

# International Internal Discussion Bulletin

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# Bolivia—Results and Perspectives

## Editorial Note

The following draft resolution, dated November 5, 1972, was prepared by Livio Maitan for presentation at the December 2-6, 1972, meeting of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International. The vote on the general line of the resolution and the report was 18 for, 11 against, 2 abstentions, and 1 not voting.

1. The MNR regime, established following the victorious insurrection in April 1952, collapsed in November 1964 with the fall of Paz Estenssoro. But this regime, which was supported at first by the majority of the working class and peasantry, and which since its inception expressed the radicalization of the petty-bourgeois sectors, had already experienced a profound weakening at the time. In fact, it had proved incapable of resolving the problems that were at the bottom of the revolutionary crisis of 1952. The economy of the country did not progress; the workers were robbed of their political and economic gains; the peasantry, while having partially received the land, still lived in extreme misery and was put under the control of a narrow and conservative bureaucracy; the urban petty bourgeoisie could not escape its poverty or make use of its democratic rights won from the oligarchic regimes; in spite of the mine nationalizations, the country remained in the grip of imperialism and its international financial institutions. The elements of dual power instituted by the working class and peasantry (formation of militias, workers control, union control over the radio, etc.) were gradually eliminated in the absence of a revolutionary leadership capable of developing them with the perspective of a centralized struggle for power.

After a period of disillusionment and partial demobilization, the masses progressively resumed their struggles, and the last years of the regime were characterized by growing conflicts between the government and the working class, while sectors of the urban petty bourgeoisie and students mobilized actively. In the army itself—as the significant incidents of October 1964 (Sera Sera combat) showed—signs of demoralization appeared as soldiers refused to engage in the repression. The military coup d'état carried out by Barrientos was a preventive coup aimed at blocking the new upsurge of the mass movement.

The political change of November 4, 1964, which was at first considered by the masses to be a victory, prevented the movement from developing according to its own dynamic through bringing about a relationship of forces more favorable to the working class. The new regime began by demagogically condemning Paz's masked dictatorship and did not hesitate to draw on revolutionary

nationalist traditions. Barrientos wanted to play for time and for a few months he was obliged to accept a situation where the masses, once again armed in certain zones, enjoyed certain democratic rights, notably the freedom to rebuild their unions and political organizations. But this was only a very brief interlude.

The military government began to work rather rapidly and energetically to attain three essential objectives: the reestablishment of "law and order" in the mining regions, the establishment of an alliance with the peasant bureaucracy permitting the government to control or neutralize the peasantry, an economic "rationalization" based on a drastic reduction of workers' wages. These objectives were to a large extent attainable by only one possible means: the establishment of a ruthless military dictatorship. The army occupied the mining regions; the unions were practically dissolved. All democratic rights were suppressed, and the leaders of the workers movement were arrested, exiled, or forced to go underground.

The precariousness of the new regime resided first in the narrowness of its social base and the nonexistence of any economic margin for maneuver. Yet it lasted for about five years. This was not the result of real success or of a total crushing of the mass movement, but, in the last analysis, of a relative equilibrium of forces in the given domestic and international context. In any case, Barrientos was successful in an important operation: The army began more and more to play the role of the political party of the ruling class, and to involve itself deeply in running the country at all levels. This operation compensated for the absence or extreme weakness of the more or less traditional parties.

The defeat of Che's guerrillas assured an additional respite for Barrientos. But he did not have the means to exploit it; on the contrary, serious frictions developed in the army and the government itself, and new mass mobilizations began to shape up. During the government of Siles Salinas, who succeeded Barrientos, the deterioration of the regime subsequently accelerated. The army found itself obliged to make a sudden turn: the new president, General Ovando, charted a reformist course.

2. General Ovando's coup of September 26, 1969, was not unlike the one that occurred on November 4, 1964—it was dictated by the necessity of facing up to a situation that was very rapidly deteriorating and that was characterized by an increasingly sharp upturn in the mass movement. But precisely because of the failure of the right-wing dictatorship, the army-party had to shift its course. It would have liked to appear as a political force that had taken the lessons of its recent past into account, had even understood the reasons that inspired the guerrilla actions and envisaged a revolutionary nationalist anti-imperialist solution for the problems that were tormenting the broad masses. The nationalization of Gulf Oil was the most symbolic gesture of a perspective that

sought to rectify relations with imperialism and stimulate the development of native capital. An anti-imperialist demagoguery, the perspective of an economic boom, prosocialist rhetoric, affirmation of the need to restructure the state on a "national" base and for an industrial revolution in the countryside were the motives that the reformist wing advanced to win the support or favor of the masses of workers, peasants, and urban petty-bourgeoisie. The relative success obtained in Peru by the Velasco government during its first year, and the "new" perspectives being outlined even by imperialist circles of which Rockefeller's report was the most explicit expression, seemed to provide Ovando's reformism with an international opening.

In the framework of the given relationship of forces, this operation inevitably involved paying the price of restoring the rights of unions and political organizations of the working class, and recognizing the reality of the new incipient upsurge of the masses. The fact that Ovando was not in position to keep his promises, and that the turn he projected had only extremely modest practical implications, then provoked the outbreak of serious conflicts and later on accentuated the combativity of the masses, who had now gained considerable freedom of action.

The maneuvers of bourgeois sectors that did not want to assume the costs of the new course, and the machinations of the imperialist circles, who refused to grant any concessions, provoked a new crisis twelve months after Ovando came to power. This crisis proved to be all the more serious in that the army had become politically divided, and in its inability to find a temporary solution responded to the situation by a thrust from the right. The right wing of the military probably underestimated the reaction of the left as well as the level of mass mobilization. However, as soon as it was clear that the masses were ready to intervene actively against any fascist or profascist attempt, the military, recognizing the danger, was largely able to reach common agreement on the basis of supporting a reformist course. But, as a result of the crisis and the warning signal it represented in the eyes of the masses, Torres, who succeeded Ovando, had to sound more radical.

This involved in practice some additional measures aimed at the imperialist positions and, above all, more clear-cut economic and political concessions to the working class. In this context, while the crisis of the regime had not ceased to worsen (reactionary plans, conspiracies, maneuvers, and foreign pressure), the upsurge of the masses assumed a breadth that had not been experienced since April 1952, extending from the proletariat to large sectors of the urban petty bourgeoisie and even some sectors of the peasantry. The convocation of the Popular Assembly in May 1971 symbolically marked the high point of this upsurge.

The downfall of the Torres government, ignominiously overturned in the space of a few hours, is in the last analysis, another confirmation that any "democratic, anti-imperialist, antioligarchic" stage is objectively impossible in Bolivia, and any consolidation for any time at all of a bourgeois democratic regime is equally impossible. As soon as a powerful mass movement develops, its dynamic tends irresistibly to call the capitalist system itself into question so that a decisive confrontation rapidly

becomes inevitable. The tragedy of the Bolivian proletariat was that the majority of the organizations claiming to be of the working class did not understand that such an issue was inevitable or, even when they sensed the danger, were incapable of assuming all the political and organizational consequences that were imposed.

3. Banzer assumed power following the realignment of the army along a reactionary orientation and thanks to support from American imperialism and Brazilian sub-imperialism. His coup was inspired in particular by national bourgeois sectors that had profited from a partial economic boom in certain regions during the sixties. These sectors, which have ties to the Brazilian as well as the Argentine bourgeoisie, went so far as to threaten a secession of part of the country, and this blackmail contributed much to the army's decision to shelve Torres, now considered incapable of controlling the situation, and to reestablish a right-wing dictatorship. The agreement with the Falange aimed, in addition, at making it possible to collaborate with the conservative sectors of the middle class, and the compromise with the MNR corresponded to the necessity of winning support from popular sectors or neutralizing them. It was precisely from this angle that Banzer avoided a direct confrontation in the mining regions.

The heterogeneous composition of the governing bloc was one of the reasons for the instability of the new military regime, shaken on several occasions by internal crises. The conflicts in interests among the bourgeoisies of other countries, especially Argentina and Brazil, also played a role. In such a context it was impossible for Banzer to completely crush the workers movement. (He even had to allow partial functioning of the unions in the proletarian areas.) The result was that important demonstrations and strikes took place, especially in October-November 1972, clearly indicating the will of sectors of the proletariat and the urban petty-bourgeoisie, victims of severe economic measures, to resist and counter-attack.

Still it would be erroneous to underestimate the essential fact: Banzer's coup d'etat enabled the ruling classes to overcome the gravest crisis of the last twenty years by setting back and dealing hard blows to a tempestuous mass movement. And the first stage of the restructuration went by without the parties allied in the FRA translating into practice the orientation of struggle they had agreed on in principle. This respite has increased the margin for maneuver of the new regime (even if Banzer were to remain in power or to be replaced by someone else).

The national bourgeoisie and imperialism are perfectly conscious of the country's structural instability and of the danger of more mass upsurges. They recognize the necessity—from their point of view—of coming up with plans for exploitation and relatively long-lasting political reorganization, and crushing the working class for an entire period. On the one hand, they must seek to stimulate an economic growth, which, although deformed and partial, would reinforce the social position of the bourgeoisie, link up sections of the middle layers, and assure some outlets for at least a part of the growing mass of unemployed and semiemployed workers. On the other hand, they have to provide themselves with a more "scientific" repressive apparatus, capable of following the example set by the gorilla regime in Brazil.

During his first year, Banzer did not take one decisive step in this direction. The strikes and mobilizations of October-November 1972 have demonstrated, moreover, that the working class and sectors of the petty bourgeoisie have not been crushed by the dictatorship and are ready to engage in important actions. It would nevertheless be an error to overlook the fact that a series of initiatives (economic projects, investments, military "aid," etc.) have either been taken or have been projected by imperialism and some of its Latin American allies. If the workers movement is not in shape to again launch a counterattack on a broad scale, the military regime—whether under Banzer's leadership or a possible successor—can score some points in the indicated direction. The lesson of Brazil, aside from the obvious differences, must also be assimilated by the Bolivian revolutionists.

## II.

4. While representing a small minority of the population, the proletariat played a crucial role in the major struggles of the last decades owing to its position in the key sector of the economy and its geographic concentration. It is in this concentration that the force of the working class resides—the citadel of the mining regions has created grave problems for all the governments, which have often been forced to grant significant concessions and even to tolerate situations of dual power on several occasions. But at the same time this geographic position and the relative isolation have at times prevented an effective and direct mobilization at crucial turning points and otherwise facilitated repression by veritable massacres.

The Bolivian miners attained a high level of union consciousness fairly early, and they have periodically been impelled by the very conditions they live in to organize tempestuous political mobilizations. Their combativity and their capacity to rebound, even after the most severe blows, are without equal in the South American continent. But all that has not proved sufficient for them to gain general political self-consciousness or an understanding of the need for an autonomous political working-class organization, differentiated from the unions.

As in most of the other Latin American countries, the Bolivian proletariat has not lived through the experience of the traditional Social Democratic or Stalinist mass organizations. In the specific context of Bolivia this involved two consequences: the formation of political groups moving directly towards revolutionary Marxism and the mobilization of a great majority of the proletariat for a long period under the banner of revolutionary nationalist movements with a petty-bourgeois leadership and working in the interest of the so-called national bourgeoisie. This phenomenon explains why these movements in Bolivia were so radical at their height and this radicalism in turn explains why the MNR was able to maintain hegemony or at least very significant influence over the working class for a long period.

The insurrection of April 1952 enabled the working class to wrest important victories (including workers control and militias) and for years to maintain a high level of combativity and very high consciousness of its own strength. But subordination to the leadership of a party, which in the last analysis represented the interests of other

classes, prevented the proletariat from formulating a tactic and strategy corresponding to the needs of its struggle in a situation of revolutionary crisis that objectively placed the question of proletarian power on the agenda. On the whole, April 1952 was the February of Bolivia. The acceptance of the leadership of the MNR blocked the working class from taking the road to October. This was the historic price paid for the absence of a politically autonomous working-class organization, of a revolutionary party with broad mass influence.

5. The MNR would not have maintained its hegemony for so long and the proletariat would not have found itself politically disarmed under the Barrientos dictatorship and under the reformist military regime if centrism had not stood in the way of constructing the revolutionary party.

Above all through Lechín and his faction, centrism operated in a way that prevented growing working-class opposition to the MNR government from breaking through the framework of the regime and the party. Thus it prevented this opposition from becoming the concrete point of departure for general political maturation and the construction of an independent working-class party. This orientation did not change radically with the formation of the PRIN, which still retained a centrist stamp in its ideology as well as in its political strategy, and especially in its practical endeavors. It is true that since the birth of the new party, Lechín has sought to appear as the spokesman of the revolutionary aspirations of the working class, but in reality he never went beyond struggles for immediate demands, limiting himself in the broader political realm to demagogic proclamations on the necessity for socialism and revolution, completely unsupported by an adequate strategy. Lechín's greatest skill—paid for at an extremely high price by the masses who had confidence in him—was always to evade making hard decisions at crucial turning points. He utilized the COB apparatus much more than the PRIN as his instrument for influencing the masses.

Equivocal during the first stage of the Barrientos government, Lechín flirted with Che's guerrilla front, but carefully refrained from committing the forces and influence still at his disposal. Finally, during the period of military reformism, in spite of all his demagogic pretenses and a certain stance to the left of the pro-Soviet CP and the opportunist Lora, Lechinism moved into the Torres regime, which assured virtually ideal conditions for its traditional performances—appearing as the No. 1 defender of the mining proletariat, utilizing the bureaucratic machine of the COB which was quickly reinstated, making declarations as bombastic as they were empty of practical content about the revolution and socialism. Owing to its composition, its origin and functions, the Popular Assembly was bound to become the natural culminating point of all of these new gestures: the louder the speeches, the less prepared the proletariat became for the approaching outcome. The result was that once again the masses found themselves unarmed in the face of a ruthless attack by the forces of repression.

The complete rejection of centrism in all its forms is an imperative condition for the working class to be able to launch its counterattack and to be in position to effectively wage its revolutionary struggle for power.

6. In 1952 the peasantry was one of the motor forces of the revolutionary movement, one of the pillars of the new regime. Through the agrarian reform, their traditional enemies were destroyed and they received the land, freeing themselves from centuries of submission. To defend their gains and assert their force, the peasants organized their own militias, which, together with the workers militias, introduced real elements of dual power for an entire period.

But after winning land—if only partially—and after becoming small landowners—if very poverty-stricken ones—the peasants began to demobilize and become conservative. They remained organized and even partially armed. But their organization gave birth to a peasant bureaucracy that linked itself to the government, becoming the instrument of conservatism and repression, and the militias themselves—where they survived—increasingly became the armed wing of this bureaucratic apparatus. All this was also made possible following a growing demoralization caused by seeing that, for lack of financial and technical aid, the ownership of the land did not mean any change in the productivity of the land or standard of living. Thus the peasant movement began increasingly to ebb, to split up, to express itself only through sporadic and incomplete actions, to lose all revolutionary dynamism. It was thrown onto the defensive and in this mood remained passively attached to the regime that had given it the land.

This demobilization of the peasantry has now gone on for fifteen years; among other things, it constituted one of the more serious limitations of the 1970-71 upsurge and was consequently one of the elements contributing to Banzer's reactionary coup.

7. The radicalization of petty-bourgeois sectors in the forties and fifties became expressed in partially contradictory phenomena. The MNR was to a large extent an expression of this radicalization, which, however, also revealed itself by petty-bourgeois elements joining the Stalinist or pro-Stalinist formations which had opposed revolutionary nationalism during the second World War and immediately after, incorrectly characterizing it as a fascist current. Paradoxically it was only later, as the MNR became more and more conservative, that the CP began to support it—in tribute to its Menshevik conceptions of the revolution in Latin America—thus helping to prolong the hegemony of a bourgeois leadership over the masses.

The Barrientos period, especially from 1966-67, marked an important stage in the ripening of considerable sectors of the urban petty bourgeoisie. It was above all at this time that the students began to radicalize, thus becoming part of a worldwide phenomenon. Che's undertaking was an additional stimulant to this new wave of radicalization, which the defeat of the guerrilla front in no way slowed down. Unfortunately this radicalization and the legitimate rejection of worn-out schemas of peaceful coexistence and revolution by stages went hand in hand with a wide adherence to spontanéism of the Debrayist type and to foquista conceptions. The lesson of 1967 did not lead to any serious reflection. On the contrary, the Teoponte guerrilla action of 1970 bore the bitterest fruits of foquista adventurism. This experience was like a symbol of the sterility of a basically petty-bourgeois concept that claimed to conceive a revolutionary initiative by abstracting from

the real dynamic of the class struggle and of all participation by the working class and the impoverished peasantry.

### III.

8. Revolutionary Marxists will not be able to define their strategy and orientation without drawing up a balance sheet of two crucial events of the period following the downfall of the MNR regime—the guerrilla experience of 1967 and the defeat of August 1971.

Guevara and his collaborators took the initiative in opening guerrilla war in a political context that fully justified the launching of armed struggle. On the one hand, the Barrientos dictatorship had closed all possibility for the workers movement to take legal action by eliminating the last vestiges of bourgeois democracy; on the other hand, the masses, far from being crushed and demoralized, showed signs of growing combativity. Since September 1965, the vanguard forces had decided on a perspective of armed struggle in the form of guerrilla war.

All this was confirmed by the response that the guerrilla action immediately had among the masses, giving rise to considerable mobilizations. It was also confirmed by the lasting political repercussions that Che's action had even after his rapid defeat.

Having said this and without in any way minimizing the turn marked by the guerrilla action in the political struggle of Bolivia, a series of critical considerations are called for.

First of all, the choice of terrain was questionable. This choice, in fact, did not assure the advantage of preparations carried out before the launching of operations and at the same time prevented any contact with the local population. Secondly, if Guevara was correct in placing the Bolivian guerrilla action in a continental perspective, his analysis of the conjunctural situation in other countries—especially Peru—was either excessively summary or ill founded.

But the fundamental deficiency concerned the links with the social and political forces necessary to assure the indispensable political and logistical support. Che's diary provides clear indications on this.

Certainly Guevara was not ignorant of this central problem and he understood that he could not resolve it without appealing to the militants and the cadres of existing organizations of the workers movement. But his mistake was to depend on the pro-Soviet CP, or on a sector of this party, and, to a lesser extent, on a rotten centrist like the bureaucrat Lechín. The fact that the choice was largely determined by the Cuban political orientation at the time of the Tricontinental Conference (rupture with the Chinese, Fidel's Stalinist-like attack on Trotskyism), explains the decision that was made, obviously without justifying it.

The second error resided in an objectively sectarian conception of the political relationships among the forces favoring armed struggle. It was completely correct to strongly advocate a united military front. It was also correct for the group that took the initiative to uphold Che in the leadership role he normally played. But from this it did not follow that all those who wanted to join in the guerrilla action had to automatically accept the political



hegemony of the ELN and even less to dissolve organizationally. The attitude of the ELN leadership in this matter, besides providing an alibi for Monje and Co., was a very grave obstacle to reinforcing the core of fighters and even more so to substantially expanding the guerrilla action.

It was owing to these errors that the guerrillas did not succeed in establishing effective links with the masses, in taking root, in building up at least a minimum of solid infrastructure, in growing in time through the addition of other forces, who were, however, available from the earliest months. Thus, when the repression struck its first hard blows, the results were catastrophic and Che's group was condemned to the most tragic isolation. Hence their inevitable liquidation in a short time.

9. Concerning the events of August 1971, the question is posed as to why a mass movement that had experienced a spectacular rise right up to the time of the events was crushed with extreme rapidity without offering significant resistance.

In a very general sense, the deciding factor once again was the absence of a revolutionary party rooted in the masses on a national scale. It is necessary to conclude that, in spite of past experiences, the opportunist parties and currents had succeeded in maintaining their hegemony over the majority of the working class and the radicalized petty bourgeoisie.

But at the same time it is necessary to remember that as a national social force the peasantry did not mobilize either during the upsurge or at the moment of the coup d'etat. Peasant struggles took place in 1970 and 1971, especially around La Paz and Santa Cruz; but they did not go beyond the level of local explosions, while displaying a potential tendency that did not escape the frightened bourgeoisie who were already preparing their coup. Such a situation made it possible for the army to concentrate its efforts on the cities, even on a limited number of cities, thus increasing its chances for rapid success.

Secondly, in spite of all the demagogic statements and the formal adoption of seemingly very radical documents, the majority of the workers movement and the petty bourgeoisie did not have a clear understanding of the nature of the Torres government. Likewise they did not understand the ineluctable dynamic of the situation. The deficiency in rigorous analysis and the absence of a full exposure of the nature of military reformism and its nebulous ideology prevented the masses from gaining a clear perspective, from grasping in a concrete way that a major confrontation was inevitable in the near future. Even worse, the illusion was broadcast that in face of a "fascist" attack, Torres himself would counterattack with the aid of at least the army, and in the end, he would be forced to give arms to the people clamoring for them.

The error in analysis also involved the evaluation of the gains made by the working class upsurge and especially the significance of this Popular Assembly that attracted worldwide attention. The Assembly, which Torres was forced to accept, was without question a manifestation of the strength of the mass movement. It indicated a situation of embryonic dual power, represented an effective instrument for revolutionary propaganda and agitation and for a confrontation between the different currents on the crucial problems. But it had no decision-

making power, no effective force to impose its possible deliberations, and even more, did not directly express the sovereign will of the masses. It was not supported in the least by democratic organs elected in the factories, in the villages, in the working-class suburbs, in the army. In this decisive terrain no comparison is possible with the Russian soviets of 1917. In addition, the composition was decided by arbitrary criteria and sectarian pettiness often took precedence over general political considerations. Finally, the essential questions—including the approaching political tests and the means to counter the imminent coup—were ignored or evaded. In fact, the Assembly appeared much more like a sterile and impotent parliament than an instrument for mobilizing the masses. At the time of the coup d'etat, it proved totally incapable of providing any orientation whatsoever or of leading the armed resistance of the masses.

In the context of a revolutionary upsurge, of a crisis of the ruling-class apparatus, on the eve of a major confrontation, which in the last analysis posed the question of power, the problems of armed struggle became the decisive political problems. The great majority of the leaders of the labor movement forgot this fundamental truth. They were caught up in the illusion that it was possible to continuously postpone the final battle, to force Torres and the "anti-fascist" sectors to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them. To the extent that they took up the problem of armed struggle—in any case without any attempt at systemization—they were unable to go beyond the insurrectionalist and spontanéist conception refuted by numerous tragic experiences in Bolivia and elsewhere.

The revolutionary front had also been weakened in other respects by errors of adventurism and militarism committed by certain of its adherents, especially the ELN. The ELN had not assimilated the lessons of 1967, had not overcome its sectarian and bureaucratic tendencies. It had not grasped the meaning of the September 1969 turning point in time—that is why it embarked upon the disastrous adventure of Teoponte, among other things, wasting valuable energy and playing into the hands of the opportunists and centrists. Even after Teoponte, the ELN persisted in its confused orientation, to the detriment of mass work which it was possible and necessary to develop.

#### IV.

10. The Trotskyist movement entered the crucial period of the last twenty years with significant forces. Still the activity of the Marxist revolutionists since the 1930's, in consequence of a whole series of weaknesses, was not sufficient to counteract the hegemony of the MNR over the working class and the peasantry. Immediately after April 1952, the POR succeeded in expanding considerably and also in gaining real influence in some peasant zones (where it participated in the struggle for occupation of the land) as well as political and ideological influence in the trade-union movement (drafting of the first program of the COB). But it was harshly attacked by the regime through brutal repression, corruption, and infiltration of its ranks. It was seriously weakened by the capitulation of the Moler-Lora tendency, which provoked a split and came out for adherence to the MNR.

As a result, it was not in position to take advantage of the crisis of the Paz Estenssoro regime and the growing mass disaffection with the MNR.

All the same, the leadership team's ability to analyze, which assured the continuity of the party, and the positive repercussions of the Cuban revolution in Bolivia also permitted the POR to regain important regional positions, to gain a few new cadres, and to intervene effectively in the events of October-November 1964. As soon as Barrientos succeeded in imposing his brutal dictatorship, the party understood that it was necessary to formulate a new orientation of armed struggle and beginning in September 1965 it initiated moves in this direction.

At the time of the launching of guerrilla action in 1967, the leadership immediately grasped the revolutionary import of this, expressed its solidarity, and declared itself ready to engage in it directly. Conditions were such that they could only participate in the struggle for a very short time, and with only modest forces, although compared to the strength of Che's detachments these were appreciable. If these possibilities were not taken advantage of, it was partly due to the repression, and above all to the political and material sabotage committed by the ELN network, riddled with sectarian and Trotsky-phobic elements, which created all sorts of obstacles.

11. After the death of Guevara, the POR, in contact with the International, decided on an orientation of relaunching armed struggle, while recognizing the lessons of the defeat. This orientation was completed at the time of the Ninth World Congress.

In short, the POR considered that a prerevolutionary situation existed in Bolivia as well as on a continental scale. It emphasized that the army was now playing the role of a bourgeois party in power, that no perspectives existed for relatively broad democratic stages, such as to allow a growth and maturation of the movement and the revolutionary party in conditions of legality or pseudo-legality; that any mass upsurge and any working-class political and economic conquest of the least importance would inevitably provoke a major confrontation in the immediate future between the mass movement and the repressive forces. The POR reminded Bolivian revolutionists that not only the indigenous enemy, but also American imperialism and its allies in other countries in the continent, stood in their path.

That was why it was necessary to place the problem of armed struggle on the agenda, rejecting the conception that reduces armed confrontation to the final stage of a mass insurrection. It was necessary to prepare for a long and hard struggle acquiring—and this is the most likely variant—a continental dimension. The specific form of this armed struggle for an entire period could only be guerrilla war.

This guerrilla war, in the concrete context, could be developed without risking isolation from the masses and without adopting one-sided forms. Precisely because the workers and peasants movement in Bolivia had a very long tradition of struggle, precisely because many cadres had reflected on the past experiences and understood the blind alley of the traditional concepts, precisely because there were no democratic margins, the armed struggle could from the beginning count on the direct participation of workers, peasants, and politicized students, and es-

tablish solid links with the mass movement. Since September 1965, the POR had already conceived of "guerrilla activity as a prolongation of mass struggle." Since 1968 the POR had specified that guerrilla activity could not be purely rural, but a combination of guerrilla activity in rural zones—selected according to political and not exclusively technical criteria—with guerrilla activity in mining regions and guerrilla activity in the largest urban centers.

Carrying out such a line implied, in the given context, an alliance with other forces ready to engage in struggle with an analogous orientation. At the time this meant an agreement with the ELN and indirectly with the international forces that supported the ELN. However, it was absolutely clear from the beginning that the POR would not accept the idea of dissolving its political organization into the military organization nor would it agree to any limitation of its autonomy whatsoever.

The concrete application of the decisions agreed upon and the accords reached with others was delayed considerably mostly because of multiple objections on the part of the ELN where Stalinist prejudices as well as sectarian conceptions still existed. Moreover, the plans were set back by the repression in 1969, followed in close succession by the assassination of Inti Peredo.

The death of Inti created a very serious crisis of leadership in the ELN and the agreements reached in 1968 were practically annulled. In any case it would have been difficult to maintain them since the ELN has not really assimilated the lessons of 1967, in spite of a few verbal concessions, and it refused to recognize the turning point marked by the establishment of the Ovando government. The Teoponte adventure tragically confirmed this.

The POR quickly understood the change in the situation, which it analyzed in a series of documents. At the same time it underlined the narrow limits of the reformism of the military and the inevitability of new confrontations in the near future. It called for the construction of rank-and-file revolutionary committees and affirmed the necessity to arm the workers and peasants. It took advantage of the new conjuncture, regaining ground lost because of the repression, playing a role among radicalized sectors of the peasantry, and for the first time winning influence among the students. This was confirmed by the representation it had in the Popular Assembly, which was not negligible despite the fact that it was arbitrarily excluded as a party, as well as being the target of other bureaucratic maneuvers. The participation of groups of its militants in the confrontations of August 21 and the heroic sacrifice of Tomas Chambi and other comrades revealed, moreover, that the POR had concretely posed the military problem without being taken in by illusions nourished by the opportunist and centrist leaders of the Assembly and the unions.

Nevertheless the strength it had achieved was absolutely insufficient in relation not only to the objective needs, but also to the need for defending the organization, its members, and its infrastructure. The party also let itself be sidetracked by conflicts within the Assembly and did not take advantage of all the possibilities it had to give an impulse to the peasant movement (occupation of land, etc.) and to develop its military preparations under the form of self-defense as well as under more specialized forms. It marked time too long before taking audacious

initiatives that were both possible and necessary. The material difficulties were not serious enough to justify this failure—all the more so since during the decisive months the POR did not even call upon the International for help in overcoming its difficulties.

The functioning of the organization and especially of its leadership merit severe criticism. On the one hand, the centralization was excessive with the result that the formation of new cadres was seriously impeded; on the other hand, the criteria for membership and the organizational norms were often too vague without a clear distinction being made between members and sympathizers, and without the leadership working as a collective body. One particularly serious error was to postpone the party's convention for a long period and especially not to have held it in June-July 1971 in accordance with the decision made at the time. Finally, the party systematically failed to bring out its publications, which for years have appeared with extreme irregularity.

(It is particularly in the elaboration of the following part that the POR as a whole should make its essential contribution. Hence the text is limited only to sketching very general lines.)

12. To rearm the workers movement it is above all necessary to once again clarify the nature of the revolution in Bolivia. The fundamental premise of any revolutionary perspective is that no revolution by stages can resolve the economic, political and social problems at the heart of the country's chronic crisis and of the age-old suffering of the masses. In this regard the experience of the MNR regime was definitive. Following the steps taken during the insurrection of 1952, a "democratic and antioligarchical" revolution was deprived of any objective base, and any revolutionary process had to take objectively anticapitalist and socialist goals from the very beginning. More than any other neocolonial country, the Bolivian revolution will follow a dynamic of permanent revolution or it will not develop. This is the fundamental lesson to be derived from the events of 1971 which have revealed without the least equivocation the extreme precariousness and fragility of any "democratic-reformist" endeavor that does not break the framework of the system as such.

From this it follows that revolutionists must reject any policy advocating direct or indirect collaboration with the so-called national bourgeoisie or its sectors. The battle in this field is, in the last analysis, a battle for the political autonomy of the proletariat, which, in spite of its combative and heroic spirit, has long remained under the grip of bourgeois or petty-bourgeois movements or caudillos and has not ceased to be under the ideological influence of petty-bourgeois revolutionary nationalism even in the recent period under the military reformism of General Torres.

In the second place it is necessary to make it extremely clear that the peasantry has an irreplaceable role to play as one of the motor forces of the revolution. It is imperative to struggle against any explicitly or implicitly workerist conception implying that the striking force of the working class would suffice to overthrow the capitalist state apparatus. In reality, as long as the peasants do not mobilize, any revolutionary upsurge risks inevitably becoming a confrontation between the proletariat and the repressive forces completely concentrated against it. This is what happened on August 21 with its well-

known results. Besides, in view of the country's social composition and the base of the army itself, the revolutionary awakening of the peasantry is a necessary condition for the revolutionary contagion to penetrate the armed forces, bringing about their disintegration. One of the primary tasks of the POR in this period is thus to draft an up-to-date analysis of the socio-economic situation in the countryside and the potential tendencies ripening there, to elaborate a policy likely to win a response among the peasants, and to prepare their overall political reactivation.

Thirdly, it is necessary to clearly reformulate the concept of armed struggle. It is necessary to struggle relentlessly against two counterposed conceptions, both of them false—the foquist-adventurist conception, which fundamentally claims to stand removed from the concrete development of the class struggle, and the insurrectionalist-spontanéist conception which reduces armed struggle to the intervention of the masses at the final stage of the struggle for power, and holds that the masses will themselves resolve the problem of their armament at the decisive moment.

The strategy of armed struggle should begin with the presupposition that, owing to the aid and intervention of imperialism, the enemy is equipped with sizeable political and military resources, that it will be impossible to defeat them in relatively short battles, that the culminating stage of the revolution when large masses of workers and peasants mobilize will be preceded by other stages where armed struggle will be the task of sectors or nuclei of the vanguard. Thus the need for this specific form of armed struggle which is guerrilla warfare.

Revolutionary Marxists believe that armed struggle in Bolivia could from the start acquire forms very different from that of the guerrilla war of 1967. It could and should be concretized in guerrilla nuclei in the rural zones, armed action in the mining provinces, and urban guerrilla initiatives in the principal centers. To the extent that it will be preceded by adequate political and technical preparation and will be undertaken in relation to the concrete dynamic of the situation, it may be characterized from its early stages by a substantial participation of militants and cadres from the mass movement, whom the workers and peasants will recognize as the defenders of their interests and revolutionary aspirations.

Just as Marxist-revolutionists underline the specificity of the military tasks, so they reject any minimization of the tasks that are more properly political. That's why the party will always have to conduct agitation and propaganda campaigns around transitional slogans. At the same time these militants will actively participate in union battles, clandestine or semilegal, and will take advantage of any possible avenues for legal intervention.

In accordance with the probable hypothesis that the armed struggle will be undertaken by several organizations or groupings, the revolutionary Marxists will support united action in the field of operations. This unity should involve both the participation in the technical leadership of all the representative forces engaged in the action and rigorous maintenance of the party's political and organizational autonomy.

In the area more strictly designated as political, the POR is a partisan of unity of action among the parties and currents struggling against the military dictatorship and imperialism. But this united front is unable to include parties

or formations expressing the interests of the so-called national bourgeoisie whose perspective might be to overthrow the military dictatorship so as to return to military reformism or another form of bourgeois hegemony. The front must therefore base itself on an alliance of parties or movements claiming to be of the working class and on the possible participation of petty-bourgeois currents that in practice accept the leadership of the proletariat.

14. In the period following the August 21 coup, the workers movement was not crushed and many elements drew the lesson of the recent events. This created conditions partially favorable for actions aimed at impeding the consolidation of the new regime. The fact that these possibilities were not fully explored resulted in the later weakening of the opposition parties that created the FRA.

The adherence of the POR to the FRA was essentially inspired by the desire to promote an action as quickly as possible against the dictatorship and the realistic appraisal that no action of any scope was possible in the absence of an alliance with other forces. The analytical justification was that the FRA was not a classical popular front since no bourgeois party was represented in it.

In fact the parties and groupings in the FRA do not directly represent the bourgeoisie, but they either claim to be of the working class or they are expressions of the radicalized petty bourgeoisie. However, the real nature of the front will be determined by the objective political role it plays. If it must work in the perspective of restoring a "democratic" regime and if some of its components impose their conceptions, which are not qualitatively different from the ideology of Torres and the military reformism already tested, if it were to accept certain international conditions, the formal absence of bourgeois parties would

no longer be a determining element and the policy of the FRA would become that of a popular front that does not aim at overthrowing the capitalist regime. The first call issued by the Front indicated that such a hypothesis was not unfounded insofar as it contained equivocal or outright false formulas. This is why the leadership of the International believed that the POR should not have limited itself to expressing its disagreement when the document was being discussed, but should have even refused to sign it. In any event, the revolutionists cannot continue to participate in the FRA except under condition that all political confusion be eliminated, that the front be actually capable of organizing real actions, and that it does not reduce itself to a cartel devoting itself to making periodic sterile declamations.

15. Any orientation adopted in principle would be condemned to remaining largely on paper if the revolutionary Marxists do not first succeed in reorganizing their party and transforming it into an effective instrument of struggle. This implies the application of much stricter organizational criteria and the formation of a renovated leadership team that functions collectively. The problem of the press—newspaper, magazine, agitational leaflets, etc.—must also be solved at the same time, breaking with a tradition of flagrant discontinuity.

Relations with the International must be reestablished on a regular basis with much closer contact than in the past two years. It is a necessity for the POR. It is a necessity for the International, which remains convinced that the developments in Bolivia will have important implications for the future of our movement in the entire continent.

# The Political Crisis and Perspectives for Revolutionary Struggle in Argentina

## Editorial Note

The following draft resolution was prepared by Comrade Livio Maitan and presented by him at the December 2-6, 1972, plenum of the International Executive Committee. The vote was 15 for, 11 against, abstentions 3, not voting 1. In addition, three French comrades, who had to leave before the summaries, asked to be recorded in favor of the resolution.

The following document was approved by the majority of the IEC in December 1972. The comrades who voted for it reserve the right to update it in presenting it to the World Congress, making whatever changes the development of the situation may require.

## I. Historical Crisis of the System: From Peron to Onganía

1. Argentina has been convulsed by an economic, social and political crisis, which throughout numerous conjunctural ups and downs, goes back two decades and, in certain respects, dates as far back as the thirties.

In the framework of a capitalist system where, because of the imperialist grip, there was only distorted and unreliable growth, Peronism represented the most suitable political formula for the industrial bourgeoisie. In fact, General Perón's regime did help, to an important degree, to bolster the position of native capital vis-à-vis both the traditional conservative classes and foreign capital. By using a highly developed Bonapartist technique, he succeeded in establishing a relative equilibrium between the bourgeoisie and the exploited classes, a balance, which while in the last analysis guaranteeing the optimum functioning of the system in the given situation, assured real gains for the working class and other popular strata. By basing himself on mass support, Perón was able to bring about the social and political restructuring that made it possible to take advantage of the exceptional opportunities offered by the international situation at the time. But in order to win this support, he had to mobilize the working class, which won the greatest victories in its history (universal unionization, the development of the Comisiones Internas [Plant Committees], on-the-job rights, social-welfare laws, a marked rise in the standard of living, etc.). It is precisely because of this situation that Peronism still appears to be a viable short-term solution to some layers of the bourgeoisie and a hope for radical social and political change to very broad sectors of the popular masses.

The success of the Peronist formula was to a large extent owing to the situation that existed during the second world war; the urgent economic needs of the European capitalist countries in the immediate postwar period of reconstruction; and to a lesser extent, the economic boom resulting from the Korean war. As soon

as this situation changed and as soon as the world market was no longer starved for certain agricultural products and capitalist competition was once again unleashed, Argentina's socio-economic balance was upset and a serious crisis loomed up. From the beginning of the fifties, Perón had to set his course toward "rationalization" and a quest for sources of imperialist capital. It was this sort of policy that provoked serious tensions between his regime and sectors of the working class.

2. Perón's downfall, resulting from numerous and contradictory factors, opened a period of prolonged instability. The objective bases on which the Bonapartist regime rested, which guaranteed popular support for the policy of the industrial capitalists, no longer existed and the ruling classes were not able to come up with any formula that would offer the slightest stability. The industrial bourgeoisie was deeply shaken by the crisis and was unable to project any solutions; it had, moreover, to face a pitched battle with the working class, which although it was on the defensive was still able in the five years that followed Perón's overthrow to put up a very vigorous struggle. The army began to emerge as the guarantor assuring the maintenance and functioning of the system. But it itself came under the influence of different social and political pressures and failed to advance a common strategy. It hesitated to take direct charge of running the government, dividing into opposing tendencies.

Frondizi's regime was, when all was said and done, an ephemeral attempt to reestablish the dominance of the industrial bourgeoisie, based on the radicalized petty bourgeoisie and layers of the proletariat that remained faithful to the slogans of Peronism. The Frondizi regime failed because, on the one hand, it quickly came into open conflict with the masses, and on the other hand, it could not provide a solution for the economic impasse and thus promoted a comeback by the most conservative sectors of the ruling classes.

The industrial bourgeoisie demonstrated its intrinsic social and political weakness and had to rely on certain sectors of the army until the installation of the Illia regime—as transitory as Frondizi's—which more directly represented the interests of the rural bourgeoisie and layers of the rural and urban petty bourgeoisie. The only success scored by the ruling class was that starting in 1959-1960 the working class, hard hit by unemployment and a declining standard of living, began progressively to lose its dynamism and fighting spirit and entered into a stage of relative stagnation and demoralization, able only to wage sporadic and essentially defensive battles.

The Onganía regime, which came to power in 1966, brought the army to the forefront in the context of a situation relatively more favorable for stabilizing the country. The main goal of the new Bonapartist regime was to rationalize and modernize the economy, a policy which suited primarily the interests of the most "modern" capitalist sectors more or less directly tied to imperialism.

Furthermore, the job of the new government was made considerably easier by the relative passivity of the broad masses; the neutrality or even the favorable inclination of the majority of the union bureaucracy; and the attitude of the Peronist movement, which was, to say the least, equivocal for an entire period. A clear indication of the dictatorship's policy and the source of the social and political conflicts at the time were the measures restricting sugar production in the northern mills, the attempts to reorganize the railroads and the ports, and more rigorous control over the universities.

Onganía's Bonapartism, which operated in a completely different context from that of the Peronist variety, could promote the interests only of a very narrow minority. If Onganía was able to partially reactivate the economy and appreciably reduce the level of inflation, it was only by increasing the impoverishment of the proletariat as well as broad sectors of the petty bourgeoisie.

3. May 1969 marked a radical turning point. In Rosario, Córdoba and Tucumán the masses mobilized in the most gigantic movements Argentina had ever experienced. The Cordobazo was a major test of strength between workers and students and the military dictatorship. It was the outbreak of a new stage of impetuous upsurge that created a prerevolutionary situation by shattering the balances established in 1966. This rise took the form notably of repeated explosive mobilizations both in the traditional epicenters of the workers movement and in the less radicalized cities, of hard-fought battles in vanguard workers sectors as well as general strikes that involved greater numbers than ever before in Argentina and in Latin America (November 1970 and September 1971). In this context the class struggle began to give rise to armed struggle, and urban guerrilla warfare spread to all of the country's important centers. General Lanusse pointed to the importance of this struggle when he said: "We are confronting enemies different from the traditional type since they are now coming from the population of the country itself. This is why all services should join in a common struggle . . . I believe we are at war."

The bourgeoisie thus found itself faced with the need to reexamine its whole orientation. The question for the working class was how to take advantage of the new prerevolutionary crisis and the new explosive imbalances of the system in the context of a comprehensive anti-imperialist and anticapitalist strategy.

## II. A Prerevolutionary Situation

4. Lacking a political leadership of the slightest solidity or homogeneity and faced with an unfavorable economic conjuncture and with high rates of inflation, the ruling class has had to cope with a powerful rise of the mass movement and with the audacious initiatives of the armed-struggle organizations.

Over the last three years, the ruling class has tried, by an improvised technique, to alternate the most brutal repression with demagogic populist and liberalistic blandishments. But so far it has failed to get any appreciable results. Mass movements have not ceased to emerge with periodic explosions. Petty-bourgeois strata have rallied increasingly to the working class. The student movement has taken on new vitality. And, despite the barbaric methods used against them, the armed struggle organizations

have by no means been broken.

In the present stage, the policy of Lanusse, who represents the main groupings in the army and takes his cue from the interests of the decisive layers of the ruling class, is aimed, on the one hand, at isolating and crushing the vanguard organizations—and first of all the armed ones; and, on the other hand, at achieving a substantial compromise with the trade-union bureaucracy, the traditional political forces, and the Peronist general staff. With the aim of diverting and canalizing the rising mass movement, the perspective seems to be to gradually restore a civilian regime, which in any case would be watched over by the army. The 1973 elections will probably be the first step in this direction. Perón's return from exile has been the most eloquent sign thus far of the progress of the GAN operation. The complexity and the extreme instability of the situation makes it difficult to make any predictions for the short or medium term. However, leaving aside secondary variants and unexpected conjunctural developments, the Argentine bourgeoisie has fundamentally to choose between three solutions—the solution outlined by Lanusse, which involves accepting a regulated "democratic" framework; a populist-reformist solution along the lines of the post-1968 Peruvian one; and a reactionary military dictatorship patterned on the model of the Brazilian "gorillas." The Peruvian solution is an unlikely variant both for structural reasons and the political conjuncture. In Peru the agrarian question was a vital one before 1968 and remains so today. This is not the case in Argentina, which has gone through a more advanced process of industrialization and where the vast majority of the population is concentrated in the cities and in the urban economy. To the extent, more generally, that bourgeois strata were capable of taking on anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchic tasks, this was done under the Peronist regime, and there is no objective basis for any real repeat performance of this. The Velasco experiment was undertaken, moreover, by a politically homogeneous army that had spent years planning the operation, and it was carried out in the context of a stagnating mass movement. Such conditions do not obtain in Argentina.

A solution of the Brazilian type would involve considerable risks for the ruling class. In a stage in which the masses are mobilized and the working class is combative and dynamic and enjoys the support of the radicalized petty bourgeoisie, in which armed organizations exist that are already endowed with a wealth of experience, a gorilla coup could have a boomerang effect, precipitating a full-scale civil war whose outcome could not be predicted.

The other solution, the "acuerdista" one, is not easy to put into effect either. First of all, the economic margins for maneuver now or in the near future are nonexistent or are extremely limited. (Periodic wage readjustments are only a paltry compensation for the erosion of the buying power caused by inflation.) Moreover, any deal with the Peronists—which would have to offer something more than a fraud pure and simple—could unleash a chain of mass mobilizations that Perón himself would be unable to block or stem. Nonetheless, this solution appears to the most representative strata of the bourgeoisie to be the least dangerous and the most desirable. For this reason, it is the one advocated by Lanusse, the shrewdist of the military officers, as well as being the

one desired by Perón, who is aware of the explosiveness of the present situation, and the one supported by a large majority of the traditional political circles.

5. It is necessary to specify what significance this operation will have, if it is carried out. "Normalization" based on elections and an eventual return to a civilian government would not in any way mean opening up a period of bourgeois democracy where parties and unions would be allowed to enjoy real freedom and to conduct their activities without hindrance, where they could build up their strength gradually by winning successive victories and, in a prerevolutionary context, be able to develop embryonic forms of dual power. No more than in the past decades do the objective conditions exist that would make it possible to establish and operate a constitutional democratic regime. Projecting such a perspective would mean relying on a completely improbable variant and losing sight of, or minimizing, the explosiveness of the social and political contradictions in the present stage and the extremely precarious position of the existing regime. At most, there might be a very limited conjunctural "democratization," marked by extremely sharp struggles, explosive political and social conflicts, and confrontations between the fundamental classes.

This does not mean that we have to exclude any possibility that the bourgeoisie will bring about a degree of stability and a conjunctural economic upswing. For some time, markets in the capitalist countries, notably in Western Europe, have begun to again offer interesting openings for staple products from Argentina (primarily meat). Some perspectives might also develop on Latin American markets if an agreement with other countries on the continent were reached (such as an Andean bloc based on opposition to Brazilian subimperialism, etc.). But in any case the precondition for stabilizing the economy would be rationalizing the economy and intensifying the rate of exploitation, and this would hit the working class as well as layers of the petty bourgeoisie. The ruling class could only achieve such an objective by blocking the mass upsurge, launching a broad counterattack, and, ultimately, by breaking all capacity for resistance on the part of the working class and the popular strata. In other words, the working class would have to suffer a defeat similar to the one suffered by the Brazilian working class in 1964. In the not very long run, this is precisely the level on which the Argentine bourgeoisie and the imperialists will look for the solution to their problems. Thus, the stage that would be opened by an application of the *acuerdista* line would be marked by very sharp conflicts and struggles and would, in the last analysis, be only a passing phase. It could lead either to strengthening the mass upsurge and deepening the social and political crisis, or to the establishment of a reactionary dictatorship.

### III. The Working Class, the Driving Force of the Revolution

6. The working class, the fundamental driving force of the revolution, has accumulated a great wealth of experience over the last thirty years. It has been the protagonist of an extraordinarily wide gamut of economic struggles extending from normal trade-union conflicts to

factory occupations and kidnapping hostages, of political general strikes, vast mobilizations and abrupt semi-insurrectionary explosions, and hard-fought defensive battles; as well as of embryonic armed struggle initiatives going from the most elementary kinds of sabotage to the boldest forms of urban guerrilla warfare. It has built powerful trade unions, which despite their origins and the ideology they adopted, have been seen by the broadest masses as suitable instruments of class struggle and which in certain periods have accomplished the task of defending the immediate interests and elementary rights of the workers. The Argentine working class represents a relatively homogeneous social force with a tremendous specific weight in the political life of the country. When it mobilizes together with the wage workers in transport and in the services, it is capable on its own of paralyzing all activity, as has been shown on several occasions by the most significant general strikes.

The contradiction of the Argentine workers movement lies in the fact that the proletariat has reached a high level of organization and carried out its most decisive political mobilizations under the hegemony of the Peronists, whose leadership reflected the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie. Perón—unlike the MNR leaders in Bolivia—fell before a split opened up between his movement and the masses. Moreover, his successors sought to roll back the gains the working class had made during the Justicialist era and to crack down on the trade-union organizations that more than ever seemed to be the best instruments of defense. Therefore, the myth of Perón has persisted. In the period immediately following his downfall, it even gained strength. And the influence of the Peronists in the trade-union and political spheres has continued to play a substantial role in the political struggle in the country.

At the beginning of the 1960s, important changes started to occur. From a structural point of view, the working class in the big cities in the interior, which was integrated into the modern industrial sectors, was acquiring an ever increasing specific weight. From the political standpoint, the mobilizations had their epicenter first in the Tucumán region. A very hard-fought battle was waged there, but since it was a defensive one in the strategic sense, it was condemned to run out of steam. Next the epicenter shifted to Córdoba, which unquestionably became the nerve center of social and political confrontation.

This development went hand in hand with the emergence of young strata of the working class that had not suffered the negative effects of stagnation and demoralization. A broad vanguard matured politically under the influence of the Cuban revolution and the armed struggles inspired in many countries by the Castroists. The crisis of the international Communist movement and the Sino-Soviet conflict also had repercussions in CP circles.

Thus, in the 1969 mobilizations in Córdoba and Rosario an important role fell to very militant workers who were not organized in the traditional workers movement. So, too, an ever clearer differentiation showed up in the unions, which was marked by phenomena of varying importance but all pointing in the same direction—increased radicalization of the regional leaderships, formation of the CGTA [the Confederación General del Trabajo de los Argentinos—a left trade-union formation led

by Raimundo Ongaro], the development of antibureaucratic tendencies and of plant unions reflecting pressure from below. Moreover, the emergence of these plant unions also reflected the revolutionary aspirations of the politically advanced layers of the working class that decided to break with routinist practices and respond to the violence of the repressive apparatus by posing the problems of armed struggle in a short-term perspective and beginning to operate on this level. The example of the Tupamaros in Uruguay was an additional stimulus.

It would be wrong, for the following reasons, to conclude that the political influence and ideology of Peronism represents a simple carry-over from the past: (1) Broad strata have broken with Peronism, having understood its role. (2) The Peronist influence that still holds sway over very considerable sectors of the masses reflects much more a hostility to the regimes that succeeded the Justicialist ones than an adherence to the projects and conceptions of Perón and his official representatives. This influence is exercised primarily through the trade-union apparatuses, which, despite their increasing loss of credibility, are still the only force capable of initiating actions on a national scale.

All this amounts to saying that Peronism no longer exercises its sway over the working-class vanguard.

The Argentinian working class is, thus, more than ever the backbone of revolutionary mobilizations, and its role will be decisive in the coming battles. Its weakness still lies fundamentally in the absence of an organization projecting policies on a national scale independent of all bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leaderships and tendencies, in the absence of a revolutionary leadership capable of mapping out and implementing the strategic lines of a struggle for overthrowing the government. But forces have matured that understand the need for struggling simultaneously against imperialism and capitalism, as well as the need for an overall strategy of armed struggle for seizing power.

7. The peasantry does not represent a major force, and its social and economic weight is tending to diminish even further. Moreover, the Argentine revolutionists have not developed a general analysis of the countryside in recent years, a failure that has not been without its consequences in formulating political positions. It is unquestionable in any case that the poor peasants, especially in certain regions in the north where they are closely linked to the workers, must be regarded as allies of the proletariat. Mobilizing these strata both in political battles and in the armed struggle is an imperative need that revolutionists cannot underestimate on the pretext of the specific social composition of the country and the overwhelming weight of the wage workers integrated into the urban economy.

A considerable role will be played by the petty bourgeoisie. In the 1940s, this social stratum was to a large extent the base of the anti-Peronist movements and organizations that stood objectively on conservative, if not outright reactionary ground. The petty bourgeoisie also have been affected by the growing strength of the monopolistic sectors, the progressive elimination of all freedoms and democratic rights by the military dictatorship, the repercussions of the Cuban revolution, and the situation of other countries on the continent. The result has been a growing radicalization of the petty bourgeoisie,

along with the radicalization of the so-called marginal layers which fit into a category between the poorest workers and the most impoverished petty-bourgeoisie. It is these phenomena that explain the role played by petty-bourgeois elements in the struggles of recent years and in the armed-struggle organizations, as well as the influence Peronism has gained in these social strata.

The student movement itself—which cannot as such be characterized as petty-bourgeois—has reflected, and in large measure given expression to, this tendency. The significance of such an alliance between the working class and the radicalized petty-bourgeoisie was shown especially by the participation of petty-bourgeois layers in the great mobilizations of 1970-72, as well as the links established between the workers and students at the time of the revolutionary explosions in 1969. It is evident, moreover, that a favorable attitude on the part of the petty-bourgeoisie enormously facilitates the development of guerrilla warfare in the big urban concentrations.

#### **IV. Permanent Revolution, Between the Army and the Mass Movement**

8. In a situation marked by a structural crisis and revolutionary tensions such as exists in Argentina, the question of power, of overthrowing the capitalist system and establishing a workers' state is objectively posed. But no positive solution of this problem is possible without an adequate strategy of armed struggle and without a revolutionary party intervening to apply this strategy.

The basic orientation of the struggle flows first of all from the nature of the Argentine revolution. Revolutionary Marxists more than ever reject every conception based on the assumption of a democratic stage preparing the way for a socialist one. They reaffirm the concept of a permanent revolution, that is that the revolutionary process unfolding has an anticapitalist and socialist dynamic. All of the experiences of the last thirty years—in Argentina as well as in other Latin American countries—show that a revolution that stops on an "antioligarchic" and "anti-imperialist" plateau and does not attack the capitalist system as such inevitably reaches an impasse, is thrown back, and ends in defeat. In those countries where democratic tasks remain to be accomplished—and there are less of these in Argentina than in almost any other country on the continent—these tasks can only be achieved in the framework of a dynamic of permanent revolution under the hegemony of the proletariat.

It follows from this that we must reject any perspective of an alliance with the so-called national bourgeoisie or with any of its so-called progressive sectors. The workers and revolutionary movement must not, of course, fail to exploit the tactical advantages offered by the enemy's contradictions. In the case of a reactionary dictatorship, for example, it cannot exclude the possibility that bourgeois organizations or movements may take part in the opposition struggle. But this by no means implies that bourgeois layers or political formations can be considered allies from a revolutionary standpoint. Any hesitation or doubt in this matter would come down, in the last analysis, to questioning the concept of permanent revolution. Since the revolutionary dynamic tends to shatter



not only the framework of the capitalist system as such, a confrontation with the bourgeoisie is inevitable and it is necessary to prepare for such an eventuality. The revolutionists' criticisms of the Chilean Unidad Popular and the Uruguayan Frente Amplio do not concern simply the method of the "democratic road." They are aimed also and above all at the nature of a strategy that involves maintaining the essential political and economic mechanisms of the system, and, on this basis, an alliance or compromise with the bourgeoisie or important sectors of it.

9. In Argentina, the strategy of armed struggle, which the Ninth Congress could only outline in a very general way, fitted into a context where a prerevolutionary situation was developing, the class struggle was reaching the stage of armed confrontations, and embryonic forms of civil war were taking form. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie had not exhausted all its margin for maneuver. The imperialists and the bourgeoisies of other countries on the continent were ready to intervene politically and, in the last analysis, even militarily to prevent the birth of a second workers state in Latin America. No revolutionary party existed with a decisive influence over the masses that could in the short run channel the social explosions that were occurring and building up in the direction of a struggle for power. It was in this context that the revolutionary Marxists said that unleashing armed struggle is a task belonging specifically to the vanguard. It must take the initiative, while putting the emphasis from the start on those forms of armed struggle that make it possible to establish or strengthen ties with major strata of the masses. At the same time, they outlined a perspective of armed struggle developing through ups and downs and multiple variants for a prolonged period.

Revolutionary Marxists reject any conception of armed struggle marked by the features of focoism, putschism, or militarism. They reject any approach that maps out an armed struggle without taking into consideration the concrete process of the class struggle and the problem of developing links with the masses, which underestimates political content and methods for the sake of essentially technical and military ones. Such conceptions have wreaked havoc in Latin America—and, to a marginal degree, in Argentina also—and it is necessary to fight energetically against any attempt to repeat them.

Revolutionary Marxists likewise reject any approach that makes a fetish of the masses as well as all spontanist, insurrectionalist conceptions. The Latin-American workers movement has also paid a heavy price for these notions (the Bolivian example is the most eloquent). The advocates of such conceptions envisage the armed struggle as being able to arise almost automatically out of the masses, believing that it cannot be undertaken until the majority of the masses are ready to participate in it or support it. They reduce the armed struggle to a stage of a generalized insurrection making the final assault on the government, and in this context they harbor definite spontanist illusions. In the last analysis, these conceptions boil down to denying the Leninist conception of a vanguard and the Leninist critique of spontanism. They mean rejecting the Leninist ideas on the role of military questions at the stage when the masses themselves begin to attempt insurrectionary mobilizations, when the class struggle has reached the stage of armed con-

frontation.

The revolutionary Marxists state that, above all after the turning point in 1969, it was imperative to make preparations for armed struggle in the short run. At the same time, they confirm the need for intervening in the mass movement to exploit all opportunities for legal and semilegal work. To the extent that revolutionists succeed in understanding the daily problems of the workers and offering them a perspective in their struggle for their immediate demands as well (both economic and political), in showing that armed-struggle initiatives are applicable to these fields also, they will be able to win broader and broader layers to their overall revolutionary strategy. Among other things, they will be able to step up their potential for action markedly by increasing the working-class members of the operational detachments. Transitional slogans—slogans that by starting off from the concrete concerns of the broad masses help to get across the need for a struggle breaking out of the framework of the system—represent an essential element of a revolutionary strategy exactly insofar as they establish a link between the struggle for immediate demands and the overall battle to overthrow the capitalist system.

The revolutionists must utilize the instruments in which the masses traditionally place their confidence, as well as those that may arise in future mobilizations. They will be active in the unions, where they will wage a continual struggle against the bureaucracy that still represents the major obstacle to effectively utilizing the extraordinary energies the working class expends in its mobilizations. Their task will be not only to participate in the mobilizations. Also and above all, it will be to promote a polarization and maturation of advanced strata of the working class around platforms that correspond in reality to the needs of the struggles themselves as well as of extending these conflicts in the framework of a political battle against the dictatorship. This means that it will be necessary to work to strengthen all currents that, at different levels, begin to offer an alternative to the bureaucratic apparatuses.

The revolutionists will have at the same time to support and give impetus to the formation of the democratic rank-and-file bodies that arise in the course of the great mobilizations in revolutionary or prerevolutionary situations. Such bodies are the product of a need felt by the workers and especially their most dynamic layers not to stay trapped in the routine functioning of the bureaucratized structures, to express their aspirations in a more immediate and more effective way, to give their desires more weight, to achieve a broader united base of struggle. Organs of this type must be defended, above all inasmuch as they are the instruments par excellence of revolutionary mobilizations and can grow over into embryonic forms of an alternative power.

10. As regards the more immediate perspectives, the orientation of the revolutionary Marxists must be based on an analysis of the specific stage and its potentialities. The revolutionists must exploit to the fullest all the possibilities offered by contradictions within the bourgeoisie and by the political game Lanusse and company are playing. This involves taking advantage politically and propagandistically even of the electoral campaign and, all the more, participating in the battles that will be waged

by the masses, in order to stimulate and promote political clarification. This cannot, under any circumstances —on pain of committing suicide—mean disarming the armed organizations.

Assuming that the "acuerdista" operation is carried off, the establishment of a controlled "democracy" will not prevent the outbreak of great mass struggles that will bring about a rapid, or relatively rapid, disillusionment and will stimulate the political development of the broad layers of the social vanguard. In such a perspective, linking up with the masses in the political and trade-union field becomes imperative and any armed-struggle initiative must be subordinated to accomplishing this task. The revolutionists will have to be able to assign their best, politically most perspicacious cadres to the mass movement, at the same time as assuming the defense of political and trade-union mobilizations against the attacks the enemy will not fail to unleash. It is on this basis that it will be possible to establish a connection between the activity of the specialized detachments and the self-defense bodies emerging directly from the masses. On the success of the revolutionists in exploiting all these potentialities depends the possibility for projecting forms of armed struggle involving sections of the masses and in which the foremost role will be played by cadres coming directly from the working class and the most exploited strata of the population. If this stage is reached, it will have important implications for the successive stages of the struggle, even assuming the most unfavorable variant, a defeat of the working class and the establishment of a "gorilla" regime. The struggle against such a regime would in fact have a rather broad basis to start from and would begin in conditions very different from those that existed, for example, when the armed struggle was unleashed against the Brazilian dictatorship.

In a period marked by a grave crisis of the system and by revolutionary tensions, revolutionary Marxists will not limit themselves to advancing economic demands and fighting for the most elementary democratic rights. These objectives must be integrated into the framework of a transitional program. In the context of a mounting inflationary thrust and increasing sensitivity among the masses to the need for countering the rapid erosion of their buying power, a key slogan will be a sliding scale of wages that could immediately and completely counteract price rises and which would be implemented under workers' control. The issue of workers' control, the backbone of the transitional program, could be concretely brought in through this opening. As regards a general political alternative, a systematic campaign must be waged under the slogan of a workers and people's government. The precise content of this formula will be a government excluding representatives of the ruling classes and composed of representatives of the working class and those layers of the poor peasantry and the radicalized petty bourgeoisie that constitute the only allies the working class can count on. The formula of a workers and people's government will be explicitly opposed not only to all the formulas advanced by the *acuerdistas* and the traditional politicians but also to any formula that may be advocated by the Peronists and the Argentine Communist party deliberately obscuring the precise class content and involving an alliance between the bourgeoisie and the exploited classes.

## V. Critical Balance Sheet of the Argentine Trotskyist Movement

11. The PRT was founded in 1964 with the aim of forging the indispensable instrument of the workers' struggle for power. It lay claim to the conceptions and traditions of the Argentine Trotskyist movement and became a section of the Fourth International. Despite its audacious actions, the selflessness of its militants, and the prestige that it has won nationally and internationally, it still has not succeeded in transforming itself into a Leninist vanguard sufficiently rooted in the working class on a nationwide basis.

Both before and after the Ninth World Congress, it has undergone grave crises that have led to splits, reflecting the difficulties it encountered first in defining a strategy and then in putting the strategy it adopted into practice.

Shortly after the Fifth Congress, the ERP inaugurated its action. The party succeeded in changing the style of work and spirit of the militants and was thus able to undertake a struggle of considerable dimensions in a systematic and effective way. In the space of a few months, the ERP emerged as the most dynamic organization waging armed struggle, winning widespread sympathy in working-class and popular strata and becoming a real factor in the political struggle in the country.

The actions of the ERP—which was led by the PRT—fitted into a framework of many-sided urban guerrilla warfare, taking in general the following forms: (a) actions aimed at accumulating financial resources (in the tradition of the Bolsheviks); (b) actions aimed at acquiring arms, medical supplies, medical equipment, etc.; (c) actions of confiscating food, clothing, etc., and distributing it in poor neighborhoods in order to win the sympathy of the most deprived strata of the population; (d) actions linked to mass mobilizations; (e) actions inflicting punishment on the hangmen of the dictatorship who were well known and hated for their crimes. Certain actions in particular (the armed intervention at FIAT, the participation of ERP teams in the second Córdoba uprising) rose to a high level of armed struggle, the highest attained in Latin America since the Cuban revolution, inasmuch as they represented an attempt to integrate armed struggle into the concrete dynamic of the mass struggle. Extremely significant episodes (notably during the 1971 mobilizations in Córdoba) concretely refute opportunist arguments claiming that armed actions of the type conducted by the ERP are not understood or approved of by the working class and bring about the isolation of the vanguard. To the contrary, in the conditions of an upsurge and a pre-revolutionary crisis, the existence and intervention of armed detachments reinforces mass mobilizations and increases their militancy.

12. The problems that the PRT must face in the present stage and discuss also in connection with the debate in the International can be summed up as follows: Why, despite the favorable objective conditions and the prestige won by the actions of the ERP, have the ties between the party and the masses remained extremely weak? Why, especially after the Sylvester action, has the urban guerrilla war been marked by a setback in political content, inasmuch as the actions have generally been dictated much more by the needs of defending and freeing militants than

by logistic requirements or by a more political overall plan? If the potentialities of the present stage, in the context of the given relationship of forces, have not been sufficiently exploited, this is the result primarily of the PRT leadership's incorrect strategic orientations and general conceptions.

Already before the 1968 split, the party had drawn the conclusion — apparently unanimously — that the problem of armed struggle had to be put on the agenda. The analysis of the situation at the time, which was marked by a relative stagnation of the workers movement, acute social conflicts in the Tucumán region, and the existence of a guerrilla nucleus in Bolivia, suggested the perspective of armed struggle in the form of guerrilla warfare centered for a whole period in the North. The Fourth Congress, held before the Ninth World Congress, developed a sharp polemic on the need for concretizing the armed-struggle orientation (in the meantime the minority represented by Moreno had left the organization), putting forward a conception that sought to avoid the Scylla of adventurist focoism and the Charybdis of insurrectionalist spontanéism. On the basis not only of technical but also and above all social and political considerations (and in fact having a relatively static view of the tendencies ripening in the country) it gave priority to rural guerrilla warfare. The Fifth Congress, which was held at the conclusion of a new internal crisis, marked a decisive stage in the life of the organization by founding the ERP, which was to begin applying the strategy of armed struggle that had been adopted. Partially rectifying the line of the Fourth Congress in the light of the mobilizations of 1969, it mapped out a combination of rural and urban guerrilla warfare.

But these rectifications, which were made in an empirical way, have proved completely insufficient. First of all, the development of the revolutionary struggle in Argentina was projected on the basis of an analogy with the experience of the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, with a tendency to overlook or minimize the essential differences (including the social composition of the countries, the existence even before the revolutionary war was launched of a party with broad mass influence, the paralysis of the ruling classes resulting from both domestic and international factors, etc.). Subsequently a schematic analysis constantly obscured the distinction that must be made between a trend toward civil war and the first stages of armed confrontation on the one hand and revolutionary war in the strict sense on the other. Finally, the conception was that the ERP would be built essentially through its own initiatives carried out by its own members. The result was failure to avoid the danger of projecting a military strategy not strictly related to the course of political development. A critical analysis of all these problems is a primary task to be accomplished in the discussion that has opened up and in which all members of the party must participate actively.

The PRT must confirm — eliminating any possibility for misunderstanding — its appreciation of the anticapitalist, socialist dynamic of the revolution in Argentina, ruling out any notion of a revolution by stages. It must fully assimilate the lessons of the Uruguayan Frente Amplio and the price paid by the Tupamaros for their strategic default and their electoral opportunism. It must define

more precisely its conception of the alliances the working class must enter into in the revolutionary process, distinguishing the question of the convergence of social forces from that of possible agreements between political formations and making clear the limits of any tactical accords. Nor can the policy of unity with other organizations engaged in armed struggle be applied without taking into consideration whether there is an identity of political objectives, which is the precondition for any revolutionary unity. This is all the more true since certain organizations remain under the ideological sway of Peronism.

Finally, the party must make clear its conception and method of intervening in the mass movement. The concept of rank-and-file committees — which in itself is correct — has so far merely been tacked onto the conception of the armed struggle without really being integrated with it. This is why activity in this field has usually had an episodic character and has not produced any significant general results. It is essential to understand that if the PRT does not solve this problem it will not be able to translate the prestige gained by its military operations into direct political and organizational influence. In this event, it will jeopardize the chances for broadening the armed struggle substantially by directly involving sectors of the masses. The PRT must also make an effort to clarify the lines of its intervention in the student milieu, the breeding ground of activists and cadres for the revolutionary struggle. The deficiencies in this area up till now have been very grave, and they must be overcome as quickly as possible. Clearing up all these essential questions and carrying out the indicated political initiatives are, moreover, a precondition for the PRT taking the lead in the fight to expose the Peronist ideology and the trade-union bureaucracy, which remain the major obstacles to the development of revolutionary consciousness in broad layers of the working class. It is a prerequisite also for winning the worker and student vanguards that have taken form in recent years, especially in the epicenters of the class struggle, and that oscillate between ultraleftism and sectarian dogmatic and opportunist centrism.

13. The Argentine Trotskyist movement developed under very special conditions. An Argentine section was recognized unanimously by the Third World Congress in 1951. The choice in favor of the Posadas tendency was determined fundamentally on political grounds. The Moreno tendency was characterized at the time by a completely false analysis of the Peronist regime and by a sectarian attitude toward the mass movement led by the Peronists. During the period of the split, the Moreno group established ties with the International Committee but on several occasions took positions that were not shared by the other members of the IC and which provoked violent polemics, especially in Latin America. It was not by chance that this group did not participate in the Reunification Congress and only joined the united International two years later. Both before and after the reunification, it expressed positions on crucial questions (the attitude to be taken to the Peronist movement, the possible role of the middle classes, the policy of alliances, the evaluation of the 1938 Transitional Program, the characterization of the Chinese CP leadership and the cultural revolution, etc.) that differed sharply from those of the International

as a whole. As for the Posadas group, starting in 1957 it began to develop the aberrant political and methodological conceptions that led it to the 1961 split and made it the most grotesque and most irresponsible of all the sects that fraudulently claimed to be Trotskyist while remaining outside the International. From eminently dogmatic and adventurist positions, it passed progressively to ultrarightist ones, capitulating to the Kremlin and the leaderships of the pro-Soviet CPs. The lack of relations between the international center and the new Argentine leadership even after it joined—as well as the methods of the Argentine leadership at the time—prevented the necessary political and theoretical discussion between the International and the Argentine Trotskyists as well as the assimilation of new cadres (especially after the fusion between the former Moreno group and the FRIP, which gave rise to the PRT). The consequence was that the Argentine section continued to express ideas, to adopt a methodology and to use a terminology that had no equivalent in any other section of the International.

All these precedents must be recalled inasmuch as they indicate the origin of a whole series of positions expressed by the PRT, even after the 1968 split (the evaluation of Maoism, and especially Mao's conception of people's war; the estimate of Castroism; the conception of building the International; the conception of the struggle against the bureaucracy in the degenerated workers' states). These positions mean that the Argentine comrades have very clear and serious differences with the conceptions of the International. It is an urgent task for the section to develop an in-depth discussion with the International on these questions. This is required, on the one hand, by the necessity of making our movement homogeneous and, on the other, by the needs of developing the party and a correct orientation in the struggle the comrades are engaged in in Argentina.

From this standpoint grave errors have been committed. Immediately after the Ninth Congress a discussion should have been initiated with the comrades of the PRT on all the political and theoretical differences. Subsequently, we should not have limited ourselves to publicizing the courageous actions of the ERP without at the same time raising the problems that existed. Consequently the needed discussion has begun only after a delay that threatens to endanger the results.

14. The world congress must draw up a balance sheet of the group recognized by the Ninth Congress as a sympathizing organization. It can only be a negative one.

First of all, the *La Verdad* group has applied a line

opposed to the one adopted by the Ninth Congress. It has developed a policy opposed to that of the Argentine section of the International, from which it has taken its distance at crucial moments. It has conceived of its relationship with the International in a factional way. In its press, it has publicly attacked other Latin American sections as well as leaders of the International by name, whose guilt was that they defended the orientations set by the World Congress. In the second place, *La Verdad* has adopted clearly opportunist attitudes, showing thereby that it has not overcome the traditional failings of the Moreno group. This grouping, which went from sectarian positions in 1951 to a line of merging opportunistically into the Peronist movement at the time of *Palabra Obrera*, which oscillated between making conservative and bookish criticisms of Guevarism and giving unconditional support to Inti Peredo's guerrillas, even advocating a strict adherence to the discipline of OLAS, and which bore the main responsibility for the split in 1968, has confirmed its fundamental lack of comprehension of the needs of armed struggle in the present stage of the class struggle in Argentina. It was quick to seek electoral registration when even the ultra-opportunist Communist party of Argentina hesitated to accept these conditions, and thereby objectively gave a left cover to the dictatorship's insidious maneuver. And finally—also for electoralist purposes—agreed to a political and organizational fusion with the PSA-Coral tendency, which has never had the slightest significant influence in the working class. It is in the name of this party that its members are now operating, making the elections the central axis of their activity and developing an opportunist and tail-endist conception of building the party. At the time of the Uruguayan elections, it confirmed its rightist conceptions by supporting the Frente Amplio, led by the bourgeois Liber Seregni.

15. Over the last twenty years Argentina has been the scene of the broadest mobilizations of the working class in Latin America. Vanguards have developed there on the basis of manifold experiences, both national and international. There are many activists who claim to be revolutionary Marxists. The formation of a revolutionary party with a mass base is on the agenda and the Fourth International must make it one of its priorities to promote this. The discussion that has opened and which will continue up to the world congress must help to accomplish this task and help to bring about theoretical and political homogeneity between the Argentine section and the other sectors of the world Trotskyist movement.

November 15, 1972

# Documents of the December 2-6, 1972, meeting of the International Executive Committee

## Editorial Note

In addition to the documents on Bolivia and Argentina, a number of statements, resolutions, and motions were part of the political record of the December 2-6, 1972, meeting of the International Executive Committee. These items, which were attached to the minutes of the IEC, were submitted to the International Internal Discussion Bulletin by the April 7-8, 1973, United Secretariat meeting.

The "Sterne-Walter resolution on Vietnam" was adopted by a vote of 18 for, 11 against, and one abstention. It was printed in the January 15, 1973, issue of *Intercontinental Press* (pp. 27-29).

The "Motion on Vietnam submitted by Adair, Hans, Juan, Pedro, Stateman, and Therese" was defeated by a vote of 11 for, 19 against, and no abstentions.

A motion by Juan that the World Congress be postponed for three months was defeated by a vote of 11 for, 19 against, and no abstentions. The "Statement by Juan on reasons for postponing the World Congress" and the "Statement by Walter on reasons for not postponing the World Congress" were attached to the IEC minutes to explain the two points of view on this question.

The statement by Sandor, the statement by Sakai, the letter from the Central Secretariat of the Communist

League of India, and the message from Comrade Roca require no explanation.

The December 2-6, 1972, meeting of the International Executive Committee discussed and voted on several other documents and reports. Some of these have appeared in previous numbers of the International Internal Discussion Bulletin (IIDB).

The United Secretariat majority draft resolution, "The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe," was published in IIDB Volume IX, Number 5.

"Argentina and Bolivia—the Balance Sheet," by Hugo Blanco, Peter Camejo, Joseph Hansen, Anibal Lorenzo, and Nahuel Moreno, was published in IIDB Volume X, Number 1.

"A Criticism of the United Secretariat Majority Draft Resolution on 'The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe,'" by Mary-Alice Waters, was published in IIDB Volume X, Number 3.

The "December 3, 1972, Statement by 19 IEC members" was published in IIDB Volume X, Number 4.

"Bolivia: Results and Perspectives" and "The Political Crisis and Perspectives for Revolutionary Struggle in Argentina," both adopted by a majority of the IEC members present, appear in this bulletin, IIDB Volume X, Number 6.

## Sterne-Walter resolution on Vietnam

1. The opening of negotiations between the United States and the Vietnamese, and their subsequent evolution, can be correctly understood only in the complex framework of the existing balance of forces between the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces, both on a world scale and in Indochina itself.

The basic weakness of the Indochinese revolution lies in its relative international isolation. The main cause of this isolation is the conservative policy of peaceful coexistence followed by the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies and by the Communist parties they control on a world scale. This policy has enabled American imperialism to carry out a systematic escalation of its murderous attacks on the revolutionary forces in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam without an adequate response in the least way from the bureaucracies in power in Moscow and Peking. What aid they have given the Vietnamese fighters has been doled out drop by drop and has at the same time increasingly been used as a means of putting political pressure on these fighters to "moderate" their struggle.

The relative isolation of the Vietnamese revolution, which was partially ameliorated only by the growth of the worldwide mass movement of struggle against the war of imperialist aggression, worsened after the announcement of Nixon's trips to Peking and Moscow. Nixon succeeded in demobilizing a significant part of the antiwar movement in the United States, enabling him to launch a new military escalation in Indochina. Under these conditions the Vietnamese revolution cannot win victory over imperialism on a purely military level. Hence the attempt to reach a negotiated solution in order to end imperialism's military intervention in Indochina.

The basic power of the Indochinese revolution lies in the unprecedented breadth and vigor of the revolutionary process initiated and developed in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Because of this, the imperialist intervention has experienced a series of strategic setbacks. First there was the failure of "special war," then of "local war," and today the props of the "Vietnamization" policy have been undermined.

The victories scored by the revolutionary forces in Cam-

bodia (after Lon Nol's coup d'etat) and in Laos (after the battle of Bass Loo in February 1971) prevented the crushing of resistance in South Vietnam. The offensive unleashed in South Vietnam eight months ago destroyed the "pacification" program in the countryside and generally altered the relationship of forces in favor of the popular revolutionary forces. The agrarian revolution and the formation of organs of revolutionary power have moved forward in vast rural areas of South Vietnam. The air attacks on the North and on the liberated zones of the three countries of Indochina did not succeed in breaking popular resistance or in preventing the revolutionary armed forces from continuing their offensive.

In this context, the Vietnamese Communist party's attempt to win through negotiations a withdrawal of imperialist troops from Vietnam does not necessarily imply a step backward for the Vietnamese revolution. The immediate prospects for the Vietnamese revolution can be laid out and the tasks of revolutionary Marxists in relation to it can be defined only through a correct analysis of the military, political, social, economic, and psychological effects that the possible cease-fire accords may have on the various South Vietnamese social classes and their major political expressions.

2. In any event, withdrawal of the U. S. armed forces from Vietnam and cessation of the bombing of both the North and South would constitute a shift in the relationship of forces in favor of the Vietnamese revolution. This would reflect imperialism's inability to break the heroic resistance of the Vietnamese masses as well as its retreat before the strength of antiwar sentiment in the United States itself.

But in itself such a retreat does not guarantee the victory of the permanent revolution in South Vietnam. It only means that the revolutionary process will be able to develop with a reduced, but not eliminated, foreign interference. U. S. aid to the counterrevolutionary forces in South Vietnam will continue. The American fleet will remain in Indochinese waters, threatening the masses of these countries with a resumption of bombing should the revolution make fresh advances. The retention of U. S. bases in Thailand entails an analogous threat. Moscow and Peking's pressure on the Vietnamese CP will scarcely cease. The continuous rearming of the puppet army, the transformation of U. S. troops into "civilian advisers," the continuing financial and economic aid to the Thieu regime, the increase in Saigon's police terror, the sending of forces from an international control commission, which, inasmuch as it is composed of bourgeois armies will intervene in favor of the counterrevolutionary forces—all these factors show that U. S. imperialism will seize every opportunity offered it by the continuation of dual power after the possible signing of accords of the type proposed in October 1972.

Under these conditions, everything will depend on the development of revolutionary mass struggles both in the cities and in the countryside, on the policy followed by the Vietnamese CP, and on the interrelation of these two factors and their impact on whatever counterrevolutionary military apparatuses Thieu's puppets will command.

3. The current situation in South Vietnam is one of dual power from top to bottom. On a countrywide level

and on a provincial level, in countless villages and in various cities the workers and peasants' governmental structures and armed forces stand opposed to the governmental structures and armed forces of the counterrevolution, the big landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie, the puppets of imperialism. Some important regions have been completely liberated and are administered by revolutionary organs of power. But this dual power has yet to be extended to the country's principal cities. The success or failure of the revolutionary struggle of the masses in extending the formation of organs of revolutionary power and in destroying the bourgeois state apparatus—a struggle to be waged after the possible signing of a cease-fire agreement—will determine the outcome of the revolutionary process in Indochina.

It is in this context that the question of a "national coalition" government or structure must be approached. We must clearly explain that there is no possibility, in Vietnam or elsewhere, of "national concord" between the exploiting and exploited classes. The Fourth International remains opposed to coalition governments with the bourgeoisie, whatever the specific composition of these governments. Even when the bourgeois ministers are hostages of an already proletarian state power, their presence does not facilitate the consolidation of the revolutionary seizure of power and can only disorient the proletariat's class consciousness.

But this principled opposition to any coalition government with the bourgeoisie does not entitle us automatically to define all cases of such governments as popular-front regimes stabilizing and defending the economic rule and the state of the possessing classes. History offers us the example of France and Spain in 1936, France, Italy, Greece, Indonesia, and elsewhere at the end of the second world war, where this was the case. But it was not the case in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and China, where the presence of bourgeois ministers in the central government did not prevent the socialist transformation of the revolutionary process from occurring. The decisive thing is the nature of the state, that is, the class character of those who control the armed forces. If the bourgeoisie is in reality disarmed, then the bourgeois ministers are hostages of the proletarian state (whether bureaucratically deformed or not). If the proletariat and poor peasantry are in reality disarmed, then the revolution has suffered defeat. If both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie retain their arms, then the "government" or structure of "national coalition" can only be an expression of dual power; that is, it represents but a momentary hiatus in an ongoing civil war that can be ended only by the victory of one or the other existing camp of class antagonists.

4. The revolutionary offensive of the South Vietnamese laboring masses will develop along already discernible lines that make any interruption in the political struggle less than likely:

(a) In the countryside, the deepening of the agrarian revolution—which in many areas has already reached the stage of forming cooperatives—and its extension to other regions, that is, its generalization throughout South

Vietnam; elimination of the landed proprietors, usurers, big traders, and the gangster-watchdogs of the Thieu regime, and implacable opposition to their returning to

villages from which they have already been driven.

(b) In the cities, the struggle against the high cost of living, speculation, gambling, hoarding of vital goods and basic necessities, exploitation of the masses by the industrial, financial, and big commercial bourgeoisie.

(c) In the cities and the countryside, immediate struggle for the release of the 200,000 political prisoners, for political rights, and for complete freedom of action for all organizations illegalized by the Thieu regime.

(d) In both the cities and the countryside, dissolution of the puppet military and administrative apparatuses through the combined effects of the processes just described.

All indications are that the cadres of the NLF and the Vietnamese CP are systematically preparing the South Vietnamese population for this mass political struggle. The U. S. withdrawal, like the perspective of reunification with the North and the acceptance of the principle of free elections with the participation of all political parties today consigned to clandestinity, will inevitably stimulate mass struggles and will further tilt the balance of forces in favor of the revolution.

5. The Vietnamese Communist party and the NLF leadership enjoy such prestige and authority among the South Vietnamese laboring masses that their orientation will significantly affect the pace and breadth of the mass mobilizations. To evaluate all the actions of this leadership it would be necessary to know in detail the situation in South Vietnam, which for us is impossible at present. We can only make some general observations.

First of all, a capitulation of the CP leadership, which would entail the dissolution of the revolution's independent armed forces, seems very unlikely in light of what happened both to the cadres and to the South Vietnamese masses after the Geneva accords. Further, if the Stalinist training of the Vietnamese CP leaders implies the possibility of opportunist maneuvers — which are reflected in the written public program of the NLF — the balance of the last fifteen years clearly demonstrates this party's tenacious commitment to the overthrow of the bourgeois state in South Vietnam. Finally, the relationship between the CP and the South Vietnamese mass movement is not simply a function of the CP's political authority, but also of the unusual pressure of the revolutionary masses on a party which in its practical orientation has broken with Stalinism's classical Menshevik line in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and which is independent of the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies.

6. All opportunities for independent intervention in this process by revolutionary Marxists must be utilized to the fullest extent possible, with the principle aim of deepening the permanent revolution in South Vietnam and of helping it attain final victory. On the scene, this will involve action to strengthen the independent proletarian

organizations in Saigon, in which our movement has a real tradition.

It is especially important to stress the role that devolves on us on an international scale, not only today, when imperialism's barbaric war is in full swing, but tomorrow as well, in the event a cease-fire agreement is signed. The revolution will go on after the signing. International solidarity with this revolution will remain more than ever a vital necessity, the more so as the Communist parties around the world sink further into immobility, if not into open abandonment of the defense of the Vietnamese masses' fight to complete their revolution. Our responsibility in developing mass actions to support the Indochinese revolution will thus increase, and we will have to fight against any attempt to demobilize active international solidarity.

The main lines of our activity are clear: extension of the support actions now being waged by our sections, especially against any imperialist intervention continuing after the signing of the possible cease-fire accords (for the complete withdrawal of the U. S. fleet and of U. S. "civilian advisers," for the elimination of the air-naval bases in Thailand, against the sending of "international control forces" composed of bourgeois armies); the development of increased propaganda against the "peaceful coexistence" policies of the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies, which substantially contributed to the deterioration of the international relationship of forces in which the Indochinese revolution is unfolding.

In case a cease-fire agreement is signed, our movement must explain that there must be no letup in support for the Indochinese revolution. It is around the line of complete support for the Indochinese revolution until total victory — a line carried out through concrete slogans in each country in accordance with the concrete situation of the mass movement — that we must mobilize militants and continue our mass work of support to the Indochinese revolution.

Today an international campaign must be prepared demanding the immediate release of South Vietnamese political prisoners and against the terror unleashed by the Thieu regime — terror for which U. S. imperialism bears full responsibility. From now on, the American government's responsibility for any massacre of these prisoners must be sharply stressed. This campaign must be carried out in the most united fashion possible.

The development of the situation in Laos and Cambodia must be closely followed. It will also most probably necessitate many solidarity actions.

7. The importance of the questions raised by the future of the Indochinese revolution necessitate a continuing discussion in the framework of preparation for the tenth world congress (fourth since reunification) of the Fourth International.

December 6, 1972

## Motion on Vietnam submitted by Adair, Hans, Juan, Pedro, Stateman, and Therese

1. It is against the background of the intensified U.S. military pressure, and the political, diplomatic and material pressure of Moscow and Peking, that the Vietnamese have been forced to offer the concessions to imperialism contained in the proposed "nine-point settlement" released by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on October 26.

It is not unprincipled for the Vietnamese leadership to make concessions of a territorial, military or other material nature, forced upon them in given situations. That depends upon the relationship of forces. However, a genuinely revolutionary leadership would clearly explain to the masses that concessions have been made, what they signify, and why they had to be made.

To tell the truth about any concessions made is necessary to prepare for the next stage of struggle, to mobilize the masses in Vietnam and internationally, to confront the real obstacles to the revolution that the concessions entail, and to warn of the dangers contained in them. The Fourth International will do this regardless of the position taken by the Vietnamese leadership, which up to now has not done this adequately.

2. The program of the Provisional Revolutionary Government includes the call for a coalition government—that is, a government including bourgeois forces—in South Vietnam. The Fourth International differentiates itself from any support to the call for a coalition government. As differentiated from the program of the PRG, the Fourth International projects its own program of democratic demands and transitional demands, in accordance with the theory of permanent revolution, to carry out the democratic and socialist tasks of the Indochinese revolution.

3. The line of the Fourth International has been and continues to be unconditional defense of the Vietnamese revolution, irrespective of the policies of its present leadership.

Our major fire is directed against the imperialist aggressor. We should continue to build and support mass actions against the imperialist aggression on a united-front basis. We demand, with or without a cease-fire, that the U.S. withdraw all of its troops, "civilian advisors," bases and material from all of Southeast Asia immediately and unconditionally. All aid to the Saigon regime should be ended forthwith, and every other form of interference in the affairs of the Vietnamese people ended, in consonance with the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination.

We are opposed to any conditions forced upon the Vietnamese in the current negotiations. We will support no demands, such as "sign the nine-point agreement" (directed against Washington), involving support of conditions that violate the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination and that constitute obstacles in the path of the revolution.

The sections of the Fourth International will continue to oppose any complicity with the U.S. intervention in Indochina by their "own" bourgeoisies, including the sending of troops or other forces as part of an agreement placing an "international" supervisory force in Vietnam.

Among the forces claiming to be revolutionary, our major fire is directed against the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies, which bear the major responsibility for any concessions wrung from the Vietnamese.

## Statement by Juan on reasons for postponing the World Congress

1. A democratic congress requires making the documents available to the membership well in advance so that the discussion can be properly organized. This applies not only to the main initial documents voted on by the leading bodies but also to the contributions that are made in response to them. The unfortunate fact is that we continue to be faced with inordinate delays in the preparation of documents and above all in translating them.

It is true that considerable technical difficulties stand in the way of speedy translation and circulation of the documents. These difficulties, however, are not insuperable; and we have been promised that every effort will be made to overcome them and that we can rest assured that they will be overcome, particularly in the case of translations into French. However, the same promise has been made repeatedly in the past three years. The promise has not been kept. In light of the record it is doubtful that it can be kept now, whatever the intentions of those who do the promising. The deadline is too near.

In all likelihood, we will face a repetition of the situation that occurred at the last world congress in which many delegates arrived without having had an opportunity to read in advance, still less discuss, the documents on which they had to vote. If that situation is repeated, the coming congress would not be a democratic one, in my opinion.

To postpone the congress for several months would

help avoid such a situation. It would increase the possibility of setting up a better functioning technical apparatus so as to assure translation and circulation of the documents in time.

2. It may be felt that the present apparatus can catch up with the accumulation. The comrades should be reminded of the fact that the documents of the PRT (Combatiente) are only first now being made available in English. To translate them into French and German and to circulate them in Spanish, as scheduled, is a big job. Moreover, it must be anticipated that there will be an increase in the submission of new documents in the months immediately ahead. The positions of the PRT (Combatiente) alone are bound to provoke intense discussion once the comrades have had an opportunity to study them.

On top of this, the new documents presented at this IEC meeting are certain to engender replies and counter-replies, as is normal in a democratic discussion, further increasing the translation load.

3. We must take into consideration still another problem; that is the fact that two tendencies have been forming internationally. This is a consequence of the deepening of the differences that appeared at the last world congress. Such a development, as everyone knows, is a normal part of the internal life of our movement. Nevertheless, every experienced comrade is aware of the fact that such



a development involves certain dangers. We should note the recent splits that have taken place in some areas—Canada, Australia, more recently in Mexico, and now Spain. These constitute a warning sign.

To speed up the pace of the discussion, as will certainly happen in face of an imminent deadline, can add to the danger, particularly if no way is found to break the bottleneck on translating and circulating the documents.

It is in the obvious interest of both tendencies to seek to establish better control of the situation so as to be able to more effectively counter ill-considered actions or flare-ups that would foster a mood favoring a split.

It is all the more necessary to do this in view of the fact that the differences have already become public knowledge to a certain degree, and further spillovers into the public, exacerbating the situation, can hardly be avoided whether through carelessness or through accident. We have already had some examples of this. If better control can be established, this danger can be reduced. But time is required for that.

We need more time to permit the movement to become adjusted to the existence of tendencies, and to find ways

of working together with the least possible friction despite this complication in the life of the International. If we had more time at our disposal it would be easier to do this while at the same time conducting a model discussion that would permit a resolution of the differences in accordance with the objective test of events and without a split that might be precipitated out of a subjective reaction. This is exceedingly important, as I see it.

4. All these reasons for postponement would seem to call for subordinating such secondary considerations as the fact that the congress has already been postponed beyond the normal time or that it is technically awkward to organize a congress later in the year when the weather is colder and when it is more inconvenient for delegates to get off the job in Europe.

5. The decision, of course, is up to the comrades of the majority. I hope they will weigh the matter carefully and decide that it is worth providing more time to help counter the possibilities of a split and to help ensure that the coming congress will be a democratic one and thus one with authority in the eyes of the world movement.

### Statement by Walter on reasons for not postponing the World Congress

The discussion in the International on the differences which have arisen during the Ninth World Congress has been going on now for practically three years without interruption. In the meantime, the movement has witnessed rapid growth, in several parts of the world the most rapid growth it has ever known. The situation which results from this combination of circumstances confronts the leadership of the Fourth International with several conflicting responsibilities.

It has to make sure that the world movement prepares the next world congress in a truly democratic manner, in which all tendencies and viewpoints expressed get a full hearing, and delegates are elected after the ranks have made up their minds on the disputed questions, on the basis of adequate information. It has to make sure that the movement is led by a leadership which has been chosen by the ranks as they are at this stage—i.e., much more numerous than at the time of the Ninth World Congress in the spring of 1969. It has to make sure that the internal debate which must take the upper hand during a pre-congress discussion does not drag on too long, turning the attention of the comrades away from the tasks of party building and expansion of the International. It has to preserve the unity of the movement, which is submitted to an obvious stress by the divisions which have occurred in several countries, and by the intertwining of the questions disputed on the international scale with questions of national tactics arising in these countries.

Taking into consideration all these priorities, a further postponement of the world congress, which has already been postponed twice, and which is already much past the date limit fixed by the statutes, does not appear a wise decision.

Comrade Juan is right in stressing the absolute need for having the discussion material made available to the sections before they make their final decisions as to the

election of delegates to the world congress. There has been a regrettable delay in the appearance of part of that material up till now. But a further postponement of the congress will not help solve that question, on the contrary. It will simply mean that the discussion period will be further extended, that the mass of material submitted will further increase, and that especially those sections in smaller language groups will find it even more difficult to catch up with the backlog of material.

The right decisions to take in that respect should be:

a) To guarantee the publication of all the backlog of material in French in the coming weeks. This is a special responsibility for the majority caucus, which will insure this without reservations or delay.

b) To make sure that the sections' congresses be held at a date sufficiently close to the world congress that an adequate discussion of the available material can take place in the ranks.

c) To put a final deadline to the submission of material, so that a continuous expansion of discussion material till the eve of the congress could be avoided.

Comrades should keep in mind that already today hundreds of pages of discussion material are being submitted to the ranks. This amount is likely to be at least doubled during the coming months. Any further extension of the discussion period, which would further increase this mass of discussion material in a substantial way would lead to a situation in which the majority of the ranks of the movement would be in no position to read, let alone seriously discuss, such a mass of documents.

Internal democracy does not only demand that all points of view should be made available. This is only the formal, although of course indispensable, side of the democratic process. It also demands that all points of view should be adequately discussed by the ranks. By extending the mass of material beyond a certain limit, this is practically prevented. The essential side of the democratic process—

the actual assimilation by the ranks of the different points of view, in order to be able to choose among them—is thereby sacrificed to the formal side.

On the other hand, to decrease the heat which has been introduced into the debate in several countries, it is not only necessary to give minorities full democratic rights of defending their points of view. It is also necessary to enable the movement to elect a leadership which really represents the whole movement, and which is capable of applying majority decisions in practical day-to-day activity. The unity of the movement is threatened both when a minority feels that it cannot get a full and equal hearing, with a chance of convincing the ranks gradually of the correctness of its positions, and when a majority feels that it is prevented from leading the party building activities of the movement, as a result of interminable inner debates producing growing paralysis with regard to public intervention.

It is a fact that the issues dividing the International are now clearly formulated before the movement with the emergence of the calls for the formation of two tendencies. It is also a fact that the leadership bodies elected at the Ninth World Congress do not adequately represent the movement as it is today, with important sectors of the movement having no representation at all, or very

inadequate representation, in the present leadership bodies. Prolonging such an unhealthy situation far beyond the statutory limits is not going to decrease the dangerous heat developing inside the movement. It will rather tend to increase that heat.

The responsibility before the leadership of the world movement is to turn the present experience of internal differentiation inside the FI to a convincing demonstration of its capacity to apply the logic of democratic centralism in the same way as this was done in the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky, i.e., without sacrificing any of the basic needs of either internal democracy nor unity in action of the movement. Let us show our opponents and sympathisers alike in the revolutionary vanguard that we are capable of organizing the most democratic discussion possible in our own ranks, and that we are likewise capable of submitting to majority decisions of a representative and democratically elected world congress, held after years of discussion, till the next discussion period is opened. This is the only way to avoid growing internal tensions and to make the International come out of this debate stronger and more united than before. The fulfillment of the conditions and pledges enumerated above serves that purpose. A further postponement of the congress would not serve it.

### **Statement by Sandor on behalf of those IEC members who voted for the general line of the Latin American resolution at 1969 World Congress**

It was correct after the Ninth World Congress to stress active solidarity with the courageous struggle of the Argentine section of the Fourth International, a struggle that has enriched the experience of the entire Trotskyist movement and increased sympathy for Trotskyism among the international revolutionary vanguard.

It was likewise correct to condemn the public attacks launched by tendencies in the Fourth International against the tragic aspects of the activity of our Argentine section.

But the comrades who voted for the Latin American

resolution at the Ninth World Congress committed an error in not opening up a fraternal discussion sooner in our movement on the ideological positions of the Argentine section, in particular, on Maoism, the military intervention in Czechoslovakia, and the road toward building a mass revolutionary International, positions with which they are in complete disagreement. These comrades hereby make a self-criticism in this regard and promise to begin a discussion on these questions with the Argentine comrades and throughout the International, in the context of preparing for the Tenth World Congress.

### **Statement by Sakai**

I would like to explain my position. First, it is my opinion that the minority document on Argentina contains no complete action program for what is today a prerevolutionary situation. In a deep and critical prerevolutionary situation, we should have a very clear and concrete action program for taking power. The Transitional Program is a general method of the class struggle but it's a general, abstract, method. We should have a concrete program for the struggle for power, one which corresponds to the concrete situation at this time.

Secondly, I was absent during the discussion of the European document. However, as I commented in a recent letter to Walter, since 1967 our section in Japan has been a kind of JCR-type organization. It has not been a real section of the Fourth International—ideologically, politically and organizationally—in either its international or domestic aspects.

Now our central problem and task is to construct real sections of the International in capitalist Europe and Japan. This is the task that the draft thesis on Europe poses for the International. The draft thesis tries to pose the problems and tasks as a total unity, which is correct and very essential at the present stage, after the sporadic, regional entryism in capitalist Europe and Japan. We should enter into a new, systematic and consistent field of activities organizationally. We cannot enter the current period without a totally unified theory on party building, even if it may contain some errors.

So, I support the majority document on Europe. I can't accept the minority opinion on that document.

Third, on the majority document on Argentina: I'm not so well informed and I'm not so clear about the concrete situation in Argentina. So, my opinion at this stage is more an impression, or feeling. But I want to indicate

my line of thinking about the Argentine situation, about the problems and tasks.

At the present, I think the most important field of activity in Argentina should be the preparation of the working masses themselves for the coming real confrontation. On that point, the majority document has a kind of militarist orientation. At the present stage, and in the coming stage, the military aspect of the struggle is clearly very important. So, we should be clear on the military aspect of the struggle, especially among the working masses. But, in my opinion, the most important question is how to break the working class from the traditional Peronist trade-union bureaucracy. For this purpose, a political organization is the most essential, the most centrally important thing.

### **Letter to the IEC from the Central Secretariat of the Communist League of India**

We tried to send one of our friends to the meeting of the IEC but it was not possible to complete the formalities because of technical difficulties.

We would like to convey our opinion regarding some problems which are likely to be discussed in the IEC.

1) With regard to the situation in Argentina and Bolivia we do not agree with the stand taken by the majority in the United Secretariat. The tendency is to directly or indirectly support the terrorist or semi-terrorist activities on the part of youth organizations which are revolting against the traditional working class parties would lead us to serious difficulties, both in organisational and in far reaching political implementings. Our stress should be on the classical concept of class struggle of the working class against the bourgeois state in every country. We recognise that this struggle can even get distorted by wrong intervention of alien class forces. While we may sympathise with those who indulge in terrorist activities in so far as their objectives are concerned, we cannot identify ourselves politically or organisationally with them. This applies to the kidnapping episode in Argentina and also the stands taken by the Bolivian section on the question of armed struggle.

2) To the extent we are able to understand the controversy among the European sections our view is that some of our comrades in their anxiety to win over the million of youth to our movements tend to align themselves with various adventurist elements. This might bring temporary advantages but will ultimately compel the movement to compromise itself on questions of basic strategy and tactics. We feel that on a global scale with the traditional working class parties cracking up and starting to degenerate the various extremist tendencies that revolt against the traditional leaderships have not gained but on the contrary are exhausting themselves. If our movement is to take advantage of this we have to have patience and

The military aspect should be subordinated to this political line.

Fourth point: On the Argentine section's attitude toward the International. We are very familiar with China and North Korea. The present peaceful-coexistence policy of the Maoist leadership is very clear. As for North Korea, I think, the North Korean leadership is the most bureaucratized of all the Asian workers states. In the Asian countries, we have and will have very hard, serious fights with the Maoist Chinese leadership and also with the North Korean leadership. We should have no illusions about the Maoist leadership and about the Kim Il-sung leadership. The position of the Argentine section on the International is related with their line on armed struggle in Argentina. The two are indivisible, I think.

we are bound to get new forces, if we pursue a classical concept of organisational methods.

3) With regard to the Indian sub continent we think that our movement will have to evolve a common strategy for all the countries including India, Pakistan and Bangla Desh. We have discussed our general approach in the last issue of "Red Spark."

The call for united socialist Bengal we gave in December 1971 after the armed intervention of the Indian army in Bangla Desh and before the arrival of Mujib in Dacca was basically correct as a propaganda slogan at that time. The general expectation was that the revolutionary struggles both in Bangla Desh and West Bengal would fuse together and force the issue of a United Socialist Bengal. This has not happened. The revolutionary movement in West Bengal has also suffered a set back. Therefore we think the slogan of "greater Bengal" given by Maulana Bhashani is motivated more by Chauvinist consideration rather than by revolutionary objective. What Bhashani is demanding is a bourgeois Bengal and not a Socialist Bengal. While we support the right of self-determination for all nationalities including the Bengalis, we think this principle can be realised only in the context of the Union of Socialist State of Indian sub-continent. Therefore we do not think the slogan of United Socialist Bengal can be used as immediate agitational slogan by us.

The traditional working class parties in India are also disintegrating and there is a new regroupment of revolutionary groups like former Naxalites. If a new leadership of the FI has to emerge in India, it has to be integrated with these forces.

We shall prepare a detailed document on this for the consideration on different subjects before the next World Congress. These are the views of the Central Secretariat which met recently.

### **Message to the IEC from Comrade Roca**

A telegram was received from Comrade Roca during the IEC informing of technical complications delaying

his arrival. The telegram states his "agreement with the general line of Livio's document" on Bolivia.