the petty bourgeois aspect of Castro-ite opportunism and its European practitioners.

As the struggle developed against the revisionist majority of the United Secretariat, and as new decisive events in the class struggle took place, the Lenin-Trotsky Fraction itself began to divide into an opportunist wing, which tended to collaboration with the United Secretariat majority, and a wing which waged an ever-increasingly intransigent struggle against revisionism. The new leadership of the SWP is the physical expression of the desire to liquidate the past struggle of the Lenin-Trotsky Fraction. The fact that it was a new leadership represents a qualitative fact, but it does not discharge in any way the responsibility of the old leadership for its policy towards Cuba and the International Committee. The old leadership was a Trotskyist one, even though it had serious national-Trotskyist deviations, but anyway it reflected a Trotskyist, proletarian tradition. The new leadership is the product of the student movement; its own nature exposed it more to the dangers of the impressionist and substitutionist deviations which the method of the old and the new European revisionist leaderships betrayed. This new leadership was to transform itself into the spear-head of the new liquidationist offensive of revisionism, when it completely subordinated itself to Castro-ism which the Congress of 1979 and its attitude towards the Nicaraguan Revolution endorsed. Then two tendencies opposed head-on the liquidationist, petty bourgeois course of revisionism in the leadership of the SWP inside the United Secretariat. These were the Bolshevik Fraction and the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency. Leaving aside secondary differences related to their earlier history, these two tendencies united to struggle against the capitulatory course of the SWP leadership. The latter undertook to destroy the intransigent struggle of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency against the majority and to form an un-principled front with the latter, thus taking over its^{revisionist} method, politics and programme.

There was a parallel phenomenon in the International Committee. The split in the International Committee and the formation of the Organising Committee for the Re-Construction of the Fourth International are phenomena parallel to the crisis of the

United Secretariat and to the birth and the crisis of the Lenin-Trotsky Fraction, and were responses to the same causative forces, the rise of the world revolution. In this case, the Healy-ite sector played the same national, revisionist role as the SWP played in the Lenin-Trotsky Fraction. It is not accidental that today the positions of the SWP and of Healy-ism are as alike as two drops of water. The International Committee divided into two, a sectarian, nationalist wing, which quickly turned, like the SWP, into full-blown opportunism, and the other wing, led by the OCI, which intransigently defended Trotskyist principles.

The new leap forward of the world revolution, with the great revolutionary triumphs in Iran and in Nicaragua, like its general upsurge in Latin America, finally blew the United Secretariat apart. In order to support the FSLN unconditionally after the fall of Somoza, the United Secretariat openly betrayed the most elementary principles of Trotskyism, such as the unconditional defence of every militant persecuted by a bourgeois government, and in this case Trotskyist militants; the systematic struggle against all bourgeois governments; the struggle within the ranks of the workers' movement for class independence, in intransigent struggle against such petty bourgeois leaderships as the FSLN, the un-interrupted task of the Fourth International to construct Trotskyist parties in every country of the world. This attack immediately created a principled united front of the Organising Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International, the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency and the Bolshevik Fraction, who organised the unified defence of Trotskyist principles. From the beginning, the components of the Parity Committee were conscious that they must not repeat the errors of the International Committee and that it was necessary to work out a clear programme and a centralised leadership to defeat revisionism.

- (1) It is known that at the 26th Congress of the OCI, in December 1981, the Unified OCI formed the Internationalist Communist Party, the PCI.

THESIS XXXIX: THE RELEVANCE TODAY OF THE THEORY OF THE PERMANENT REVOLUTION AND OF THE LAW OF UNEVEN AND COMBINED DEVELOPMENT

Just as we have the duty, more than ever, to defend the Transitional Programme and Trotskyism, we have the same duty to defend the theory of the Permanent Revolution.

Trotsky's theses on the Permanent Revolution, written in 1927, on which the programme of the Fourth International is based, obviously could not include the programme of the political revolution. None the less, the programme of the political revolution is an integral part of the theory of the Permanent Revolution, which is counter-posed to the "theory" of "Socialism in a Single Country".

In the face of the historic reality which the existence of bureaucratic workers' states represents, the political revolution is an integral part of the world socialist revolution, like the analysis of the processes which lead to February revolutions.

It is on the basis and by the application of the principles of the permanent revolution that Trotsky and the Fourth International analysed the degeneration of the first workers' state. The world unity of the class struggle and the struggle for the international proletarian revolution integrate the social revolution in the imperialist countries and in the backward countries with the political revolution in the bureaucratic workers' states. The revolutionary struggle in the imperialist countries and in each imperialist country, in the backward countries and in each backward country for the conquest of power includes the struggle against the counter-revolutionary bureaucratic apparatuses. In the same way, in the countries where the bourgeoisie has been expropriated, the revolutionary struggle based on the programme and the slogans of the political revolution includes the struggle against the counter-revolutionary bureaucracies on the world scale and in each country.

The tasks of the world revolution, which include democratic tasks in backward as well as advanced countries, can be accomplished by the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary processes of the mass movement in the backward countries, which imply that, in the first stages of the revolution, the masses bring about a situation of dual power (February Revolution) in a more or less developed form, cannot be accomplished without the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. In preceding theses we have analysed these processes as they developed in the period since World War II in Cuba or in China.

That analysis completely confirms the theory of the Permanent Revolution, that is, that the democratic tasks were entirely completed only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. We have analysed how, in the Transitional Programme, which was entirely built on the foundation of the theory of the Permanent Revolution, Trotsky and the Fourth International furnished us with the means to understand the revolutionary processes which led to the formation of the "workers' and peasants' government", through the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and of the landed proprietors, which preceded the formation of the bureaucratic workers' states.

As we have seen, what was earlier considered as "exceptional" took on greater depth and dimension. After the war our movement had a great deal of difficulty in recognising this. But the important thing is that the "theoretical possibility" which Trotsky took into account as an expression of the theory of the Permanent Revolution was perceived and was given a principled ^{basis} by the programme of the Fourth International.

The theory of the Permanent Revolution is the theory of the international Socialist revolution, which combines different tasks, stages and types of revolutions, all of which exclude the possibility that the tasks which they undertake can be carried out without the bourgeoisie being expropriated in the course of the advance to the world revolution.

The world socialist revolution has won important successes, in unexpected combinations of events, even though the forward march of the proletariat and of the working masses towards new October Revolutions has been obstructed by the bureaucratic apparatuses and by the weakness of the subjective factor. In many countries it has succeeded in expropriating the national and foreign exploiters, despite the fact that the leadership of the mass movement continues to be in the hands of opportunist, counter-revolutionary apparatuses and leaderships.

We recognise these facts. At the same time, we denounce the revisionist interpretations, which use these facts to deny the class character and the political character of the theory of the Permanent Revolution. To take one example, a complete revisionist theory, the substitutionism of Deutscher, has sprung up. According to this theory, the Communist Parties fulfill the function of the working class in its place; the Communist Parties took the power and ipso facto must be revolutionary parties. The substitutionists deny that the working class intervened in the revolutionary process and affirm that it is the Stalinist parties which "made the revolution". They deny that there was an "exceptional combination of circumstances", including everywhere the mobilisation of the masses, even allowing that this mobilisation was obstructed and manipulated by the apparatuses, which led the petty bourgeois parties, including the Stalinists, to go further than they wished on the road to breaking with the bourgeoisie.

According to Deutscher, Trotsky was wrong when he did not say that a class could be replaced by "its" bureaucratic party in the fulfillment of its function; Trotsky did not take into account that many of the Communist Parties were "revolutionary". Deutscher claimed to be correcting the theses on the Permanent Revolution with this criticism of Trotsky.

Deutscher is a "theoretician" who has capitulated to the apparatuses and, in particular, to the Stalinist apparatus. He refused to understand the processes of the mass movement which lead to situations of dual power (February Revolutions). He refused to admit that the opportunist leaderships could be obliged by the pressure of the masses to go further than they wished in expropriating the bourgeoisie. After Deutscher abandoned the Fourth International, he became the leading "theoretician" of revisionism.

The leadership of the SWP has attacked the theory of the Permanent Revolution from another side. According to the new theory of the SWP, the proletariat and Trotskyism are no longer necessary for the development of the permanent revolution to continue. At most, they are only supplementary ingredients. The new theory of the permanent revolution, which the present leadership of the SWP holds, is the theory of united, progressive movements of the oppressed - not of the proletariat and of Trotskyism. According to this theory, every movement of the oppressed spontaneously acquires a permanent character and leads inevitably to the socialist revolution in one country and internationally, without differentiations due to class or politics - as long as it is united and embraces the mass of the oppressed, even if they are of different social classes. This conception has been expressed particularly in relation to the Black and to the feminist movement... all women are oppressed, just as all Blacks are oppressed... if a movement of the whole of these oppressed "sectors" is put together, this mobilisation will not stop, but will lead them through different stages to make a socialist revolution. The SWP regards the socialist revolution as a combination of different mass movements - without class differentiation - all of equal importance, movements of Blacks, of women, of workers, of youth, of the aged, which will arrive almost peacefully at the victory of socialism.

Here we have the theory of Bernstein combined with the negation of the Permanent Revolution. The theory of the Permanent Revolution makes the proletariat, in alliance with all the exploited and oppressed layers, the agent of the proletarian revolution, which is the unified and differentiated process of the social revolution in the imperialist and in the ^{under}developed capitalist countries and of the political revolution in the countries where the bourgeoisie has been expropriated. The theory of the SWP quickly develops into a humanist view of society, which denies the existence of classes and raises "praxis" as the fundamental category in place of the class struggle as the motive force of history. The appreciation by the SWP of the Government of National Reconstruction in Nicaragua still further extended and deepened ^{its} non-class, non-political, revisionist conception of the theory of the Permanent Revolution.

In opposition to the SWP, it is our duty to defend more than ever the class character, the Trotskyist character, of the Permanent Revolution. No section of the bourgeoisie will follow us in the process of the Permanent Revolution. In certain exceptional combinations of circumstances, bourgeois and working-class youth, bourgeois and working-class women, opportunist and revolutionary Blacks, will be able to march together, when the activity does not threaten private property. But such joint actions will be exceptional and not permanent. We shall continue to defend, without giving an inch, the spirit and the letter of the theses of the Permanent Revolution: the proletariat alone, led by a Trotskyist party, can carry through to the end, consistently, the international socialist revolution and, therefore the Permanent Revolution. Trotskyism alone can provide the impulse for the permanent mobilisation of the working class and of its allies, and in particular that of the working class.

The theory of the Permanent Revolution is further enriched by the most extraordinary instrument for political and theoretical investigation and elaboration which Marxism has provided for us: this is the theory of uneven and combined development. The thrust of the mass movement, combined with the crisis of the revolutionary leadership, has given birth to combinations of events which our movement did not foresee in detail (and which could not have been foreseen). But these combinations of events confirm, not only that the process of the permanent revolution exists, but that it is so powerful as to be at the origin of these combinations of events which confirm the law of uneven and combined development.

The theory of the Permanent Revolution is the theory of the world revolution, counterposed to the counter-revolutionary fake theory of "Socialism in a Single Country". It is the theory of the world revolution (integrating the social revolution in each imperialist and under-developed country and the political revolution), going forward towards the construction of a society without classes and without states, with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie as its basis.

But none of the victories which the revolution has won, especially since World War II, has solved the dilemma which is posed before humanity: Socialism or Barbarism. The bureaucracies, which have passed over definitively to the side of the bourgeois order, with the counter-revolutionary policy of "peaceful co-existence", are not only obstacles to the forward march of the world revolution, but place in grave danger all the past conquests of the working class and all the advances of the revolution which the expropriation of the bourgeoisie over a third of the world represents. The processes of the world revolution can be successfully carried through only on the line of the theory of the Permanent Revolution. Only Leninist, Communist parties, sections of the Fourth International, can lead the world revolution to victory.

THESIS XL: THE HOUR OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL HAS STRUCK

Despite all the victories which the revolution has won, humanity is on the edge of the abyss. Marxism, Trotskyism, have warned that, as long as imperialism rules, as long as the crisis of the leadership of the **proletariat** is not resolved, a descent into barbarism, into a new regime of slavery, a consequence of the imperialist rule, threatens mankind. Socialism alone will enable the world to go beyond necessity and to enter the world of freedom. Either we shall experience the degeneration of mankind into barbarism, or we shall enter, through socialism, into the world of freedom.

The enormous means of destruction available to imperialism mean that the danger which mankind has to face is even greater. It is no longer a question only of the descent into barbarism, but of the possibility of transforming the planet into a lifeless desert by means of the terrible armaments which have been accumulated. Neither the bureaucracy nor the apparatuses offer any way out in the face of these dangers. On the contrary, their subordination to imperialism helps to push mankind to the edge of the abyss. The only way to avoid it is to get rid of national frontiers, imperialist domination and capitalist private property. There are no methods other than the permanent mobilisation for this purpose of the world proletariat and the unification of its struggles.

But the liquidation of national frontiers, of imperialism and of capitalist private property by the revolution, as well as the permanent mobilisation of the proletariat and its allies, can be undertaken as its task by only one organisation, the Fourth International. It is defended by only one current in the workers' movement, Trotskyism. For this reason, despite our extreme weakness, the alternatives^{are} clear. The choice is no longer between Socialism or Barbarism, but between holocaust and Trotskyism.

The Trotskyists who are re-grouped in the Parity Committee are proud of having been the ones who have known how to fight to maintain themselves on the ground of the Fourth International and to defend its programme, during the crisis of disintegration of the Fourth International which Pablo-ite revisionism opened and which was made worse by the offensive of liquidationism in 1979. The currents which have formed the Parity Committee re-group two-thirds of the militants in the world who claim to be for Trotskyism and for the Fourth International.

We are perfectly aware that that Trotskyism is incompatible with the revisionism which has raged for three decades in our movement. We well know the role which revisionism has played in the service of the counter-revolutionary apparatuses which control divert and tend to crush the mass movement. Revisionism has played its destructive role and continues to try by all means to prevent the International and its parties from being transformed into authentic Trotskyist parties with mass influence. Nothing shows better the role of revisionism than its treachery in Bolivia in the past, its liquidationist offensive in Nicaragua and its adaptation to Popular Front-ism in Peru and El Salvador today.

Furthermore, we are applying in a consistent way the living, rich, Marxist method of the Transitional Programme, as these theses show, to observe the new phenomena and to enrich our own programme and analyses, without abandoning any of the principles which characterise our International and which reality has confirmed. We are betraying none of our principles, we are not capitulating before the counter-revolutionary apparatuses and we are not delegating any historic mission to them. On the contrary, we continue to denounce them systematically as agencies of counter-revolution in the ranks of the workers' movement.

On the other hand, we believe more than ever in democratic centralism. We believe in the only authentic democratic centralism, which is based on the revolutionary programme, the programme of Trotskyism, the Transitional Programme. We will never accept a spurious democratic centralism in the service of the revision of Trotskyism and of the liquidation of the Fourth International, just as we denounce any combination of a federal type for constructing an unprincipled front against Trotskyism.

This is the reason why the World Congress which the Parity Committee has called sets itself the task of going forward in the direction of the reconstruction of genuine democratic centralism in the Fourth International, which has been destroyed since the crisis which Pablo-ite revisionism provoked in 1951. We fight not merely for the Transitional Programme, but for the Bolshevik organisation of our International on the world scale, as it was in Trotsky's time and in the ten years which followed his assassination.

Our intention to reconstruct our International on these programmatic and organisational bases does not mean that we are going to abandon to their fate all the groups, tendencies and militants who claim to be Trotskyists but whom the confusion provoked by revisionism still keeps outside our ranks. We are aware that we have all made mistakes. But these mistakes can only be explained by the crisis of disintegration of our International which revisionism has provoked. As Marxists, as defenders of the world unity of the class struggle and, therefore, of the International, we have all been marked by the effects of its disintegration, those who form part of the Parity Committee as well as those who do not. This is the reason why we do not intend to abandon to their fate and to the destructive effects of dispersion or national isolation one single militant or none single organisation which claims to be Trotskyist.

On the contrary, the reconstruction of the Fourth International means also that we intend to adopt an aggressive attitude in order to defeat revisionism once and for all by means of united activity and discussion without pre-conditions with all those who stand for the continuity of the programme of the Fourth International and who believe that the unity of Trotskyism is indispensable, whatever may be their positions. We are far from restricting ourselves to a purely defensive attitude to our principles and to the Transitional Programme. For this reason, we address a fraternal appeal to all the comrades and organisations who are prepared to discuss with us and to join

with us in common activities on the basis of Trotskyism. For this reason we shall be the best defenders of every possibility of unity of action of those who claim to stand for the Fourth International. This is the way in which the imperative necessity will be proclaimed, a little louder every day in the class struggle, for one single Trotskyist organisation in the world and in each country: the reconstructed Fourth International, the genuine Trotskyist international. This is the only way to draw the line in practice between the camps and to enable the Fourth International to cleanse from its ranks the revisionism which has lodged itself there in different variants.

THESIS XLI: ON THE FORMATION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL (INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE)

We propose to the International Conference that it shall constitute ^{itself} ~~as~~ the Fourth International (International Committee), for the following reasons:

1. Our struggle is the same struggle as that which was engaged in 1950 - 1953 and which made necessary the construction of the International Committee of the Fourth International.
2. The liquidation of the International Committee of the Fourth International was due to the capitulation of the leadership of the SWP, which refused to lead the struggle to ^{extirpate} liquidationist revisionism from the Fourth International and which finally lined up with it. The liquidation of the International Committee of the Fourth International dealt a supplementary blow to the Fourth International and its sections, the crisis of which it deepened.
3. The formation of the Fourth International (International Committee) means that we are continuing the struggle which was engaged in 1953, because that is the struggle which enabled the Fourth International to be saved from revisionism, its continuity to be ensured and today the great majority of the Trotskyists in the whole world to be brought together in a single international organisation, with the two historic currents which have resisted and struggled against Pablo-ite revisionism, whatever may have been the difficulties, the different episodes and the different roads which have been taken.
4. The formation of the Fourth International (International Committee) does not mean that the task of the re-organisation - re-construction of the Fourth International has been completed. It means that we intend to carry out what, because of the fault of the SWP, the International Committee of 1953 did not carry out, that is, to drive out liquidationist revisionism from the ranks of the Fourth International and to form, in the course of this struggle, a new leadership for the Fourth International, that is, to complete the re-organisation - re-construction of the Fourth International.

The formation of the Fourth International (International Committee) means, however, that from now on liquidationist revisionism has suffered a profound defeat and that the conditions for dislocating it and totally defeating it are asserting themselves. The formation of the Fourth International (International Committee) shows that an international organisation has been re-formed on a principled basis which ensures the continuity of the Fourth International which was proclaimed in 1938, re-organised at the end of World War II and dislocated by revisionism in 1950 - 53. In the present circumstances, the development of the world class struggle opens the possibility of building ^{parties,} sections of the Fourth International with mass influence in numerous countries. Such parties will be built only by starting from the Fourth International (International Committee), as a result of its activity and within its framework.