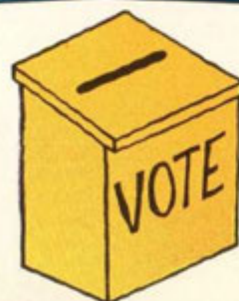
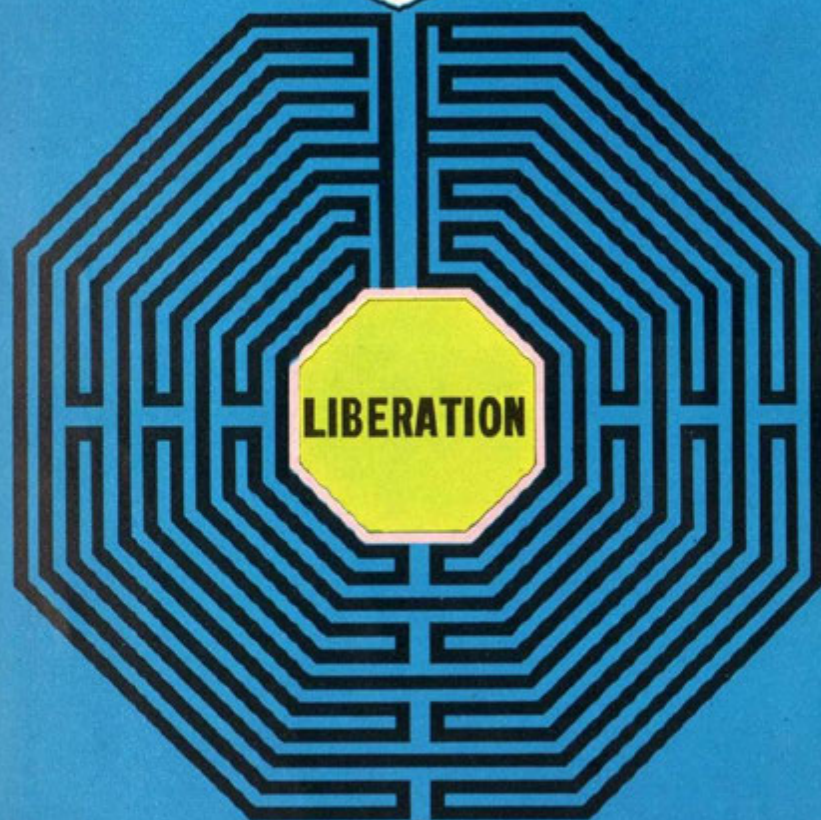


Tricontinental





editorial

Historical exception or revolutionary possibility? This question, posed at the time of the triumph of the Russian Revolution and again when the Chinese Revolution achieved victory, arose once more when the armed rebellion of the Cuban people finally triumphed on January 1, 1959.

The far-reaching importance of the Cuban Revolution did not escape some observers, who described it as an event of cardinal importance in the history of Latin America. The importance of this event was to be found in its extraordinarily popular nature, in the great number of myths it destroyed, and in the tremendous possibilities it opened for the revolutionary movement on a continental scale.

This was no product of a barracks revolt. This Revolution was born in the heart of the people, and its leaders — as was evidenced in the program of the Moncada — had a clearly defined ideal. This was to put it in a nutshell, a *revolution*.

Those who had hoped for a mere change of names soon realized their mistake as the Revolution developed. The steps taken by the Revolution progressively destroyed the foundations of the dependent politico-economic structure, building in its place the basis for a new society.

In the face of this reality, the US imperialists came to the conclusion that the Cuban Revolution was completely uncompromising. As soon as the first revolutionary laws were enacted, the imperialists stepped up their activity, utilizing the resources at their disposal, hoping to crush the Revolution. In their eagerness to destroy it, they have resorted to acts of sabotage, set up counter-revolutionary bands, imposed an economic blockade, launched an invasion using an army of mercenaries, and threatened a nuclear attack. But, in spite of this criminal policy, the Revolution continues to march onward, upheld and advanced ever more vigorously by its leaders and the people.

The triumph of the Cuban Revolution has proved to the Third World — especially to the peoples of Latin America — the possibility of effecting a change in their situation; it has been a clarion call for a second and definitive independence. The roots of the first socialist revolution in the American hemisphere are deep, going beyond the geographical limits of Cuba. In their confrontation with imperialism, the leaders of the Revolution have learned that the triumph of the rebellion did not signify the end of the struggle, but rather meant that the real struggle had just begun. From the very beginning, the leaders of the Cuban Revolution realized the continental nature of the struggle they were involved in and the important role the Revolution had to play in the global fight against imperialism. They realized — from the very beginning — that, as Che put it, "It was not an isolated event, but rather the first sign of America's awakening." The triumph — after several years of intense fighting — of the Revolution over the pro-imperialist tyranny that

was destroying the nation announced to the world that Cuba was one of the free countries and — what is fundamental — showed the peoples still under the colonial or neocolonial yoke that the road to liberation was open, that there is no power in today's world capable of preventing the peoples from making their revolutions. With the triumph of the Revolution, Cuba has become a solid pillar of solidarity for the peoples that are struggling to free themselves. This is no accident, nor is it without reason. The stand of the Cuban Revolution proceeds from a basic premise: only through the active solidarity of the peoples will final victory against imperialism be achieved.

Certainty of this has taken deep root in the Third World's revolutionary movement. The objective conditions common to all these peoples — conditions which gave rise to the designation of these continents as "the underdeveloped world" — and their having to face and destroy the common cause of the evils afflicting them — imperialism — made solidarity, more than a mere watchword, a necessity in revolutionary struggle. This solidarity was to be expressed not in empty words but in the generous offering of their lives by the heroic fighters in the continental epic.

The search for expanding and coordinating joint action in the struggle brought about the meeting, for the first time, of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, in January 1968. The Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America made it possible for revolutionaries to exchange experiences and to clearly set down in public documents the principles that should become the common banner of struggle. The revolutionaries' aim of winning the freedom of their respective countries can be summed up in their principal watchword: to oppose imperialist violence with revolutionary violence.

This Conference opened up a new, broad vista for the future of the anti-imperialist revolutionary movement, the value of which has been and still is dependent on the activity of every one of its members. New causes and factors inherent in every revolutionary process have affected its development, but they cannot stop the process. The course of history is irreversible, and neither imperialism nor traitors nor conciliators can prevent mankind from winning its full freedom. These elements are no more than the dregs of humanity, which must be eliminated in the present process of purification, revolutionary struggle.

Viet-Nam, with its lesson of heroism, unyielding resistance, and victorious offensives in the face of US aggression, offers the clearest proof of what the peoples have in store for the imperialists and their accomplices. Its impact cannot be denied even by the aggressors themselves, who, defeated militarily on the field of battle, have had to accept the conditions set by the National Front for Liberation and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam for initiating diplomatic negotiations.

The success of the people of Viet-Nam has greatly encouraged all revolutionaries in the world and gives even greater validity to Che Guevara's central thesis expounded in his message to the Tricontinental Organization. Creating many Viet-Nams has become more than a mere watchword: it has become the primary duty of all revolutionaries.

It is in this context that the peoples are making ready to celebrate the anniversaries of two events of universal significance: the tenth anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and the third anniversary of the holding of the First Tricontinental Conference. These two dates in our revolutionary calendar should stimulate us and spur us on in our daily struggle against imperialism and its local allies. We are revolutionaries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America; our enemy is unmistakably defined; and the paths leading to our triumph are clearly blazed. Let us push forward our just war; let our ears be receptive to Che's battle cry resounding from the Bolivian jungle. And let us rise in armed rebellion to perform our duty — a duty set us by the example of our martyrs and whose fulfillment our peoples demand today.

TRICONTINENTAL

to the reader

The appearance of the tenth number of Tricontinental coincides with the anniversaries of the Cuban Revolution and the First Conference of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Our cover and the traditional section entitled Tricontinental on the March are dedicated to the third anniversary of the event which brought together in Havana the revolutionaries of 82 countries of the Third World. Land of Ideas is dedicated to the first socialist revolution in the western hemisphere and includes, under the title "Cuba: Ten Years of Revolution," the speech of Major Fidel Castro on the occasion of the celebration of the first ten years of the revolutionary victory of the Cuban people.

In Starting Points, the Secretary General of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), P. Sundarayya, gives us a poignant picture of the state of poverty and oppression to which the people of India are being subjected after twenty years of formal independence. "India: Introduction to a Congress," written on the eve of the Eighth Congress of the GPI (M), analyzes the position of the various political forces of that country in respect to the present situation, pointing out the strategy and tactics to be followed by its Party in order to "complete the Indian revolution."

A little over a year ago, a small nation in the Arab world broke loose from colonial bondage through armed rebellion. After attaining freedom from foreign tutelage, it now faces



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a new and perhaps more difficult task: the attainment of economic freedom. "South Yemen: Toward Definitive Liberation" (our contribution to Meridian Liberation) presents a view of the difficulties which the South Yemenite revolutionaries must face and overcome in this decisive stage of the national liberation of their people.

Who are the Tupamaros? How do they function? To what do they aspire? These questions, which have been asked more than once by those interested in the Latin American problem, are fully answered in Experiences and Facts by newsman Carlos Nuñez. His article "The Tupamaros: Armed Vanguard in Uruguay" offers, for the first time, detailed information about this movement which, with its daring actions, has made armed struggle the order of the day for this small South American country.

In the same section, French newsman and writer Albert-Paul Lentin presents us with a global panorama of the problem of hunger, veritable scourge of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America, "the continents of poverty." "Sociography of Misery," an analysis of the causes of hunger, offers proof of the evidence that only through revolutionary violence can the underdeveloped world put an end to exploitation by foreign powers.

Books of Today is again honored by an article by well-known writer Wilfred Burchett. This time it consists of a chapter from Why the Vietcong Wins, his book which will soon be published by Tricontinental Publishing House. "Making an Army" (the third chapter of the book) is an eloquent exposition of the origins of the People's Liberation Armed Forces, the army which has defeated the Yankees and their mercenaries in South Viet-Nam.

Voices of protest and indignation rise from the very entrails of the monster. These voices tell us of their concern; they tell us of the ills affecting the capitalist society of the United States; and they promise us in no uncertain terms that they will continue struggling until victory is attained. "USA: the Alienation of Culture," which appears in New Expression, and "Black Panthers: the Afro-Americans' Challenge," appearing in Man and his Word, are integral parts of the same denunciation of the imperialist and racist system which has the United States as its vortex. The first is an article by outstanding US folklorist and writer, Irwin Silber, the second, an interview with George Murray, Minister of Education of the Black Panther Party, and Joudon Major Ford, New York leader of that organization.

On the back cover a poster by Emory Douglas, Minister of Culture of the Black Panther Party, graphically illustrates the path to liberation indicated by Silber, Murray, and Ford.

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Cuba: Ten Years of Revolution

Fidel Castro



Honored Guests; Workers:

On this anniversary our celebration is characterized by its simplicity. There is no military parade, even though we had thought that the 10th anniversary might possibly include a military parade. However, this has been a year of arduous work, a year of great effort in every field of activity, a year of great savings in every respect, and a year in which every man and woman in our country played an important role. And, since the most important thing for us was work and fulfillment of the goals we had set ourselves, we decided — and we did so with the absolute confidence that we were acting in accord with our people's best interests — not to use up one single gallon of fuel or to stay away from work one minute longer than necessary for a military parade on this 10th anniversary. (APPLAUSE)

Today marks the beginning of another year of great effort, the beginning of an 18-month-long year! (APPLAUSE) This is because this year we have to complete the 1969 harvest and carry out part of the 1970 one. (APPLAUSE) Thus, we have to work in two harvests.

Next year, the traditional year — that is, next December — and quite probably, next January 2 — it is quite possible that we will not be able to gather here in this Plaza, since a great many of us in this country will be out in the fields cutting sugarcane. (APPLAUSE) Thus, the next New Year will probably be celebrated on July 1, while the next Christmas will be celebrated between the 1st and the 26th of July. (APPLAUSE)

This doesn't mean that we intend to change traditions or to give up, once and for all, the traditional holidays to which we are accustomed. We will go back to the regular

New Years, and the regular Christmases, but only the use of machines will make that possible. The machines will have to come to the rescue of our traditional holidays!

But the fact is that we are all involved in a giant task, a task we will fulfill at any cost! (OVATION)

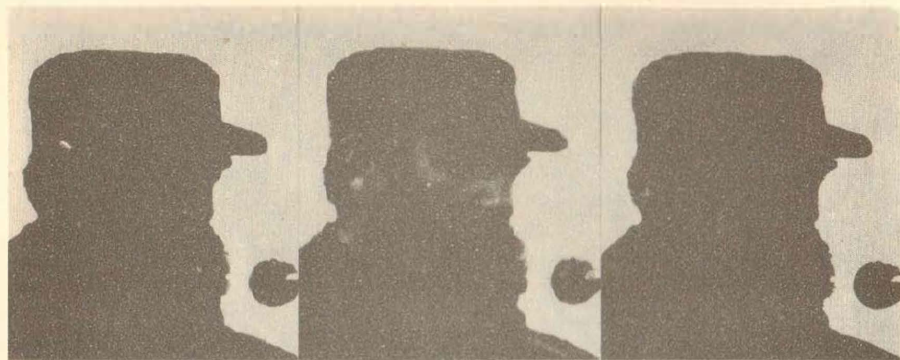
Several celebrations of this type have been held during the past few years, but this one certainly seems to be the one in which the greatest number of people have gathered in this Plaza de la Revolución. (APPLAUSE) Not only does this multitude extend over a large area, but there are no empty spaces within that area. And much more important than the size of the crowd is the fact that this is a multitude, a people, with an extraordinarily greater political awareness. (APPLAUSE)

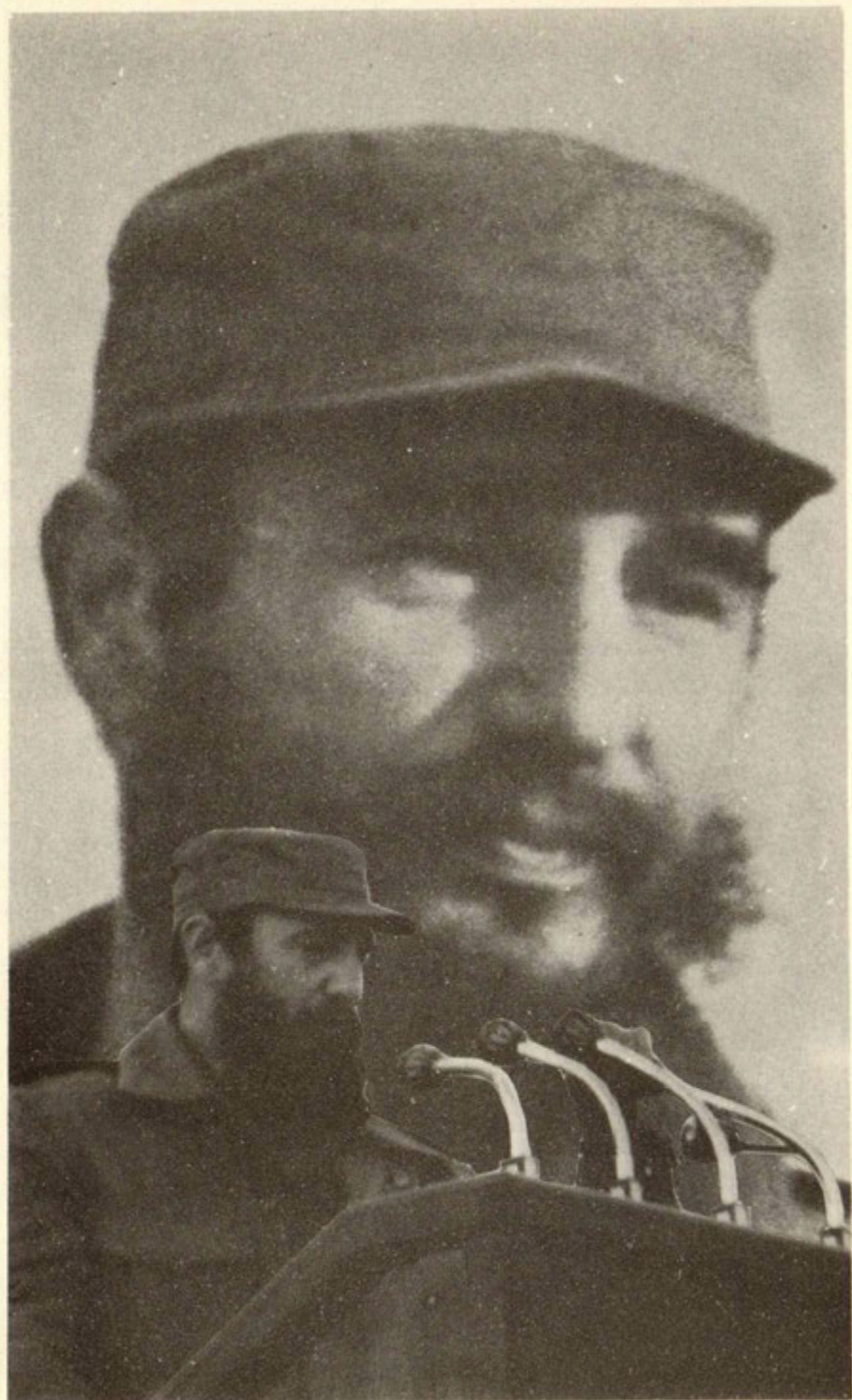
We sincerely believe that there are reasons why the conscience and the strength of the Revolution should have increased. We believe that we have sound reasons for being optimistic, and we believe that this optimism is based on actual, palpable facts.

We believe that the time is near when the material benefits we will have reaped by then will be less important to us than the moral satisfaction we will get out of the way and period of time in which such gains were achieved.

Naturally, on this 10th anniversary, on which we have actually been graduated — though not as revolutionaries from the highest grade, not with a university diploma — as graduates, we might say, of the primary school of the Revolution, who are now entering junior high in that school, (APPLAUSE) we should make a brief review of the effort that has been made. This should be done now as we close a ten-year period and begin







a new decade, at a time that marks the close of the ten most difficult years and the beginning of the ten most fruitful years, a time that marks the point where we pass from a period of almost absolute ignorance to a certain level of accumulated experience, at a time when we have achieved a tempo of work and of progress that is incomparably more rapid than the tempo that we managed to set in the beginning. But rather than actually making a review, or even a summary, it is better that we give an idea of what this effort has meant to the Revolution and, at the same time, outline the policy to be followed and the tasks to be set for the next stage.

Our country has concentrated its efforts — and we think this is interesting — in the field of cultural development in general, in social development, and, at the same time, in economic development.

There is no need to speak of anything so familiar to so many people as our efforts in education, which were undertaken from the beginning and are fundamentally marked by the wiping out of illiteracy and the tremendous progress achieved thus far in the field, exemplified not only by the fact that each Cuban child has a teacher but also by the fact that after ten years of Revolution we have more than 300 000 live-in, full scholarship students. This unquestionably places our country far ahead of any other Latin-American country.

Nor is it necessary to stress the efforts made in public health, another field where we have left all other Latin-American nations far behind.

In the sphere of social development, as well, the Revolution's social institutions have brought retirement benefits and pensions to all the workers in the country. The process culminated this year with a heartening event — discussed and decided upon by the masses. The

minimum pension has been raised to 60 pesos a month for all retired (APPLAUSE) and pensioned people who received less, beginning practically immediately. This measure benefits approximately 180 000 people and shows all Cubans alike the way to well-being and security for all who have in one way or another contributed to create the wealth of this country.

Other notable steps forward in the social and political spheres — measures which were also discussed this year by the masses — have to do with the remuneration received — when illness prevents them from going to work — by workers who maintain communist work conduct and by their families if their economic mainstay should become disabled or lose his life while at work.

Among many institutions that have been established to create conditions of human dignity for all the citizens of this country, these are some which constitute just sources of satisfaction for all.

In the ideological sphere the distance covered has been unimaginable. Today's people, with their political culture, experience, organization, discipline, awareness, and sense of responsibility, can hardly be compared with the people of ten years ago.

However, a revolution must base itself upon an economic structure. And it has been precisely in the field of economic structure that our people have faced the most difficult challenge, the most extraordinary task: confronting underdevelopment in the conditions of today's world, and confronting it, in the case of our people, without any experience, confronting it, as our people did, with nothing more than the enthusiasm of the masses. Because the few trained people belonged, almost exclusively, to the privileged minority that was not, nor could be, in

agreement with the changes made in the economic structure of this country.

And, as we commented last night to some guests, it was as if overnight all of us, with a vast ignorance of everything, had taken charge of everything and of doing everything with an utter lack of experience.

Then there was, in addition, that great mirage produced by capitalist society, by class society: the mirage of the full store shelves. That mirage is the boast of privileged societies and makes the masses believe in the illusion of a sky's-the-limit abundance and that all you have to do is break down a barrier to obtain access to those endless riches, as if they came from inexhaustibly rich mines.

But what such masses do not know is that those supposed riches are none other than the by-product of misery, the by-product of misery that is allowed and which must exist to incite and oblige a country's citizens to work in the midst of unemployment. They are, of course, illusory riches which quickly disappear as soon as the masses have some access to them.

We ourselves had to learn that such a society of the privileged, an underdeveloped society, was very far from creating limitless wealth and that the creation of all true wealth was essentially ahead of us.

But now the masses know that wealth had to be created, because they know how to add and subtract, multiply and divide. And when you divide any of the production levels reached by that society among eight million people, even second graders realize at once that that was a poverty-level production. When 80 or 90 percent of a country's children don't drink milk, then 50 000 cows suffice to provide milk for all the children who do drink milk, and there will even be milk left over in some dairies, just as there will be

hundreds of thousands of children "left over" who don't have two cents to buy themselves a fraction of a liter of milk. (APPLAUSE)

But when you have to provide milk for all the children born in this country, when you must provide that right and that opportunity to each and every one of them, then 50 000, 100 000, and even 200 000 cows are not enough: then you need half a million cows, because now the thing is to divide all the milk among all the children and old people, or among those who need it or who would like to have it. To be sure, we will not have just half a million cows. We are already raising that number in this country, and several times half a million will be born in the years to come, and there will be over a liter of milk not only for every child but for every citizen of this country, and at a date not far in the future. (APPLAUSE)

In any case, all of this is easy to understand. But in the early years of the Revolution did wealth increase? No, it did not. Moreover, during the first years after the triumph, not only did our people not increase the wealth, but they were not even able to produce the little that was produced by the old society of privilege.

That society's production took place in very inhuman conditions. Every human being was threatened by hunger, sickness, eviction — the worst and most fearful consequences. People cut cane: 40-odd million tons of cane were cut by hand and loaded onto wagons a handful at a time. This country's caneworkers cut and loaded more than 40 million tons, one cane at a time. And they had to work at it 15, 16, 17 hours a day during the harvest season to earn a miserable living; otherwise, they and their children were faced with hunger, despair, and death.

When those subhuman conditions for earning a living disappeared, it was natural that no one wanted to

work 14, 15, 16, or 17 hours, and they worked 12, 11, 10, or 8 hours. And some people didn't even work 8 hours, because there were those who went from one extreme to the other, from an excess of work to a minimum.

Naturally, conditions changed before machinery could be used for that excessive work. And this is, of course, without taking into account some things very worthy of consideration — the complete changeover in administration and the generalized ignorance.

But it is true that in the early years our people could not have produced, were unable to produce, more than the capitalists had. Thus, agricultural production dropped, declining from the former level. Today the annual rate of growth of the world's agricultural production is two, two and a half, or three percent. In the underdeveloped countries — especially those of Latin America — in most of those countries, the rate of growth has been zero. Sometimes it increases by one, one and a half, or two percent, but generally scarcely as rapidly as the population; our own rate of growth, with the Revolution, did not increase. In fact, it even dropped; there was a definite drop. At one time sugar production was much lower than under capitalism. We had an annual production as low as 3.8 million tons of sugar.

An analysis of these obvious facts is vital if we wish to have an accurate idea of what has actually been the result of our apprenticeship, of our efforts during these years.

However, here is an amazing fact: we are at the beginning of 1969, and by 1970 Cuba's agricultural production will be approximately double — twice as much! — what it was before January 1, 1959. (APPLAUSE) This is truly amazing, perhaps even incredible. Something we can examine in the light of all the studies of the increases in agri-

cultural production in every country and under all circumstances without finding another case that even remotely resembles this achievement. Because doubling agricultural production in ten years is something that cannot be done even by the so-called developed countries.

And actually this doubling of production has not been achieved in ten years; it has been achieved through an effort of less than five years. It has been achieved through efforts, organization, experience and concepts that were arrived at after five years of Revolution had passed.

Thus, this nation will have doubled its agricultural production in a period of not, actually, more than four years — at the most. It is quite enough to point out that during 1968 most of the cane for the famous 10-million-ton sugar harvest has been planted. (APPLAUSE)

And the results in 1970 will actually be a mere nothing. What is really going to surprise a great many people, what will surprise the skeptics and amaze the reactionaries, will be the agricultural advances of our nation in the next 12 years. We have selected 12 years so as to be able to use a period of time that can be compared with what other countries are doing.

Recently, in the neighboring country of Jamaica, there was a FAO meeting to which we sent a delegation. There the food situation in our countries was studied. And there, with the participation of delegations from a number of countries, it was possible to observe just how tragic the situation is, how this is a tragedy for practically the entire world, but how it is especially tragic for the countries of Latin America.

I have some of the statistics here which illustrate what is being done today in all those countries and what is being done here. They show what incredible advances are being

chalked up today and the advances we will make in future years, how much we are advancing and what the agricultural advances will be in those other countries in the coming years and why, how Cuba is advancing and will keep on advancing and why, what has happened and continues to happen to the much-vaunted Alliance for Progress, and what our sister nations of Latin America are faced with in the decade of 1970 to 1980.

Because with our Revolution, an audacious historic undertaking, we had to begin with a decrease in production, but we have now not only learned to add but we have also learned to multiply, to increase production many times over.

Thus, we are not only going to add to what we had, but we will increase former production many times over. (APPLAUSE)

FAO has prepared an indicative program for world agricultural production. FAO is an agency of the United Nations in which, certainly, many competent specialists objectively analyze statistics and make predictions concerning future situations in the world. And among those who work in that institution there are many persons who are deeply concerned over mankind's future food supply. Of course they have often been alone in their campaign, for this problem of future food supply has not been something the imperialists or the reactionaries have been interested in making much noise about, since, if this problem is not solved, it will surely spark off revolutions.

In this indicative program, proposals have been made for an approximate agricultural increase for South America, from Colombia and Venezuela to Argentina, in the decade from 1970 to 1980, of some three percent annually. The true rate of growth in those countries in the last few years has actually been

less than two percent. This proposed three percent of growth — if it is achieved — is scarcely enough to compensate for the population growth, which in some countries has reached three percent, is even more in some, and is just under three percent in certain other countries.

Now, just how much will agricultural production increase in Cuba between 1968 and 1980? There will be some years with notable advances, especially 1970. But the average for this 12-year period — how much will agricultural production increase in Cuba, on the basis of facts that anyone can refer to, the resources that are in our hands, and the fact that our people have taken this task to heart? Because the most important thing today is not merely high-developed concepts, not the institutions that have been established, not the enormous resources that we already possess, but rather the subjective factors that have been created within our people. This is truly the fundamental factor, what makes it possible for us to make these advances.

Cuba's agricultural production will increase in the next 12 years — and we give this figure with complete assurance and will assume full responsibility for it — at an average rate for the 12-year period of no less than 15 percent per year. (APPLAUSE)

We can point out that this rate of growth for the period will be several times higher than that reached by any other country in a similar period of time.

We are not trying to say that the Cubans are the best workers or that anyone knows more than anyone else, but we have had the good fortune of certain factors coinciding at this time: the concept of our agrarian reform, the concept of our agricultural plans, the mass application of technology, and, above all, a people carrying out this program in a tropical climate.

At the beginning, it is more difficult to overcome natural factors in a tropical climate, but once these have been overcome, there is the sun, and thus sunlight, for agriculture the year round. Once droughts have been overcome; once hurricanes have been coped with through the proper protection of crops against this type of natural phenomenon; once floods have been prevented; once plagues are eliminated, underbrush cleared — that is, land cleared which is covered with dense vegetation; and once technology and mechanization are at our command, then it is possible to achieve results that cannot be achieved in a country without adequate conditions of sunlight and temperature all year round.

But the comparison we are making is with countries that also have favorable conditions of sunlight and temperature the year round — not Canada or Finland. We are making a comparison with countries that have the same natural conditions as ours.

Let us observe what FAO is planning for the next ten years in terms of increased farmland area each year for these countries on the basis of the social and structural conditions that prevail in each. It has set up an indicative plan for 20 years. We have chosen ten years from that plan, the next ten years. And in South America the increased area of cultivation that has been proposed amounts to 15 million hectares (some 37 million acres). Since at present those countries have 100 million hectares (247 million acres) of land under cultivation, the plan calls for a 15-percent increase in the amount of cultivated land in ten years.

The present cultivated land area of Cuba is some 4 000 000 hectares (about 10 000 000 acres). This is a statistical fact; much of this area is planted to crops which should be changed. How is this being done? By putting sugarcane plantations next

to the sugar mills, the rice where the rice should go, and everything in its place; so that much of this so-called cultivated land, this cultivated land area, will have to be planted again to other crops. However, in the coming ten years the agricultural land area will increase to 6 680 000 hectares (some 16 000 000 acres) — that is, from some 4 000 000 hectares to some 6 680 000 hectares.

So that a 15-percent increase in agricultural land area is proposed for Latin America, while that of Cuba will augment 65 percent in that same period. (APPLAUSE)

Increases in agricultural production are achieved by means of the application of modern techniques and the extension of land area. We are going to move full speed ahead on both fronts. Fertilization plays an important role in the application of modern techniques to increase the yield per land area.

This program proposes two million tons, net content, of fertilizer for all of South America. What is meant by "net content"? The formulas that can be produced chemically in a ton to be applied to the soil. Many persons know this, but perhaps some who are not involved in agriculture need this explanation. It is not 100 percent nitrogen; it may have, for example, 20 percent of this element in a compound fertilizer — 15 percent phosphorous, let's assume; 15 percent potassium. This is already a relatively high formula. It's not 100-percent net content, but 50-percent net content. The formulas are variable. To apply two million tons net content, one has to calculate four to eight million tons of fertilizer to be applied in the fields, according to their level of concentration.

Very well. This year Cuba is applying more than one and a half million tons of fertilizer in the

fields — more than a half million net content.

But, as we said, two million tons net content is proposed for South America; let us say six million in actual volume. In 1975 Cuba will apply not less than a million tons in net content, approximately three to four million in volume. So that in 1975 Cuba will be applying more than 50 percent of the amount of fertilizer proposed for all of South America. (APPLAUSE)

In the third place: irrigation. In that program a yearly increase between now and 1975 of 200 000 irrigated hectares (almost 500 000 acres) of land is proposed.

Irrigation plays a decisive role, but its major importance lies less in its facilitating growth, counteracting the effects of lack of rainfall, than in the fact that the ready availability of water permits planting at the most favorable time, the application of fertilizers in the most favorable form and herbicides at the most favorable time, the preparation of the land at the most favorable time, maximum use of machinery and labor by its distribution over the entire year, and optimum conditions for cultivation. More is obtained through these factors than through the mere application of water to the plant. In other words, irrigation makes possible the maximum employment of agricultural techniques, a factor often overlooked when the problem of irrigation is discussed. Irrigation not only ensures against drought but permits the optimum application of modern techniques.

For a country such as ours, its importance is extraordinary. It is much more important for a country which has sunshine all year than for a country such as Finland, I repeat, which is frozen over a good part of the year. Even if it had water, it couldn't accomplish anything during the winter. In those months we

are not frozen over, but neither do we have water. Ah! But if we have water in these so-called dry months — which they indeed are — then unquestionably our advantage is extraordinary. It is for that reason that irrigation is extraordinarily important for us, more important than for any temperate or cold country. Any cold country can build dams and assure its water supply in August or any other hot month, but that does not help it in December, January or February. With water, we can ensure our Augusts against drought and also cultivate in January, February, and March or any other dry month. In other words, we are able to benefit from sunshine and the soil all year, from our machinery all year, our technology all year, and our work force all year. Otherwise, we would have to wait for rain with folded arms and then plant everything in a matter of 15 days. Of course, that is impossible. The result would be a wild growth of weeds long before we had finished planting everything. We know this very well from the hectares of cane that we have had to plant in the rain in these years — and, above all, this year.

In that program a yearly increase of 200 000 new hectares under irrigation is proposed for South America. Very well, between 1969 and 1975 Cuba will increase its irrigated land area by 300 000 hectares per year — that is, by 50 percent more than what is proposed for all South America. (APPLAUSE) And it remains to be seen whether those 200 000 are reached, if they are reached, because so far there is merely a program, and we know under what conditions these programs would have to be carried out.

So that these three figures reveal the absolute impotence of these countries at this moment and in their present condition to achieve anything resembling a decent development of agriculture — that is, in the production of food — that

even begins to approach or to compensate for their increase in population.

So that while they are proposing to increase their agricultural production to a level more or less parallel to their increase in population, maintaining their present level of hunger and underconsumption, in Cuba yearly agricultural growth, average growth in the next 12 years, will be seven times the yearly increase in population. And the cumulative effect of a 15-percent increase — "cumulative effect" means a 15-percent increase in 1968, then 15 percent for 1969 and 15 percent up to 1975 — at the end of the period is equivalent to multiplying production several times over.

Now, then, as to the land area of Cuba in relation to that of South America, which has an area of 17.3 million square kilometers. Cuba has an area of 111 111 square kilometers — this is what the geographers say to make it easier to remember, although it probably is a little larger — Cuba has 1/158th the land area of South America. Cuba's population is 1/22nd that of South America. Yet by 1975 we shall be applying an amount equivalent to more than one half the volume of fertilizer that will be applied in South America. We will put 100 000 hectares more than they under irrigation every year. And the land area cultivated in our country will be increased by 65 percent over ten years, compared with the 15 percent that is considered possible for them.

And what do we count on in order to achieve this? Was this an easy thing to achieve? No. It was not easy. Could we have done it at the beginning of the Revolution? To tell the truth, at the beginning of the Revolution we did not even know the geography of Cuba — not even the geography! I would say, not even the landscape. Imagine the agricultural development of a country being advanced by those who did not even know its geography.

And we didn't know it. But we must also say that the capitalists didn't know it, either; each knew only his little piece, or his big piece. But we had to learn, practically discover, the geography of this country. And we didn't know it. Some of us knew very well a part of the Sierra Maestra and certain other regions of some provinces, but of the whole country, where this development had to be carried out, we didn't even know, I repeat, the geography — that is, the visible part. How then could we know about the part we couldn't see?

Of geology, we knew absolutely nothing. US monopolies held some mines and made some investigations, and only they knew what was there: how much nickel, or, if there was petroleum, how much and where, whether there was chrome, manganese, or whatever. The amount of rainfall was known in some areas by the rain gauges at some sugar mills. Nobody knew the volume of water of our rivers, since no one had ever installed a gauge in them to measure, over a period of years, their average yearly flow. To construct a dam might seem easy, but it required first of all determining the water volume of the river, where the river could be dammed, and the geological conditions of the proposed dam site, if it was cavernous or compact, if it allowed water filtration or not. And here no one knew a word of any of this. That is, neither the water volume of our rivers nor where our basins were located, nor our geology.

All this had to be investigated. And, of course, there were neither geologists nor hydraulic engineers, nor anything resembling them, nor anybody with any knowledge, with very few exceptions. Because, logically, where dams are never constructed, nobody learns how to build dams. That is logical and evident! We neither had such personnel, nor

could we train such personnel within a few short years, nor do we have them yet. We still don't have them! With only our own technical knowledge we could not achieve what we are going to achieve, or anything like it.

Machines? Machinery for this type of work? No. The same thing happened here that happens in other places. As we recently told the students in Santiago de Cuba, there were 300 000 automobiles in this country, while 300 000 people lived in the Sierra Maestra without a teacher, without a doctor, without even a road! And that we knew. Tractors? There are no statistical data. FAO estimated that there were some 5000 in 1950. There were possibly 7000 or 8000 rubber-tired tractors in this country in 1958. But the enormous amount of machinery needed to carry out a plan such as the present one, not even in our wildest dreams! Machinery operators, mechanics, personnel qualified to organize and direct this work? Not in our wildest dreams!

Now, then, how many machines do we count on now to support our development? How many machines? And on what forces and on what factors do we base this program? In the rest of Latin America, logically, they will not reach it while they continue to import millions of automobiles. They would have to stop importing luxuries, and that is impossible. No rich man living in one of these countries would resign himself — let alone taking a bus — to stopping trading in his automobile each year! And they are the ones who rule there, who administer everything. At most, the rich are required to pay some minor taxes, but later they simply raise the prices of everything and laugh up their sleeves at everyone, while they spend their lives traveling to Paris, to the United States, to Europe in general. We are not at-

tacking any particular country here, but it is a fact they spend their lives jaunting about the world. And they take their money with them and deposit it abroad because they consider it safer there than on the powder keg that exists below the surface of their hunger-ridden countries.

And, naturally, they will not reach the average of three percent.

On the other hand, what do we count on for our program? At the present time, we have all of our basic forces for agricultural development organized into a single institution called DAP — the Agency for Agricultural Development — which has at its disposal all of our machinery for the construction of dams, land-drainage systems, extraction and catch-water wells, irrigation systems, highways, roads, bridges, and railroads; for land clearing; and for hill terracing.

How many machines does DAP have at present? In basic equipment — that is, in bulldozers, earth-moving machinery, power graders, freighters, rollers, cranes, dump trucks, well-drilling equipment, and ditching machines — it has at this moment 6138 machines — this figure is as of December 1968 — 6138 machines! (APPLAUSE) In additional and auxiliary equipment it has at this moment, including concrete mixers, compressors, mobile shops, oiling plants, tank trucks, compactors, pavement-laying equipment and asphalt-spreaders, gravel mills, mobile power plants, etc., 3190 machines, (APPLAUSE) which amounts to a total of 9328 machines, worth the equivalent of 150 million pesos in foreign exchange.

That is the tremendous mechanical force which supports and guarantees the plan of development to which we referred. And these machines and this plan are supported at this moment by the work of 40 676 men, 22 705 of whom are qualified operators.

At this moment work is going on

simultaneously on more than 20 dams and in perforations of numerous subterranean water basins. As a result of this effort, in 1969 — in just one year — the nation will have 2000 million more cubic meters of water available for agriculture, some 1000 million in dams and approximately the same amount from subterranean water sources, which is more than enough for reaching our goal of 300 000 hectares this year.

But it must be said that this figure will rise in 1970. And the goal of reaching some 15 000 million cubic meters of available water by 1973, which seemed impossible, over-ambitious, will be achieved.

Full water potential in our country, attainable, usable water: some 20 000 million cubic meters. By 1975 we shall have reached the maximum potential.

Thanks to this, practically all the agricultural area of our country will be under irrigation by this date.

At the present time, as well, we have 120 road and highway brigades, 101 of them organized in the last 18 months, at work in 115 different parts of the country, 115! Thus, by 1975 the country will have no fewer than 40 000 kilometers of paved roads. And no agricultural development is possible without roads; that is as impossible as agricultural development without knowledge of geography. It is impossible to transport men, machinery, fuel, fertilizers, and modern technology without roads.

And, needless to say, it isn't hard to imagine the road situation in South America.

But Cuba will have approximately one kilometer of paved roads for every two square kilometers of agricultural land by 1975. And, as I said, 120 brigades are already pushing ahead in this work. And, in addition, there is the building of dams, land clearing, irrigation, and drainage systems, which constitute important aspects of agricultural

development.

During 1969 our equipment will be increased by some 3000 additional machines. Thus, by December 1970 we shall have 12 000 machines, including basic and auxiliary machinery, devoted to the agricultural development of the country. With this force, with these resources, we can assure — without the slightest possibility of failure — our program for agricultural development, which this year has already begun to show imposing strength.

For example, how much planting was done in 1968, just past, for the 1970 sugar harvest? Not throughout the whole year, but approximately since the beginning of spring, a total of 27 250 caballerías have been planted in 1968. Some of these, which were affected by an excess of rain or, on certain occasions, in some regions, by drought, had to be newly planted, but 27 250 caballerías — which, converted into hectares, amount to 364 150 — were planted! An additional 14 000 caballerías — 12 000 of them with irrigation — will be planted in the next five months, which will amount to 187 000 hectares more in new cane areas.

Thus, in 12 months this country will have planted the incredible amount of 41 250 caballerías to sugarcane — that is, 551 150 hectares of new-plant cane.

To give an idea of the amount this represents, suffice it to say that only the ratoon cane is being ground in this year's harvest — in 1969 — all the new-plant cane that was planted earlier is back under the soil, replanted as seed. Thus, a harvest of more than five million tons could be obtained from the new cane planted during these 12 months. That is, we could obtain a harvest approximately equal to what we shall have from ratoon cane in 1969, which will be superior

to 5.5 million tons. Why? Because this force of thousands of machines on which our development rests was already at work building roads, clearing and draining land, building dams, drilling wells, etc.

Thus, we already have one example. At the beginning of the year we did not have all of these machines. Many of them were received during the year. Yet in 12 months we have planted enough cane to produce a harvest equal to the one we shall have in 1969. Of course, in 1970 we shall harvest both, all of the ratoon cane and all of the new-plant cane.

We shall have some 116 000 cañalleras planted to cane by 1970, 1 554 000 hectares of cane.

And the plan for the 10-million-ton harvest has been prepared taking into consideration the possibility of a drought year.

So we considered it a sure thing, taking for granted, of course, the effort we still have to put forth to make it a reality.

That is why everybody is saying, "The ten million are assured." Very few are still skeptical as to the result of this effort. And we have not only been working on sugarcane. We have also worked on various other crops — in the production of root vegetables, for example. Results of the work done this year are beginning to be seen. Havana Province, for example, which used to receive a great many of the root and other vegetables it consumes from the rest of the country, now receives practically nothing of these products from other provinces. And in only two years there has been a rise from three million cwt. in root vegetables fruits, and other vegetables, a figure which is expected to rise to seven million cwt. in 1969 and 12 million cwt. in 1970. That is, we shall have another bumper crop of root and other vegetables in this province. Suffice it to say that in

1970 the province of Havana will grow as many root and other vegetables as the whole country produced before the Revolution.

A notable effort has been made in rice growing. For this year we will have an additional supply of rice of national production. The Ministry of Foreign Trade has not yet concluded negotiations on the importation of rice. Assuming, for 1969, an amount equal to that of 1968, we shall have an additional 100 000 tons of rice — 100 000 tons more! (APPLAUSE)

Rice distribution will not be increased until we are assured of the exact import figure corresponding to 1969. That is, we first want to know the exact amount of rice imports, which we expect to be the same as last year's. As soon as we are sure of these figures, there will be an increase in rice distribution. Our rice production for last year — that is, 1967-68 — was 50 000 tons. And in 1968-69 — that is, from May 1968 to May 1969 — we will have 150 000 tons. Three times as much! (APPLAUSE) And by 1970 the increase will be several times that figure!

In other words, there are certain facts which prove that we attained geometrical increases in crops even when we did not have the tremendous drive we have today.

Quite a considerable number of coffee seedlings have been planted, as well as some forage and other crops. The effort made in forage planting was not equal to that made in other areas of agriculture, but a great effort will be made in this year of 1969, because half a million future milch cows — including calves, yearlings, and heifers — are now being raised, and most of them will go into production by the second half of 1970. This means that milk production will also increase several times over by 1970.

Rice, cane, root vegetables, milk — all of these products will be multiplied in 1970. (APPLAUSE)

Naturally, this development calls for additional investments, for more mechanization. There is only one way in which we could fail to achieve all this, and that is by failing to mechanize our agriculture quickly. All the sugarcane and all the agricultural products we are going to have can only be produced by having machines take the place of manual labor. This is a must, an imperative need, or else a country such as ours, with its eight million inhabitants, would never succeed in that effort. All the sugarcane must be cut by machinery. Some cane-growing areas may have to be relocated, and more sugar mills enlarged so as to do away with sugarcane-growing areas in the hilly zones; all sugarcane operations must be mechanized between 1970 and 1975; milking and all cultivation must be completely mechanized. Where would we get all the people to milk all of our enormous dairy herds? We must do away with traditional methods and replace them with machines. All this calls for heavy investing, no longer on basic equipment for development but already for the utilization of all that land, the harvesting of all those crops, and the exploitation of our growing dairy herds.

All this includes a special effort in the acquisition of farm machinery.

Throughout the last ten years, our country has imported some 42 000 tractors. Deducting the number of tractors worn out throughout that period, we now have a net figure of 35 000 tractors in active service. This figure is many times above what we had before the triumph of the Revolution, but it is far from sufficient.

I would like to give you some figures. In 1966 there were 14 million tractors in the world. Ninety-four percent of them were in the developed world; six percent were in the underdeveloped countries. What a difference!

So that, in order to achieve the

average that developed countries have at present, it will be necessary to import some 8000 tractors per year in the next ten years. To which we must add, in the next five years, some 6000 sugarcane-harvesting combines; and in the next two years we will bring our number of rice-harvesting combines to 2000.

Figure out the qualified workers and operators we will need to handle that equipment and maintain it.

For the next ten years we will need 80 000 tractor operators. All told, to operate the combines and tractors and for our agricultural aviation — which will require hundreds of new pilots — the auxiliary equipment and maintenance of that equipment, our country will need at the end of this period approximately 180 000 qualified workers in the mechanized sector of agriculture. This gives an idea of the dimension of what must be done in this field alone in the preparation of qualified personnel.

Now, why is special emphasis on agricultural development, designed to discover and take advantage of the potentialities of our nation, of decisive importance to us? The population of the world has now reached some 3500 million. Within 30 years it will reach approximately 7000 million. The annual rate of growth in agriculture needed to feed this expanding population adequately is some six percent. And at present it is three percent, or less. The world's population has never before increased at such a rapid rate. This means that in the next 20 or 25 years mankind will have to confront one of the most serious problems it has ever had to face. And we are aware how many problems development entails. And, above all, we know that, first of all, a revolution has to be made. For, unless there is a revolution, the great difficulties that a backward country must face in developing its

economic structure cannot be solved.

So that mankind is faced with an undertaking of epic proportions. And it is truly encouraging to realize that in this effort our country will attain results which will place us practically in a vanguard position among the underdeveloped countries of the world.

Together with this endeavor, a great effort in the field of industry has also been made, raising the productive capacity of our sugar mills, developing electric power facilities, improving the construction and transportation sectors, and increasing the production of fertilizers. At present two large fertilizer plants are under construction, and in the future others will have to be built.

But it is not just agriculture that will expand in this period. In 1970 the catch of fish, of our fishing fleet, will be approximately eight times as great as it was before the triumph of the Revolution, eight times as great! (APPLAUSE) And our merchant fleet has also grown considerably. This increase in our fishing industry cannot be compared with anything in other countries, this rate of development of the fishing industry. Because we were an island without a fishing fleet and without merchant ships. Nonetheless, everything we export must be shipped by sea, just as everything we import must come by ship. There were no seamen here, nor any maritime tradition. This fishing tradition had to be built up from scratch, and actually it was a new creation here. And one proof of this is this young generation of fishermen represented by the members of the Alecrin's crew, who are present here today. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

This episode experienced by our fishing fleet, which deeply concerned our people because of the provocation involved, because of the arbitrary action involved and espe-

cially because of the highly dignified and courageous stand of the crew members, (APPLAUSE) is one that our people took a keen interest in. What could be done in the face of this arbitrary action?

Of course, our country is not a country with unlimited means that would enable us under any circumstances to confront this type of aggression thousands of kilometers from our shores. Such an event could not, of course, happen close to our shores. It took place thousands of kilometers away. But, nonetheless, we could have taken reprisals. And we must state that it was a very troubling provocation, highly annoying, by its very nature, its arbitrary nature, the arrests, the interrogation of the crew. Their insolence knew no bounds. And we had the means for taking reprisals.

However, how did the Revolution act in this case? We asked ourselves what lay behind all this, in the first place; and also, any reprisal against that government would have implied measures that would have, in a way, affected the Venezuelan people, as well. Because Venezuelan ships are out there, and we could grab them, too, just as they arbitrarily captured ours. (APPLAUSE) They don't have many, but some are out there. But those boats carry crews of Venezuelan workers. And we thought: the same type of episode, at night, shooting at a ship.... How can blame be placed on these crewmen?

Moreover, planes from all countries fly over here, along the airways. And, of course, if they engage in piracy against us, we can oblige a number of them to land. (APPLAUSE) And it must be said that, although we do not have the means to defend ourselves against a provocation over there, we do have the means to take reprisals over here. We are not without the means or the ability to do so, because, one after another, we can oblige them to land or impede their crossing our airspace and force them to take a

devil of a big detour.

However, we thought that it was our duty not to let ourselves be provoked; our duty was to analyze the facts carefully and to act calmly. Anyway, they were in no position to do anything further. Because we also had the means, in case of their moving their dinky navy toward Cuba, to send it all to the bottom of the sea. (APPLAUSE) That is, we have the means to defend our country close to our coasts.

The provocation was unquestionably irritating. But what lay behind it? We understood the situation. The gang of murderers and thieves that has been ruling that country all these years, sold out lock, stock, and barrel to the imperialists, was so discredited, so repudiated by the people, that it was not even able to win an electoral farce. Gentlemen, we know how those things were here in Cuba and how votes were bought. And that is a country whose ruling clique has huge sums of money at its disposal, from the exploitation of its oil wells, from the part that is left to it by the monopolies — in addition to the holes that they leave in the ground. So much is extracted and carried off that, with only the part that is left to it, the clique has abundant money at its disposal.

And in elections of this type everything is bought, from radio and television time to newspapers, magazines, and posters depicting typical politicians in their panama hats and linen suits, with their cigars. Imagine the picture, and to what all of these countries dedicate their energies, to the people's misfortune.

And that clique was so discredited that it did not have a chance of winning even the electoral farce.

In Cuba, too, there were bad governments, thieves, and murderers of all kinds, but they would win elections under those conditions by buying votes and using the classic tricks.

What did they resort to when

they saw they had failed, had been repudiated, and were on the verge of defeat in spite of all of their official resources? Among the numerous rivals, even a slight variation in the percentage of votes could save them, and they brazenly and desperately looked for an incident of an international nature. Anything that Cuba might have done would have been exploited melodramatically by them by the classic method of claiming that their country was in danger. The slightest incident would have been just what the doctor ordered; possibly even a slight incident would have been sufficient to alter the electoral results. And the electoral results have borne this out.

And so we could see the thing clearly. And this was a determining factor, or one of the determining factors, for our waiting. Then came the electoral farce, and the way things worked out showed that we were completely right.

They had captured the ship 100 miles from the coast of Venezuela — 100 miles — with a Japanese technician on board, a fishing instructor, and without the remotest evidence or proof or anything even vaguely resembling it. They kept it there after the farce, and after it was evident that their maneuver had not helped them at all, we knew that they would have to let the ship go. Moreover, one may be patient for some time, but not indefinitely. And so we waited.

They have caused damage to our economy, and, of course, our Government will file a formal claim for indemnity, so that it will be on record that they owe us money. (APPLAUSE) We expect the Venezuelan Government to assume the responsibility for this debt and pay it. It's better for them to do so, because it's a bad thing not to pay one's debts.

But the fact is that the maneuver

was clear as day. It shows the lack of scruples, the procedures that these barefaced bandits, these plunderers of the peoples, these servitors of imperialism, avail themselves of when they find themselves in a crisis.

So, what a difference between the Cuban Revolution and the Venezuelan farce! What a difference between the strength of our people and our Revolution, with their future prospects, devoted to their work, sure that the future is in their hands, and that bunch of fakers that can barely manage to get elected alderman, no matter how many millions they invest in vote buying!

It's incredible, but these are the lessons of every day. Gentlemen, how many and what magnificent lessons we have been witnessing, not to speak of those that the coming decade holds in store for us.

And what a different picture you find in the rest of Latin America; take the Alliance for Progress, that invention they claim was made to carry out a peaceful revolution and bring progress and development, and about which so much has been written. Perhaps they managed to confuse some naive people, and maybe they even pulled the wool over the eyes of some of those who are supporters of the Alliance.

But here's an article that is a real jewel; I suggest that our papers publish it. It's called "The Alliance for Progress Scandal." Now don't think it was published by some leftist publication or written by some leftist writer. Hardly — it was written by a gentleman who was a US State Department official specializing in Latin-American affairs, and it was published by none other than Life magazine.

It is really worthwhile for revolutionaries to read and analyze this article, because it is an X-ray of frustration and failure, a confession of the incredible things behind the

Alliance for Progress.

If we had said such things they would have said: "Well, they're enemies, agitating from the speakers' platform, mouthing clichés, slogans, and preconceptions." But no, it was written by an actor in the comedy, a former functionary of the State Department, who should know.

I don't think any revolutionary could make a more eloquent analysis, with the added advantage of who the author is and the magazine that published it.

The article offers some data. For example, national income is still poorly distributed after six years of the Alliance. In Colombia the richest five percent of the population receives 31 percent of the total income; in Brazil, five percent of the population receives 31 percent of the total income; in El Salvador, 33 percent; in Costa Rica, 35 percent; that is, five percent of the population receives more than 30 percent of the income.

In contrast, the lower-income half of the population receives 20 percent of the total income in Colombia — while five percent receives over 30 percent, 50 percent receives 20 percent — and in the case of Argentina the lower-income half receives 20.5 percent; in Brazil, 19.7 percent; in El Salvador, 16 percent. That is, half the population receives 16 percent of the total income, while five percent receives over 30 percent, and so on.

But what perhaps most impresses one are the revelations made here — of course, it's better for the papers to publish the article so you can read it — the article's conclusions on the Alliance, what it says about agrarian reform, what it says about how US firms have intervened in the Latin-American countries and exerted political pressure on their governments, the fantastic business done by these firms, the conditions they have imposed. So here we have a price-

less X-ray of the Alliance for Progress that our people should read and study.

You see? We're not dogmatic. We don't study only Marxist or other revolutionary documents; we can even study a document of quite another kind, because it is the naked confession of all that the Cuban Revolution has been saying about the incredible lie and the kind of false remedy they took up as medicine against revolution and which has now filled them with such disappointment and desperation that they are ready to scuttle the whole farce, which has turned out to be humiliating for the people of Latin America and even for the partners in the venture themselves.

So we're not going to use up this time; it's better for you to read it in the papers.

And, of course, what a contrast, what a difference! Our country's road is clearly marked, and the Revolution is strong.

However, this certainly doesn't mean that we are already free of problems and perils. It would be a big mistake to think such a thing. We have far more resources, much more strength and experience, but we still have to work very hard and face difficulties and perils.

In the sphere of the economy many efforts must still be made. For instance, there's something.... I'll mention it as an illustration. In our country in recent years increasingly more alcohol is being used as cooking fuel. There are fewer and fewer charcoal makers — quite logically — for this was a sector of the population that lived a marginal existence, on the coast, under very poor conditions, a sector that has been incorporated into other types of work. But there is a greater use of charcoal. And it must be stated that the Revolutionary Government has, of course, the responsibility for not having foreseen this problem

sufficiently ahead of time so as to prevent it in time.

And what is the result of this? At present the nation is using some 600 000 tons of molasses to produce alcohol for fuel. This is the equivalent of converting 600 000 tons of maize into 130 000 tons of charcoal for cooking. Alcohol is the worst of fuels; it can be replaced by another better and more economical fuel.

That is, we use, in old distilleries, 600 000 tons of molasses to produce from 125 000 to 140 000 tons of alcohol for fuel, while in the dry season the cattle need more feed. We have not yet created all the conditions for giving them the best possible feed, for irrigating pastureslands and providing other feed. The cattle lose weight. But with 600 000 tons of molasses approximately 125 000 tons of meat on the hoof could be produced. Thus we have been using a highly nutritive type of feed — very nutritious for beef cattle — to make fuel for cooking.

And, of course, this question cannot yet be solved. But this year we are planning to replace these 100 000 or more tons of alcohol with some hundred thousand tons of kerosine — that costs one sixth as much — gradually replacing stoves still in use, alcohol burners and such things by kerosine stoves. So that in 1970 we will all have not only the additional molasses from the 10-million-ton sugar harvest but also 600 000 additional tons for feeding cattle, and we can export our surpluses.

The fact that we're going to have greater wealth does not release us from the obligation of knowing how to better utilize products all the time.

Measures have been taken to acquire the necessary equipment, since we cannot suddenly say no more alcohol will be produced. But

it is unfortunate at this time, and certainly it is our own fault; we are to blame, we who have the responsibility of foreseeing such situations.

But it was a question of custom. A given quantity of alcohol was being used, and it kept on increasing. Under capitalism this was considered good business. It was even used in place of gasoline. But if you figure it out, the price of molasses is the equivalent of 20 to 22 pesos in foreign exchange, and in order to make a ton of alcohol almost four and a half tons of molasses are needed. Adding other production costs, the ton of alcohol costs more than 100 pesos in foreign exchange, while kerosine costs barely 20 pesos. Obviously this is very bad business. In capitalist times you couldn't even give molasses away, and there weren't any buyers if you produced meat. Thus, it was good business to make that kind of mistake. And so it was perpetuated.

And there are still other things that adversely affect the economy. We have the problem of the consumption of sugar; one can see that the consumption of sugar keeps climbing. But what happens? Well, the per capita levels are higher than in any other country in the world. It's quite logical. We are sugar producers. At times, sugar has compensated for our lack of other products. But what happens? There are many people who feed sugar to hogs, give sugar to chickens, and sugar to cows. The result: we are using 200 000 tons more sugar.

What is the situation this year? Those 550 000 hectares in 12 months mainly represent cane that would have been cut in this sugar harvest and which cannot be cut because

it has been used or will shortly be used for seed; the cane from the 550 000 hectares and that which for one reason or another was ruined and had to be replanted. So that enough cane had to be reserved for 600 000 hectares, including what had been used for seed and what was still lacking. All the new cane, the best of the cane, has been planted or is being planted as seed. And naturally this affects our production in the 1969 sugar harvest.

But the 1969 sugar harvest is very important for our economy, for the acquisition of more equipment, for the fulfillment of our commitments, for the maintenance of the pace we have attained.

We are not in 1970 yet. In 1970 we will have a great deal of sugar because we will be cutting both the ratoon cane and a lot of new cane. But this is not the situation in 1969. Everyone is thinking in terms of the 1970 harvest, but the 1969 sugar harvest must be considered, and there is a lot of hard work to be done. We cannot leave any of the ratoon cane uncut, and we must cut it soon enough to devote ourselves fully to the cultivation of these same ratoon fields and to the spring cane for the 1970 harvest.

All well and good. Is it right at this time — when the price of sugar has risen, when there is a sugar agreement in which Cuba has an important part, at a good price — for us to waste 200 000 tons of sugar, which represent 15 million dollars in foreign exchange?

And I'm going to tell you what 15 million dollars will buy. It's enough to buy, in three years... a great deal of equipment we can pay for over several years, but I'm going to use three years as an example — one thousand eight hundred 180-h.p. bulldozers, almost more than all those we have working at present in DAP; or 3000 ten-ton trucks.

In spite of all the brigades we have building roads, how many people in this country are still waiting for roads! Some of them will have to wait for years. How happy their faces become every time those machines which solve so many problems arrive!

However, we waste, in detriment to the economy, resources with which we could purchase 1800 bulldozers or 3000 ten-ton trucks—more than what we have in that whole vast program — or a huge fertilizer plant like the one in Cienfuegos, which is worth 40-odd millions.

In years past, sugar was very cheap; its price dropped to 1.25, 1.30. But not this year. This year the price of sugar has gone up, to approximately three cents. Therefore, it is correct to call for an end to the waste of sugar in the interest of all the people. We have saved fuel. Why not save sugar now, as well?

It is necessary for us to adopt measures of self-control this year or to limit the consumption of sugar to a rational amount. We talked to farmers.... (APPLAUSE) If you agree, well, let's see: the best thing would be to set a rational limit this year which is still more than what people need. Let's say a little more in the countryside, a little less in the cities, but a limit that amounts to what is really consumed, more even than is really consumed, to save those 200 000 tons of sugar.

If you agree on six pounds, for example, in the capital.... (APPLAUSE) Is six pounds per capita per month enough? (SHOUTS AND APPLAUSE) Let's see, is six pounds enough here? (SHOUTS AND APPLAUSE) Do you agree that this will be enough? (SHOUTS AND APPLAUSE) We could make it a little higher in the interior — in Las Villas, Camagüey, and Oriente — and save the equivalent of more than ten million pesos in

foreign exchange, in a year in which we can begin to reap the fruits of the development of our economy. If it's all right with you, this measure will go into effect beginning tomorrow. (SHOUTS AND PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

Anyway, as I was saying, there will be increases, and we can make the first increases in rice for consumption as soon as we know the exact figures of rice imports, to which will be added the rice production we have this year. And of course by 1970 we'll see what happens. That is, there will be increases in other products.

I think that the effort that this country has made in these years has to be consolidated. We didn't work for ten years just to let the fruits of victory slip through our fingers. The time has come for us to be more conscious of how we use our resources, to be more thrifty, in order to keep advancing ever more rapidly.

A great deal of equipment must still be purchased; agriculture must be mechanized. In the coming ten years this country will have to make enormous investments in construction. Now, after we have furnished equipment for DAP, we must meet all the needs on the construction front for cranes and other equipment for using all the cement we are going to make; we must meet social needs, family needs. The development of this country must continue.

Fortunately, we will have more, but we must have still more, and, at the same time, we must invest more. A twofold effort: to raise the country's level of income while continuing its development. We still have to leave underdevelopment behind; we have not yet emerged from it. We're on our way out, but we haven't made it yet. This is something we must realize, and,

therefore, we must be aware of the efforts that we must make in the future.

I spoke of risks. We know, for example, of the threats against us, coming from the United States. There is a new tenant in the White House: a Mr. Nixon. Mr. Nixon has made a name for himself for several reasons, one of them being his constant use of threatening, aggressive terms when speaking of Cuba, talk about stepping up the blockade, etc.

Messrs. Nixon and Eisenhower started the economic aggression against Cuba, organized the mercenaries who came on the Playa Girón invasion, and began the blockade. Of course, the venomous, threatening language of Mr. Nixon doesn't scare us. We weren't scared ten years ago, when we were practically unarmed; now we cannot even be remotely impressed. We are incomparably stronger now than we were then.

And the blockade? Gentlemen, what gall you have to speak of a blockade now, when you're on the verge of seeing a blockade blasted to smithereens! It was Kennedy's fate to live through the bitter experience of Girón; it will be Nixon's no less bitter, or perhaps more bitter, fate to see this country emerge from underdevelopment and reach rates of agricultural production increases never before reached by any country. And we would really love to know what the imperialists will say in 1970! (APPLAUSE) We're very curious to know what they will have to say, what news dispatches, what arguments, what tricks, what fairy tales—they have done so much talking—they will come out with in the face of all these realities. It will be Mr. Nixon's bitter experience to see the blockade smashed to pieces.

Mr. Nixon, however, speaks of

"stepping up the blockade." This gentleman is a few years—maybe 15 or 20 years—behind the times. He speaks of bringing pressure to bear on the countries that trade with Cuba. At this stage of the game? Pressure to bear on the countries against which the Yankee monopolies compete? Countries in which Cuba has built up her credit because she is one of the few countries that pay on time, including interest? It is our country's policy to go hungry rather than leave a single debt unpaid, because this would be detrimental to the credit of this country, (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) credit with which we have obtained a lot of this equipment, a large part of this equipment.

Now we will begin to reap the fruits. Now we will begin to reap the fruits. Had we spent what we have invested in all this on other types of things that we needed, it would have been a drop of water in the desert; we would have solved nothing in all those years, not to speak of the future. With really relatively very little, this country, with the help of technology and machinery, will achieve unheard-of successes.

To think that the blockade could be a success this late in the game! The least some people are going to do is smile. Because in addition we have to pay for some of the purchases we have made. Would countries which have sold a lot to us and want to sell us more now join Mr. Nixon's blockade? This is simply laughable!

So we are not intimidated by the language of force; it's something we are used to by now. The blockade makes us laugh—and it couldn't be otherwise. That is the real situation. But we must bear in mind the need to struggle hard, to work hard, and to keep on preparing ourselves.

Perhaps one thing to our country's

credit which is worthy of being taken into consideration is the fact that it has been doing all this while at the same time earmarking, forced by necessity, huge resources for defense, a measure we have taken in view of the actual need... military projects, military fortifications, a great number of comrades serving in the armed forces on a permanent basis for the defense of the Revolution and the country. This area has called for the expenditure of a great deal of effort and will continue to call for it, because we cannot lower our guard; we cannot become careless. We must go on building up our forces, not only economically, but militarily, as well. (APPLAUSE)

That is why we will continue working in these fields, which makes the fact that the country, with all these obligations, has been able to successfully face and begin to overcome the problems of underdevelopment even more meritorious. Thus, in the coming decade, with more strength, with more experience and more resources, we shall have to continue to struggle hard.

The imperialists have also been given very serious lessons, very serious blows, such as the historic blows which the heroic people of Viet-Nam are dealing them. (APPLAUSE)

The people of Viet-Nam proved to the imperialists that they were not omnipotent, for their teeth and claws splintered against the strength of the Vietnamese people. The Yankee imperialists will find themselves forced to give up the adventure, and they are, in fact, already partially giving up. In the final analysis they will have no choice but to decide how in the devil they are going to get out. The fact is that they are already like the man who could neither stay nor leave. And finally, in the midst of a crisis—a historic defeat—

they will have to withdraw from Viet-Nam. In the long run, the heroic, incredible efforts of that people will end in victory; in fact, they are already achieving victory.

The brother people of Viet-Nam, who with their blood and sacrifice have done so much for the revolutionary peoples of the world, have and can count on our solidarity and our full support—(APPLAUSE) the people of Viet-Nam, the comrades of the Party of North Viet-Nam, the glorious Comrade Ho Chi Minh, (APPLAUSE) and the comrades of the South Viet-Nam National Front for Liberation. (APPLAUSE)

Our country today has been able to express its optimism and joy over the successes achieved, over the magnificent perspectives for the future. However, these expressions would not be quite right, this satisfaction of ours would not be quite honest, if we were to take all the credit for it. We must say on this occasion, as we foresee the success of our country, as we foresee a great future, how much the solidarity of the socialist camp, and especially the solidarity of the Soviet Union, has meant to us. (APPLAUSE)

On certain occasions we have had differences of opinion on certain matters, and we have expressed them with all honesty. But at the same time this same honesty obliges us to point out that this aid was decisive for our country throughout these difficult years. At the time when our production was dropping, during the first few years, the shipments of food to Cuba; at the times when the threats were greatest, the shipments of arms to our country. And bear in mind that these arms are worth more than all the equipment we are using for development, because armaments are very ex-

pensive. And we have received these weapons at no cost! (PROLONGED APPLAUSE) When we lacked qualified personnel for industrial projects, geological investigations, dam construction, and a thousand other needs, we were able to obtain all of the technicians we needed.

We must also point out that at times we were short of products: with poor sugar harvests, we were not able to make the specified shipments in relation to imports, and in many cases they were less than what we should have shipped. Nonetheless, this did not affect Cuba's imports. And that situation, naturally, will not recur in the coming years, thanks to our efforts. This help also made possible something which I mentioned previously: it enabled us to fulfill our commitments with other countries with which we did not have the same kind of relations; it helped us to maintain our credit for purchasing other types of equipment which were unavailable in the socialist camp.

In short, in all justice we must say that that aid was decisive for us. And when we compare this with the situation of Latin America, with the Alliance for Progress, with what the imperialists themselves admit....

In explaining the reasons for Cuba's successes, let it be known that, yes, in the first place, it has been the result of a revolution, of a legitimate revolution, of a correct concept of how to make this revolution, of how to mobilize the people, of how to exploit the natural resources, opening the door to a tremendous specialization, to optimum use of the resources of the country, to extraordinary successes, with the prerequisite of the economic objective's having become a part of the conscience of the people,

of the people's awareness of work as a duty. These were decisive factors. And the determination of the people to defend their revolution at any cost and carry it through was decisive. (APPLAUSE)

This, and international solidarity and economic cooperation with our country — blockaded as it is by the imperialists — will produce this result: surprise for our enemies and pride for the world revolutionary movement. Because the triumphs of Cuba will not be Cuba's triumphs but the triumphs of the revolutionary movement, an example for the underdeveloped countries of the world, a solution and a road to be followed by those who suffer from hunger, poverty, underdevelopment, and exploitation. (APPLAUSE)

It is necessary for us to understand and to know which have been the determining factors and, at the same time that we express our joy at these successes, to express our deep recognition of those who have helped us. (APPLAUSE)

What remains to be done now is to name this year. The name for next year we already know: it will be the Year of the Ten Million. But, before the ten million are reached, we must put forth great effort. Every year many persons think of a name. I think... generally another name appears. Someone should propose something.... (SHOUTS OF "THE YEAR OF ENDEAVOR") Of endeavor? (SHOUTS OF "OF HEROIC ENDEAVOR")

That is a coincidence, because I had thought of something along those lines. We shouldn't say "heroic," because this year's effort has also been heroic. I should say "of decisive endeavor." What do you think? If you agree with it, we shall hereby baptize this year, 1969, as the Year of Decisive Endeavor. (PROLONGED APPLAUSE)

Patria o Muerte!
Venceremos! (OVATION)



India: Introduction to a Congress

P. Sundarayya

By the time this issue of *Tricontinental* is in circulation, the 8th Congress of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) will be taking place.

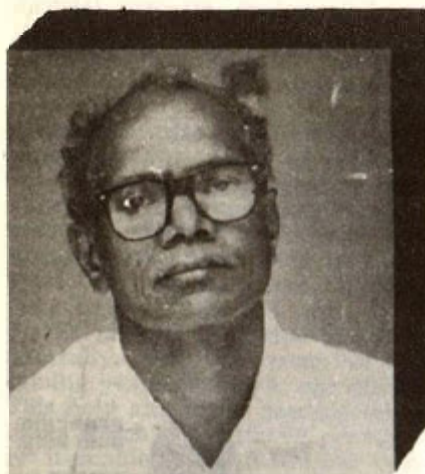
The following article talks about this event and expresses criteria which will be fundamental in evaluating the Congress and acquiring a better understanding of India's complex problems.

The Indian revolutionary movement—in spite of all the obstacles that face it—is one of the strongest and best organized in the area, with a long tradition in struggle. But it is also one of the less known and most ignored, particularly outside the continent. Its importance has grown in the last few years and will continue to grow as the problems of India—as well as those of the rest of the Asian subcontinent—become more dramatic and, as a result, their solution is more sought after and yearned for.

The article deals with subjects which are evidently polemical, and clearly outlines the position of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) regarding the internal and external problems of the country and the world revolutionary movement. The fact that the author is a person of great prestige and authority makes the article more important.

Since 1925, when he was hardly twelve years old, Sundarayya joined the groups that struggled for India's independence. In 1929 he was sentenced, in Madras, to two years in prison and in 1934, when the Communist Party was made illegal, he was a member of its Central Committee. During the following years he engaged mainly in organizing agricultural workers and peasants, and in 1936 was again sentenced to two years in jail.

He was released in 1939, and afterwards—except for the period from 1942 to 1947 when the Communist Party enjoyed a legal status—all his political work was carried out underground. He directed the armed struggle of the Telengana peasants (1946-51) and in 1952, when the Party was again granted legality, he was elected to the Upper House of Parliament and became the leader of the Communist faction. In 1953 he became a member of the Political Bureau (Politburo) of the Communist Party of India and in 1964, after the 7th Congress, was appointed its Secretary General.



THE EIGHTH CONGRESS of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) is being held in the State of Kerala from December 23 to 29 next. This Congress comes four years after the Seventh Congress of the Party held in Calcutta in October-November 1964.

The Seventh Party Congress was rightly called the Congress of Fight against Revisionism. The Seventh Congress came as the culmination of a decade-long struggle inside the united Communist Party of India against the class-collaborationist policies, national chauvinism and revisionism of the dominant leadership of the Party. During these ten years, this section of the leadership of the Party had sunk deeper and deeper into the bog of revisionism, adopted a nonclass approach to the bourgeois-landlord ruling classes and their policies, prettified them and created reformist illusions in the people, abandoning all Marxist-Leninist principles and reducing the revolutionary

party of the working class into an appendage of the ruling classes. And the high-watermark of their national chauvinism came when, in 1962, they welcomed US imperialist aid to India to fight Socialist China. It was because the Marxist-Leninist sections refused to accent this position that the revisionists forced a split in the Party.

Coming as it did after such a long and bitter struggle against revisionism inside the Party, the Seventh Congress, held after breaking away with the revisionists, adopted the Programme of the Party charting a revolutionary path for the Indian people. The Programme basing itself on Marxism-Leninism and applying it to the concrete Indian conditions, gave a scientific assessment of Indian developments and showed the path the Indian people will have to take to complete the Indian revolution.

The Programme laid down that the Indian revolution was in its second stage, the people's democratic stage, with the first stage of general, united front against imperialism having come to an end with the winning of the political independence of the country from British imperialism by the national liberation movement under the leadership of the bourgeoisie and the setting up of the bourgeois-landlord regime led by the big bourgeoisie. Only the replacement of this state by a state of people's democracy based on the alliance of all genuine antifeudal and anti-imperialist forces led by the working class can complete the antifeudal, anti-imperialist, antimonopoly and democratic tasks, and since this is possible only in determined opposition to the big bourgeoisie which occupies the leading position in the present State, the peo-

ple's democratic revolution together with irreconcilable opposition to feudalism and imperialism is opposed to the big bourgeoisie.

The Programme made a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the internal policies of the bourgeois-landlord Government and confidently predicted that the capitalist path of development chosen by the ruling classes will not only not lead to any independent economic development, that it can only go from crisis to crisis, make the country more dependent on the imperialists, specially the USA, opening the country to the threat of neo-colonialism, and that the ruling classes unable to get out of this crisis created by their own policies will resort more and more to police state methods undermining the very system of parliamentary democracy by which they have been swearing.

The Programme examined the foreign policy of nonalignment of the Government and stated that it was a class policy, the various shifts in it reflecting the play between the two camps — the Socialist and imperialist — as also between the various imperialist powers. The growing dependence on the imperialists, noted the Programme, was more and more emasculating this policy of its content of nonalignment since the anti-imperialist, anticolonial content of genuine nonalignment cannot go hand in hand with growing dependence on US imperialism.

The Programme while stating that the Party will "strive" to achieve the establishment of people's democracy and socialist transformation through peaceful means, warned at the same time:

However, it needs always to be borne in mind that the ruling classes never relinquish their

power voluntarily. They seek to defy the will of the people and seek to reverse it by lawlessness and violence. It is, therefore, necessary for the revolutionary forces to be vigilant and so orientate their work that they can face up to all contingencies, to any twist and turn in the political life of the country.

The Programme declared that the Party was a proud contingent of the international Communist movement and would exert all its energies for the struggle for the principled unity of the world communist movement and the socialist camp.

This Programme, the draft of which was discussed for over six months inside the Party during the pre-Congress discussions, rallied the majority of the united Party behind it. It is this which made it possible for the Congress to state in its Declaration that "the delegates assembled here are the true representatives of the Communist Party of India and that the Dange group has no right to call itself the CPI."

The Resolution on Tasks adopted by the Congress gave concrete guidance to the Party for its immediate activities. The perspective given by the Resolution was one of growing mass struggles as the economic crisis deepened and it called on the Party to give leadership to these struggles and mobilise all democratic forces for united action on mass issues.

The tremendous success of the Congress created panic in the ruling classes. They and their venal press had hoped that because of the revisionist policies and practices for a long time, the Communist movement in the country

had been disrupted and weakened. They also nourished the illusion that with their slander campaign against the Party calling it a "Chinese agent" they could isolate and suppress the militant Communists who had revolted against revisionism in the then-prevailing anti-China hysteria created in the country by arch-reactionaries. The Party's Seventh Congress belied all these fond hopes of the ruling classes. The Party had rallied to it and its Programme the majority of the Party ranks forging a new unity on a correct basis and despite the arrests and jailing of Party leaders in West Bengal on the eve of the Congress, the mass mobilisation for the Congress was something unprecedented. It was clear that the overwhelming majority of the Communist Party of India would take the path of firm opposition to, and determined struggle against, the Congress Government and its anti-people policies.

The Government then came down with its heavy hand of repression on the Party on the eve of the first meeting of the Central Committee after the Seventh Congress so as to prevent it from elaborating and implementing the Party Congress decisions. In this, it was aided and abetted by the revisionists who had kept the sign-board of the Party but found the mass base of the Party deserting them. Over a thousand leaders of the Party, among them 95 per cent of the members of the Central and State Committees of the Party, were arrested and jailed all over the country under the lawless Defense of India Act. The Government's action was directed to behead the mass popular movement, which was already bursting out, of its revolutionary leadership, but there

again all the Government's calculations went wrong.

The removal of the leaders of the Party at such a time was, indeed, a severe blow to the Party. But the Programme adopted by the Seventh Congress and its other decisions had armed the Party with revolutionary perspectives and revolutionary tactics and it not only fought back the Government offensive but also creditably faced the many complicated problems, which arose in the period. Tested cadres of the Party came forward to take responsibilities in the absence of their leaders, reorganised the Party Committees from top to bottom, started the Party's central weekly, **People's Democracy**. The large mass of sympathisers and friends of the Party stood by it loyally and the still larger mass of non-Communist democrats refused to be swept by the anti-Communist barrage unleashed by the Congress rulers and raised their voice of protest immediately after the Government attacked the Party.

That the Party was far from beaten became clear when, despite the initial dislocation caused by the arrests, the Party moved into action and gave a big rebuff to the ruling Congress Party when a crushing defeat was inflicted on it in the midterm elections in Kerala State in February 1965 — within two months after the attack on the Party. The Congress Party had thought that its attack on the Communist Party would frighten other democratic parties and they would keep away from the Communist Party which, according to the tactics laid down by the Seventh Congress, was engaged in forging the united front of opposition democratic parties. But this did not happen. The Party emerged as the single biggest party with even

more seats than the Congress which was reduced to a minority. An alternate non-Congress Government with the Communist Party as the leading force would have been possible even then had not the revisionists who were parading the sign-board of the Communist Party of India played the game of the Congress Party and broken the united front to the advantage of the Congress. For this shameful role they played, the people taught them an unforgettable lesson. They suffered the worst disaster of their life. The same rejection by the people of the slanderous accusations against the Party was seen in other elections too. The Congress Government which had hoped to isolate the Communist Party from the people was itself growingly getting isolated. The developments in Kerala — the Government's refusal to release from jail those Communists who had been elected to the State Legislature, the refusal to give an opportunity to the opposition who had won the elections to form the Government of the State, the dissolution of the legislature without allowing it to meet even once — shocked all those with even a modicum of democratic sense and a much wider section of the people began demanding a change in Congress policies.

The Kerala events had a lasting effect in that they unleashed a countrywide movement for civil liberties in which eminent jurists, journalists, educationists, parliamentarians and others participated. The Communist Party linked up the activities of these intellectuals with the campaign and agitation for civil liberties among the mass of the working people and from this was born that broad movement which became irresistible and which in the days that followed

forced the Government to revoke the Emergency which it had imposed on the country in November 1962 to abrogate the fundamental rights of the people guaranteed by the Constitution and arm itself with dictatorial powers.

Simultaneously, the Party was active, in cooperation with other left opposition parties and mass organisations, in heading the mass struggles which were breaking out on an unprecedentedly large scale as a result of the deepening of the economic crisis foreseen by the Seventh Congress.

The bourgeois-landlord rulers of the country were making furious attacks on the living standards of the people in an attempt to shift the burdens of the crisis on to their shoulders and the working people were putting up a determined resistance to defend their living standards. The Party mobilised its own independent strength to unleash and lead these struggles and also strove to forge united fronts with other parties to develop these mass struggles and simultaneously defeat the Government's attempts to isolate the Party. It was a measure of the correctness of the Party's tactics that the ideological and policy differences among the various opposition parties and organisational differences among the mass organisations did not prevent them from coming together and fighting for the legitimate demands of the workers, peasants, middle class employees, teachers and other sections of the working people.

There was a big set-back to this rising wave of mass struggle when armed conflicts broke out between India and Pakistan in September-October 1965. The ruling Congress Party, reactionary parties like the

Jana Sangh and even left parties like the PSP and SSP began whipping up national chauvinism and anti-Pakistan hysteria. The revisionists, in line with their doings at the time of the Sino-Indian war in 1962, vied with the worst reactionaries to whip up chauvinism. It was a trying time for the Communist Party. It was the only party which refused to be driven into chauvinistic positions, raised high the banner of peaceful settlement with Pakistan and told the people that only US imperialism gained by this conflict, the people of both countries suffered. For this it was denounced by all others and particularly the revisionists but the Party's stand was soon vindicated when the Government signed the Tashkent Declaration with the Government of Pakistan.

In this period the Party boldly campaigned for a settlement with not only Pakistan but also with China. More and more people began realizing the serious consequences of continued hostility with China and began to see the wisdom and correctness of the course suggested by the Party. This was the biggest political defeat suffered by the Congress Party.

The Indian ruling classes' efforts to divert attention from mass struggles did not succeed for long, they began to break out again in a big way.

The biggest and most historic of these mass struggles in this period were the struggle against tram-fare increase in Calcutta and the great food struggle of W. Bengal in March-April 1966 in the course of which there were two total state-wide **bandhs** (general strike of the workers accompanied with strikes in offices and establishments and closure of all shops and

business) and the Kerala **bandh** of January 1966 on the question of food supply to the State.

The West Bengal struggle was not only quantitatively bigger and more widespread, it was qualitatively higher than ever before in post-independence India. The people showed greater determination in facing the repressive measures of the police and the army and they fought a political battle against the Congress Government and forced it to retreat. Not only was the Government forced to make some concessions regarding the economic demands of the people of West Bengal, politically, too, it had to concede the demand for the release of the detainees.

The release forced in West Bengal along with the growing all-India movement for releases, withdrawal of Emergency, etc., forced open the jail gates in all the States and the people brought the Communist leaders back into their midst.

The struggle all over the country continued with renewed vigour and against this background of huge mass struggles, the Party began its preparation for the Fourth General Elections to be held in February-March 1967.

The elections were coming in the midst of a deepening economic crisis and the perilous situation created by growing dependence on US imperialism. Heavy burdens had already been imposed on the people and to these was added the monstrous defence expenditure of a thousand **crore** of rupees¹ because of the Government's policy of continued hostility with China and Pakistan. The internal and foreign policies of the Government were under continuous pressure

from the imperialists. In this situation, the Party decided its main aim in the elections should be to break the Congress monopoly of power and for this laid down its electoral policy of united front and adjustments with other left and democratic parties. According to this, in States where alternative Government was possible, the Party would forge electoral alliances with those parties ready to shed anti-Communism and fight the Congress jointly with the Party and evolve a common minimum programme of giving whatever relief was possible to the people with the limited powers the States enjoy under the Indian Constitution—federal in name, unitary in practice. The Party decided it would campaign on its own programme of people's democracy as the only alternative to the Congress, fight the Congress as the main enemy while at the same time exposing reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra which had the same class basis and policies as the Congress Party.

The Fourth General Elections held simultaneously to the Lower House of Parliament and the Legislative Assemblies in the States, reduced the Congress Party into a minority in eight States and slashed its majority in Parliament.

In Kerala, the Congress Party could secure only seven per cent of the seats. The CPI (M) emerged as the single biggest party and the United Front of the CPI (M) and other parties which had confronted the Congress secured nearly 90 per cent of the seats.

Unlike in Kerala, where a single united front faced the Congress in the elections, in West Bengal because of disruption by the revisionists, no such front could be formed and two fronts faced the Congress—one of the CPI (M) and other left parties and the other of the

revisionists, the Bengal Congress, a break-away group from the Congress, and two other parties. Despite this disruption, the people cast their votes to reduce the Congress into a minority though it became the single biggest party in the Legislature. The CPI (M) emerged as the single biggest of the Opposition parties.

Thus in two of the traditional strongholds of the united Communist Party—West Bengal and Kerala—the election results confirmed that the mass base of the united Communist Party had remained with the CPI (M) and not with the revisionists.

In Kerala, the United Front in which the CPI (M) was the major force had fought the elections on the basis of a common minimum programme and the Front formed the Government in the State. In West Bengal, the two fronts which had fought the Congress came together after the elections, chalked out a common programme and took over the Government of the State.

In the other States where the Congress had been reduced to a minority, everywhere it was not the democratic forces that had defeated the Congress. In some of these States formation of alternative non-Congress Governments was possible only in alliances with parties like the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra. The CPI (M) rightly rejected the proposal to join these Governments as such participation in Governments with reactionary parties like the Jana Sangh and Swatantra which were no different from the Congress would have been sheer opportunism. But the revisionists for whom opportunism had become the sheet-anchor after they had abandoned Marxism-Leninism, joined some of these

¹ A thousand crore of rupees is equivalent to approximately US \$1319 435 000. (Ed. note)

Governments.

In West Bengal and Kerala, where the CPI (M) joined the State Governments, it had to fight a simultaneous battle against the Congress which ruled at the Centre and against the vacillations of its partners in the United Front. The CPI (M) did this successfully by independently mobilising the people and getting the people's intervention at every crucial stage.

These Governments, with the restricted powers they enjoy under the Constitution, could only give limited relief to the people. While giving this relief, the CPI (M) looked upon these Governments more as instruments of struggle to take the mass movement and actions forward. The Party rejected the revisionist thesis that these State Governments could be made stepping stones for the capture of power.

The Central Congress Government right from the start began conspiring to overthrow the non-Congress Governments, making the West Bengal and Kerala Governments its main target because the CPI (M) was the leading partner in these two Governments. All the more was it necessary for the Congress Centre to topple these two Governments because though they could not give much relief to the people, they stood in the way of the ruling classes' attempt to shift the burdens of the deepening economic crisis on to the people, they refused to use the police and the repressive machinery of the State to suppress the working people's struggle to defend their living against the onslaught of the capitalists. With this example, some of the other non-Congress Governments also had to give some relief to the people.

The election results had shown that not only the economic crisis was deepening, but a political crisis had also begun to develop. It was manifested in the growing anti-Congress discontent of the people and the fast-losing political hold of the Congress over them, the disintegration of the Congress itself, the aggravation of Centre-State conflicts and the growing threat of the ruling classes establishing a police state to suppress the people.

The Congress succeeded in buying a few unstable elements in the West Bengal United Front and toppling the United Front Government. The massive people's protest which followed defeated the Congress attempt to come back to office first through setting up a puppet Government and later forming a coalition Government in the State. This Government had to resign and elections had to be ordered in the State—the one thing which the Congress dreaded most. This was possible because the CPI (M) was able to direct the huge mass struggles that had been going on in the State into a political battle against the Congress machinations.

Non-Congress Governments in three other States—Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab—were also overthrown. But no protest movements developed in these States as in West Bengal, because the opportunistic coalitions in these States had at no stage gone to the people and mobilised them but were also interested in unscrupulous back-stage manoeuvrings. Again, the CPI (M)'s stand in relation to these Governments was proved correct.

In Kerala, where the Congress has been reduced to such an insignificant minority in the legislature, the Congress cannot hope to overthrow the Government by such methods. There the Congress Cen-

tre has deliberately set out on a policy of starving the people. Because the State produces a large amount of commercial crops which earns huge foreign exchange for the country, Kerala is deficit to the extent of fifty per cent of her requirement of food grains. The Congress Government had taken the commitment to supply adequate rice to the State and it used to do so before the United Front Government assumed office. But after that the Centre has refused to honour this commitment and reduced the rice supply to the State to almost half of what it was giving earlier. Along with this starving of the people, the Centre is also abusing its powers to interfere in the State to make it impossible for the State Government to implement the policy it has chalked out of not using the repressive police machinery against popular movements and working people's struggles.

While the CPI (M) has been heading this battle of the people and for democracy, it has taken a number of measures to strengthen the Party and the mass movement. Through the tasks it laid down on the trade union, peasant and Party organisation fronts, it called upon the Party to liquidate the revisionist practices which have lingered on in the Party's mass work and building its organisation. It gave a new orientation to the working class movement by emphasizing the need to overcome economism and to politicalise the class and to the peasant movement directing it to base itself on the agricultural labourers and poor peasants.

The Party also conducted a thorough inner-Party discussion on the ideological questions in dispute in the international Communist movement and adopted revolutionary positions on these questions.

It rejected the revisionist interpretation of peaceful coexistence which extended this concept to class struggles in different countries, to the national liberation struggle, leading to the sabotage of these struggles, to failure to oppose imperialism.

It rejected the illusion that war can be prevented for all time to come even when imperialism continues to exist.

It rejected the revisionist thesis that peaceful transition to socialism is the general law of the present epoch, and the one-sided emphasis on the possibility of peaceful transition.

It rejected slogans like "State of the whole people" and "Party of the whole people" as slogans arising out of an alien outlook, as slogans which will lead to the abolition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the leading role of the Party of the working class. Similarly it rejected another alien slogan—that of material incentives to increase labour productivity in Socialist countries.

It at the same time rejected that capitalism had already been restored in the Soviet Union and that the Soviet Union had become an ally of US imperialism for division of the world into spheres of influence.

It recognised the supreme necessity to fight for the principled unity of the world Communist movement, of restoring the unity of the socialist camp and for taking all such steps as united action against the common imperialist enemy.

The ideological discussion and the ideological documents that were adopted armed the Party with a revolutionary standpoint and further unified the Party.

In the process of the ideological discussion the Party was able to isolate and defeat an infantile left trend which had appeared demanding the stereotyped copying of the experience of other Parties without any relation to the conditions existing in India. The Party thus defended the Programme against interference by some brother parties.

To cite only one instance, it is the correct ideological positions that the Party had adopted which enabled it to take the right attitude when counterrevolution came to near-success in Czechoslovakia and the five Warsaw Pact States had to intervene there.

It is in this background that the Party is going to its Eighth Congress.

It is a situation where the Socialist forces, despite the disunity and disarray in the Socialist camp, are making big advances, where the imperialists are being dealt death-blows by the Vietnamese people, when Cuba and North Korea stand up to the imperialist threats and force them to retreat. The national liberation movements in Asia with Viet-Nam in the forefront, in Latin America inspired by the Cuban example and in Africa are striding forward.

The imperialists, despite all the manoeuvrings they are resorting to, are losing every day — economically, politically, militarily. The general crisis of capitalism, in its third stage, is undermining the system as a whole.

India being a part of the world capitalist system is in the throes of a deepening economic crisis which has led to a political crisis which is also deepening. The ruling classes are trying to get out of the crisis through even more dependence on the imperialists and suppression of

the people at home. This dependence on the imperialists has already led to such antinational deals as the devaluation of the rupee, further opening of India to the depredations of foreign monopoly capital, etc. It is this dependence that has led India to succumb to imperialist pressure and refuse to take an anti-imperialist stand in relation to US aggression in Viet-Nam, cut off trade with Cuba and North Viet-Nam while expanding trade with the puppet regimes in South Korea and South Viet-Nam and strengthening relations with junior partners of the US imperialists like Japan, and deny recognition to the German Democratic Republic. The foreign policy as a whole is being shifted in a reactionary direction.

But this growing dependence on the imperialists is only further accentuating the crisis. More and more struggles of all sections of the people are breaking out — the latest being the all-India one-day general strike of the employees of the Central Government. All the Government's repression is failing to cow down the fighting people.

Struggles of agricultural labourers and poor peasants for land and better living standards, of workers, of middle class employees, teachers, professors, newspaper employees, of students and youth, in fact, all sections of the people are getting more and more intense. It will be the task of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to head these struggles and give a revolutionary turn to the Indian situation. It is to this task that the Eighth Congress will address itself.

The Seventh Congress of the Party was the Congress of Fight against Revisionism. The Eighth Congress will become the Congress of Leadership to India's Revolutionary Movement.



experiences
and facts

The Tupamaros: Armed Vanguard in Uruguay

Carlos Núñez

August 1968. A bold action — the kidnapping of Ulysses Pereira Reverbel, notorious collaborator of the Pacheco Areco regime — shakes the Uruguayan political scene and brings to light a surprisingly efficient organization: the Tupamaros. With this as a starting point, Carlos Núñez (*Tricontinental* 3, "Régis Debray: Guilty of Being a Revolutionary") has written a chronicle of how this group developed, whose history is a mixture of legend and reality.

To talk about the Tupamaros, of their theses — which are brief but backed by action — of their praxis, is, in short, to confront this attitude with the torrent of words in which a great deal of the continental "left" is now submerged. This is just what Núñez does when he describes for the readers of *Tricontinental* the history of the movement, from its origin among the *peludos* to its present concept of what armed struggle should be, particularly under the conditions prevailing in Uruguay, including a unique interpretation of the *foco* proclaimed by Che Guevara.

The analysis of the foresight with which the group prepared itself in order to face the regime, until it became a perfect war machine, also offers an interesting experience which is valid not only within the framework of the small southern country. Five years after their first signs of life, the Tupamaros constitute a lesson in revolutionary consistency which runs parallel to the deterioration of the myth of Uruguayan democracy.

members of the Mario Robaina Méndez Commando Unit of the Tupamaros National Liberation Movement kidnapped Pereira Reverbel as he left his home, slightly wounding one of his companions who tried to offer resistance and leaving behind a "communiqué to public opinion" stating: "Today Mr. Pereira Reverbel has been detained by decision of the MLN." In this communiqué, the organization stated the principal antipopular measures taken by Uruguay's Executive Power. It concluded by saying:

We warn the repressive forces that: 1) Mr. Pereira Reverbel, who is in our hands, guarantees the physical security of our comrades and all those who are today persecuted; 2) the physical safety and security of Mr. Pereira Reverbel will depend on the conduct of the repressive forces and the fascist groups at their service, and for that reason we will be most vigilant of the methods they use; 3) therefore, do not try to find him because that will jeopardize the safety and security of the prisoner; 4) Mr. Pereira Reverbel will be released safe and sound when the leaders of our movement feel it opportune and if the aforementioned requisites are honored.

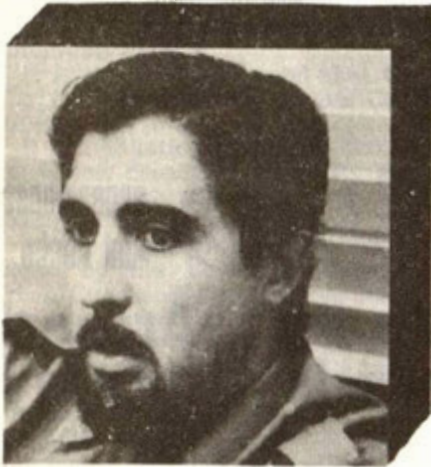
It was, undeniably, a challenge; immediate events were to prove that the regime headed by Jorge Pacheco Areco did not have the possibility of successfully coping with the situation. More than 3000 police agents — practically half the total force stationed in Montevideo — were mobilized to search for Pereira Reverbel and his captors. But all in vain. The repressive forces did not have even a clue to go on. Meanwhile, the Tupamaros gave new evidence of their organizational efficiency, sending Pacheco Areco a letter written by the prisoner (in which he said that he was perfectly safe; he gave instructions on the handling of urgent public matters in his hands, and pleaded that

the MLN warning be headed). The police once again, weren't able to make any headway at all in the matter. The repeated proof of their impotence seemed to have so angered the regime that it launched its militarized police against the University, occupying all the schools in a frenzied search, as violent as it was futile. Pereira Reverbel was, of course, not hidden in any of the "subversive grottoes" of the University. To some, intervention of the University could only be explained by the Manichaean paranoia of police "intelligence" that sees the roots of political "subversion" wherever there are students. On the other hand, others saw the search for the Tupamaros as a mere pretext for an operation designed at hitting the University, firm bulwark of opposition to the government's antipopular policy. (Furthermore, with this alleged intention, Pacheco Areco planned to dismiss the University's Central Council at the same time for "aiding and abetting subversion." Parliamentary opposition has, up to now, prevented that scheme from being carried out.) The most coherent version, however, was that which was heard in some leftist sectors, making much of the repressive inefficiency in the case of politically inspired actions: confused, perplexed, without the least idea of the path to take, the police had seemingly replaced efficiency with a spectacle. The outcome was tragic for the population (one student — Liber Arce — dead, and dozens injured), but it also had its antithesis for the regime: the armed intervention of the University, which once again gave the lie to the government's contention of "institutionality," served only to radicalize even more the student struggle and place broad popular sectors firmly in the ranks of militant opposition as was demonstrated by the great multitude that accompanied the funeral procession of the student killed by the police.

Lawyer, landholder, director of

the state-owned Power and Telephone Enterprise (UTE, the power division), noted for his fanatic anti-labor stand, intimate friend of Pacheco Areco, "author" of the "tough" government policy, Ulysses Pereira Reverbel was certainly the person least likely to win the sympathy of Uruguayan public opinion. This factor, logically evaluated by the Tupamaros (as was revealed by the characterization made of the "prisoner" in their communiqué), together with the growing legend of impunity that surrounds the MLN — legend that, once again, is backed up by the facts — determined a reaction of relative popular complacency regarding the kidnapping of the politician. Of course, the legalistic puritanism and antiviolenent attitude of certain well-meaning sectors (including some leftist "personalities" whose political fate appears irreversibly tied to the path of supposed "constructive opposition") formally condemned the Tupamaros' action; but the cold, hard facts were there to see, defying all speculation. The violence implicit in the kidnapping of Pereira Reverbel (violence which is calculated and controlled, far from being indiscriminate and futile terrorism) was but a response to the repressive violence employed by the regime, which is indeed indiscriminate, blind, and ruthless.

Thus, when Ulysses Pereira Reverbel, physically unharmed but as morally defeated as the regime he represents, awakened from his 5-day nightmare with battered elegance, he had involuntarily become a multiple testimony: that the members of an antipopular system such as that existing in Uruguay cannot hope from now on for the privilege of impunity ("No one will be immune, and popular justice will know how to pass judgment, by the appropriate channels and forms," stated the Tupamaros' communiqué); testimony of the fact that



WITH A several-days-old beard, his clothing soiled and wrinkled, still doxy from pentothal, Ulysses Pereira Reverbel retained little of his usual elegance. He reeled on getting out of the car that left him not far from the center of Montevideo and discovered the wristwatch that his hooded captors had taken from him some hours before, prior to leaving the room papered with newspapers in which he had been held for five days.

On the morning of August 7,





Uruguay, moth-eaten "Switzerland of the Americas," has ceased being the "exception" frequently pointed out in the context of a continent shaken by oppression and, consequently, by popular violence and revolutionary struggle; testimony, in the last analysis and contrary to the opinion of many, that even in this country it is possible to counter with direct actions the repression of the ruling sectors, that this same repression shows itself to be impotent in the face of a revolutionary organization, such as the Tupamaros, that proves itself to be conscious of the difficult demands called for by the praxis of national liberation.

Sendic and the "Peludos"

Despite all their efforts, the police have consistently failed in their attempts to penetrate the MLN's security setup. And, of course, it is no less difficult to try to get a story on the Tupamaros. However, the documents issued by the Movement — documents that circulate underground in Uruguay, some of which have recently appeared in Latin-American publications — and the statements that can be picked up within the Uruguayan left, give us an approximate idea of the background, theoretical lines, and fundamental activities of the organization.

In July 1963, ten years after the attack on the Moncada Army Garrison that marked the beginning of Cuba's insurrectional struggle, a group of leftist militants headed by Raúl Sendic entered the Swiss Colony Rifle Club (a placid resort in the Uruguayan countryside) and seized a dozen automatic rifles. Looking back, this action is viewed by most Uruguayans as the newspaper "baptism" of what in time was to become the National Liberation Movement. But at that time that "expropriation" of weapons had the most diverse repercussions. The newspapers, at first shocked by the appearance of "subversive" activities in the arena of Uruguayan

political struggle (the "model and example of representative democracy," droned the official press of the time), did a fast about-face, understanding the risks that such a scandal involved, and sought to minimize the news, reducing it to the level of an ordinary robbery. Meanwhile, the traditional left, whose platform in the recent 1962 elections had been the creation of a "united front," readily termed those responsible for the action as "provocateurs." But at the base of these sectors and among the most politically sophisticated sections of public opinion, the incident created quite a stir. The perplexity and even scepticism surrounding such actions (common in Latin-American history, especially since the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, but practically unknown in Uruguay) could not hide an obvious fact: the growing crisis that had plagued the country for more than a decade (and which foretold a much blacker future for the working class); the progressive gangrene that corroded the structure of the welfare state promoted by liberalism since the turn of the century; the inefficiency of the electoral process as a means of shaking the political domination of the ruling classes; and the handing over of the country to the imperialist interests they represent.

The police identified Raúl Sendic and other leftist activists as those responsible for the raid on the Rifle Club, but could not apprehend them. As a member of the Socialist Party of Uruguay, Sendic had, even since before 1960, devoted his energies to political and organizational work in rural areas, largely ignored by leftist organizations which traditionally direct their efforts at the urban masses. Sendic directed and directs his efforts toward the most typically proletarian sector in the countryside, different from the small merchants that one finds in farming

areas in the south as well as from the peons who worked on the ranches whose class definition was ambiguous and who were practically impossible to organize into unions. He worked in fact with the men who brought in the rice harvest in the east, and with those who worked in the sugarcane and sugar-beet fields in the north. A law student — with a lawyer's degree — Sendic did not limit himself to a political or organizational task. He understood that the only way to win the workers' confidence, to assimilate their problems, to speak their language, was to integrate oneself into their life and their work. And so he became a *peludo* (what the local cane cutters call themselves). After mobilizing and organizing the sugar beet workers in the department of Paysandú and the sugarcane workers in Salto — both departments bordered by the Uruguay River which marks the frontier to the west with Argentina — Sendic founded UTAA (the Artigas Sugar Workers' Union) composed of sugarcane plantation workers who supply CAINSA (a US-owned firm) in the extreme northern part of Uruguay near Brazil and Argentina. Through UTAA, the *peludos* won a series of social laws that the companies did not apply — shielding themselves behind the negligence, or the complicity, of the government; the lack of workers' organizations; and the fact that the rest of the country did not know of the miserable living and working conditions on the Artigas plantations. But with Sendic's guidance, the sugarcane workers soon understood that the struggle for their legal rights — paid for at the risk of persecution and violence directed against UTAA leaders and activists — was but a first step along a path that had to be broadened to include many other matters: living and health conditions, which were inhuman, and which were the

responsibility of the firms; laws protecting women and children, who were completely overlooked by existing Uruguayan social legislation; and, above all, the seasonal nature of work on the plantations that created serious unemployment among the sugarcane workers during the greater part of the year.

In 1962, Sendic organized the first "caneworkers' march." UTAA workers, together with their wives and children, walked more than 600 kilometers from Artigas to Montevideo, with the intention of making known their problems and demands for "land to work" (they called for the expropriation of large tracts of virtually abandoned land in the department of Artigas). The *peludos'* presence in the capital did cause a ripple. However, as was to be expected, nothing was wrested from the ruling circles except recognition by a parliamentary commission of the inhuman work conditions in which the caneworkers were forced to live. In another framework, perhaps more unfortunate, they were also witnesses, during an election year, of the empty demagoguery of the large parties that tried to use their movement in a sectarian way, and of the no-less-sectarian indifference shown by certain leftist organizations. They also saw the rebirth of violent fascism when shot at from the headquarters of the Trade Union Confederation of Uruguay, hangout of corrupt, now defunct, trade unionism. The bullets intended for the workers killed a woman, an innocent bystander. This incident, that brought out the underlying violence in the Uruguayan trade union and political struggle in mounting crisis, and that as a result made the sugarcane workers increasingly aware of the need for self-defense, is seen by observers as one of the probable direct reasons for the "expropriation" of guns carried out the following year in the Swiss Colony Rifle Club.

And just as today the Rifle Club incident is pointed out as the first,

public indication of the existence of an organization ready to bring class confrontation to its highest expression, the sugarcane workers' movement is seen as the genesis of the Tupamaros. To some of those who were then active comrades of Raúl Sendic (and who share with most Uruguayans the belief that he is one of, if not the principal leader of, the MLN), his political and trade union activities since the early '60s have introduced new methods for understanding and carrying out the work of creating revolutionary awareness and mobilization: his complete personal incorporation in the ranks of the *peludos*, their march on the capital, their demands — which, even though they were the direct result of a unique situation (the seasonal employment during the harvest), went beyond mere wage demands and reached the more profound levels of the production structures — were eloquent indications of those new concepts that were to lead to the birth and the activity of the Tupamaros. It is to this extent that we can justify the partially detailed account of the caneworkers' movement, in our attempt to make a report on the MLN. But it is also important to consider these beginnings to properly evaluate the tactics on which the Tupamaros base themselves regarding the urban and rural armed struggle in the light of Uruguay's specific conditions.

From "Armed Branch" to Vanguard Force

According to what can today be culled from the sectors consulted on material for this article, in 1963, following his identification as the one behind the Rifle Club robbery, Raúl Sendic was urged to turn himself in. On turning himself over to the police, he would be subject to the relative leniency afforded for "political crimes" under Uruguayan law, with the favorable factors that could be handled during his defense and even with the opportunity

that a trial of this nature would mean for publicizing the sugarcane workers' movement and presenting an overall picture of the injustice and oppression that gave rise to this movement. But finally, the opinion held by Sendic and some of his comrades prevailed over such "political" speculation. The path was chosen and there was no turning back. Even in the event that those responsible for the "expropriation" of the weapons had not been identified, there was no other path but that of the underground open to them. Of course, police identification appeared at first to increase the risks, but at the same time it implied an unavoidable handicap, one of the imperative requirements of the path they had chosen. Since 1963, a poster bearing the likeness of Raúl Sendic has been found in every police station throughout the country, but that is as far as police "efficiency" has been able to progress.

Among the Uruguayan left it is understood that the group headed by Sendic operated then as the "armed branch" of the Socialist Party, which had just emerged from an unsuccessful try in the elections in alliance with certain nationalist elements of the petty bourgeoisie. That collaboration apparently did not last long; according to our sources, members of the armed group encountered growing contradictions between the technical needs of the organization (that meant thinking up a surefire security apparatus to protect its forced clandestineness) and the traditional forms of action and decision within a legal and public political apparatus. It can also be assumed, with the passage of time, that those primarily practical contradictions reflected an underlying and still not well-defined theoretical difference regarding the form in which they should tackle Uruguay's political activity. Four years after that

separation, the Tupamaros were to make in one of their documents certain clarifying statements on the "armed branches" of legal political organizations:

No party complies with the revolutionary principles it expounds if it doesn't seriously prepare for the armed struggle at all levels within the Party. It can in no other way achieve maximum efficiency in confronting reaction at each stage, which can be a fatal error (look at the cases of Brazil and Argentina), or the loss of a revolutionary opportunity. If they are not aimed toward a specific objective, small armed Party groups can become an unfortunate political maneuver.

Regarding that point the MLN was openly referring to an episode which occurred during the May 1, 1967, demonstration by the CNT (National Workers' Convention) when an exchange of gunfire broke out between opposed armed leftist groups, in what could be interpreted as an example of the use of Party shock troops in "an unfortunate political maneuver" that in recent years has found extreme expressions in other places throughout the continent (perhaps Venezuela is the most dramatic and eloquent case). True to this statement, the MLN suggested in the same document that members of armed Party groups demand the following of their respective leaderships:

That their activity [that of the "armed branches"] be directed solely against the class enemy, against the bourgeois apparatus and its agents. No armed apparatus can comply with its specific objective if its leadership doesn't meet at least the following basic requisites: 1) that it be consistent and demonstrate with deeds its adhesion to the principle of the armed struggle, attaching importance to it and

providing the necessary material means for its preparation; 2) that it offer the necessary conditions of security and discretion so that the members can carry out their illegal tasks; 3) that owing to its scope and correct line, it have the possibilities — as soon as possible — of becoming the leadership of the proletarian masses.

Of course, as we will try to show later, the concepts of the MLN regarding this point are not exclusively "technical" motives nor do they imply the postulation of a kind of "militarism" that presupposes the divorce between the "political leadership" and the "armed leadership" of a revolutionary organization. On the contrary, it is in these statements that we can find the seed of the ideas that have led the Tupamaros to constitute an organic group in itself, free of dependency on already existing leftist parties in Uruguay.

It is in the 1963-1964 stage that observers generally place the formation of the Tupamaros as an organization, and this is therefore the most sketchy period, the one in which the least is known regarding the movement, even for the active members of other leftist groups. According to the limited available information that can be compiled regarding its founding, the former members of the "armed branch" of the Socialist Party (with which they were supposed to have arrived at an agreement so that militants of the group could gradually select one of the two organizations which are now separated) initially concerned themselves with a formula for coordination with other militant sectors of the left, severed from their organizations by an apparently similar vision of the revolutionary struggle and the need to make it even more radical. At the same time (1964) the so-called hunger commandos carried out "expropriations" of explosives and weapons and sporadic actions, seized truckloads of foodstuffs and dis-

tributed them among the inhabitants of the *cantegriles* (jerry-built shacks that stretched around the periphery of the cities, known as *favelas* in Brazil, *villas miseria* in Argentina, *barriadas* in Peru, *poblaciones callampa* in Chile, and *ranchitos* in Venezuela); only recently political sources have revealed the fact that those activities were related to the Tupamaros.

But, in fact, according to most people on the left, the Tupamaros were born after the efforts of coordination with other militant groups came to an end, owing to tactical and strategic discrepancies. The most probable version circulating among Uruguayan observers indicates that the initial stage of what is today the MLN was begun by just 20 militants. United for the primary objective of "preparing an army," and because such a proposal implied a singularly risky technical and organizational feat, they had supposedly decided to pass to a "closed doors" stage. That voluntary and decisive entry into the world of the underground and silence lasted approximately a year and a half.

The 18 to 20 months between the actual appearance of the Tupamaros until 1965, when posters slapped up on the walls around the city began to publicize the group's name, strange at first glance, are truly impenetrable for all those alien to the organization. Those months must surely contain the original keys to the growth and maturity of the MLN, of its firm progress toward the creation of a revolutionary vanguard.

Revolutionary Maturity, Deterioration of the Regime

Since 1965, Uruguayans have witnessed the development of the legend of the Tupamaros. Police circles and their officious spokesmen began to blame the group for various attacks on reactionary radio stations and US firms; for the "expropriation" of weapons, explo-

sives, and money. At the same time, the lack of information as to the organization's structure and objectives, together with the superficial identification of some of the acts attributed to them and the methods of extremist neighboring groups (such as the Tacuara organization in Argentina) initially awakened among the politically undeveloped the image of a rightist terrorist group, an image that those sectors of information close to the ruling classes naturally tried to foment. But despite everything, the Tupamaros patiently continue their work of organizing, correctly evaluating — according to leftist circles — the political climate, and considering that it is still not propitious for unleashing actions of greater scope.

In 1964, the repressive corps, powerless before the real actions of the organization, released a report connecting the undertaking of an unsuccessful action to the Tupamaros: an attempted bank holdup carried out by UTAA militants Vique, Santana, and Castillo. The caneworkers' movement had continued to stage its annual march on Montevideo (now under the more representative slogan: "For land and with Sendic") and the hopeless situation of the *peludos* drove three of its cadres to attempt this bank robbery, which was defeated by the police, who, however, were unable to establish any tie between this action (which leftist circles interpret today as the result of desperation and of the profound conviction among the canecutters of the need for direct action) and the Tupamaros. But the incident later took on a political note, as Vique, Santana, and Castillo (still imprisoned in Artigas) became the open example of the regime's persecution of workers. In 1965 Uruguay experienced a powerful banking crisis provoked by the speculative maneuvers of a group of

"financiers" tied to the national and international plutocracy. As could have been foreseen, those bankers responsible for the crisis (that fell fundamentally on the backs of small businessmen and those with small savings accounts) were but a few weeks in recovering their freedom, while all efforts of public mobilization in favor of the UTAA leaders were in vain and the caneworkers continued being faced with misery, unemployment, and repression.

In 1966, an electoral campaign complicated by declarations from various parties urging constitutional reform (the customary smoke screen used by the system to hide its political failures) once more subjected Uruguayans, including leftist sectors, to the alienation of petty politics and electoral shenanigans. But in December of that year, some weeks after the elections consecrated the return of the one-man presidential regime — replacing the rotating presidential system in effect since 1952 — and the naming of retired General Oscar Gestido to head it, spectacular incidents once again brought the name of the Tupamaros to light.

At a time when — according to what was later learned — some members of the MLN transferred certain materials to a new locale (obviously a customary operation for underground organizations), an accidental clash took place with the police; in the gunfire that followed, Mario Robaina, a Tupamaro militant, was killed. His comrades escaped, leaving behind part of the material they were carrying: weapons and propaganda. Following this incident, the police set up a series of dragnets — more spectacular than effective, as usual — during which there were new cross fires which cost the life of Carlos Flores, another member of the MLN. However, as a visible result for many observers, hysteria hit

the police force which could not take alive a single militant of the organization and, therefore, it acted blindly with the inevitable consequence of an increased radicalization among the sectors faced with this indiscriminate repression.

Public attention then focused on the Tupamaros, confirming its nature as a revolutionary organization. It was learned that the popular name of the MLN had its origin in rebellion: the name *tupamaros* — derived from the name of Inca caudillo Tupac Amaru, who, in 1780, staged an agrarian rebellion for the independence of the Indians and, captured by the Spanish colonial power, was cruelly dismembered in the public square — referred a century ago to the remnants of José Artigas's gaucho army which refused to submit to the domination of the landholding and urban oligarchies. Of course, such information, significant though it was for a population increasingly subjected to crises and hopelessness as to traditional channels of political activity, was not even slightly useful to the police, already aware of their inability to crack the MLN's organization.

Leftist sectors today coincide primarily in the fact that the events of December 1966 could have been a "qualitative leap forward" for the Tupamaros. In fact, in view of what appeared to be partial failures (the discovery of some of their hideouts, the death of two of their cadres), those incidents were proof that the organization was already in condition to overcome this tragic baptism by fire without endangering its own existence. At the same time, the repression made clear to all leftist circles that the apparently peaceful Uruguayan political scene of a few decades ago was now at the razor's edge.

And so, throughout 1967, the political maturity achieved by the Tupamaros coincided with the definitive deterioration of the system,

the last act — whose rate of growth could only appear accelerated to those who had not recognized the ominous symptoms that had preceded it for some time — in the happy Uruguayan Arcadia. The MLN dedicated itself, according to all indications, to overcoming the effects of the violent persecution which had been reactivated beginning in December 1966, and to perfecting its internal structure and active forces (as could be seen by later events). The leftist parties, at the same time, felt the impact of the public announcement of the Tupamaros as a revolutionary organization on their base organizations and among intermediary cadres. This was a logical result of the group's growth and of its recognition by the remaining sectors. While this was going on, the evolution of the Gestido Government toward a docile attitude regarding the International Monetary Fund and imperialist interests, contributed to the destruction of the initial confidence in the government felt by some sectors of the population. Finally, in December 1967, another coincidence led the decisive convergence of these apparently parallel paths to more expressive and dramatic extremes.

An accidental event (the investigation of an ordinary robbery in a beach resort near Montevideo) brought some Tupamaros face to face with police agents once again. This time the repressive corps set up a spectacular "cordon" around the area and hastened to assure the capture of members of the MLN. The result: the Tupamaros easily evaded the cordon despite the fact that — according to the police version — one of them had been wounded. A few days later, in an open letter sent to the newspaper *Epoca*, the circumstances surrounding the clash were explained by the organization clarifying its objectives and the intention of not clashing with police agents if they do not participate in repressive

activities. In this case they (the Tupamaros) had been obliged to; but at the risk of their own lives, they had even given medical attention to a civil guard wounded in the shooting.

At almost the same time, Gestido's death paved the way for Jorge Pacheco Areco, an obscure politician, to assume the Presidency. He quickly revealed himself as the evident head of the ultramontane right, determined to lead the country down the road toward increased militarism. Scarcely a week after assuming the Presidency, Pacheco issued a decree dissolving six leftist political organizations (the Socialist Party, the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, the Eastern Revolutionary Movement, the Uruguayan Movement of Popular Action, and the *Epoca* Independentists) and closed two newspapers: *El Sol* (organ of the Socialist Party) and *Epoca*. The latter had reappeared a few days before by virtue of an agreement between the six disbanded organizations around the OLAS postulates. Both processes were now inseparable; the growing trend toward militarism adopted by the regime would find itself facing an armed apparatus that, also on the increase, showed itself capable of meeting reactionary violence with revolutionary violence.

The rest is practically contemporary history, but it is worth while reviewing it briefly. In 1968, the Tupamaros developed their activity to the extent that the basically anti-popular essence of the Pacheco Areco government was exposed (persecution against the leftist organizations and the trade union movement; wage freezes; an economic-financial policy dictated by the IMF — which makes the weight of the resulting crisis fall on the shoulders of the popular classes, saving the oligarchy's privileges; governmental corruption as revealed

in the maneuvers that led to the most recent devaluation of the Uruguayan peso on April 29, or in the case of Guzmán Acosta y Lara, former Minister of Labor, who by blackmailing businessmen and industrialists who depended on his office milked them of more than 20 million pesos — some 100 000 dollars — in “donations” for a newspaper he owned; violation of university autonomy; limitation of the mass media of communications and coercion of all public liberties; militarization of civil servants; and alliances with neighboring military regimes). Last May, two attacks on branch banks on consecutive days permitted the organization to “expropriate” more than five million pesos (some 25 000 dollars), without leaving a clue for the police to follow. In June, while Pacheco Areco was giving a nationwide radio address intended to justify application of Immediate Security Measures (almost tantamount to a state of siege) and the militarization of civil servants, an MLN commando unit blew up the Radio Ariel transmitter located on the outskirts of the city. The station is owned by Jorge Battle Ibáñez, head of the right-wing sector of the Colorado Party, who supports the government and is considered the “brain” behind the “Argentinization” of Uruguay. And in August, despite repressive measures in effect throughout the country, the Tupamaros kidnapped Pereira Reverbel, and by so doing, struck a decisive blow against both reaction and pseudorevolution.

Theory and Practice of the Tupamaros

According to their own documents, the theoretical concepts on which the Tupamaros base their actions can be summed up in the following terms:

a) As Ernesto Che Guevara pointed out, you don't have to wait until all the objective and subjective con-

ditions exist to carry forward the revolution: the armed struggle (the *foco* to which Che referred) can create them. According to the Tupamaros, the fundamental principle of the organization is that “Revolutionary action in itself, the fact of being armed, prepared, equipped, the process of violating bourgeois legality, generates revolutionary awareness, organization, and conditions.” This establishes a fundamental difference between the MLN and other Uruguayan leftist organizations.

the majority [of which] appear to have more confidence in manifests, in issuing theoretical statements referring to the Revolution to prepare revolutionary militants and revolutionary conditions without understanding that it is basically revolutionary action that precipitates revolutionary situations.

Along this line, the existence of an armed group prepared to carry out revolutionary actions acquires a polarizing force:

If there is no adequately prepared group, the revolutionary situations are wasted or not taken advantage of for revolution. Things such as the Bogota uprising result. The armed group gives the struggle efficiency and cohesion and guides it to its destiny. Furthermore the armed group can contribute to creating the revolutionary conditions, or, as Raúl Castro said, can be the little motor that starts the big motor of the revolution. The armed group creates or helps to create the subjective conditions for the revolution from the very moment that it begins to prepare itself, but above all, from the moment that it begins to act.

b) Nor do we have to wait for unity among revolutionary forces to begin the struggle:

...The famous unity of the left can take place in the struggle (...) the forces that call themselves revolutionary [once en-

gaged in the struggle] are obliged to choose between supporting it or disappearing. In Cuba, the Popular Socialist Party chose to support a struggle that it had neither initiated nor led, and it survived. But Prío Socarrás, Batista's primary opponent, as he called himself, did not support it, and he did not survive.

Furthermore, the popular masses will also awaken with that struggle:

For the people — really dissatisfied with the injustice of the regime — the choice is much easier. They want a change and must choose between the improbable and remote changes offered by declarations, manifests, or Parliamentary action and the direct path opened by an armed group and its revolutionary action.

Regarding the relationship between the creation of the party of the masses and the armed struggle:

...without considering as a lost effort that exerted in creating a Party or Movement of the masses prior to starting the armed struggle, we must recognize that the armed struggle accelerates and precipitates the mass movement. And we don't just have the example of Cuba. There is also that of the Party of the masses in China that was created during the course of the armed struggle. In other words, the rigid formula expounded by certain theoreticians — “Create the Party first and undertake the Revolution later” — has known more historical exceptions than examples. At this point in history no one can argue against the premise that an armed group, no matter how small, has greater possibilities of successfully converting itself into a great, popular army than a group that limits itself to issuing revolutionary “positions.”

c) Of course, this belief neither implies nor negates the political need for that struggle:

...a revolutionary movement needs a platform, documents (...) but this should not lead to confusion. It is not only polished principles and programs that make revolution. The basic principles of a Socialist Revolution exist and are experienced in countries like Cuba and nothing more need be said. It is sufficient to adhere to those principles letting facts point the way to the insurrectional path to achieve their application.

(It is necessary to note that even though the Tupamaros occasionally resorted to proclamations or documents, their very nature is self-defining. A good example is that which has been most quoted in this article, *Thirty Questions to a Tupamaro*: its very structure in the form of a dialogue, the coordinates of the underground struggle, which neither allow nor demand theoretical density or a brilliant exposition but, on the contrary, demand clarity and pragmatic simplicity and precision in its major statements.) To the MLN,

a revolutionary movement must prepare itself for the armed struggle at any stage, even when conditions for the armed struggle don't exist (...) for at least two reasons. Because an armed leftist movement may be attacked by repression at any phase of its development and it must be prepared to defend its very existence...remember Argentina and Brazil. And because if each and every militant isn't inculcated from the beginning with the thinking of a fighter what we shall create will be something different: we will become a mere movement in support of a Revolution for others to carry out, for example, but not a revolutionary movement in itself.

As mentioned previously, however, this should not be interpreted as “militarism” at all costs, as an

underestimation of all other activity.

...work among the masses that leads the people to adopt revolutionary positions is also important. And what the militant — even the one who leads the masses — must be aware of is that when the armed struggle gets under way he cannot stay home and await the results. He must therefore prepare himself, even though his present work is in another field. This will, moreover, give authority, authenticity, serious sincerity to his present revolutionary instruction.

For the moment, the activity of a Tupamaro militant in that field is determined by specific objectives:

If we are discussing a militant who works within a union or a mass movement, he must try to create an atmosphere, organize a group within the union or the entire union in support of the activity of the armed group and he must make the preparations for incorporation in the group. Theoretical and practical development, recruiting, will be the main concrete tasks under such circumstances. Moreover, he must provide information about the armed struggle. And whenever possible, he must make the union more radical, guide it to more consequent stages in the class struggle.

Although not specifically announced (the document bears no date; observers place it chronologically, owing to certain references contained in the text, around the second half of 1967), these points held by the MLN coincide with the major conclusions arrived at during the First OLAS Conference:

The Conference has made it clear that *although armed struggle is the fundamental path*, it is just as necessary to use other forms of struggle, as long as they are subordinate to or are used with

*the objective of helping or developing that which is considered primary.*¹

d) The need for a revolutionary movement to prepare itself for the armed struggle at any stage of its development is also determined, according to the Tupamaros, by the conviction that "a combatant cannot be improvised." Perhaps you have there the key element that has placed the MLN in a singular vanguard position within the Uruguayan revolutionary struggle: when the reactionary violence of the regime forces the tactics of struggle into the arena of direct action, the Tupamaros appear to be the only ones capable, owing to their persistent preparation, of effectively countering with revolutionary violence. In actual fact, they have put into practice a concept expressed in the following terms:

The armed struggle is a technical phenomenon that as such requires technical knowledge, training, practice, materials, and combat psychology. Improvisation in this field is paid for heavily in lives and defeat. The spontaneity favored by those who refer vaguely to "the revolution that the people — or the masses — will carry out" is but a purposeful waste of time, or to depend on improvisation precisely at the culminating stage of the class struggle. Every vanguard movement, in order to maintain its very nature at the culminating point of the struggle, must participate in that struggle and must know how to guide popular violence against oppression in such a way that it suffers the least possible losses.

e) The rejection of "technique" in itself and the need to present the struggle in interrelated political and military terms, which are concepts previously expressed in the opinions of the organization on Party "armed

¹ OLAS, General Resolution on Point I of the Agenda: For Us, the Homeland is America. It is not underlined in the original.

branches," find a precise and realistic synthesis in the MLN documents:

All armed apparatus must be part of a political apparatus of the masses at a given stage of the revolutionary process, and in the event that such an apparatus does not exist, they should contribute to creating it. This does not mean that it is an obligation, within the present structure of the left, to join one of the already existing political groups or to set up a new one. This is tantamount to perpetuating the mosaic or adding to it. We must fight the now widespread narrow concept that Party means a headquarters, meetings, a newspaper, or positions on everything around it; against the conformist practice of waiting until the other leftist parties disappear before their verbal tricks, and that their bases and the people in general will one day join one's ranks. This is what has been happening for the last 60 years in Uruguay and you can see the result. We must base ourselves on reality. We must recognize that there are authentic revolutionaries in all leftist parties, and many more that are not even organized. Take these elements and groups where they are to be found and unite them. That is a task for the left in general, for the time when sectarianism will be a thing of the past; this is something that does not depend on us. But as long as this does not happen, the Revolution cannot stand by and wait. Every revolutionary, every revolutionary group has but one duty: to prepare to carry out the Revolution. As Fidel said in one of his recent speeches: "...with the Party or without the Party." The Revolution cannot wait.

A Strategy Based Firmly on Reality

Carrying forward the revolutionary armed struggle obviously

involves the need for a strategy. According to its own documents the MLN does not view this necessity as "a lovely object for reflection." Also in regard to this point, the Tupamaros prefer to put aside the merely theoretical glitter in favor of earnestly trying to seek an approach to the hard realities of the praxis; they decline to put forth "a detailed strategy" for the taking of power in Uruguay, putting forth instead,

some general strategic lines, that are themselves subject to modifications with the changes of circumstances. That means, strategic general lines only for the day, month, and year in which they are issued, [because] a strategy is formed on the basis of real basic facts, and reality changes, independently of our will. (...) A strategy based on a strong, well-organized union is not the same as one based on a movement that has been smashed, to give an illustrative example.

With this reservation, the most important real basic facts on which the MLN founded its strategic general lines (in the second half of 1967, when the document which we use as our source was drafted) are:

1) The conviction that crises, far from being overcome, will become worse by the day. The country is bankrupt, and a capitalist plan of development to increase the production of export articles — in the event that such a plan could be applied — will bring small returns indeed, and several years hence, at that. In other words, there are several years ahead in which the people will have to continue tightening their belts. And with a 500 million [dollar] Foreign Debt, foreign credits capable of returning the mediocre standard of living to those sectors that lost it are very remote. This is a cold, hard fact: there will be economic

penury and popular discontent in the forthcoming years.

Such circumstances, according to the MLN, affect

...the objective and subjective conditions for the revolution. It is fundamental that the greater part of the population, although not ready to rise up in insurrection, is at the same time not going to let itself be killed by a regime that oppresses it. This, among other things, reduces the strategic calculations regarding the enemy's strength to practically its organized armed forces and facilitates a favorable situation for the first measures issued by a revolutionary government.

2) A second basic fact for a strategy is the high degree of trade union organization among Uruguayan workers. If it is true that not all the unions have a high degree of combativity — whether owing to their composition or their leaders — the mere fact that all fundamental State services, the Bank, Industry, and Commerce, are organized, constitutes in itself a highly positive fact, unparalleled in America. The possibility of paralyzing State services can create and has created very interesting situations from the point of view of insurrection, because—to cite an example—it is not the same to attack a State with its full force intact as a State half paralyzed by strikes. (...) The trade unions, even with their present limitations, have in the past committed and can now commit the majority of the working population in a frontal struggle against the government, which has often been forced to use the armed forces to win the struggle. If there existed an armed revolutionary group capable of carrying the class struggle to a higher stage, we would have a more developed struggle: with a great part of

the population in favor of that struggle and with the fundamental State services in depleted condition.

3) Another strategic factor to bear in mind — a negative one — is the geographical situation. We have no impregnable locations in our country that can be used to house a guerrilla foco, although we do have sites that are not easily accessible in the countryside. However, in compensation, we have a large city of more than 300 square kilometers of buildings which permits development of the urban struggle. That means that we cannot copy the strategy of those countries which, owing to their geographical conditions, can initiate a guerrilla foco in the mountains or jungles with the possibility of stabilizing it. On the contrary, we must develop an indigenous strategy, suitable to a situation that differs from that of the majority of the countries of America.

Is Uruguay's geography completely adverse for the rural struggle? According to the MLN,

not completely. We don't have impregnable natural fortresses as do other countries, but we do have natural hideouts suitable for the temporary refuge of an armed group. Throughout two thirds of the nation, the population index is as low as 0.6 inhabitants per square kilometer, which facilitates the clandestine deployment of an armed contingent; compare this with the average in Cuba of more than twenty persons per square kilometer, and even with the small-farming areas of our country such as Canelones and the zone south of San José, which have about the same population index. At the same time, the cattle-raising area solves the difficult problem of providing food, a problem which in other places requires a supply chain which is possible only with the cooperation of the population.

On the other hand the miserable living conditions of the rural wage workers, some already organized in trade unions, have created a spontaneously rebellious sector that can be very useful in the rural struggle. If our countryside cannot serve to permanently house a guerrilla foco, it can at least serve for dispersing the repressive forces.

But on the other hand, the Tupamaros point out, there are adequate conditions for the urban struggle:

Montevideo is a sufficiently large city in upheaval due to social struggles and it can provide protection for a vast contingent of active commandos. This is a better situation than that which other revolutionary movements had for the urban struggle. Of course, all organizations that intend to wage an urban struggle must patiently lay the material bases and establish the vast movement for support and protection that an armed contingent needs in order to operate or survive within the city.

4) Moreover, for a strategic study we must take the forces of repression into account. Our armed forces, some 12 000 poorly prepared and ill-equipped troops, constitute one of the weakest repressive forces in America.

From the strategic point of view, add the Tupamaros, the repressive forces

must be evaluated considering their degree of preparedness for the struggle, their means, and their distribution throughout the country. In the countryside there is one military unit — some 200 men — approximately every 10 000 square kilometers, and one police station approximately every 1000 square kilometers. The armed forces must cover any locale that may be subject to attack by an insurrectional movement with 12 000 troops from the regular armed forces and

22 000 policemen, of which a half of the regular troops and 6000 policemen are concentrated in the capital. Within the police force there is only one corps armed and prepared for a military struggle.

5) Another important strategic factor is our powerful neighbors and the United States, always potentially ready to intervene against any revolution on the continent.

In this context, can the possibility of foreign intervention be a motive for postponing all armed struggle in Uruguay? This argument, more than once used by pseudorevolutionaries, is flatly rejected by the MLN.

If that were the case, Cuba would not have carried out its revolution 90 miles from the United States, nor would there have been guerrilla forces in Bolivia, a country bordered by Brazil and Argentina, just like Uruguay. Foreign intervention can constitute an immediate military setback, but a political advance that will, in time, be reflected in a military advance. [Imagine]... the city of Montevideo occupied by foreign troops with the reaction on national sentiment that such a thing would engender, with the bother it would mean for the population, and the presence of a revolutionary armed group with good bases within the city... and you will have a thorough idea of what that feared foreign intervention would mean. Moreover, in any case, our strategy falls within the continental strategy of "creating many Viet-Nams," and the interventionists will find their hands full on many and diverse fronts.

6) And finally, a prime strategic factor is the amount of training of the armed revolutionary group. The opinion of the Tupamaros in this respect has already been given in the previous subheadings. But on this point particularly, the Tu-

pamaros maintain that actions speak louder than words. Based on these evident realities, the MLN proposed, at the end of 1967, certain general strategic lines.

for all authentically revolutionary organizations and for all individuals who really want revolution [in Uruguay]: to create an armed force as soon as possible, one able to take advantage of any favorable circumstance created by the crisis or other factors. To show the people, through actions of the armed group or other means, that without revolution there will be no change. To strengthen the trade unions, radicalize their struggles, and link them with the revolutionary movement. To create the material bases for the development of urban and rural warfare. To establish contact with other revolutionary movements in Latin America, for continental action.

Uruguay: an Exception?

According to the opinion of certain left-wing circles, the theses presented by Régis Debray in his *Revolution within the Revolution?* ostensibly coincide with the theoretical and strategic formulations of the Tupamaros. In fact, this coincidence is obvious in some of their documents, especially in the *Thirty Questions to a Tupamaro*. We should, however, state up to what point this connection is more of an up-to-then unexpressed coincidence rather than an acritical "mechanical application" such as that which Debray's book has awakened in some Latin-American revolutionary circles, something which Debray himself did not intend to happen. In this respect, it is interesting to point out the fact that in *Revolution within the Revolution?* Debray describes Uruguay as an "exception" in regard to some of his conclusions. In particular Debray states in the second

of his "future effects":

There can be no defined vanguard without armed struggle. When there is no armed struggle, in a place with favorable conditions for it, then the political vanguard still does not exist. (This is not the case of Uruguay, for example, where there are no immediate prospects of armed struggle and where there is a strong and combative mass movement.)

The contents of the above parenthesis have become the center of sharp debates within the Uruguayan left: on one hand, if we admit that there are no immediate conditions for armed struggle in Uruguay, the distinction appears to be unnecessary, considering that the exception was established in the text of the conclusion itself: "...in a place with favorable conditions for it (...)" ; on the other hand, Debray attributes Uruguay with "a strong and combative mass movement" — a unanimously recognized fact — but he does not identify this condition with the existence of a political vanguard. Presumably, the MLN itself discarded as ineffectual such theoretical disquisitions. Without describing themselves as a vanguard, without resoundingly denying or confirming the thesis that Uruguay has conditions for armed struggle, the Tupamaros basically maintain the inevitability of an armed confrontation and the necessity of preparing for it. Therefore, we should analyze their platform, and, from this base, the coincidence between the MLN and the two remaining conclusions in *Revolution within the Revolution?* acquires greater relevance:

The decisive thing in the future will be the opening of military, not political "focuses." (...) Everybody knows that in Latin America today the struggle against imperialism is decisive. If this is decisive, then everything else is secondary.

In any case, it would be conve-

nient to ask the question: Does Uruguay have conditions for armed struggle? During the OLAS Conference this point became a storm-head of controversy — namely, a paragraph of the Cuban delegation's report (a document which did not have official weight):

Today, to speak of guerrilla warfare in Chile or in Uruguay is as misleading and absurd as to deny this possibility in Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, or Peru.

As was quickly and aptly pointed out by Uruguayan and Chilean observers, this "exception" referred only to guerrilla warfare, but not to armed struggle in its different forms. Fidel Castro himself referred to this observation in his speech closing the OLAS Conference:

Some have presented theses that are even more radical than the Cuban position: that we Cubans believe that in certain countries there are no conditions for armed struggle, but this is not so. (...) We are not going to get angry. We prefer to make a mistake in making the revolution, if there are no immediate conditions, than to make a mistake in not ever making a revolution. We hope that nobody makes a mistake! But whoever really wants to fight will never have discrepancies with us; and those who don't want to fight will always have discrepancies with us.

The fact is that for years Uruguay seemed to be the perfect example of the "exception" within the framework of a continent that was leaning more and more toward armed struggle. The existence of "a strong and combative mass movement" appeared to be the cardinal concern of the traditional left-wing sectors. As a result, "the party of the masses" was the fundamental objective of these sectors, the only ideal way and sine qua non for carrying the revolution forward. But this policy, whose theses ap-

peared to be undebatable during a certain time, was seen to be inadequate before a dynamic reality which — as pointed out by the Tupamaros — "changes, independently of our will." In this context, many revolutionaries aware of the history of the MLN today assert that their prime virtue appears to be their sure vision of the future: even before the mighty nation gave brutal signs of having buried Kennedy's reformism (a coup d'état in Brazil, intervention in the Dominican Republic), even before the Uruguayan regime removed the last veil from its "institutionality," the militants of the MLN warned that the country would not escape the continent's common destiny of revolutionary violence. While the other left-wing sectors seemed to be exclusively and painfully concerned with preserving the hard-won "victories" of the mass movement, the Tupamaros — without disdaining these efforts, without deepening divisions, without proclaiming themselves the bearers of the revealed truth — began to prepare themselves.

Today, when dictatorship is a fact in Uruguay, no matter how much of an appearance of "legality" the regime has assumed, the problem of the vanguard, above and beyond declarations and phrases (in which all can agree) also stands firm on the hard and cold ground of facts. Perhaps it would be good to recall once again the conclusions of the OLAS Conference:

It is not enough that a political force proclaim itself as the vanguard in anything. The condition of being vanguard is the result of a decision to struggle and of leading and carrying forward revolutionary action to the final consequences. That is, to destroy the power of the oligarchy and the domination of imperialism and open the way to a socialist revolution. In the final analysis,

the vanguards will be those who show and develop the true roads to revolution. (...) The revolution is a dynamic, complex, and violent phenomenon. In the long run the struggle itself will select the most capable men and bring them to the fore.

At this stage, it cannot be denied that the struggle already exists in Uruguay and is also taking the road of violence. What forms does it assume and to where is this struggle leading? According to a generalized opinion, the MLN has shown that it "thinks with its own head" on this score: by recognizing that the revolutionary road in Uruguay will also have to pass through armed struggle. Neither can it be denied that the country's own peculiarities remove this struggle from the tactical formulations more appropriate to the majority of Latin-American countries: rural guerrilla warfare. A brief analysis of the geographic and demographic characteristics of the country is enough to show this. In their own theses, the Tupamaros take some of these characteristics into consideration. Perhaps it would be good to add on a few global figures which seem to place Uruguay at the opposite extreme of a reality common to almost all of the continent: 70% of the population is urban, 45% is concentrated in Montevideo. As we have seen in the beginning of this article, an incidental detail contributes to giving relevance to the option chosen by the Tupamaros: to give maximum importance to urban activities. The militants of the MLN certainly are not choosing the sphere that is more "comfortable" for them, or the only one they know; rather they are acting according to an evaluation of a national reality that goes beyond statistics. Indeed, if we keep in mind that the origin of the Tupamaros goes back to the movement of the caneworkers, and

that many of those who today are considered leaders of the organization received their training among the "landgrubbers" and acquired direct knowledge of a rural environment, we can see up to what point "real basic facts" dominate the group's theses.

Behind this affirmation, there is a detail that usually immediately catches the attention of an alert observer: the urban actions of the Tupamaros have managed to avoid, at all times, a tendency towards indiscriminate terrorism, which in other countries of the continent has been one of the most negative aspects of the revolutionary movement. An anecdote will clearly show us this. After two bank assaults carried out last May, some writers asked the Montevideo chief of police if there was evidence that the Tupamaros had had a hand in them. The police chief answered, incredibly, that there was still no concrete proof; "the perfect organization, the good manners of the assailants, and the human touch" led to the supposition that the assailants were from the MLN. When he spoke of "the human touch" the police chief was referring to the fact that the assailants had solicitously attended to an old lady who happened to be in one of the banks at the moment of the robbery and who had fainted. Many similar details have been noted in other actions: when they blew up the transmission plant of Radio Ariel, members of the MLN commando group first warned the inhabitants of a neighboring farm that they could be affected by the explosion. Pereira Reverbel himself did not receive any physical abuse during his kidnapping. In acting this way, at times even at the risk of their own security, the Tupamaros are certainly showing no lack of moderation or courage (the militants who have been killed in frontal clashes with the repressive forces are sufficient proof of this), but are fulfilling — according to observers — a revolutionary

principle and a practical necessity: their activities strike hard against the system and the interests it represents; but, at the same time, they avoid taking innocent victims which would earn them the rejection of the population. Urban warfare requires that the revolutionary militant, more so than in rural warfare, move among the people like "a fish in water," and everything leads us to believe (beginning with the undisguised disdain of the repressive forces) that the Tupamaros today are having increasing success in this respect. The country's own urban concentration, its large middle class, its peaceful customs and traditions pose additional difficulties in the task of raising consciousness as to the need for armed revolutionary warfare. The MLN has been confronting such problems with a singular lucidity: contrasting... with the police repression that attacks students with fragmentation bombs, disperses demonstrations with gases, clubs, and bullets, jails trade union leaders, and persecutes any expression of independent opinion, the population has fewer and fewer difficulties in choosing in favor of the Tupamaros.

The Voice of Facts

This point also helps us to give a coherent explanation of the failure of the repressive forces against the Tupamaros. On the one hand, we must take into account the incapacity of the police to confront a politically inspired organization. Without any precedent of direct revolutionary activities in Uruguay, the intelligence service and police forces (in charge of political repression) have had only relative success in handling common delinquency, largely through the well-known methods of informers, police traps, blackmail, and their traditional arrangements with the underworld. These methods virtually make them impotent against people who do

not need to pay off accomplices to preserve their clandestinity, who do not use the money they steal to organize orgies in brothels, who are not infiltrated by police informers. The efforts of the "advisers" from the FBI and CIA have up to now been unable to overcome this congenital defeat of the repressive forces, to such an extent that, according to well-informed sources, these "advisers" are trying to build an organization independent from the police and outside government control (a kind of small-scale CIA) which would function with the participation of "experts" in police matters and infiltrate left-wing circles. A recent episode will shed light on this point: at the time of this writing, the news cables reported the arrest in Montevideo of six persons whom the police identified as Tupamaros. If we are to believe the police version, the documents found in their possession prove that the organization counted on police collaboration, while the very arrest of the presumed Tupamaros has still not brought about a crack in the repressive structure which would permit the MLN to infiltrate, in spite of the declarations of the police chiefs who are certain of being able to break up the "gang." This shows a double-pronged reality: on the one hand, political reasons lead the system to identify the Tupamaros with common delinquents (left-wing sectors have observed a symptomatic detail in spite of the fact that the police consider Raúl Sendic as one of the organization's leaders — as shown by the questions put to arrested left-wing militants who are tortured and interrogated — great care is taken not to give his name to the press: the fact is that Sendic is a trade union leader of great prestige and it would be impossible to paint him as a common criminal); on the other hand, the police themselves act largely in

keeping with this concept, the only one that seems to fit their mental makeup.

Obviously, an organization with these characteristics should move in very different clandestine groups, which increases police consternation. According to speculative journalistic reports, the Military Intelligence Service has drawn up a list with the names of 150 Tupamaros; but if the list is correct, the police would have long since disbanded the "gang." An intelligence official seemed to be more realistic during a recent private conversation with some writers connected with the police department: *We probably all know some Tupamaro, he said; the thing is that we don't know that he is one.* In the long run, the decisive thing is the support of the population, of normal, law-abiding people above suspicion. This is the water in which the ~~Tupamaros~~ fish swims.

And this is, incidentally, another lesson of the Tupamaros. The MLN documents state that all tasks are equally revolutionary:

Some think that we are doing a revolutionary task only when we are training for combat or when we enter some action, but all tasks that support a strategic plan are equally important for the revolution. (...) He who purchases the material necessary for a base of operations, he who collects funds, he who lends his automobile for a mobilization, he who lends his house, is running as great a risk, and sometimes a greater one, than the commando group in action. It should be kept in mind that most revolutionaries spend most of their time in these small practical things without which there is no revolution. (...) A strategy for revolution depends partly on the conditions we can create with our efforts, guided by a plan for the taking of power, as well as not losing

sight of the reality around us.

In a country with a "European" facade, whose so-called "exceptional" nature generated a notorious critical and theoretical hypertrophy especially in the left-wing sectors, resulting in the atomization and overproduction of leaders in relation to the masses, it is, in particular, a lesson in humility.

It is also a challenge. The facts confirm the basic theses of the MLN: 1) the crisis, far from being stopped, has grown worse, reaching intolerable limits; 2) in view of this reality, the existence of an armed group compels the regime: in addition to the daily violence which upholds the system, the government now adds the open violence of armed repression; the mask of legality is smashed to bits; 3) this violence affects the revolutionary organizations and the mass movement in all stages of their development; only those who are technically prepared can face this violence; 4) the joint action of an armed group and the trade union movement can jeopardize the regime; 5) the armed group generates consciousness and radicalizes the vacillating sectors: a few actions of the Tupamaros have won more support from the people than months of political or trade union work.

The choice then is clear. If the moment of insurrection has not come, then armed struggle is today the order of the day in Uruguay. From this struggle will come the vanguard, the struggle will bring about unity and implement the continental strategy of "creating two, three, many Viet-Nams." For the left-wing organizations, the actions of the Tupamaros imply an unavoidable challenge: it is no longer a question of replying with large headlines, long declarations, and ardent proclamations or not so ardent but equally long ones. In this small southern country also, the clear force of facts is making itself felt.

Sociography of Misery

Albert-Paul Lentin

An implacable law has turned into a matter of scandal, especially since the end of World War II: the law of hunger.

The phantom of hunger stalks all the underdeveloped countries, sowing death. It is a silent, cold death, proof of which is the forlorn look of the Latin-American Indians, the swollen bellies of African blacks, and the rachitic bodies of the Asian people.

It is in these three famished continents—Africa, Asia, and Latin America—that hunger, that monster fed and cared for by imperialism, has set up its insatiable rule.

Several "remedies" have been proposed by those who pull the invisible strings of extreme poverty; they range from charity to FAO's long-range plans to contraceptive pills. They have all failed, because they are mere drops that are lost in the endless sea of hunger that threatens the existence of the underdeveloped peoples. As Albert-Paul Lentin points out in this work, there is only one possible solution: "revolutionary violence, especially, wherever it is possible, organized armed struggle."

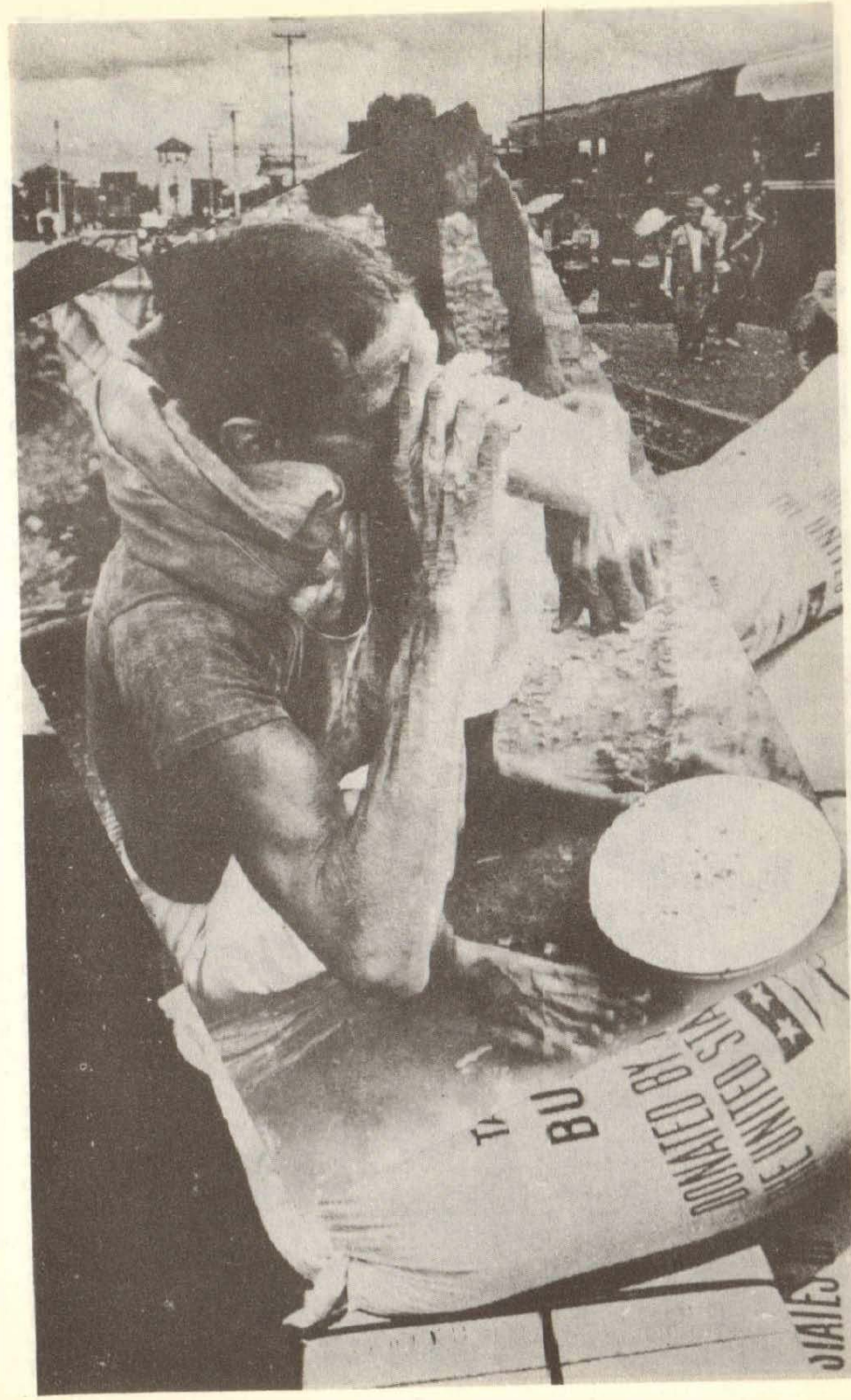
Albert-Paul Lentin offers a panoramic view in depth of the problem of world hunger—which, as he very properly points out, is really the hunger of the so-called Third World. With solid arguments, the French writer and journalist makes a rigorous analysis of the causes of hunger and gives eloquent figures to show the terrible reality in which the underdeveloped people are placed as a result of imperialist exploitation. The author expresses the hope that these "prisoners of starvation," these "wretched of the earth," will be the ones to bring about the final eruption, the general crisis and defeat of the biggest enemy of mankind.

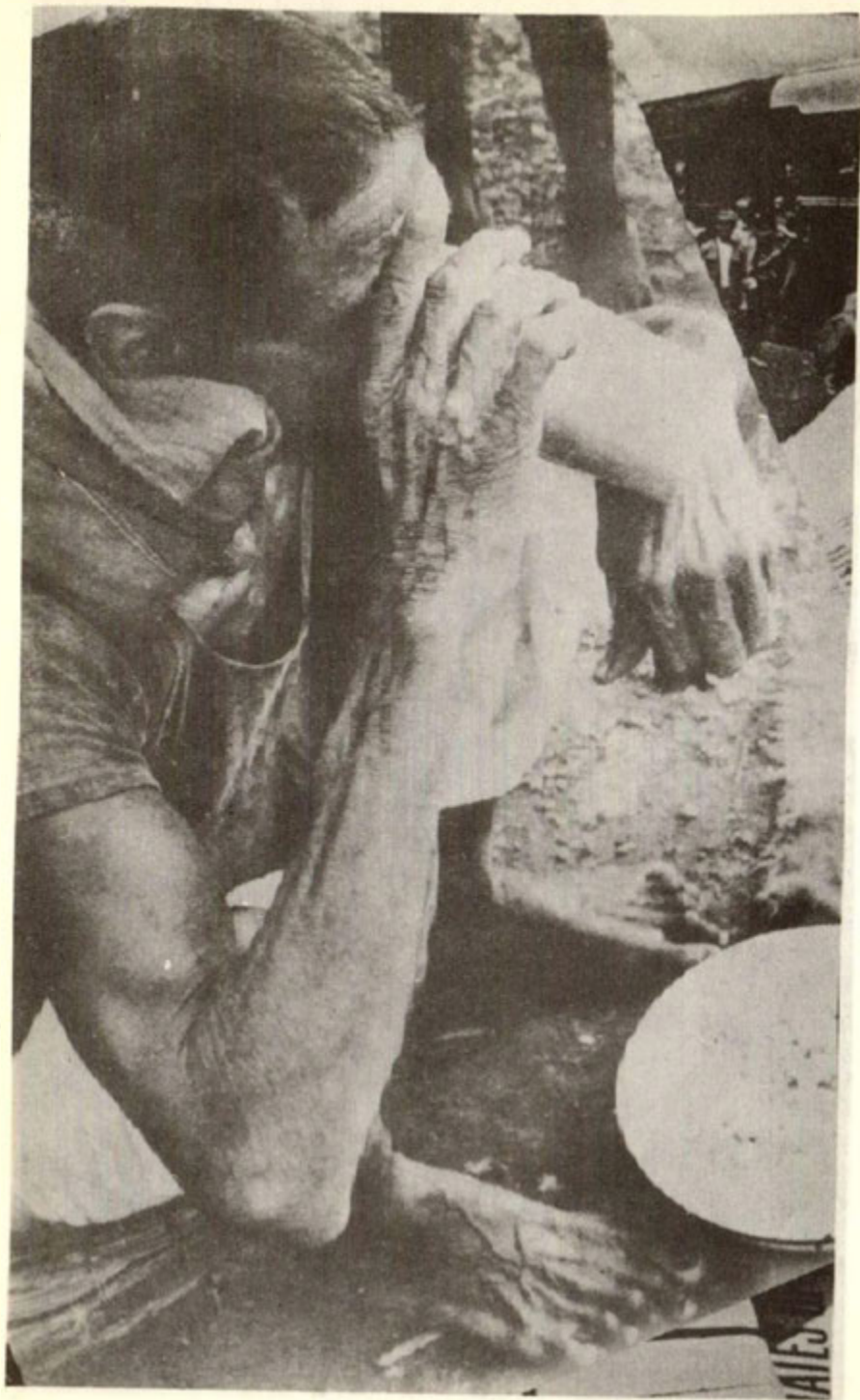
Lentin has actively participated in most of the battles for the decolonization of the Third World, especially in Africa (he has written two books on the Algerian war of liberation). After attending the First Tricontinental Conference, he published *La lutte tricontinentale* (*The Tricontinental Struggle*), a book on the problems of imperialism and revolution in contemporary times.

THE PROBLEM of "the world's hunger" is complex, and it cannot be dealt with correctly except by distinguishing between the different degrees of the same scourge: malnutrition, under-nourishment, and acute under-nourishment.

Malnutrition is caused by poor food consumption, the almost complete exclusion of those items which are rich in food value: milk, meat, eggs, fruit, and good quality vegetables. The "poorly nourished" are those who have a daily intake below the 2500 calories and 80 grams of proteins considered by doctors as necessary for the activity yield of a human being. 90% of the 1600 million inhabitants of the Third World are in this situation, as well as the poor people of "poor America" or "poor Europe." A man of the Third







World consumes a daily average of 55 grams of protein, while a European has an intake of 87 grams and over 3000 calories. *Under-nourishment* is the acute form of malnutrition. 450 to 500 million inhabitants of the Third World are more than under-nourished: they simply do not get enough to eat. *Acute under-nourishment* (below 20 grams of proteins and 1000 calories a day) causes, literally, death by starvation. Of the 60 million people who disappear from the face of the earth each year, 20 million (three million of them children) die of hunger, either as the result of a total famine or, if they don't perish at once of inanition, as the victims, after a few months, of the consequences of that inanition. 20 million more are struck down after a somewhat longer period of time by serious illnesses that inevitably destroy their organisms already profoundly undermined by under-nourishment. In all, hunger strikes down 40 million people each year, the same amount that died during the five years of World War II.

The Continents of Want

The "world's hunger" is in fact the Third World's hunger, that of the three underdeveloped continents. According to the statistics of the first Latin-American Conference on Food (Caracas, September 1968) Latin Americans consume three quarters of the calories, two thirds of the proteins, and two fifths of the fats consumed by North Americans and Europeans. The average daily caloric intake of a Latin American dropped from 2500 in 1956 to 2380 in 1968, the European average today being 3000 calories — and for certain countries the figure is considerably less (for example, 1780 in Haiti). In fact, Cuba, the "first free territory of Latin America," is the only Latin-American country to have

defeated hunger.

Central America, the Andean highlands, the Brazilian Northeast, and the marginal outlying districts of the large urban centers are among the most tragic of the world's "hunger areas." At present, for example, 210 000 people in an area of 3000 km² in northwestern Haiti suffer privations as the result of an 18-month drought. While this is an exceptional situation, malnutrition in Latin America is not. Even in a relatively rich country, such as Mexico, 12 million of a total population of 43 million — most of them peasants whose income is less than one third that of the average Mexican — never eat meat, eggs, or fish, and consume little milk.

In Africa, the "hunger areas" are found mainly in the two extremes of the continent. In the south, drought-caused famine decimates from time to time those groups whose only source of livelihood is cattle raising. In the north, under-nourishment is above all the result of an increase in population, which in certain areas (the Moroccan Atlas range, eastern and southern Algeria, southern Tunisia, the Nile valley in Egypt) surpasses by far economic growth. Hunger, however, does not spare central Africa. Famine caused 250 000 deaths in Ethiopia in 1959, while this year, the famine which is decimating the Ibos is one of the most unfortunate consequences of the war in Nigeria. Off the African continent malnutrition is also general. In Madagascar, a country possessing 9 800 000 head of cattle, there is an average of one and a half animals for every "average Madagascan" — who consumes, however, only 12 kilos of meat a year.

In Asia, endemic famine rages in certain regions of Burma, Laos, and

even in central Java, in the heart of wealthy Indonesia. But it is India which is universally known as the "country of hunger." The average Indian consumes as many calories as his Latin-American counterpart; however, in the highly populated country (according to the last census, there were 526 million inhabitants), the force of "population explosion" and the poor distribution of resources meant that at least 75 million Indians live under the constant threat of total famine. In West Bengal and Kerala, scarcity reached a dramatic point in August 1967, while in April 1968 a "state of famine" was proclaimed in the state of Bihar (175 000 km² in northeast India; 52 million inhabitants), with 30 million people "affected" by the scourge, according to official documents. Every day, 800 Indians quite literally starve to death on the sidewalks of Calcutta.

The "world's hunger" steadily grows more acute. United Nations Secretary-General U Thant declared during a press conference in Rome after the FAO¹ 1968 general session that from 1934 to 1938, the Third World exported an annual average of 14 million tons of grain — that is, almost the total production of France. The situation, which improved gradually during the following twenty years (the rate of "agricultural progress" was higher than 2% a year), took an alarming turn in 1959, due to both the "population explosion" which multiplied the mouths to be fed (Africa's food production, for example, has been increasing at an annual rate of 1.7%, while its rate of population increase is 2.6%) and the increased consump-

¹ United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, created in 1947.

tion by certain parts of the population, especially the most privileged (according to U Thant, when a country's income grows by 3%, the demand for food products increases by 1%). At present, only 10 underdeveloped countries produce more food than they consume, while 40 are food importers. Africa imports today 30% more food than it did 10 years ago, Latin America 36%, and the Far East 60%. While the annual rate of population growth for these three continents is 2.6%, their food production is increasing only by 1.6% (the UN experts who spoke of the "decade of development" beginning in 1960 expected a yearly growth of 5%). In 1966 the Third World's grain deficit amounted to 36 million tons (20 for India alone) and at the end of that "black year" Biny Ranjan Sen, the Indian who was then director of FAO, wrote in his report to the UN Economic and Social Council:

World food production during the 1965-66 crop year was no greater than that of the preceding year because of a generalized drought, while the number of mouths to feed increased by approximately 70 million. In 1966 the per capita food production in the developing countries was more than 4% less than the 1964 record year, and fell to its lowest level since 1957. The drop was most felt in Africa and Latin America.

Results were better on a world-wide scale, including the Third World, in 1967 (world cereal harvest of 302 million tons) and 1968 (world total of 273 million tons of cereal and 300 million tons of rice), but there must be no illusions. Even though food production in the underdeveloped countries increased 6% in 1967 compared to the previous year, it nevertheless remained 2% below the highest levels of the pre-

vious years. The general trend is towards the stagnation of real production levels and a drop in per capita production. The system of land tenure (latifundia in Latin America and the exploitation with archaic methods of "collective lands" in Asia), the primitive farm implements (the hoe, the wooden plow) and techniques (letting fields lie fallow, "slash and burn"), the lack of fertilizers and insecticides, and the rural exodus which often causes a lack of manpower in the countryside are many of the reasons explaining the tragic insufficiency of agricultural yields in the underdeveloped countries.

Capitalism Starves the Third World

The developed world, on the contrary, is improving its agricultural techniques, and in this sphere, as in all others, the gap between the two universes continues to widen. At present, the average yield obtained by the developed world represents twice that of Asia and Africa in rice, wheat, and maize. The US alone produces 14% of the wheat and 45% of the maize — as well as 20% of the meat delivered to world markets. Thirty developed countries produce 60.6% of the cereals and 79.3% of the proteins of the entire planet. Developed countries aid — in a very relative manner — the agricultural efforts of underdeveloped countries only in the items which are of direct interest to them, either for consumption (tea, coffee, cacao) or for industrial transformation, and of which they are the exclusive or almost-exclusive buyers. Cereals and food crops do not fall into this category, and their production tends to drop, while the production of "export crops for the rich countries" tends to increase.

Thus, the growth of one and the decline of the other are dialectically

related. Today in all of the Third World to be more exact in its countryside, the archaic structures upon which capitalism bases its policy of domination and exploitation are preventing most measures of economic advancement — reevaluating and recovering soils, irrigation, reforestation, fighting erosion, mechanization, building fertilizer factories, silos, storage facilities, highways, railroads and port facilities, etc. — without which there is no genuine agricultural development. It can even be said that capitalism has a greater harmful impact on agriculture than on the other economic spheres of underdeveloped countries.

The main world wheat producers are, in order, the USSR, the USA, China, Canada, and France, but the principal exporters are capitalist countries (the USA, Canada, and Australia, and, with far lower totals, Argentina and France). Obeying the law of profit, the be-all of capitalism these countries evidently prefer to earn substantial profits by selling — especially to underdeveloped countries — an increasingly high tonnage of cereals (60 million tons sold in the world in 1967 as against 5 million in 1938) rather than to aid the countries of the Third World to develop their production. They have set up, therefore, a veritable monopolist Mafia in order to raise the prices on the "world market" (an agreement signed on July 1, 1968, among the five monopolist countries increased the minimum price average for wheat exports by 13%) and since the five largest exporters are considerably increasing their profits by selling grain to starving countries, they are quite content to see the agricultural production of those

countries remain at a very low level, as this stagnation guarantees the permanence of profitable outlets.

The US is naturally at the head of this movement. Thus a new area of control — the "food hegemony" — is added to all the other forms of Yankee domination, allowing the US to increase its influence in numerous underdeveloped countries — India, Morocco, Congo-Kinshasa — which exist in a state of "hunger-dependence." The hungry countries find it increasingly difficult to pay for their purchases of foods and are more than ever, vis-a-vis Washington, in the position of a heavy debtor before his creditor. Such a situation evidently affords the Americans the opportunity to exert all kinds of economic and political pressure. For example, they use wheat deliveries as blackmail in their diplomatic maneuvers in the UAR. They are speeded up when the Cairo government is docile and are stopped when it becomes stubborn. The suspension of wheat deliveries in 1967 preceded the Sinai crisis, just as the cancellation of the aid promised for the building of the Aswân high dam preceded the Suez crisis in 1956.

Although Malthusians as far as the production of cereals in the underdeveloped countries is concerned, the USA and the West-European countries do not restrain the production of "tropical products" in the Third World, as we have already noted. However, since they control the world markets of these "basic items," they impose very low export prices, at the same time they sell their industrial products at higher and higher prices, and the iron law of the "deterioration of terms of trade" almost completely wipes out the profits even of most of those un-

derdeveloped countries that produce and sell the most highly prized agricultural products. Besides, the loss of foreign exchange caused by the "deterioration of terms of trade" reduces the purchasing power of underdeveloped countries, and this strikes directly at those who suffer from hunger. In effect, these governments are distributing less food products among their population; and, on the other hand, the shrinking purchases of equipment (3% on the average for the Third World between 1965 and 1967) brakes even more the industrialization process upon which depends the development of agriculture. For example, underdeveloped countries have found it extremely difficult to build chemical fertilizer factories and they use only 17% of the nitrate, 10% of the phosphate, and 7% of the potassic fertilizers used all over the world.

Charity and FAO

The capitalist world, which because of its own expansion inexorably aggravates hunger in underdeveloped countries, proposes only two solutions: charity or FAO.

Private charity — from national or international religious or lay organizations — at present is developing in the West, at the same time that guilty consciences begin to appear here and there among Christians. From time to time public opinion is shaken by unbearable images of photographed or filmed scenes of famine somewhere in the Third World: gaunt-eyed men and women, children with swollen bellies, people stretched out on the dusty soil of an Indian village surrounded by others who are slightly stronger who witness the agony of the dying with an air

of tragic impotence. Then the "crusades against hunger" collect a certain amount of funds in the West and send them to India or Laos. Such campaigns have their place — everything is useful in the struggle against murder by hunger, the slaughter of the innocent, cold-blooded genocide deadlier than the most fearful war — but it is also necessary to break up any conception that might give false assurance. Such enterprises can only be encouraged if there is also at the same time a demystification of all illusions about their real value. The uneasy consciences of the most generous Westerners are easily soothed by the annual or semi-annual spending of a little to provide a small Lao with a little bowl of rice or a little jar of milk for a small Biafran. The compassion of the well-off for the needy never surpasses a very low threshold. The supplies that the volunteers of the "crusades against hunger" can collect in North America and Europe represent, quantitatively, just a drop in the immense ocean of need.

The "public assistance" that some rich states offer some poor ones is hardly a little more serious. At times the Americans distribute, with an eye-dropper, some of the "farm surpluses" which they have a hard time placing on the world market, but these "surpluses" fell from 38 million tons of grain in 1961 to 17 million in 1967, and the "gifts" from the USA, always very limited, have been increasingly cut (three million tons of wheat sent to India in 1967-68, while India's annual production — 16.5 million tons of wheat and 38 million tons of rice — is insufficient, and the New Delhi government is asking for 33 million tons of wheat a year).

The international assistance organized under the aegis of FAO

(144 nations are now members) is a somewhat less ludicrous palliative, because it is aimed, at least in principle, not only at taking care of a very small part of the annual food needs of underdeveloped countries, but also at attempting to develop the agriculture of these countries through productive investments. FAO's World Food Program, in principle, aims at "relieving the misery" of underdeveloped countries by shipments of food surpluses and helping their economic, and especially agricultural, growth by sending certain funds. The services of the WFP, at present directed by Francisco Aquino, an Ecuadorian, have taken part in 218 "projects" in 59 Third World countries since the creation of the agency. However, these projects are discreetly "selective," since 80% of FAO is controlled by the USA (in the October 1967 session, which appointed a new director to replace Mr. Sen, the Americans had a Dutchman, Adeline Boerma, former World Food Program director, elected in preference to the Chilean Herman Santa Cruz and the Senegalese Gabriel d'Arboussier) and it reserves the bulk of its support for the most "pro-Western" Third World countries. For instance, the 12 most recent "projects" approved by the FAO in its session of October 5th - 14th in Rome will benefit seven countries especially close to Washington (Formosa, South Korea, Ecuador, Colombia, Ghana, Tunisia, and Turkey). Moreover, these "projects" are of modest dimensions, because only 200 million dollars will be invested in all of them in the next ten years.

The budget of FAO itself is only 59.8 million dollars for the 1968-69 fiscal period (49.9 million dollars

for 1966-67); most of it is used to pay such a huge bureaucracy that even high UN officials have criticized it and a general reform of the organization has been decided on. By way of comparison, world armament expenditures come to 240 000 million dollars a year, and the Pentagon's computers have concluded that the Viet-Nam war cost the Americans 30 000 million dollars in 1967 and that "220 000 dollars must be spent to kill just one Vietcong soldier." The ignominious character of the "world's hunger" shows up in full light when such figures are considered. The "food effort" that mankind could make would cost, in fact, very little compared with the "military effort" that is going on all over the universe because of imperialist aggressiveness. The cultivation during the coming decades of 7000 million hectares (out of 15 000 million) that still lie fallow on this planet and which are arable with the means available at this time (at present only 1300 million hectares are cultivated) would not require astronomic expenditures. In the near future it would cost only 6500 million dollars to produce the 30 million tons of chemical fertilizers needed by the Third World to increase its farm production so that its per capita consumption of food products does not drop any further.

A False Optimism

Capitalism's crime of starving underdeveloped countries becomes more monstrous each year. FAO predicts that the Third World's food deficit, in terms of money, will reach 3000 million dollars in 1975. Basing themselves on a conservative estimate of the "population explosion" (their prediction is 5000 mil-

lion human beings in 2000, while demographers claim a figure closer to 7000 million), Bernard Rosier and René Dumont announced in 1966² that in 1980 the Third World would lack 150 million tons of grain, and that this would bring about generalized famines.

Today a number of writers who don't see the future as dark say that 1980 will not be as apocalyptic as these Cassandras predict. This is true of Gabriel Ardant³ and Gilbert Blardone⁴ — they look towards the future in an almost serene way — it is true of OCDE and FAO's well-paid and well-fed experts who repeat almost verbatim the US Government's thesis according to which "Between now and 1980 the world is not threatened with a grain shortage" (US Department of Agriculture Report, Washington, August 22, 1967). The Director of FAO himself has added his voice to the reassuring chorus. In a June 20, 1968, press conference in Rome, Mr. Boerma, playing the role of a fakir, prophesied with perfect assurance

² *Nous allons à la famine* (We Are Going Towards Famine), Du Seuil Editions, Essai Collection, 1966.

³ *Plan de lutte contre la faim* (Plan for Struggle Against Hunger), Presses Universitaires de France, 1966.

⁴ "La famine peut être vaincue" ("Famine Can Be Conquered"), article published by *Croissance des Jeunes Nations* magazine, May 1968.

⁵ Cf., for example, among the OCDE publications, the one written by Yoran Ohlin, *Régulation démographique et expansion économique* (Demographic Regulation and Economic Expansion), Paris, 1968, and among the FAO publications, that written by Walter H. Pawley, *Possibilités d'accroître la production alimentaire mondiale* (Possibilities for Increasing World Food Production), Rome, 1963. Cf. also the FAO Report on the State of Food and Agriculture in 1967, Pedone Editions, Paris, 1967.

that "By 1980 famine may have disappeared from the face of the earth." All of these personalities do not share the same point of view, but they all count on a collective awakening of consciousness that will lead the governments of developed countries to mobilize, in the coming years, a part of their resources in favor of underdeveloped countries. Moreover, they all insist, with varying degrees of success, on hopeful factors which they feel are decisive.

The most important of these factors is technical progress in agriculture (new seeds, notably for rice and wheat, new machinery, fertilizers, and insecticides). Experience has already shown that such advances can already provide yields twice or three times as great as those obtained with the use of traditional methods. Many experts trust, in a more general way, that science will make, if they are to be believed, the improved conservation of food products possible by treating them with radioactive cobalt 60 and will also be able to produce synthesized amino acids and new protein-rich foods: chemically-produced artificial meat made from unusable remnants (skins, guts, hoofs, horns, hair) of slaughtered animals and above all petroleum yeast — which could replace, in the long run, the two items which are considered today the most useful in allaying hunger: powdered milk and fish meal. Other experts assert that the rapid development at the same time of birth control and the "mastering of fertility" could reduce in the most feasible way the number of mouths to be fed. The example most readily offered is the spread of contraceptive methods among Indian women (518 000 intrauterine devices inserted in 1965, 1 250 000 in 1966, 2 485 000 in 1967; 4 500 000 people sterilized in 1967). Also all these

specialists are now making a big fuss over a World Bank project aimed at financing a number of operations to limit births in Third World countries.

The perspectives which are thus opened are not denied by anyone, but their possible scope is minimized by what we consider as conclusive arguments among the ranks of the pessimists (René Dumont and Bernard Rosier are far from being isolated; they have now been joined by Gunnar Myrdal, author of *The Drama of Asia*; Josué de Castro, Alfred Sauvy, to a certain extent; and even by some quite conformist North Americans such as the Paddock brothers⁶). They claim that the actual application of technical progress to agriculture is advancing slowly, both because the promoters of such changes usually do not work for the "common good" but in function of financial yield criterias and because the rural populations of the Third World, conditioned by centuries of traditionalism, are very slow in modifying their traditional methods, even when they have the possibility to do so. It will be just as difficult, they add, to generalize the use of "synthetic foods," since consumers' habits are as deeply rooted as those of agricultural producers, plus the fact that it seems that mass distribution of "synthetic foods" will not be feasible within the next 30 years. The same resistance created by cultural backwardness — and in particular the myth of the "curse of sterility" among the people of the Third World — will limit the scope of the different birth control measures. In this sphere the restrictive attitude

⁶ *Famine 1975*, W. and P. Paddock, Little Brown and Co. Edition, Boston and Toronto, 1968.

of religious authorities — be it Pope Paul VI, who condemned the contraceptive pill in August 1968, or the majority of the ulemas, the “doctors of Islam” — plays a lasting negative role among the Catholics of Latin America and the Moslems of Asia and Africa. Contemporary neo-Malthusianism seems to exaggerate the concrete possibilities of a movement that will spread more rapidly among the small privileged classes than among the poor multitudes of the Third World. Even in Tunisia, the most modern Moslem country in this sphere, “family planning” has become much more a part of the mores of the bourgeois women of La Marsa than of the Sahel peasants or of the southern Bedouins. In Ceylon birth control campaigns have met with some success only in the cities and tea plantations. The praiseworthy efforts undertaken in India have not been able to prevent a population growth rate of 2.5% a year.

The “Well-Fed” and Selfish and the “Prisoners of Starvation”

All of these arguments seem pertinent to us. We will add — stressing what seems to us the most sadly conclusive fact — that the governments of the industrial world will not declare even a partial “mobilization against hunger” in the coming years.

The European socialist countries cannot be of any great help to the underdeveloped countries, at least at the “food aid” level, although the philosophy of all revolutionary Third World countries should be “Help yourself and others will help you.” On the other hand, even the most dramatic problems of the underdeveloped countries are — there is no reason to hide this

fact — looked upon with certain indifference by the public opinion of the developed socialist countries. The new generations have forgotten the enormous backwardness, 20 years ago, of their own countries in comparison to the Western European countries, as well as the sacrifices and successes of the “period of construction.” The cultural upsurge from which they themselves benefit seems to them completely natural. They are now mainly concerned with what seems incomplete to them — this is a natural law of human societies — and their present obsessions — the fulfillment of national personality and individual freedoms, a living standard as high as that of the West — are far-removed from the concerns of an Egyptian fellah or a Latin-American peon. As for the capitalist world, it has never been said that it is moved by philanthropy. Stimulated by the “imperatives of consumption,” drugged or conditioned by the mass media in the hands of capitalist power, the inhabitants of North America and Western Europe have for the most part rather negative reactions to the seemingly exotic peoples of a Third World: a more or less latent racism, “superiority complex,” or at best, the vague impulses of a paternalistic charity.

René Dumont sums up quite well the most common attitude found in Western Europe when he writes, “the hunger of others is the neighbor's toothache.” He then turns toward the governments and leaders of the “rich countries” to tell them the consequences of the famines which are announced for “horizon 80” — the social upheavals, popular explosions, peasant rebellions, riots, wars — are not without threats to the “affluent societies” and that “generosity has never been of more

interest to the selfish.” However, he seems to forget that the internal logic of capitalism always pushes it in the direction of immediate profits, even at the expense, at times, of its own best interests.

The coexistence of the law of profit and the law of hunger is the great scandal of our century. The Ministers of Agriculture of the “European Six” have met on countless occasions to try to harmonize their divergent viewpoints on the “crises of surplus farm production” (milk, butter, fruit, etc.) within the Common Market, but the idea of sending at least part of this “surplus” to the hunger zones was not even considered for a moment by the soothsayers of Brussels. The 63 million tons of oil-bearing seeds (soya, sunflower, sesame, peanuts, etc.) produced on the planet could provide the starving Third World with 35 to 40 million tons of protein foods, but the USA and Western Europe find it more profitable to use them as fertilizer for their modern growing methods or as cattle feed. Moreover, part of this cattle is fed on the meal made out of the nine million tons of fish caught along the Peruvian coast just a few kilometers from Indians who are starving to death in the Andes, and who could be saved by this fish meal. Of the six million tons of foodstuffs made from skim milk that are produced in the world, four million are used to fatten calves in the capitalist world and not the children who perish from starvation in Guatemala, Brazil, or Colombia.

“Every day 100 infants less than a year old die from hunger in Colombia,” Camilo Torres recalled in the last statement he made in Bogotá before joining the guerrilla. Another 100 babies perish every day in Guatemala, and 1350 more

in Brazil. The suffering of the small children who fall prey to hunger is so terrible that according to the testimony given in June 1967 by Mgr. Julio González, bishop of Puno in Peru, on the famine caused by drought in his diocese, some mothers killed their own children to cut short their agony. The mortality rate in children between one and four years of age due to hunger or sickness is 9.7% for Latin America as a whole (11.2% in Brazil, where, in the Northeast, only one child out of two survives the first year; 10.53% in Chile, 9.9% in Bolivia, 8.50 in Guatemala, 8.43% in Colombia, 8.20% in Peru, 4.5% in Venezuela, while it is only 3.81% in Cuba, already the best medically equipped country in Latin America). This mortality rate is still higher, according to the United Nations Children's Organization (UNICEF), in Asia and Africa, where 40% of the children do not reach adulthood. In the Third World as whole, children have from five to six times less chance for survival than those of the developed countries, where the infant mortality rate varies between 2 and 2.5%. As far as adults are concerned, the rate of death due to under-nourishment, which is just 0.3/1000 in Canada and 0.9/1000 in the USA, is 45, 40, 27, and 24/1000 in Bolivia, Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru respectively.

Another statistical comparison between the underdeveloped and the developed worlds reveals the inequality between rich and poor in the face of life and death. The “average life span” in Europe — that is, the life expectancy at birth, which was 25 years in the Middle Ages, 35 years early in the 19th century, and 50 years in 1900,

reached 70 in 1960 and 74 in 1967 (the figure for the USA is pretty much the same). The Third World is a whole century behind, since life expectancy today in underdeveloped countries is 37 years (38 in Mexico, 35 on the average in Brazil — but 33 in rural areas and 27 in the Northeast — 35 in India, 32 in Haiti and Bolivia, 30 in Pakistan). An inhabitant of the Third World lives half as long as one of the developed world, and this is due mainly to hunger.

At the present stage in the history of mankind, imperialism, headed by US imperialism, murders in silence, by hunger, 40 million human beings living on the continents that it dominates, plunders and exploits. This "cold violence" is perhaps worse than the "hot violence" employed by imperialism when it tries to wipe out by means of murder, torture, and imprisonment the people who are rising up against its injustices in ever growing numbers. In the Third World the only correct answer to imperialist violence, "hot" or "cold," is revolutionary violence, and principally, wherever it is possible, organized armed struggle. Above all it is this revolutionary violence and this armed struggle that will defeat imperialism, that will wipe out the local oligarchies and bourgeoisies of the underdeveloped countries that are the accomplices of the exploitative and profit-seeking rapaciousness of a neocolonialism which leaves them but a few crumbs of booty in exchange for their aid in guaranteeing the continuance of its domination. Not until the politico-military apparatus of these oligarchies and bourgeoisies is annihilated will the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America be able to truly transform,

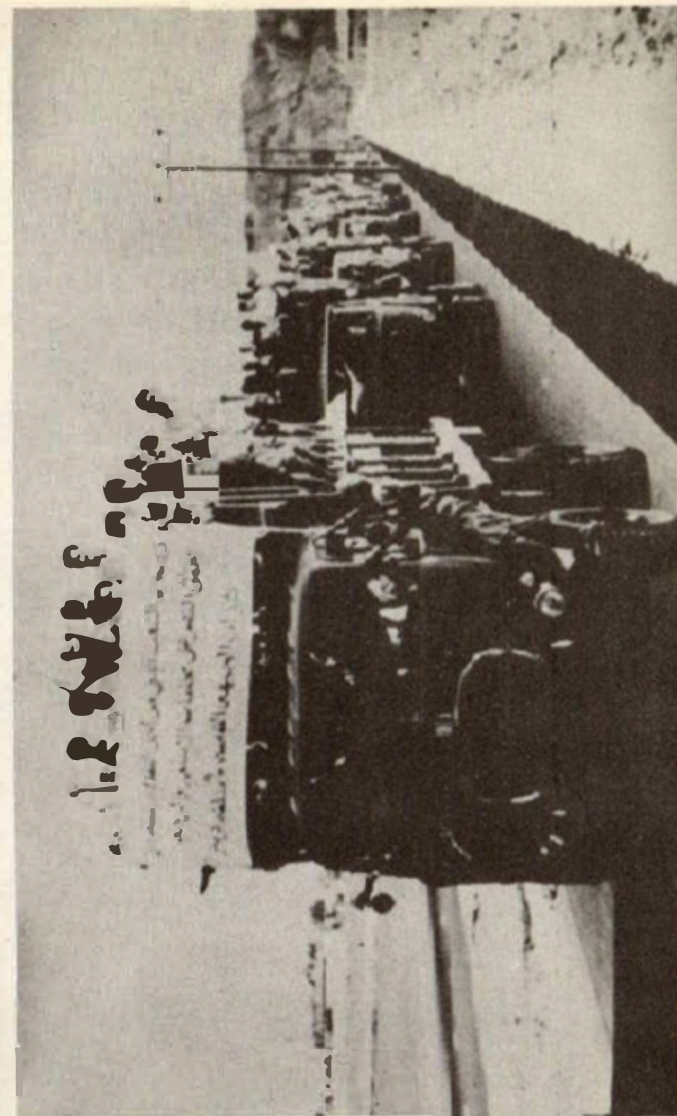
in a socialist direction, the present archaic and oppressive social structures which generate undernourishment and famine in all the countries of these continents.

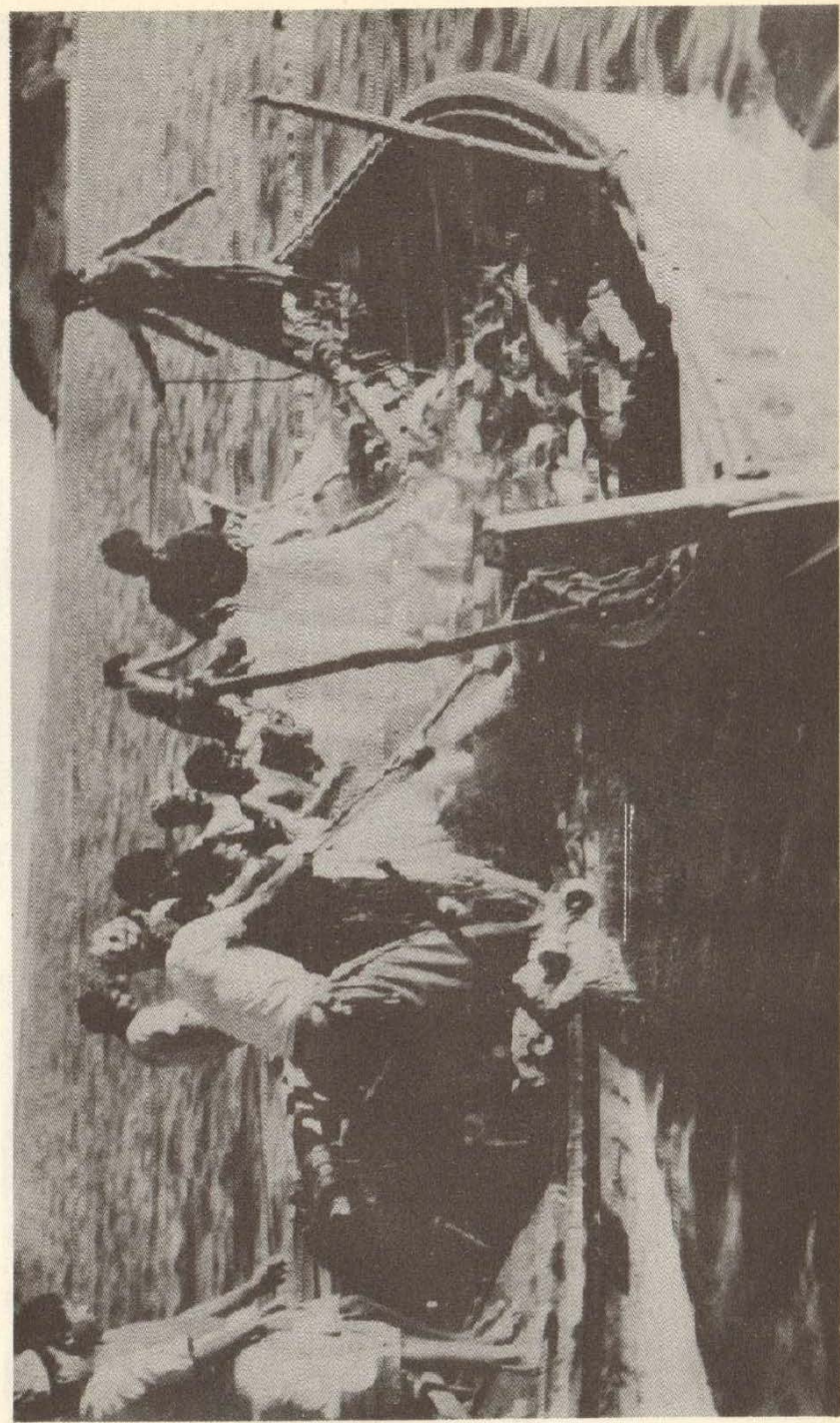
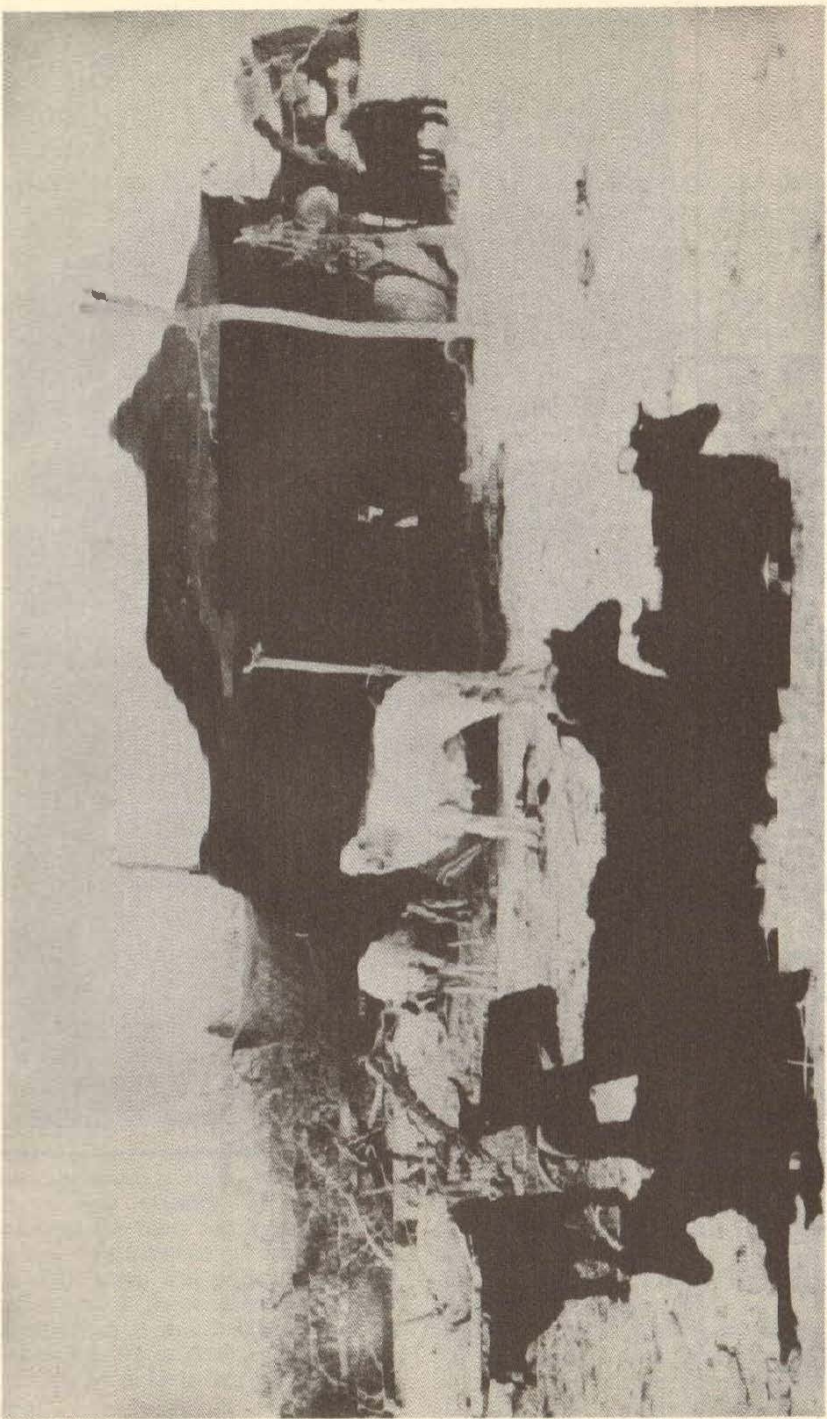
The "prisoners of starvation" evoked in the "International," the song known to all revolutionaries of the universe, are essentially, at present, those of the Third World. They are the "wretched of the earth" spoken of by Frantz Fanon, who will bring about the "beginning of the end" — that is to say, the generalized crisis and the final defeat of imperialism. No matter how weakened they may be from lack of calories, the "prisoners of starvation" possess, nevertheless, sufficient strength to hold a rifle or a sub-machinegun in their hands. The hard road, the exalting road traced by Che Guevara in his message to OSPAAAL, is the only one that can lead them to victory. When they all realize that it is better to fight and perhaps die with a weapon in their hands rather than to die of hunger in passivity and resignation, and that in this struggle, "they have nothing to lose but their chains," the twilight of imperialism will be very near.

No one denies that this coming to consciousness of all the starving people of the Third World will take time and will be difficult, but it is inevitable. The "hunger revolts" which have started to appear in underdeveloped countries will spread during the coming years and some of them will pass from the stage of spontaneous explosion, of peasant uprisings, to that of revolutionary action. New anti-imperialist armed struggles will be added to those already underway in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and there will be an increasing number of full bellies pierced by bullets shot by empty bellies.

South Yemen: Towards a Definitive Liberation

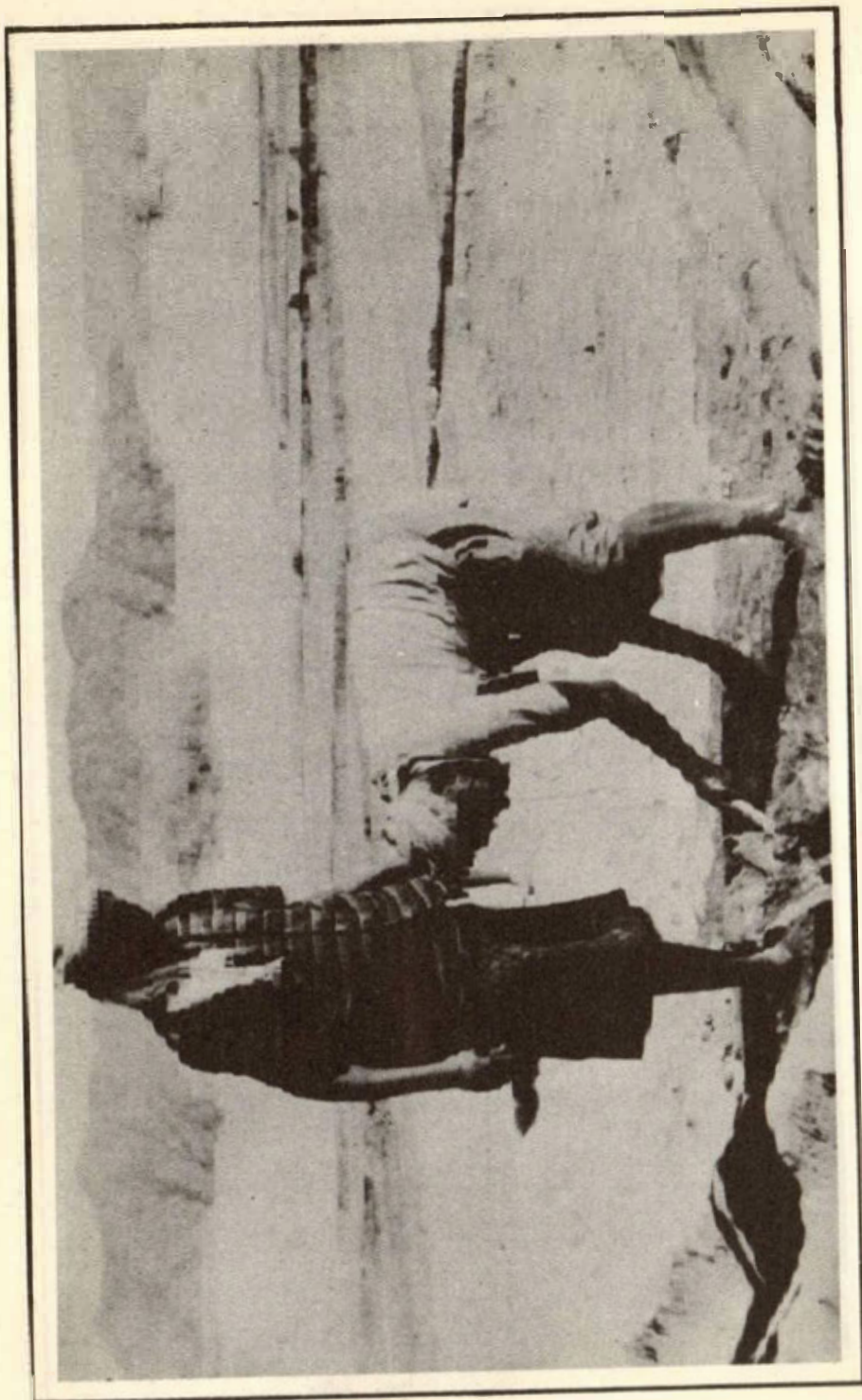
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South Yemen: Towards a Definitive Liberation

LATE IN November 1967 the last of British colonial rule disappeared from South Yemen. NLF guerrilla forces already occupied the interior part of the country. The NLF commandos in Aden, the capital, became the only recognized authority. Finally, on November 30, the new republic was founded — the People's Republic of South Yemen.

Thus ended four years of armed struggle. What in the beginning the sultans and the British thought was only a skirmish against a few tribes soon became, to the surprise of many, a dynamic armed movement which paralyzed and neutralized militarily British troops stationed in the area and the colonialist-created army and security forces. The "skirmish" with the Radfan tribe turned into guerrilla war. The urban commandos not only attacked military installations but carried the war to the individual colonialist, hunting him down in the street or in his home, preventing him from living peacefully. Their target was not only the foreign oppressor, but special emphasis was given to the struggle against the traditional oppressors, the ones who

had become the loyal collaborators of colonialism: the sheikhs, sultans, and emirs.

The struggle for independence gained a profound ideological and political content, during the first two years, which broke the traditional limits of the purely nationalist movements in the Arab world and in other regions. The NLF Charter of 1965 was the most eloquent expression of a movement whose sights were trained on objectives of revolutionary importance.

The victory of November 30 brought about two exceptionally important events: the total and unconditional expulsion of British colonialists and the destruction of the existing feudal and semifeudal structures, with their sultans, emirs, and sheikhs.

However, the revolution in South Yemen was not — and still isn't — free from conflicts and obstacles. As it grew into a powerful movement and a real danger to British colonialism, as its objectives became more and more revolutionary, as

it began to influence other areas and movements in the Arabian Peninsula, the revolution, according to the NLF leaders, had to overcome all the maneuvers and intrigues cooked up by the conflicting interests in the Arab world.

One of these maneuvers was what can be called today the "FLOSY Process" FLOSY (Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen) had been created in Cairo in 1965 and introduced to the world as the body which ostensibly represented the NLF. The organization, according to the NLF, really represented the interests of Aden's reformist bourgeoisie and of the feudal sectors in favor of a neocolonialist solution. Although some elements of the NLF agreed to join FLOSY, thereby increasing the confusion, the principal leaders refused to do so. Those who were abroad found themselves completely isolated, while the leaders inside the country were prevented from being heard outside the country when their only exit was blocked — the entry to North Yemen. The situation was publicly denounced in November 1965. However, the denunciation did not go beyond the country and it was only later that the people found out that the NLF existed as an independent body and was leading the struggle. Overcoming these and other difficulties, facing the hostility and the pressures of the reactionary Arab regimes headed by Saudi Arabia, the NLF achieved victory by reaffirming its political personality as the vanguard of the South Yemenite people.

After victory, the NLF began another battle, perhaps more difficult, and larger: the social liberation of the country, the overcoming

of centuries of backwardness and 128 years of colonial rule.

Colonial Heritage and Present Problems

To describe the colonial heritage one only has to point out that there are barely a dozen doctors to take care of one and a half million inhabitants of South Yemen; but this "heritage" extends even further. The country's natural wealth was never exploited, and the only investments that were ever made were within the limit of the capital city. Petroleum was never exploited in spite of the fact that Yemen has the richest oil deposits of the Arab world. Although a few new crops were introduced, such as cotton, agriculture did not even go through the stage of an extensive single-crop system. The peasant continues to till the soil with a wooden plow, as he did centuries ago.

The country is surrounded by a sea rich in marine resources, but the colonialists did not invest one shilling in fisheries; fishing techniques and vessels are as primitive and backward as they were 200 years ago. Fish and mollusks rot on the shores and docks to the detriment of the 10,000 families who depend on fishing for their livelihood.

Yemen has no economic infrastructure. Any development project would have to start from zero. If it were decided to build a small cement plant near the sources of raw material, the first problem to be solved would be the road or highway to reach the plant. The quickest way to get to Abyan, an important agricultural region, is to wait for the tide to go out and then to walk along the seashore. Statistics, data, references, and scientific,

technical, or economic documents are very rare and the little that did exist was carried off by the British. A few portfolios forgotten during the British evacuation have been used to make the geologic prospecting plans of the country.

As colonialists the British acted primarily on their military needs. The occupation of South Yemen centered around the conversion of the port of Aden into a first-class military base, the seat of the British High Command in the Middle East. Thus, for many years British military operations in the East and in East Africa were based on the port of Aden. All aspects of the city became hypertrophied and deformed. Aden's economy was made second to the needs of the port, and in time the British bases represented 80% of the country's economy. Aden's status as a free port and refueling station for 600 ships monthly, contributed to the economy's deformation. The capital's broad avenues and modern port installations contrasted with the absolute poverty and primitivism of the rest of the country. Even within the port city, only a few yards away from the modern buildings of Malla, one can see hundreds of miserable huts incrusting the volcanic hills surrounding the city. These huts are the heritage of colonialism in all its magnitude, the true South Yemen, and not the well-stocked stores and buildings of Malla and Tawahi.

The interior of the country was subdued and exploited indirectly through the sultans and emirs. Supported and encouraged by British colonialism, the sultans and sheiks — whose titles date back to the primitive patriarchal communities — transformed their authority, formerly limited by community representatives, into absolute power. They became the "masters of lives

and property." On the other hand, tribal differences — due to different reasons — were also fanned by the colonialists. The army and security forces had been created with native personnel, chiefly, men from certain regions and tribes, such as Aulaqui and Mechira. This shows how the colonial authorities tried to play up the ancient tribal conflicts and disputes.

What we could call the "institutionalization" of tribal differences was carried out through territorial fragmentation. Each fragment was made into a "state," with its separate organizations, structures, budget, economy, army, and police. As part of this policy a campaign was carried on to block any attempt at cultural development, to annul Arab culture, and keep the country tied educationally and culturally to the colonial metropolis. Imported English-language textbooks were used in the schools, and English was used for all working purposes.

In the Aden area alone, Britain's withdrawal and the evacuation of troops led to the unemployment of 25,000 workers who directly or indirectly worked on or for the bases. Of the 600 ships which monthly stopped to refuel and unload merchandise in the free port of Aden, only 100 ships — that is, one sixth of the total — were stopping at the port after Israel's aggression in 1967.

Yemen needs teachers and Arab textbooks to begin its school year. The books must be purchased abroad at an exorbitant price. Teachers, like doctors, must be contracted in other Arab countries. In this field too there is a contradiction in the fact that the few doctors and teachers available frequently go to work elsewhere for better pay. Of course, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Libya

can offer very high salaries in contrast to the modest ones in South Yemen. This is a serious problem in South Yemen's search for technical and professional personnel.

The agrarian reform is just beginning. More than 86% of the land and harvests had been in the hands of the sheikhs and sultans; today this land is being distributed on the basis of a maximum of 50 nonirrigated acres and 25 irrigated acres. However, the definitive norms of organization, production, and control have still not been clearly established, although they have been discussed widely. Similarly, solutions to other problems (illiteracy, unemployment, etc.) are still being thrashed out.

In general, solutions to many problems are now being discussed. The logical failure in the talks with Great Britain (cancellation of aid and assistance, market restrictions, etc.) aggravated a bad situation for the new Republic, which soon found itself facing another major problem: it had virtually no other market than the British.

So, the next problem was that of aid, assistance, and international cooperation from the socialist countries and the progressive Arab nations. Up to now, with a few exceptions, the desperately needed aid and assistance shine for their absence.

On the other hand, when it withdrew, Great Britain left a chronically unfavorable balance of payments. It had also made the army and security forces created by it the best paid in all the Arab world, except in Kuwait. A large part of the present Republic's budget is still allocated to military expenditures, chiefly salaries.

This is South Yemen. It is essentially the same today — except for

Aden — as the Yemen of 50 or 200 years ago. From this fact stem all its present economic and social problems, all equally serious in nature and number. The task is immense and is further aggravated by very complex political problems.

Political Problems

There are very delicate problems which go beyond the concrete questions in the economic and social fields. These problems have led to the crisis which confronts the country and the NLF since March 1968. In brief, these problems are as follows:

Survival within the new Republic of the old British-created army, security forces, and administration.

Parallel existence of guerrilla detachments and command units grouped in the "Popular Guards." These constitute a military force outside the army and the security forces without any defined tasks or role.

Organization of revolutionary power on the basis of the NLF Party. Creation of new organizations and mechanisms by the Revolution to guarantee control of revolutionary power.

Clear, concrete, and detailed formulation of a plan or program of revolutionary action and its subsequent application.

These four problems constitute the center of the political crisis which began in March, and they characterize virtually the entire development of the process of revolutionary construction.

The debates and contradictions which these problems brought forth led to the Conference of Zingibar, which affirmed a line of revolutionary action to solve these matters. However, the events of March 20 in which sectors of the NLF and of

the army took a series of repressive measures against other sectors of the NLF destroyed the possibility of really carrying out the stipulations of the Zingibar Conference. On the contrary, the events of March 20 and the incidents and confrontations which took place later in Madinat Al Shab and Jaar made any step forward impossible. The political and ideological contradictions even resulted in bloody encounters between different sectors of the NLF, and seriously endangered the South-Yemenite revolution.

These events jeopardized the stability of the new republic and the integrity of the NLF. The moment was favorable for counterrevolutionary forces that had, meanwhile, been constantly preparing themselves in Saudi Arabia to launch an open aggression against the South-Yemenite revolution with the aid of the CIA and the US Government. The regions affected by the counterrevolutionary aggression were Aulaqui, Medhira, and Beihan.

The selection of these three provinces was not accidental. British colonialists had filled the local army and security forces with persons from these regions, chiefly from Aulaqui and Medhira. Armed anticolonialist struggle scarcely existed in these provinces so that they were quite removed from the revolutionary process. When the revolution took over it could not, because of material conditions and other problems, bring any benefits to these regions. On the contrary, when certain negative elements were removed from the army and security forces, the communities in these provinces interpreted these dismissals as reprisals and acts of discrimination against the tribes of Aulaqui and Medhira and reacted accordingly.

The enemy was perfectly aware of this situation, and this explains

why these three provinces were chosen for the development of its aggressive plans. Moreover, the reactionary sectors which predominated in North Yemen permitted and supported the activities of the counterrevolutionary bands which participated in the aggression of July and August against the Republic of South Yemen.

The counterrevolutionary aggression also gave rise to another phenomenon: a large number of officers from the army, and especially from the security forces, as well as soldiers and noncommissioned officers, deserted over to the counterrevolutionaries. Many of the officers who committed treason and passed over to the counterrevolution played outstanding roles in the events of March 20. Some, a minority, were motivated exclusively by tribal sentiments and ties.

In this difficult situation the sectors of the NLF which had taken up arms after the events of Jaar came out against the counterrevolutionary aggression and defended the sovereignty of the new Republic, although they continued to maintain their positions against the Government. But the aggression, the imminent danger, and the attitude of the rebellious sector of the NLF against the aggression led, in practice, to a truce between the different sectors of the NLF and the Government. Thus there began an interregnum which was favorable for the reopening of discussion, the evaluation of events, the internal situation of the NLF, and the future prospects for the South-Yemenite revolution.

The security forces were then reorganized chiefly around the politically trustworthy combatants of the NLF, an increasing number of whom joined the army as of-

officers. Many combatants and other elements of the NLF, some of whom had risen in arms against the Government in May, also joined the process of reorganization, returning to the cities and, in some cases, to the General Command of the NLF. Within the latter body there began a process of discussion of all problems as well as of the immediate and long-range prospects of the South-Yemenite revolution.

The counterrevolutionary aggression, sponsored by the United States and reactionary Arabs, was crushed thanks to the formidable popular movement which helped all sectors of the population and the NLF to unite in the fight against the common enemy. This shows the extraordinary basic strength of the South-Yemenite revolution.

As a result of these conversations, consultations, and discussions, we have formulated and approved what we can call a plan or program of revolutionary action directed at beginning and developing the first stage of the revolution, what the leaders of the NLF call the "national democratic revolution." The plan in question aims at a series of economic objectives which would mark the beginning of the country's revolutionary transformation. A series of political objectives complement the plan of economic action. Both the political and economic aspects are fundamentally important and the approval and implementation of one aspect cannot be conceived of without that of the other. The political and economic objectives of the plan are clear and concrete. They refer to the situation of the port; the banking system; imports and exports; the agrarian reform; the role of the State and state economy as a guide for the

country's development; the reorganization of the political and power agencies of the State and the NLF Party, including the army and the security forces; as well as the orientation of South Yemen's foreign policy to the development of relations and cooperation with the socialist countries, the progressive Arab nations, and the national liberation movements of the Third World, particularly of the Arab world.

This program is a solid, irrefutable base on which to define the goals clearly and it is precisely in this stage of definition and direction that the South-Yemenite revolution is in. This does not mean that everything today is going well; the approval of the program will pose problems of implementation and future development. The coming stages of the revolution will bring new ideas and trends both on the domestic level and in the struggle against imperialist aggressors and Arab reactionaries who surround the new Republic and conspire against it constantly.

Nevertheless, the program is feasible, a good alternative which if accomplished could eventually make the genuine political reorientation and reorganization of the country possible and which would permit the revolution to emerge from its year-long state of conflict.

The approval and implementation of the program will create the conditions for the union of all sectors of the NLF and its reorganization on solid bases.

Importance of the South-Yemenite Revolution

The triumph of the South-Yemenite revolution has shaken the Arab world, especially the Arabian Peninsula. The Saudi monarchy, the feudal elements of North Yemen, and the emirs, sultans, and sheikhs who serve as

lackeys for British colonialism in the Arabian Gulf states see the revolution as a death challenge. US imperialism, which is displacing the British and is carrying on strategies and tactics aimed at the absolute control of the region's petroleum wealth, sees the revolution as the chief obstacle to its objectives. All of these elements have merged to crush the revolution as shown by their attempts in July and August 1968 and by the fact that they support the counter-revolutionary bands being trained on the borders of Saudi Arabia and in certain regions of North Yemen.

The South-Yemenite revolution has already begun to exert great influence on the liberation movements in the Arabian Peninsula and even outside of this area. It has reaffirmed the role of armed struggle as the way to reach genuine liberation; it has contributed important experiences in the field of guerrilla warfare under the peculiar social and geographical characteristics and conditions of this part of the world; and it has shown the importance and possibilities of armed struggle in the cities.

In this key region of the Middle East, the imperialist powers are struggling over spheres of influence, concessions, and control; South Yemen is their chief obstacle. The political, revolutionary, and progressive forces (which are small and in many cases splintered), have in South Yemen a source of inspiration and legitimate experience.

The guerrilla movement in Dhofar, the political forces which are undertaking armed struggle in Oman, Muskat, Qatar, Bahrein, and other regions, and the revolutionary nuclei being developed in Saudi Arabia have an example to follow in South Yemen. The development

and triumph of the revolution in South Yemen has led to a reorganization of the political forces aimed at creating a basic union for the victorious outcome of the anticolonialist and anti-imperialist struggle in this strategically important area in the Arab world.

The influence of the South is gaining ground in North Yemen, in the direct struggle against feudal and tribal forces which at present predominate in that country. The NLF has repeated many times that if both Yemens are really brothers in their history, geography, community, and idiosyncrasies, it is no less true that the political processes now taking place in both republics are very different and are an obstacle to real unity. The NLF bases its policies on this fact. It maintains that unity with the North cannot be a constitutional unity, that the Arab world has seen too many failures of this type of union and integration, that integration must have a genuine political and revolutionary basis. In keeping with this analysis the NLF maintains that unity must begin with the masses, the integration and cooperation of social forces that can participate in and develop a revolutionary process in North Yemen. Thus, the NLF has a policy of close unity and collaboration with the students, workers, peasants, and progressive political forces of North Yemen.

Therefore, as the combatants and leaders of the NLF and many other Arab revolutionaries say, the South-Yemenite revolution should by no means be frustrated; it must be consolidated and broadened and play the role of a political revolutionary vanguard which it has legitimately won during the hard years of struggle.



Black Panthers: the Afro-Americans' Challenge

George Murray and Joudon Major Ford

The triumph of the Cuban Revolution ten years ago, only ninety miles from the first imperialist power, demonstrated that the close presence of the monster does not make revolution impossible. About the same time, the challenging figures of Lumumba, Toiré, and Nkrumah rose up and made evident the ardent desire for liberty of a continent exploited for centuries. Malcolm X, at that time, preached that the struggle against racism was inevitably linked with the struggle against colonialism and imperialism. Almost in unison, Frantz Fanon wrote about "the wretched of the earth," and Che Guevara, summing up his experiences as a guerrilla, made the methods for their liberation available to the exploited.

These phenomena, apparently disconnected, had repercussions on the most determined elements of the black population of the United States, and gave way to an extraordinary qualitative change in their struggle. Ever since then, Afro-Americans have learned that to demand "civil rights" (which amounts to agreeing to the level of exploitation to which the poor whites are submitted) is not enough and that it is a matter of fighting for their human rights, of rescuing their stolen dignity. Yesterday's demands for "integration" have been followed by today's revolutionary watchword: "Black Power."

George Murray and Joudon Major Ford talk about this in an exclusive interview for *Tricontinental*.

George Murray, 22 one of a family of 14 children, followed the same road of many North American black people: from his native Mississippi to a northern ghetto; from terror in the South to police repression in the North.

He began his underground activities at 16. In 1967 he was jailed for leading a revolt at a state university, and is at present out on bail. He is Minister of Education of the Black Panther Party.

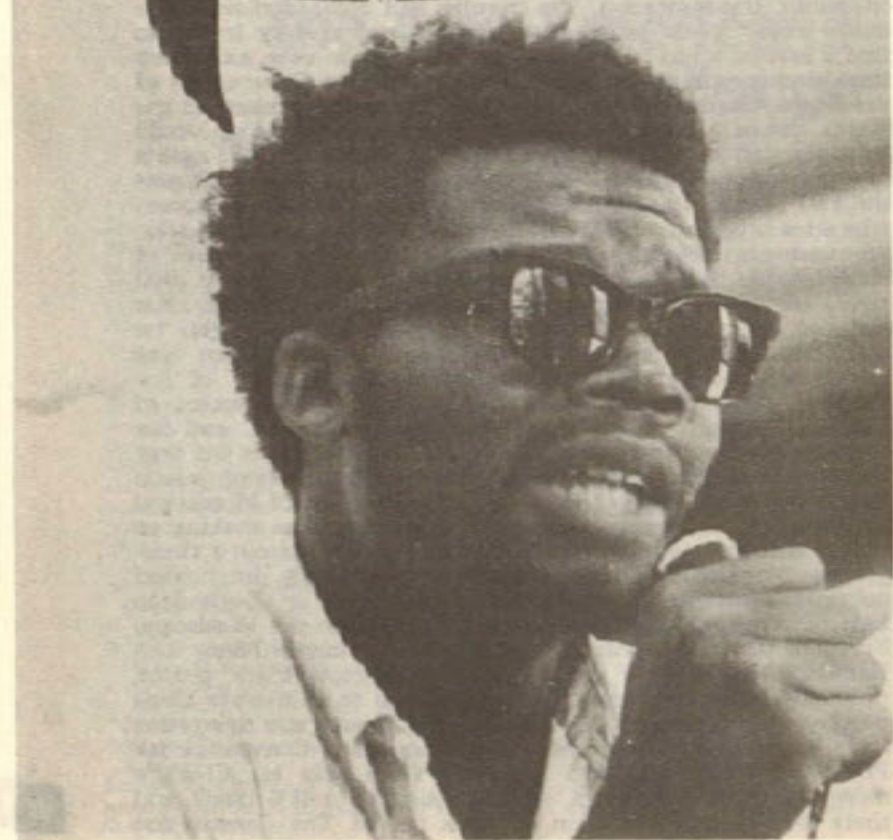
Joudon Major Ford, 33, born in Harlem, New York, grew up in New York's Bedford-Stuyvesant section, the largest black ghetto in the United States.

A former student, he undertook military training in the Civil Air Patrol Service, United States Auxiliary Air Force. At the end of June 1968 he was promoted to the rank of Captain of the Black Panther Party (leader of the New York chapter).

What circumstances brought about the birth of the Black Panther Party?

MURRAY: The contradictions of the black people's struggle for civil rights, which—to be more specific, we might say the right to vote, the right to eat at lunch counters where previously black people had been refused service, the right to use the same toilets that white people had been using, or the right to drink out of water faucets that were previously laid for whites were some of the specific rights that black people were agitating for in the civil rights movement.

Another right was the right to sit up front on the bus. This was a movement that originated in Little Rock, Arkansas—in Montgomery, Alabama, rather—with a movement headed by Dr. Martin Luther King and Mrs. Rosa Parks around segregation on public transportation. The results and contradictions were these: many black people were slaughtered merely trying to find a seat on a bus or trying to get the right to vote, and every time black people would appeal to the capitalist Government of the United States for protection from the racist crackers of the South, the only thing the Federal Government would do would be to say that it shouldn't happen again or send down FBI agents to observe the activities of civil rights strugglers. The result was the FBI agents would stand by and watch while black women who were pregnant would have babies beat out of their stomachs. So these contradictions led to the awareness on the part of black people that they could not possibly even achieve civil rights out of the present structure of the US Government. For instance, every time a black man agitated for civil rights he was shot down or murdered. Mississippi's Medgar Evers was merely organizing black people around the concept of the NAACP (the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), which is a reformist organization, and our comrade Medgar Evers was assassinated one night on his way home by some members of the Ku Klux Klan. The same person who assassinated Medgar Evers ran for Governor of Mississippi and received a large percentage of the votes, thus making us realize that there was no possible positive outcome from a struggle in the United States within the previously established political agreements, within the Democratic or Republican Parties. Again we had experiences in 1964 with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, headed by our comrade Fanny Lou Hamer. These were a group of our grass-roots black people, primarily sharecroppers and cotton pickers and illiterate black people, who challenged the right of the Democratic delegation from Mississippi to be seated in the Democratic Convention for President. What happened was that there was an all-white delegation from Mississippi, when Mississippi is 48% black, and there was no representation of black people. The Constitution



says — the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution says — that no state can deny the rights of a citizen without due process of law, and it also states that if there are members in the House of Representatives or the Senate who come from a state where people do not have the right to vote, then those Senators or assemblymen or members of the House of Representatives ought to be expelled from the House, but this law has never been enforced in the favor of black people. So in the North we realized that civil rights was a foolishness, that civil rights was a dead end, so there rose a brother by the name of Malcolm X, who preached the necessity for armed guerrilla struggle, and we are the historical progeny of Malcolm X.

Our founder, the founder of the Black Panther Party, was Huey P. Newton, who recognized that black people were powerless because we did not have guns. We practice the belief that political power comes through the barrel of a gun, that if you wish to have freedom, if you are a slave, if you wish to become free it is useless to talk about becoming free unless you talk about engaging in armed struggle against racism and capitalism and imperialism in North America. So the way we began was that we began to form armed guards that would go throughout the black communities, particularly in the state of California, on the West Coast of the United States, and observe the police and their treatment of black people; and every time there was a provocation on the part of the police, every time there was an assassination of a black man, every time there was police brutality, we would stop it with guns and force. Thus, black people began to recognize the positiveness of guns and force — so the Party began out of realization that we could not strive for civil rights but that we were striving for human rights. Because Malcolm preached the historical necessity of armed guerrilla resistance to capitalism in the United States, he was assassinated, shot 13 times. Every time a leader demanded human rights for black people, he was destroyed by the racist power structure of the United States Government. So again we recognized quite clearly that, although imperialism thought that they had a monopoly on the use of violence, we recognized the fact that violence belongs to any person who decides to use it, and we began to use it; we began to oppose racist imperialist violence with revolutionary violence.

What are the objectives pursued by your organization?

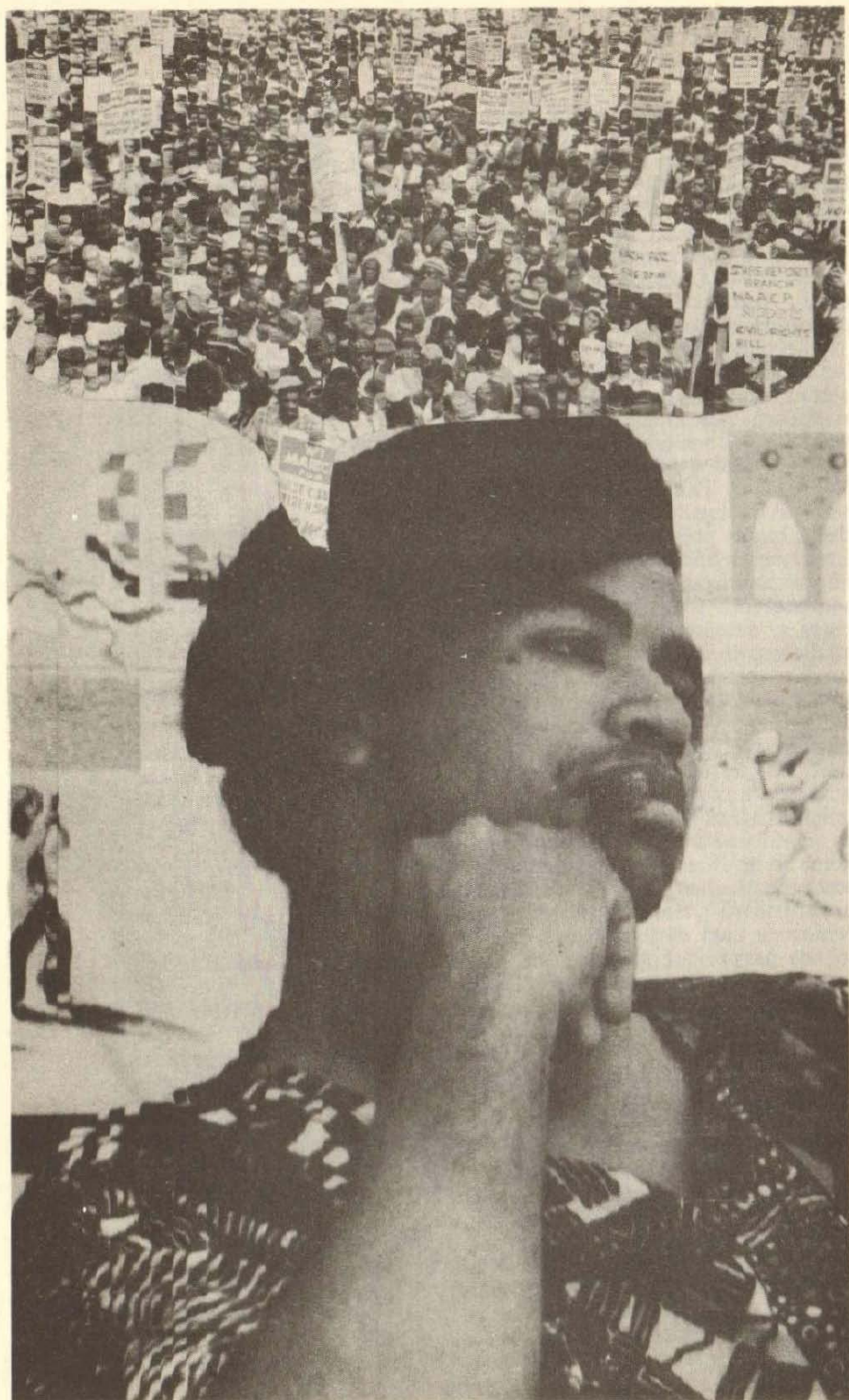
MURRAY: The Black Panther Party was organized to achieve — to accomplish — revolutionary black power for the black people of North America. When we say "to achieve revolutionary black power for Afro-Americans in North America or for black people," we use the term "black people" to mean power for all persons of African, Asian, or Latin-American descent in the United States, as well as progressive whites. What we meant by that was the total eradication of racism and capitalism, of the forming of empires by imperialists throughout the world. We understood, by saying that, we wanted to establish revolutionary black power; we knew that when you talk about a revolution you talk about bloodshed; and, as our brother Malcolm X used to say, it was the ballot or the bullet. That is, it was the ballot or the bullet in 1965, but the contradictions within the

capitalist domain of North America have become so sharpened that now it is not the ballot — it is only the bullet. The reason that it is only the bullet is that the same imperialism that we are fighting in North America murdered more than one million Africans in the Congo between 1960 and 1965 and has burned up and cremated more than a million children in Viet-Nam besides the men and women that imperialism murdered. So the Black Panther Party was formed to organize the black people of the United States with guns and force to lead to the disappearance of racism and capitalism in North America.

Our objective is the eradication of racism, capitalism, neocolonialism, and imperialism in the world. Our objective is the achievement of human rights of all the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

What can you tell us with reference to the Ten-Point Program and the question of the colonial analysis and the problem of the plebiscite?

MURRAY: The Black Panther Party is a grass-roots organization. An organization designed to help black people achieve their basic political aims and desires. We have a Ten-Point Program, where we demand the right to determine the destiny of our communities; where we demand the right for black people to receive a trial by jury, and appeal; where we demand the right of the black people to enjoy the highest possible standard of living in the world; where we demand an education that teaches black people the true nature of the racist, decadent society of North America, that educates us about our historical development in the world, and that guides us to understand our correct, historical position in the world today. Also we demand that all persons of African, Asian, or Latin-American descent who are now in prisons, in jails in North America, be released unconditionally. Also we demand that a United Nations plebiscite be conducted in all the communities in North America; we demand that representatives from the UN be sent into those communities, so that Afro-Americans, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, Indians, Puerto Ricans can decide whether they want to remain a part of the United States or recognize their belonging to the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and thus are usurping the right to determine their own destiny. So these are some of the points within the Ten-Point Program platform of the Black Panther Party. Also we recognize the fact that we are a colony within the United States — in fact, we form several colonies. For instance, the colony in New York contains 3 million people; the colony in Chicago contains about 2½ million people. The colony in the southern part of the United States is so large that it contains at least 22 million Afro-Americans. The colonies on the West Coast range from 140 000 Afro-Americans to southern California, which has about 7 million Mexicans. So when we say that we have a colonial status within the country we mean that each separate community is a colony that is exploited just as South Viet-Nam or Algeria or Cuba were exploited by the imperialists. That is, just like Cubans were forced to engage in slave labor, chopping sugarcane all day for the sugar companies of the United States, black people were forced in the North, were forced to pick cotton — that is, the North Americans were forced to pick cotton or work in shipyards,



Mexicans were forced to pick grapes for 25 cents a bucket, Chinese were forced to work in laundries ironing clothes for white people, black women were forced to be domestic maids and servants to white people. In general, we were nothing but a cheap labor supply for the capitalists and imperialists of North America. So the treatment of any community or colony of North America is the same as the treatment of any persons of color within the colonies of Bolivia, South Viet-Nam, Mozambique, South Africa, or anywhere else in the world where persons are of African, Asian, or Latin-American descent or slaves to neo-colonialism and imperialism. So that is part of our colonial thesis. We maintain that we are colonial slaves and that we have the right to self-determination, just as the Algerian people have the right to self-determination, and that we must also engage in an armed struggle as the Cubans engaged in armed struggle. We are colonial subjects in the same sense.

Some progressive sectors, aside from the complicity carried out by the capitalist press, believe there is some sort of racism in the Black Power concept. What can you tell us in relation to this belief?

FORD: The nervousness about the term "Black Power" and its implications on the part of certain progressive sectors is merely a reaction on their part, principally of fear. Now most black revolutionaries do not get involved in black racism. However, when one has been exploited, oppressed, murdered, and stamped on for hundreds of years, one naturally develops an unbounded hate for his enemy and draws a clear line of demarcation between himself and the enemy. Many progressive elements actually want the black liberation struggle to take on a character of love and "hippie-ism," but we are serious; we are dealing with the lives of people, and we make our position clear. We are for Black Power, which is the power embodied by the descendants of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We have no interest in reactionary comments that draw energy from the revolution. We have made our position clear. We are totally in opposition to all imperialists, and we will move in all revolutionary directions to destroy our enemy, regardless of the personal hang-ups of some people.

MURRAY: What the comrade said is true. Some progressive people feel that when we say "Black Power" we mean that we merely want to put—say, to create black Rockefellers rather than white Rockefellers. That is not the goal of the Black Panther Party, nor of revolutionary black people. If Rockefeller was black we'd kill him just as quick as we'd kill him if he was white. If Johnson was black he'd be the enemy of the peoples of the world just as he is the enemy of the peoples of the world now. But, at the same time, we recognize that it happens in North America that most of the imperialists are white; we do not attack them because they are white. When we attack the police we attack them because they are racist dogs and brutes at the service of the imperialists and the only way we can get to the imperialists is to first wipe out the police and then there'll be no one to act as a stopgap between us and the imperialists. So that is our position. We do not want black capitalists or black racists, nor do we want white capitalists. When we say that we want revolutionary black power we mean that we want the necessary amount of guns and force to destroy racism,

capitalism, and neocolonialism in the world. We believe that, so far as our culture is concerned, the only culture that's worth keeping is revolutionary culture.

What criteria inspired the new tactics and strategies in the ways and means of the struggle oriented by Minister of Defense Huey P. Newton?

MURRAY: Our leader, the Minister of Defense, Huey P. Newton, recognized that we were slaves to neocolonialism because we were powerless and that if we wished to become free men we had to understand one historical fact: political power would make us free. Political power would allow us to determine the destiny of our community. Political power moved us from the realm of slavery to the realm of freedom, and, since political power comes through the barrel of a gun, then we must pick up the gun to liberate ourselves. At the same time, the members of the Black Panther Party recognized that resistance was already developing within the United States, and not only was it developing along reformist lines—that we might call the Civil Rights Movement—but black people were beginning to resist with weapons of force. Primarily, these weapons of force consisted of rocks, bottles, and sticks and Molotov cocktails. For instance, the historic revolt that took place in the Watts ghetto of California, where black people burned more than 100 million dollars' worth of factories owned by imperialists, but the result of this tactic, which was called rioting, was that it led to the slaughtering of hundreds of black people. After Watts, in 1965, there were revolts in various parts of the United States; in 1966, there were revolts in various parts of the United States; in 1967 there was a large-scale uprising in Newark, New Jersey—in fact, it was the largest uprising that had occurred to that date in the United States. But the danger that we recognized in this pattern of resistance was that there were at least 500 black people murdered in Newark. For instance, while black people would be in the streets looting and taking goods out of stores that were manufactured at Hong Kong by Chinese slaves to imperialism, the racist Army of the United States would be flying over the crowds in helicopters, machine-gunning black people. So, while the strategy of the use of revolutionary violence was absolutely correct and necessary, our Minister of Defense recognized the fact that we had to change our tactics; so he wrote a very historical declaration, entitled "The Correct Handling of the Revolution," which was written in July 1967. And we noticed an immediate change in the pattern of the revolt that took place in Detroit in August. For instance, in August in Detroit there was more sniping and less looting, there was more sniping and burning than rampaging, running up and down the streets in large hordes. The result was that the imperialists admit that 16 snipers were able to drive the police and the National Guard out of 40 square blocks of Detroit. In other words, black people and progressive white people who were rioting were able to control for about 10 days half of Detroit, by merely changing the tactics from one of riot to one of insurrection and revolt, based on ambushes and sniping.

FORD: This is the sense of the slogan "No more riots; twos and threes."

But essentially this tactic of "twos and threes" is conceived on the basis of self-defense. Is it?

MURRAY: No, the tactic of "twos and threes" is not based

upon the maintenance of the status quo. For instance, we recognize the fact that when you talk about self-defense you're only talking about maintaining a situation as it exists in its present form. For instance, if today we are not being attacked by the imperialists but tomorrow we are, and we drive them back to the point of yesterday, then there's been no progress; in fact, we are regressing, because a new contradiction has arisen and we have not dealt with it properly. When our Minister of Defense said that there must be no more riots but that we must resist in twos and threes he meant that we must organize guerrilla bands whose goal would be the destruction of racism and capitalism in North America and the instituting of a socialist people's government.

Now that you refer to a socialist government, how do you conceive this future state — as a state within the present state, as a separate state inside North America with the full participation of those progressive whites?

FORD: Our goal is to bring about complete, total, and unconditional destruction of the imperialist domain of North America. In other words, when we finish with North America, no more imperialists.

MURRAY: Further, we'd like to add to this point that we do not advocate separatism or integration. When one advocates integration into the system — that is, integration to the capitalist system — it is based upon two tenets: the first is based upon racism, in the sense that in order for black people to make progress, then they'd have to participate in the same electoral politics that white people participated in. And accept the same culture and practice the same culture that white people practice. The second point was that if we were integrationists, then that would mean that we were working to maintain the enslavement of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America to North American Yankee imperialism and neocolonialism. So, as far as culture goes, we maintain that the only culture worth keeping is revolutionary culture. Therefore, the culture would change from day to day as the struggle develops. Concerning the point of capitalism and integration into that system, we are organizing to destroy capitalism and its bastard children, imperialism and neocolonialism. About the point of our separatism or geographical integration into the United States, our communities are already separated according to race. We are not organizing to form separate states for black and white people in the United States. We are organizing to erase racism and capitalism, as we said earlier.

How do you conceive, during the present stage of the struggle and its future development, of the participation of whites — that is, the role that students, intellectuals and young people must play in the struggle?

MURRAY: The role of progressive whites in the struggle is to create a revolution in the mother country. In a position paper written by Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver, our thesis has been stated clearly. It is based upon the realization that in the colony we are striving for self-determination and freedom from slavery, and in the mother country — that is, the part of the country that is inhabited by white people primarily — there must be a revolution based upon the historical necessity to bring a violent end to capitalism and neocolonialism. Concerning progressive white people, students, intellectuals — those

who agree with armed struggle — we welcome them with open arms; we welcome any resistance to the imperialist domain of North America, because it weakens it. At the same time, we recognize that there are certain racist elements in the United States who feel that the United States should be a bastion of white supremacy; for those persons there's no hope, so we must defeat them to the death. For instance, in April of 1968, in the same month that Martin Luther King was assassinated, in the same month that 127 rebellions took place in cities in the United States, the House Un-American Activities Committee, a policy-making body of the United States Government, stated that the only solution to the problem of rebellions and revolts in the United States was the garrisoning off of all black communities and requiring all black people in the United States to carry a pass, and that anyone who's caught without a pass would be punished by death. There are already cities in the United States such as Oakland, California, the headquarters chapter of the Black Panther Party, where all black students are required to carry a pass, and if they're caught in school without a pass they are taken to jail. This measure was created by the imperialists to prohibit the black students from revolting in the cities.

Also, this same governmental body called HUAC (the House Un-American Activities Committee) stated in the same news article that there were more than 36 concentration camps, and it reiterated the policy of the McCarran Act of the United States Government. The McCarran Act says that any person who advocates guerrilla warfare, or who advocates the stopping of the sending of troops to Viet-Nam, or who any governmental official thinks will advocate any such action in the future, action of a civil disobedience nature or action that will include the use of armed force, would be taken to these concentration camps. With the situation as it is in Chicago today, that could happen tonight.

What are your concrete experiences in the state of California in relation to cooperation with white progressives?

MURRAY: We have had most of our experience with white progressives around the imprisoning and trial of our Minister of Defense, Huey P. Newton. In December of 1967 we formed a coalition with the Peace and Freedom Party, where on problems of mutual concern we would cooperate to find mutual solutions. For instance, one of these problems was the Viet-Nam war. We both demand an immediate end to the Viet-Nam war, based upon a total withdrawal of all American troops and the right of the Vietnamese people to determine their own destiny. Through organizing within the Peace and Freedom Party by representatives of the Black Panther Party and white radicals, we were able to get them to demand an immediate release of our leader and Minister of Defense Huey P. Newton. For instance, the racist police of Oakland, California, will not let us into jail to visit the Minister of Defense, nor will they let us into the courtroom, so we've been forced to depend on some progressive whites for communication with our leader. Also, these same progressive whites have created disturbances in the surrounding cities, particularly in Berkeley, California, around the University of California.

In your capacity as Minister of Education at the present moment, what is the orientation of the educational, cultural, and ideological work within the Afro-American communities in the States?

MURRAY: Within the Party the political education consists of all of the members being able to form a correct analysis of capitalism, neocolonialism, and imperialism in the world today, and being able to understand the historical roots of the racism that is practiced within the United States. Concerning our political educational work, in the black community we've opened what is called Liberation Schools for young black people and adults; for the young children we have classes in elementary school subjects, such as science and mathematics; then we have what is called black history and the teaching of African languages, but these teachings are not based upon a historical retreat into Africa. For instance, some people in the Congo speak Swahili but Swahili has not freed them. Africans in South-West Africa or in Mozambique wear African robes and have not lost their African cultural patterns but at the same time they're slaves to colonialism and neocolonialism, so that our teachings for both adults and young black people is the necessity to have a revolutionary culture. Our education and culture is the culture of the gun and the culture of resistance to racism and imperialism. The reason we say that the only culture worth keeping is the revolutionary culture of revolutionary agitation is that in revolution there is change — there is complete, radical, absolute, and total change. That is, if we merely retreated back into our African past, we would not be engaging in complete change. For instance, the culture of the people may be defined as the total ways of the people. And therefore, in order for us to defeat racism, neocolonialism, and imperialism, our total ways must be revolutionary; that is the meaning of the phrase "The only culture worth keeping is revolutionary culture." In other words, our dances, our songs, and the way we embrace one another must be geared towards resistance. Our language structure must have within it words that increase the political consciousness of the people. For instance, in 1965 our password was "Burn, baby, burn," and our password in 1968 is "Panther Power," and what we mean by that is the power of the gun.

Speaking of Africa, what, in your opinion, is the relationship that exists between the struggles of the black population in the United States and those of the African peoples?

MURRAY: We are Africans in the United States. Historians admit that between 75 million and 100 million Africans were murdered in the slave trade carried out by Europeans and Americans. What we ask from our brothers in Africa is that they drive every imperialist and every Uncle Tom (such as Tshombe and Mobutu in the Congo) into the grave; that the racists in South Africa, Mozambique, "Portuguese" Guinea, Angola, and South Rhodesia be sent to hell; and that a socialist form of government be established in the place of capitalism.

What personalities and historical events have had a direct influence on the radicalization of the black movement in the United States?

FORD: There has been resistance on the part of black people to imperialism since the Portuguese first raided Africa. There were revolts on the slave ships. One African prince succeeded in taking over a slave ship and landing it at Montauk Point on Long Island in New York. All during the 1800s there were

revolts by slaves. Many were hanged because of their participating in revolutionary action. Nat Turner, who was a minister, organized a band of guerrillas that moved on slave master communities and sowed destruction upon the slave masters. In the early part of the 1900s Marcus Garvey organized a revolutionary movement to take people back to Africa, and he had thousands of armed men in the streets ready to battle all imperialists. In the Armed Services we've always had black men who have been rebellious against racism. In terms of contemporary developments black people have always been aware and have supported liberation struggles around the world. Many black people who the power structure thought were relatively quiet had very strong reactions to the death of Patrice Lumumba and the invasion of the Congo and the murders by the apartheid dogs of South Africa. The black people in the United States follow very closely the struggles in Bolivia and in Cuba and support the Vietnamese struggle. So black people have always had a more or less basic revolutionary urge to be free. The only thing that remained was to transform the movement into an organization and that's where the vanguard party, the Black Panther Party, serves its function.

MURRAY: To mention some specific names who have encouraged us in our struggle, in Latin America we were most inspired by the Cuban people's Revolution and the struggle led by Comandante Fidel Castro and Ernesto Guevara. The person that meant probably the most to us in Africa, in terms of creating a revolutionary conscience among black people, was Patrice Lumumba. In the United States it was Malcolm X. Our Minister of Defense was mostly inspired by Che Guevara and Malcolm X, because Malcolm internationalized the struggle in the United States. He traveled to Africa and made us aware of the relationship between the Bandung Conference that was held in Indonesia for persons of African, Asian, and Latin-American descent, and Afro-Americans in the United States. Just as the imperialist dogs in America assassinated Malcolm, he was planning to come to Cuba the next month to become more acquainted with the struggle of our Latin-American brothers. And the imperialist dogs, realizing that the black people's revolutionary consciousness would receive a great upsurge by becoming acquainted with our brothers in Latin America—the imperialist dogs assassinated him.

What is your opinion of the guerrilla struggle being waged in the Latin-American continent?

MURRAY: We welcome the struggle carried on by our brothers in Latin America. We respect the sacrifice of Ernesto Guevara in Bolivia and all the other comrades in Bolivia, and we believe that—like Inti Peredo stated in the last *Tricontinental* supplement—in Bolivia, guerrilla warfare has just begun. We were very happy today when we read in the Cuban newspapers that the lackey of US imperialism who is the President, Barrientos, stated that they knew that there were urban guerrillas in the cities of Bolivia, as that means that Comrade Che's example was followed by the Bolivian people. We only hope that all of Latin America will become a Viet-Nam.

FORD: We are always happy to see—you might say, overjoyed

to see — all the oppressed peoples following Che's valiant example of creating one, two, three, many Viet-Nams, and we will all work together toward the destruction of imperialism.

What is the role of the Black Muslims in the States and the significance of the assassination of Martin Luther King?

MURRAY: The assassination of Martin Luther King forced many reformist black people to understand the historical necessity for the use of armed force to end racism and imperialism. If a man who advocates reform within the system of capitalism was murdered, and two years before, a man — three years before — a man who advocated guerrilla warfare, Malcolm X, was assassinated, then we understand what our position is in capitalism, within the system of capitalism; any and all progressive people would be murdered, and the only way to properly resist this murderous pattern, this murderous practice of assassination, is to resist with armed force, organized arms and force. At the same time, the Black Muslims within the United States have, we regret to say, some capitalist trends. The reason is that the brothers are attempting to get some land and some bread, but we feel that, through political education, we can make them understand the necessity for all people getting land at the same time and that the fact that — even if you did have a separate state in the United States — as long as imperialism and capitalism existed, you would be in danger of extermination through any or all means.

The Party was born in California, but now it's being developed in other states of the country. Could you give us an explanation about perspective developments and the successes that you have already obtained, let's say, in New York, and so on?

FORD: The Black Panther Party's program and political direction is based on the national unity of all the oppressed peoples to rise up and destroy imperialism. Therefore, it was a natural occurrence that the Party would spread. Because of the correct analysis of our Minister of Defense, Huey P. Newton, and the proper direction that the Party is taking, the response across the country has been very, very high. Chapters have been set up in other states; they are functioning well, and in states where a chapter is in a particular city — specifically, in New York — I've had the experience that people in at least ten cities want Panthers to come to the city and organize. People in other states communicate to chapters asking for organizers to be sent immediately, for this is the Year of the Heroic Guerrilla, and, in the imperialist domain of North America, the Panther stalks. The power structure is shaking, and Panthers are being set up nationally with one direction: Patria o Muerte!

Would it be possible for you to mention concrete experiences in the sense of urban resistance, in the sense of gun battles with the police?

FORD: First I'll talk about what happened in a relatively new chapter. For instance, specifically in New York. Panthers were there simply organizing to educate the community to the necessity of revolution. The police immediately started to brutalize Panthers and people from the black communities; they've been trying to incite Panthers to react by shooting pellets at them from high-powered rifles. The FBI has been going around people's houses. There's been slandering of the Party, trying to blame it for the shooting of policemen, and a mobilization of all

the John Birchers in the Police Department to try to kill all the Panthers — completely erase us. In New York City the actions of the Party in the name of the community have caused the Mayor to lose control of his police force, so that's just one example of Panther Power.

MURRAY: As a result of the call by the Black Panther Party for resisting in groups of twos and threes and due to the fact that 1968 is the Year of the Heroic Guerrilla, we had several experiences. For instance, within the first two weeks of August, 38 police were shot, across the United States, and particularly in one area where a member of the Party had been organizing, in Cleveland, Ohio, there was an ambush of the police. The result was that three police were killed, and 27 were wounded. This is a beautiful example of the use of guerrilla tactics. The Panthers were so sophisticated in their resistance, in their methods, that they used tracer bullets to reflect who was being shot and who was not being shot so that they could train more bullets on them. We are also happy to report that the comrades who led this particular ambush were black GIs who were puppets of imperialism in Viet-Nam but who returned to the US and were politically educated and began to engage in guerrilla struggle.

A whole series of student actions took place this year in Europe against the consumer society, against the imperialist system. Even though the black movement and the Panthers center their action around and coordinated their struggle with that of the peoples of the Third World, are they contemplating any work with the European student forces?

MURRAY: We welcome the struggle of any progressive people in the world. We were very surprised at the resistance that took place in May, primarily in Paris. We were glad to see it happen, and any struggle anywhere in the world is helpful to the struggle in other parts of the world. For instance, in the United States it has begun to be common knowledge that the power structure of the US was going to move American soldiers either out of Germany or the United States into France to assist the Government of France, and articles appeared in the newspapers to that effect. The United States does not recognize the right of any people to self-determination. To the American Government, it was a riot or revolt, and on the front pages of magazines such as *Newsweek* there were pictures of police automobiles and stores burning up in Paris, and there was a question, "Is this Paris, or is this Detroit?" So this shows you the American mentality toward resistance anywhere in the world.

Finally, what is the best and most effective form of solidarity which other peoples can offer the black people's struggle?

MURRAY: The most effective solidarity that the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America could offer to the guerrillas in North America would be to create a whole continent of Viet-Nams so that we could lay waste to the imperialist domains of North America. If the North Americans use an atomic bomb on our comrades of Viet-Nam, then we must make all the imperialist dogs disappear from the world. It would be up to us to shoot down American tourists, the reason being that they would only be capitalists if they had money enough to travel around the world, and it would be up to us to destroy every imperialist.

USA: the Alienation of Culture

Destructive and Revolutionary Art

Irwin Silber

In the heart of imperialism, encouraged by the songs of victory from the Third World, the first standard-bearers of the epic that will put an end internally to the imperialist system of oppression have begun to emerge.

Symptoms of the progressive decomposition are the black rebellions, the students' protest movement, the attention which is paid to the problems that affect the underdeveloped world, and the rejection of the system by an increasingly larger number of intellectuals and artists.

North American artists have been the first ones to perceive the alienation implicit in the way of life imposed by imperialism. Hence the refusal by many of them to become integrated into a society that, by definition, handles man as an object liable to be changed into a commodity. Hence, the new destructive art which also characterizes North American culture today. But destructive art, although valid, is not enough — states Irwin Silber in this article specially written for *Tricontinental*. In order to avoid turning into an instrument of self-destruction, it must offer a revolutionary alternative.

Irwin Silber, North American folklorist and writer, editor of *Sing Out* magazine, points out the road to be followed so as to turn destructive art into revolutionary art and give a constructive meaning to the rejection of capitalist society.

IMPERIALISM IS DYING. Like other powerful systems of the past, it is dying at the very peak of its development. Surrounded by, and based upon, the most complex and incredible technology ever developed by man, guarded by a vast military establishment, propped up by the most carefully calculated techniques of thought control and mind manipulation ever devised, United States imperialism is, nevertheless, dying.

The dialectics of history teaches us that social systems produce their own negations. Capitalism brings into being a working class whose ultimate historical interest rests in the destruction of capitalism. Imperialism brought into being a colonial and neocolonial world whose urgent and beautiful historical task is the destruction of imperialism. But at this stage of its development, the domestic monopoly capitalism of the

US and Western Europe are inexorably intertwined with the economic and political realities of overseas investment and colonialist exploitation. And it is for this reason that the developing national liberation movements throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America carry on their banners and on their rifle sights the hopes and dreams of all humanity.

The revolutionary Third World, the world of the exploited and the hungry, the world of color, the world of the "wretched of the earth," has now emerged on the stage of history as the bearers, not only of their own liberation, but of the revolutionary destiny of all mankind.

In the heart of the United States, in the very eye and gut of the monster, the revolutionary consciousness which is sweeping the world today is beginning to take seed and flower. This new consciousness takes many forms; some will be familiar to other peoples, some will be strange and perhaps frightening. Do not be afraid. The monster is dying and the weapons for his destruction are sometimes ugly to behold and painful to use. We who are working to develop revolutionary consciousness and a revolutionary movement in the United States are ourselves products of the entrails of the beast. Our minds are not pure. Neither are our hands clean. But we have learned to recognize the taste and smell of death. We have learned that death comes in many disguises — some of them sweet and soothing. We have learned that death may hibernate in the freezing compartment of a refrigerator. We have learned that death drives a Cadillac. We have learned that the life of the slave-owner, the exploiter, the racist, is a living death. And we have rejected this death and the

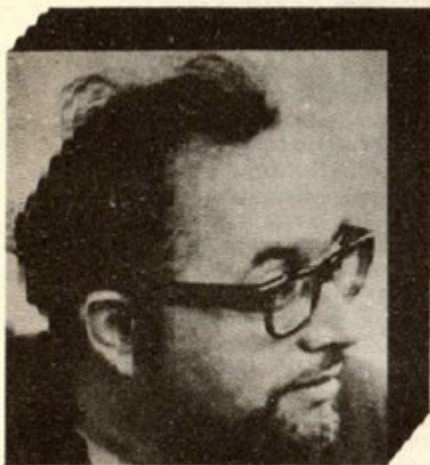
system which has produced it.

We? Who is this "we"?

WE are a beginning. WE are several thousand students and other alienated young people. (At first sight you might think some of us were what have come to be called "hippies," but do not be misled by such superficial signs as long hair and an individualistic life style. We have left behind the "hippie" syndrome which is only one of the system's many subtle traps for diverting our revolutionary energies into meaningless alienation.) WE are guerrilla artists and radical intellectuals. WE are a growing number of revolutionary black militants. WE marched on the Pentagon in Washington. WE took over the buildings at Columbia University. WE have begun to prepare black communities for self defense. WE have exposed the hypocrisies of the American ruling class on the streets of Chicago. WE have begun the construction of alternate systems of expression and communication outside the established and controlled media and art forms of the system.

WE are a movement — still disorganized and occasionally chaotic, frequently at odds with each other, making and compounding many mistakes — and slowly, painfully, desperately growing. Somehow, out of the innermost recesses of human necessity, we have found the energy and the understanding which has enabled us to emancipate ourselves ideologically from imperialism. Someday we will grow into a movement capable of destroying mankind's common oppressor, United States imperialism.

The learning has been a painful process. From the moral decay of life in our country, from the artful







psychological manipulations which have turned our people into a giant mass whose social function is the consumption of products, from the intellectual bankruptcy of our educational systems, from the unceasing, accelerating exploitation of black people, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, from the poor and starving who live surrounded by an ugly culture of plenty, from the pollution of our natural ecology, from the ugliness of hate and fear and insecurity which has been etched into the minds and faces of our once beautiful people — from all this we have learned. We have learned, first of all, despair. And alienation. And hatred. And we have learned that these feelings are necessary purgatives which will enable us to clean out our minds and consciousness.

But while imperialism has been dying and the stench of its rot has filled our nostrils and our bodies with a sense of futility — our ears have heard a new sound on a distant horizon. We have heard the sounds of waking on the "dark" continents of the world. We have heard Algeria and the Congo and Angola and the agony of South Africa which will one day turn into a torrential shout of assault. We have heard Guatemala and Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico. We have heard and been electrified by Cuba. We have heard the sound of distant rifles in Bolivia and Venezuela and Colombia. We have heard China and felt the mighty surge of power unleashed by the liberation of 800 million people on the continent of Asia. We have heard the stirrings of our black brothers and sisters in the streets of North America and sensed the new energies at work for liberation.

And we have heard Viet-Nam. In Southeast Asia, we heard the dying

and the pain and the cruel agonies of war. At first we were dismayed, then horrified. We protested, we marched, we demonstrated against the cruel and vindictive aggressions of imperialism. But we learned and went beyond that. We heard the sounds of victory in far-off Viet-Nam. We saw the mighty military machine of imperialism stopped and then reversed by a poor, "underdeveloped" people — and we came to understand the power of the forces of liberation.

From this Third World — from the world of struggle in the cause of national liberation, from the world of China and Algeria, Cuba and Viet-Nam, from the world of the Heroic Guerrilla Fighter — we learned hope. And that is why we think that we are perhaps closer to being revolutionaries than ever before. For what is a revolutionary who dares not dream? The defeated retreat into the empty caverns of moral and intellectual decay when faced by the seemingly impregnable strength of the oppressor. But those who will one day be victorious can risk all. Their hope is not an illusion. It is based on understanding the forces of historical necessity, of seeing how one's own personal liberation is indelibly connected with the liberation of all humanity, of committing oneself to a life of purpose in the cause of mankind's ultimate flowering.

These, then, are the two forces which have been most important in shaping us: death and life. The death is closest to hand — ever-present in the air we breathe, on our television and radio sets, in our schools and super-markets, in our theaters and movie houses, in our mad accumulation of material

goods and the growing dehumanization of our daily work. The life is in the wind — in the sound of the national liberation movements from all over the world, in the baby's cry of new social systems coming to birth, and in our own growing determination to take charge of our own lives by joining in the struggle to destroy imperialism.

In the course of one brief decade we have produced a whole new generation with a vision of themselves and their world which is new to America. Sometimes the political activists of this generation are called "The New Left." (In the black communities they are sometimes called Panthers and they have instilled a new dignity among a people who are coming to believe more and more that "black is beautiful.") The music and poetry and art is also new — and in some ways, perhaps the most accurate reflection of the ideologies and currents that have shaped this new generation.

There is a new art in the United States today. (There is, also, an old art. The old art comprises 90% of the art carefully and methodically spoon-fed to the American people in books, on television, on the motion picture screen, through fashions and in that ultimate symbol of capitalist decadence — commercial advertising.) The new art, for the most part, is a bitter reflection of the American reality. It is an alienated art, a destructive art, sometimes an ugly art. It is an art produced by a generation grown conscious of the hypocrisy of the "American dream." It is an art which has penetrated the protective curtain of other eras and portrayed the ugly nakedness of a rotting society. It is an art which has seared the exposed nerve endings of

a corrupt system. It is an art in which destruction is truth and truth is destruction.

What is this art? It is the theater of Albee and the music of Bob Dylan. It is the poetry of Alan Ginsberg and the painting of Andy Warhol. It is the art of the underground — the art of obscenity and a drug culture. It is an art created by a generation which has been betrayed by the hypocritical words in the mouths of its teachers and leaders, its philosophers and elders. And so it becomes an art which rejects words and distorts meaning. It creates a music of the body where the only truth is animal truth of the gut and of the loins. It is an art created by a generation which has been forced to reject the out-moded moral and ethical code which has been used to justify a system of racism and murder and profit-starved exploitation. Sensing the need to destroy, it destroys everything — God, time, work, intellect. It creates antimusic, antipoetry, anti-theater, antiart.

Is there a surer sign of imperialism's dying than this flourishing of America's destructive culture? And let there be no misunderstanding about this. The only creative art in the United States today is destructive art. Anything less is a lie, a distortion of truth which the uncompromising artist cannot accept. His very artistic instinct tells him that destruction — the tearing away of the mask, the exposure of the social reality — is the only artistic truth permissible. This is the agony — and the beauty — of our time.

And if we destroy, what shall we build?

Now we must understand that imperialism is nothing if not resourceful. In the "democratic republic" of the United States of

America, direct repression of dissent is a last, desperate measure to which the ruling class resorts only when all other methods have failed. In America today, alienation and despair are prevalent moods of the young. Capitalism cannot destroy those moods. They are the natural reflection of fundamental social contradictions which the social system cannot resolve. So it must attempt to contain these moods, control them, direct them. It must make sure that the alienation and loss of faith are not translated into a weaponry that can threaten the source of power. They must be neutralized.

How does it contain and then control and direct? In the recent political campaign, Senator McCarthy made no secret of the reasons for entering the presidential race. His purpose was "to take protest off the streets" and bring it back into the framework of the political system. This is the mockery of election politics in the United States — for no matter what your point of view, so long as you are playing by the system's rules of the game, the system is in control.

America's mass media contain, control and direct this destructive art, this art of dissent — while giving the illusion that they are permitting its full and free development.

How does it do this? The system constructs limits to protest and destruction. It will never permit the dissemination of revolutionary art in a revolutionary situation. It encourages the dissidents to "let off steam" with songs of protest, anarchist plays, a newly permissible "freedom" concerning sex in all forms of expression. (Can you make the revolution standing naked on the stage of a theater?) The system contains the destructive culture by

keeping this culture within the economic and political framework of the structure. By merchandising the very culture which destroys the old illusions, it helps create new illusions of a new "freedom" in the arts — and by paying its destructive artists huge sums of money in royalties and fees it provides a material incentive for these artists to confine their work to the outer limits of the system. The system uses its power to "buy" as its most important weapon of control — providing material incentives for the artist to conform. (Actually, the system's area of "permissible dissent" is much larger than it admits. In this way it gives the artist the illusion that he is being "antiestablishment" by going beyond certain narrow limits — and he does not realize that even anti-establishment art can be absorbed and used by the system as both containment and necessary self-correction.)

But the artist is not a mindless destroyer. He cannot tear down without having some vision of what will replace the old. And it is here that the profoundly healthy and vital destructive art engendered by the alienation of life under capitalism is turned into its opposite. Destructive art without a genuinely revolutionary alternative becomes, sooner or later, a distortion of reality and an instrument of self-destruction.

Out of the decay of capitalist society has come the projection of alternatives. When these alternatives are the product only of alienation they become mockeries of themselves. Does capitalism offer hate? The answer is love. Does capitalism offer war? The answer is

nonviolence. Does capitalism offer puritanism? The answer is sexual freedom. Does capitalism offer conformity and order? The answer is chaos. Does capitalism offer "leaders" and manipulators? The answer is "no leaders." Does capitalism offer mindless bureaucracy? The answer is anarchism. Does capitalism offer the dehumanization of the technological society? The answer is flowers and the primitive commune.

The "alternatives" are a part of the philosophy of alienation. Capitalist power encourages these "alternatives." In movies, in songs, in the theater and poetry, in all the ways which a system has for spreading its ideology, capitalism posits "flower power," "love," "the revolution of the mind," "the new pop culture" as the acceptable alternatives to its own dehumanizing system — because none of these "alternatives" threaten the root of capitalist power.

But we do not have to play their game. Revolutionary artists are developing revolutionary alternatives. We will not "improve" your cultural product. We will not make your movies better. We will not give a new sense of reality to your songs or your art. We will develop our own movies, our own newspapers, our own songs (and recordings of these songs), our own art and our own theater. We are not out to make your system last a little bit longer by lending it the validation of our own revolutionary vision. We are out to destroy it — and we offer a clear "alternative." Power. Revolutionary power. Economic and political and state power. For the purpose of completely liquidating this anachronism called capitalism. For the purpose of creating a socialist

society resting firmly on the basis of the fullest participation of all the people of this planet in the economic, political, cultural and emotional life of their neighborhood, their city, their country. We must settle for nothing less.

This is where "we" are — we, the seedlings of a movement whose historical moment has arrived. To you, our brothers and sisters of the Third World, we say this:

Never be misled by the superficial lures of the imperialist system. Its technology is strong and its propaganda is clever. But its structure is rotten at the core and at the very moment that it seems strongest it is in its very death throes. We know what we are talking about. We live in the bowels of the monster.

Understand our struggle — and demand more of us at all times. You are the life force on this planet. We need your approval and your inspiration and your comradeship help.

Do not imitate us in our agonies. Our struggle is fierce and we have developed many new weapons with which to destroy our common enemy. Our destructive weapons are not necessarily your tools of construction.

We — young people, black people, artists — we who have appointed ourselves revolutionaries for our time and place, have just begun a long and perilous journey. Some of us will die. Some of us will be forced to test our revolutionary commitments — and some will be found wanting. Some of us will discover hidden strengths in ourselves and be reborn in the cauldron of historical necessity.

But we have begun. There is no turning back.



tricontinental
on the march

Three Years After a Historic Meeting



ON JANUARY 2, 1966, after long and intensive preparation, the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America began its activities in the city of Havana, with the participation of representatives from 82 countries and a large number of observers and guests. This event was to place before the peoples of the three continents new perspectives in their struggle for liberation and national independence. Moreover, the very holding of the Conference, apart from the results that might be achieved, was positive for the revolutionary movement. It meant the attainment of an objective which not only was necessary, but had been sought for years.

Since the early decades of the century, when the ideals of independence and freedom were still more of a hope than a real possibility for the African, Asian, and Latin-American peoples, the firmest and most farsighted revolutionary leaders had pointed to the need for establishing and developing relations among the liberation movements which were then beginning to arise upon the three continents. At that time the colonial powers — mainly European — were the "owners" of the greater part of Asia and all of Africa, while Latin America, which had broken the colonial yoke during the preceding century, was already in the clutches of a new kind of exploitation — which would later become the preferred instrument of the European colonialists and of the US ruling class in Africa and Asia, as well, in carrying out their aim of violating the demands of the peoples for independence and thus prolonging their domination: neocolonialism. But, although they were subjected to different forms of exploitation — to suit the convenience and interests of the imperialists — the African, Asian, and Latin-American peoples faced the same situation of exploitation and misery and shared the same aspirations.

The struggle, at first spontaneous and isolated, provided the peoples with the necessary experience and with confidence in their victory throughout the long years of combat. In the face of this struggle the colonial empires, structures that seemed "eternal," collapsed, and the peoples began to settle accounts with the enemy. The triumph of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, the victory of the Korean people, the heroic epic of the peoples of Indochina and the other independence movements that arose in Asia, in black Africa, and in the Arab world in the years following the end of World War II began to turn the prospects that the October Revolution opened before humanity into reality for the peoples of these continents. These prospects opened out for the Latin-American peoples with the Cuban Revolution, took on greater meaning in Africa with the triumph of the Algerian people, and are today defended by the peoples

of the three continents who are fighting for the final destruction of colonialism, neocolonialism, and imperialism and for the attainment of genuine independence. This struggle finds its highest expression in the heroic people of Viet-Nam.

In the face of each of these victories, the imperialists and the old-style colonialists — formerly in conflict over their expansionist aims — multiplied and polished their methods of aggression, joining together in their maneuvers and attacks against the peoples, at times because of coinciding interests, but more frequently because of the increasing predominance among them of US imperialism, which has appointed itself an international gendarme. In response to these alliances of the reactionary forces under the imperialist aegis, and as a result of the victories attained by the peoples in their struggle for national independence, genuine ties of friendship and solidarity grew up among the peoples of the three continents, ties which manifested themselves in new relations of support and cooperation.

In April 1961, coinciding with the defeat of the mercenary attack launched by the US Government against Cuba, a session of the Executive Committee of the Organization of Solidarity of the Afro-Asian Peoples was held in the city of Bandung, Indonesia. It was there that the organization of a tricontinental conference was proposed. This initiative, made by a Cuban observer delegate, received the support of all the participants. Nevertheless, more than a few obstacles and expressions of indifference were to arise later on.

More meetings: in Gaza, in December 1961; in Moshi, in February 1963; in Algiers, in March 1964; in Winneba, in May 1965. At each, fresh steps were taken in the direction of concrete preparatory work. Finally, in September 1965 the International Preparatory Committee of the First Tricontinental Conference met under the chairmanship of El Mehdi Ben Barka, represen-

tative of the National Union of the People's Forces of Morocco. Doubtless, it was a moment of a notable upsurge in the revolutionary movement, but it was also a moment of important polemics and divergencies and of needed definitions in the face of the increasing aggressiveness of imperialism.

The reactionary forces headed by Yankee imperialism had shown their concern since the beginning of the project of holding a tricontinental conference, although they evidently placed great hopes upon the obstacles that the meeting would come up against — mainly the divergencies in the socialist camp — without ceasing for one moment their anticongress maneuvering. From the very beginning, the imperialist press unleashed an intensive propaganda campaign against the projected "subversive conference," and pompous international organizations met to consider "with serious concern" the "threat" emanating from the slated conference. In the midst of such an atmosphere, the Organization of American States (OAS) hurried to be the first. Faithful to its well-known traditions, the junta of representatives of the American "governments" (rather, the junta of the Yankee colonial administration in Latin America) met and created committees and work groups to make reports, studies, and "recommendations" on this point.

The Latin-American oligarchies manifested their fear in many cases in thoroughly ridiculous ways, although no less ridiculous was the reaction of the African and Asian lackeys.

Showing through the whole preposterous story, the intensive press campaign, and all the other imperialist maneuvers was the great concern awakened by the Tricontinental Conference.

The hate aroused in our enemies made it plain that the Conference touched them precisely in their sorest spot. The old and new colonialists dropped their variegated disguises and made common cause

in the face of the efforts of the African, Asian, and Latin-American peoples to build a united force. It became increasingly clear that this was not a conference to express revolutionary wishful thinking or to "philosophize," nor would it be a gathering of the peace-loving forces which would once again condemn the imperialist aggressor and call for the stilling of the aggressive hand which endangers world peace. Rather, it was to be a meeting of the most genuine and representative forces of the peoples who have suffered from the cruellest manifestations of the capitalist system, of the peoples who were turned into slaves, who languished for long years under the worst conditions of exploitation, despoiled of their wealth, and whose blood and sweat have made possible the degree of development and living standards attained by the countries that today enjoy consumer societies. A gathering of the peoples subjected to the oldest and cruelest forms of colonialism, of those who suffer from the new forms of colonialism, and of those who, having seized their independence from their oppressors, struggle under the difficult conditions of backwardness and misery to become developed and to build a new society.

At a time when the preparatory work for the conference had reached its most complex and difficult stage, on October 29, 1965, El Mehdi Ben Barka was kidnapped. Worldwide condemnation of this repulsive deed was not long in coming, but it did not prevent the consummation of the crime. Little by little, the "Ben Barka affair" was unraveled, and its material and intellectual authors were revealed. The reactionary forces of Morocco had more than enough reasons to "wish for" the death of Ben Barka. In addition, they were concerned about the Tricontinental Conference and feared the role that Ben Barka was to play in it — which would, in fact,



signify the support of the progressive African governments and all the other revolutionary forces for the principal opposition leader of the country. It appears that the CIA quickly "recommended" the ways and "offered" the means that might be necessary, plotting to carry out the kidnapping and murder of Ben Barka: the CIA, the Moroccan secret service, French police agents, gangsters, and mercenaries all played their part.

The death of Ben Barka meant a deeply felt loss for the revolutionary movement and a hard blow against the preparatory work for the Conference. Notwithstanding, neither the death of Ben Barka nor the other underhanded activities and maneuvers and the worldwide press campaign of the imperialists could prevent the holding of the Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

The Conference began its work on January 3, 1966. For the first time, the revolutionary parties and movements of the three con-

tinents — both those struggling for their independence and those already in power — exchanged experiences, discussed their points of view, and arrived at agreements. The confrontation of situations with essentially similar characteristics, a majority position in defense of the interests of their peoples, and, above all, the clash with the common enemy served as the common denominators which held sway over the differences existing between some of these organizations and over sterile quarrels and discrepancies, making it evident that, even if there were no other factors uniting them, the existence of imperialism and the arrogant and criminal behavior of its principal force, the United States, would suffice to bring about the unity of its victims.

With its emergence as the most powerful force of the capitalist camp, US imperialism tries to place all the peoples of the world under its domination, considering them only sources of raw materials and markets for its goods. Not only the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (the last of which the United States considers its private property), the traditional victims of capitalist exploitation, but also the European capitalist countries themselves, which are increasingly bound to the Yankee financial and economic juggernaut, suffer from this situation.

If we analyze the growing Yankee economic penetration in Africa and Asia and the consequent extension of US political influence on these continents, it is not difficult to see how the European capitalist countries — the former big colonial powers — are rapidly being displaced from their old areas of influence not only by the national liberation movements but also by US penetration.

These are the elements which have characterized the international situation in recent years, and, as a consequence, we are witnessing a swift-moving process of alliances on a worldwide scale, under US

auspices, of all the imperialist and reactionary forces. Even the capitalist forces in some European countries that are striving to maintain their own personalities in the face of US imperialism come up against increasingly difficult and dependent situations.

Of course, this does not mean that the old colonial powers have ceased to behave with the same cruelty manifested by them in their heyday. The illegal and criminal war of aggression against the Vietnamese people; the maneuvers and coups d'état against the progressive African governments; the acts of aggression against the Arab peoples and independent countries; and the repression of the national liberation movement are dramatic evidence that the US-headed imperialist forces try to impose or to maintain by force their domination and act as an international force, either in conjunction or individually, as their interests in each case dictate.

In the face of this international "holy alliance" of the imperialists, the most effective answer of the peoples is to take the road of ever-increasing unity and coordinate their struggles.

This is why the meeting of the revolutionary forces of the three continents to seek common roads constituted, without any doubt, a decisive step for the revolutionary movement. Moreover, the presence of liberation movements alongside organizations that have already achieved power created the right conditions for the solidarity and support for the peoples engaged in struggle to take on more concrete and effective forms. Certainly, the Conference debates were not smooth and easy, nor were they always harmonious. Border problems, old claims, and conflicts between some of the participant countries — to a large extent "legacies" of colonialism — differences within the socialist camp, and the weaknesses seen in the positions of some independent governments that "flirt" with imperialism arose at one time or another in the committee debates.

But, prevailing over the sterile quarrels, precedence was given to the interests of the revolutionary movement and in particular to those of the peoples engaged in armed struggle for their liberation, those that form the front line, representing the dignity and honor of all mankind in their confrontation with imperialism and all the forms of domination and exploitation. The agreements and resolutions were generally passed by an impressively unanimous vote, thus giving the lie to pre-Conference predictions to the contrary.

The Conference obviously had a very broad composition, not only in terms of numbers and representation but also because of the very nature of the participant organizations. Marxist parties took part alongside parties and organizations which do not define themselves as Marxist. Nevertheless, the Conference's pronouncements were — to the surprise of many and the subsequent shame of some — incomparably more militant than those that have emerged from recent international meetings and conclaves. The Conference did not limit itself to condemning the actions of the imperialist forces by name and to analyzing their causes, but it proclaimed in its General Declaration, "the right of the peoples to have recourse to all forms of struggle that may be necessary, including armed struggle, in order to take power" and "the right and the duty of the progressive governments and states of the world to provide material and moral support to the peoples that are fighting for their liberation or are directly or indirectly attacked by imperialist powers." Determined and unrestricted solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese people and with all other peoples that are fighting for their independence — not only those in conditions of colonial dependency, but also those under neocolonial oppression — was declared, and concrete and effective



aid and support was demanded for those peoples

In order to consolidate the relations and the ties established, the Conference decided upon the creation of a permanent organization, the Organization for the Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America; it named an Executive Secretariat and created special committees. With the handing over of its functions to the new organization, among its most important aims were clearly established those of uniting, coordinating, and promoting the struggle of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America against imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism, headed by US imperialism ...; organizing the solidarity of the peoples of the three continents; and serving as a permanent liaison among the different movements belonging to the Organization."

Once the Conference had ended, there remained the implementation of the agreements and the great possibilities that had been opened up. This would be affected by the general situation of the revolutionary movement, which would either promote or limit these possibilities.



américa latina



Some of the Conference participants would ignore its decisions and assume positions which differed in essence from its postulates. Moreover, for its part, imperialism has not let up for a single instant in its acts of aggression against the revolutionary movement, and it has made gains where weaknesses or congenital defects had left the way open. The coups d'état in Indonesia, Ghana, and most recently in Mali and the increased willingness on the part of several African governments to adopt policies in line with neocolonialist norms are just a few examples of this. The revolutionary movement has also suffered failures and reverses, while the differences within its ranks have sharpened dramatically.

Reference to this situation and a thorough analysis of it are to be found in Major Ernesto Guevara's message sent to the Tricontinental Organization a few short months before his heroic death. His message reflects the voice of the Tricontinental Organization, which is the voice of those who have undertaken the road of struggle against imperialism to its final consequences. This was the spirit of the Tricontinental Conference, and this is the line of OSPAAAL. It is the line which answers to the interests of the peoples, the interests of the liberation movements, the interests of the fighters of the three continents and of all parts of the world. The maintenance of this position — when many are reconciled with imperialism or in the service of the selfish interests of parties or tendencies — cannot be kept up without facing obstacles and reverses; but today — just as the Tricontinental Conference proclaimed yesterday — we proclaim our confidence in the road and the conduct outlined of responding to the violence of the imperialist enemy with revolutionary violence, and we repeat the watchword which Che gave to all mankind: "Create two, three, many Viet-Nams."

Meaning of the Tricontinental Conference

In January 1966 the revolutionary representatives of three continents met in Havana to exchange experiences, join their efforts, and form a common front of struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism. Three years after the holding of the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, Tricontinental asked the delegates of the revolutionary organizations which are represented on the Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL to give their opinions on the meaning of this event.

The delegates of the Congo (L), the Portuguese colonies, the Republic of Guinea, Korea, Syria, South Viet-Nam, Venezuela, and Chile answered our request, as did the Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam in Cuba.

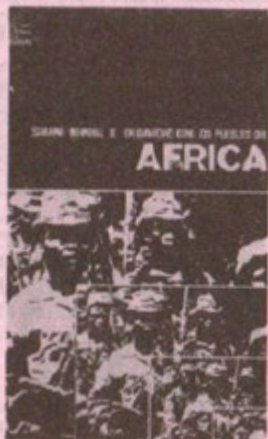
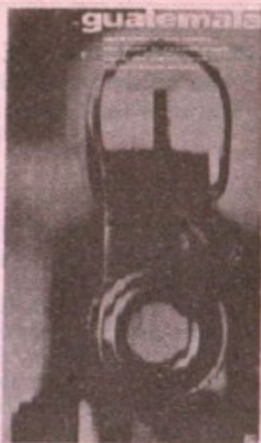


EDOUARD MARCEL SUMBU,
delegate from the National
Council for Liberation of the
Congo (L).

THE SIGNIFICANCE of the First Tricontinental Conference was demonstrated in practice, since it constituted a very hard blow for imperialism and complete support for the revolutionaries, especially the Congolese revolutionaries. We are indeed satisfied with the institutions created by the Conference — the Executive Secretariat, for instance, which implements all the resolutions; the Committee of Aid to the Congo; the Tricontinental Committee of Support to Viet-Nam; the committees of aid and assistance to other liberation movements; etc. The Secretariat, for instance, is working precisely along the lines prescribed by the First Tricontinental Conference.

Regarding the seat of the Organization of the Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, the National Council for the Liberation of the Congo (L) has demonstrated and explained its stand to the whole world: the seat should remain in Cuba because we can verify that the work is carried out well and the Organization is kept away from any control of reactionary and imperialist elements. It is a very consistent, militant organization that measures up to the struggles of the peoples, which are subdivided in various parts. Let us take, for instance, the struggle against colonialism. In Africa, all the movements that fight colonialism receive aid. Our delegation to the Secretariat has proofs demonstrating that the Organization is up to its task of aiding these movements for liberation from colonialism.

We have the case of various movements which are fighting against



neocolonialism, with weapons, etc. and we have tangible proof of the assistance given to them. And we, the Congolese, are very proud to have an allied organization such as OSPAAAL.

There are also those who are fighting against imperialism and colonialism, such as the Vietnamese, and we think OSPAAAL contributes greatly toward the development of the anti-imperialist struggle in the world, to increase the peoples' hatred, thus contributing to the victory of the peoples of Viet-Nam, Laos, Thailand, and others.

As to the struggle against racism, we have the case of the black people of the United States. On various occasions they have been invited by the leading members of the Executive Secretariat of our Organization. Their statements prove that OSPAAAL is aiding them effectively. We think that this organization will continue to develop its work until the people defeat imperialism, our common enemy.

PAULO JORGE, delegate from the Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP).



WHEN THE FIRST Tricontinental Conference convened in Havana in 1966, I had the pleasure of belonging to the delegation representing the Angolan People's Liberation Movement in this international event, which aimed to gather all progressive and revolutionary forces of the three continents. During the course of this Conference, after serious debates and a deep analysis of the problems affecting the so-called Third World, the Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America was constituted.

During this same Conference it was decided to create an Executive Secretariat, composed of a certain number of members for each continent. Three years have already elapsed since then. During this Conference, in addition to a series of resolutions it adopted tending to solve some common problems, it was decided to take militant solidarity to the liberation movements or to the underdeveloped countries, and in this respect, a series of criteria were adopted. Criteria which, unfortunately, some member organizations of our Organization have not fulfilled. They have not assumed their responsibility towards them, and naturally, this did not ease the

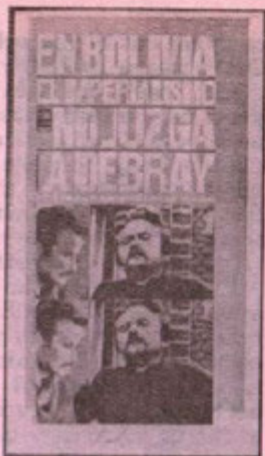
carrying out of the noble tasks our Organization had assigned itself.

As I have just mentioned, three years have already passed. It would be very difficult, and also it would take too long, to make a balance of all the activities of this Organization; however, we must point out some of the positive elements among the activities of OSPAAAL.

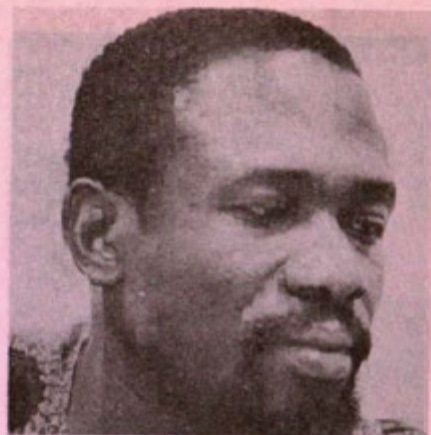
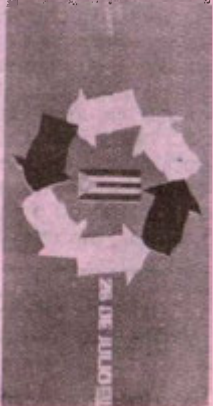
If we examine the many statements issued by the Executive Secretariat, which clearly reflect the position of the Organization in relation to international and national problems; if we gauge the quality of the OSPAAAL publications, such as *Tricontinental* magazine and *Tricontinental Bulletin*, in which our Organization makes known the foremost problems of our world, so convulsed and in which violence tends to increase daily in order to counteract the also violent offensive of the counterrevolutionary forces of the three continents; if we consider the vanguard positions adopted by our Organization throughout the work which has been carried out during these three years, in spite of all these difficulties, we believe we can congratulate ourselves on the results obtained.

As a participant in the First Tricontinental Conference, and now as member or integral part of the Executive Secretariat, I look forward to the celebration of the third anniversary, foreseeing additional successes in the work of our Organization. Successes which are reflected in the development of the struggle for national liberation in the nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Successes which OSPAAAL can obtain in the international context, even though it has already secured a position of prestige on the international plane.

DABO BENGALY, delegate from the Democratic Party of Guinea.



REPUBLICA DE
SOLIDARIDAD CON CUBA

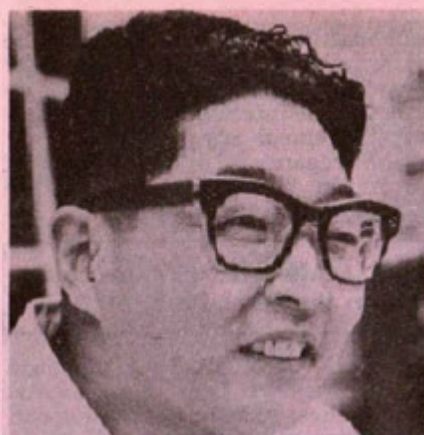


THE IMPORTANCE of the Tricontinental Organization within the framework of the struggle of the peoples of the Third World is the culmination of an ideal, of a desire of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America of uniting in order to fight effectively for the welfare of their respective peoples, and in our point of view we shall never cease to render special homage to the activities that, to this end, were carried out by the great Moroccan fighter, El Mehdi Ben Barka.

In the opinion of the Republic of Guinea, the activity of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America should be fundamentally aimed at fighting with all the means available to them against any form of domination in order to unite all around a common ideal. A common ideal which is nothing but happiness, well-being, and progress.

**KIM KIL JEM, delegate from
the Workers' Party of Korea.**

THE FIRST Conference of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America was really a historic one which took effective measures to support, help, and inspire the peoples of the three continents, by pooling their energies in their struggle against imperialism and colonialism, headed by US



imperialism, and for freedom and independence, peace and social progress.

Three years have already elapsed since the historic First Conference. During this period, the Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL established in the First Tricontinental Conference has carried out a lot of work on the basis of the resolutions of the Conference representing the unanimous ideas of the peoples of the three continents fighting against imperialism and colonialism, headed by US imperialism.

It has most energetically supported and encouraged the Vietnamese people in their heroic struggle against the US imperialist aggressors and expressed firm solidarity with the Korean people in their just and valiant struggle against the US imperialist aggressors and for the country's independent unification.

Especially, it has supported actively all the peoples of the Asian continent in their struggle against the revival of Japanese militarism, which constitutes the danger of aggression in Asia, and against imperialism.

It has energetically inspired and encouraged the African peoples in their vigorous struggle against the imperialists and racists, headed by US imperialism, and for their national independence and the peoples of the Arab countries in their struggle against the Israeli expan-

sionists.

It has also effectively supported and encouraged all the guerrillas and the peoples of Latin America in their revolutionary struggle, weapons in hand, inheriting the revolutionary thoughts of Che Guevara, a genuine internationalist and an indomitable revolutionary fighter, and following the example of the heroic struggle waged by the Cuban people.

Thus, it has made a great contribution to have Africa, Asia, and Latin America turned into the most fierce anti-imperialist front today.

Imperialism has met with the strong resistance of the African, Asian, and Latin-American peoples and suffered the heaviest blows from them.

All these facts have proved the correctness of the measures taken by the First Tricontinental Conference.

The cause of liberation of the African, Asian, and Latin-American peoples has not been completed.

So long as imperialism exists on the globe and oppresses and plunders the people, the people cannot leave off the anti-imperialist struggle even a moment.

The peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America should unite more firmly with the common objective of opposing US imperialism.

As Comrade Kim Il Sung, the respected and beloved leader of forty million Korean people, pointed out in his article published in *Tricontinental* No. 8, the magazine of OSPAAAL,

The peoples of the countries making revolution should join efforts to tear left and right arms from US imperialism, tear off its left and right legs and behead it eventually everywhere it stretches out its crooked hands of aggression.

We, the Korean people, who consistently support the peoples of all the countries in their struggle against US imperialism, are fighting to accomplish their cause of



national liberation and, at the same time, are doing everything in our power to accelerate the advancement of the international revolutionary movement as a whole.

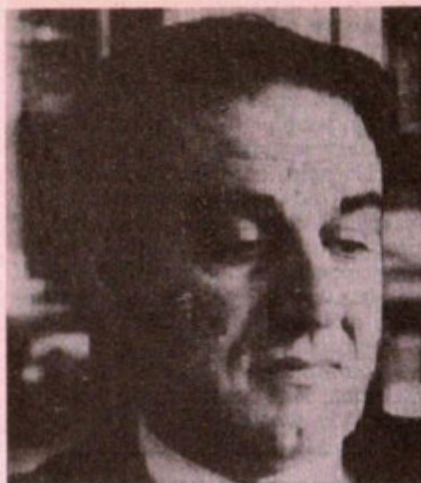
We regard it as an important factor in bringing victory to the Korean Revolution.

WILLIAM KHOURY, delegate from the Baas Party of Syria.

ON THE OCCASION of the third anniversary of the Tricontinental Conference, I should like to express my ideas and feelings on such an important commemoration. The creation of this Organization is an outstanding historic event because the world is now going through a very important stage in its history. Imperialism, which occupies vast regions of the world, which interferes in the internal affairs of other nations, and which has military bases all over the world, wants to perpetuate the occupation and exploitation of the underdeveloped countries. Today colonialism and neocolonialism are committing all sorts of injustices in Viet-Nam, Korea, Laos, Palestine, the Congo, Mozambique, so-called Portuguese Guinea, the Latin-American countries... and these injustices demand that the people help each other to set up an organization that will enable them to face colonialism and imperialism in a common struggle.

The fact that the Tricontinental Organization has its seat in Havana is of special significance, since Cuba represents a revolution that has given to its people a socialist regime that has liberated them from imperialist exploitation, and that struggles with all its strength and cooperates with the world struggle for liberation and the establishment of a new socialist regime.

Because of these principles Cuba participated in the preparation of the First Tricontinental Conference, and Syria, my country, participated also in this Conference together with the organizations of more than



80 countries that attended it. It is a great honor for Syria to participate in the world revolutionary struggle.

We are going through a very important stage and it is necessary to increase the cooperation among the tricontinental countries and carry forward the struggle throughout the world. The role of OSPAAAL has been very important for the strengthening of this struggle; statements and articles have been issued which have served to light the road of the struggle of the peoples. OSPAAAL has begun on this road of common struggle and we hope that it shall be able to fulfill its liberating mission all over the world. The peoples of the world must cooperate closely with each other in order to face imperialism, which is committing injustices all over.

On the occasion of the third anniversary of the First Tricontinental Conference and considering that OSPAAAL has carried out many outstanding missions, Syria is cooperating with all its strength in the same struggle and wishes great success to the Organization in the liberation of the peoples from the injustices of imperialism, for the achievement of freedom and world peace based on justice and a socialist regime.



HOANG BICH SON, delegate from NFL of South Viet-Nam.

IN THESE TIMES, it is in Africa, Asia, and Latin America that the biggest contradictions are concentrated. In these areas the people have risen to fight against the policy of aggression, domination, and exploitation of imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism.

The First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, held in Havana early in January 1966, was an outstanding event in the political life of the peoples of these continents. The Tricontinental Organization has outlined the road to be followed by the peoples of these areas, which is that of uniting and carrying out revolutionary struggle in order to win their independence and freedom.

The First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as the activities carried out by the bodies created during that event—such as the Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL and the Tricontinental



Committee of Support to Viet-Nam —have made positive contributions to the struggle against the US for the national liberation of the Vietnamese people. The approval, support, and assistance of the peoples of the world, especially of the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, constitute a source of energy and a permanent stimulus to my people and to the fighters of my country to fight on with enthusiasm and completely defeat the war of aggression of US imperialism, the common enemy of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the whole world.

ROBERTO RODRIGUEZ,
delegate from Venezuela.

I WAS HIDING from the police when I learned that the Conference was to be held. To me it was indeed encouraging news, because the Tricontinental Conference, in my opinion, means the development of the anti-imperialist struggle in the three continents, and its importance lies in how — after all the work involved in these conferences — one arrives at such unity that it comes to mean the political line of anti-imperialist struggle for the three continents.

You just have to see the resolutions, especially the political resolution, in order to realize its magnitude. To me it is so important that its results will mark the road to be followed and will radicalize people even more in this final struggle against imperialism.

Afterwards, the Conference created OSPAAAL, with its Executive Secretariat as a leading body in charge of implementing the agreements contained in the resolutions. We can affirm that the Tricontinental Organization has fulfilled its role — not to the extent to which all of us would have liked it to, because the difficulties to be overcome are enormous, because we have a powerful enemy, but it has fulfilled, in



general, the line set down in the resolutions. The holding of the Second Conference will consolidate what was created in the first one, which has outlined slight changes in the course of the anti-imperialist struggle, for time marches on dynamically — as befits history, the history of man.

WALTERIO FIERRO, delegate
from the Front for Popular
Action of Chile (FRAP).

UNDOUBTEDLY, the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America answered the need of spurring the revolutionary struggle of those who are trying to shake off the domination and exploitation of world imperialism, with the US at its head. This gathering of the national liberation movements and revolutionary forces of the three continents brought about an awareness of the fact that the main contradiction in today's world is that played by these forces in their revolutionary confrontation with US imperialism, the self-appointed universal gen-

darme, in order to end all forms of colonial and neocolonial exploitation.

A balance of the experiences obtained from the struggle of the Afro-Asian-Latin-American peoples, and especially from the heroic war of liberation carried on by the people of Viet-Nam, shows that the First Tricontinental Conference outlined the bases of a strategy in the fight against imperialism in which revolutionary armed struggle — as the supreme form of liberating battle — will be the means for a definite victory.

During this great historical meeting it was also confirmed that strategic and tactical coordination is a decisive factor in order to defeat the world policy of aggression against the peoples launched by US imperialism, as was very clearly expressed by Major Ernesto Che Guevara's Message to OSPAAAL under the watchword, "to create two, three, many Viet-Nams."

Three years after this historic Conference we are able to witness with satisfaction the projections of its conclusions in the victorious

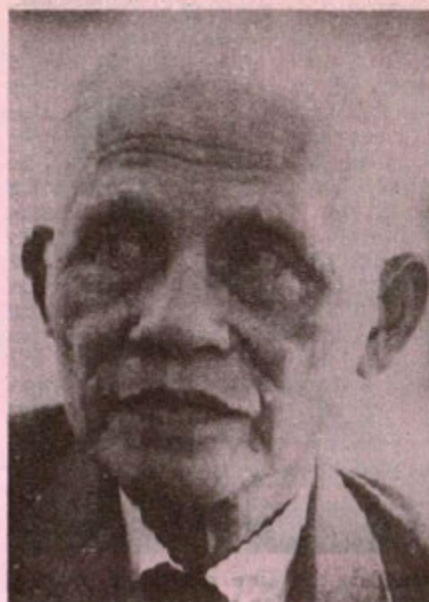
advance of those who have decided to deal increasingly heavier blows to US imperialism, its lackeys, and puppets. The Organization of Solidarity of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, its main body, has had the responsibility of encouraging the people of these continents and of increasing and extending revolutionary awareness at a tricontinental world level. In this sense, my people, in particular, owe their most important achievements to this Conference and Organization as well as to the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Latin America.

NGO MAU, Ambassador from the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam in Cuba.

AFRICA, ASIA, AND LATIN AMERICA, which occupy 71% of the total area of the earth, with a population of over 2800 million, are the scene of intense revolutionary tempests.

With vigorous impetus of revolutionary offensive, the peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America have dealt demolishing blows to the imperialists and colonialists, breaking up blocks of their colonial system. The battle of the peoples of the three continents unfolds under all forms; the most generalized is armed struggle, aiming its spearhead at US imperialism.

Three years ago, the First Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America — held in the Republic of Cuba, the revolutionary standard-bearer of the Western Hemisphere — marked a new step forward in the solidarity movement of the oppressed peoples against imperialism. After the Conference the revolutionary forces of the three continents have intensified their mutual assistance and support and the movement for national



emancipation has achieved many new victories. It is obvious that the Conference and the executive bodies elected by it have made an active contribution to this general advance of the revolutionary movement in the three continents and throughout the world.

The struggle of the Vietnamese people against the US imperialist aggressor for national liberation is also part of the national liberation movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Our people always follow and support the struggle of the peoples of these continents and consider their victories as our own. We sincerely appreciate the valuable support of the peoples of the three continents and the world to the cause of the struggle of our people against US aggression and for national liberation.

Answering the sacred call of President Ho Chi Minh, our people are determined to carry that cause onward to complete victory, thus contributing with dignity to the common revolutionary endeavor of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the progressive peoples of the world.



**books
of today**

Making an Army

Wilfred Burchett

The people of Viet-Nam have been making headlines for over five years. The success gained in forcing the US imperialists to cease unconditionally the bombings against the DRV and accept the presence of the NFL at the Paris discussions is the news highlight of the day. The humiliating defeat suffered by the imperialists says more than any treatise on the ability of a poor and small people to fight and triumph over the mightiest imperialist power on earth and its puppet armies.

The People's Liberation Armed Forces—coauthors of the Yankee disaster—were at the beginning small scattered groups, armed with only a few old and rusty weapons. The courage and patriotism of the Vietnamese have turned those embryos of resistance into an indestructible force.

An exceptional witness to this vigorous metamorphosis is Wilfred Burchett. Well-acquainted with Southeast Asia and especially with Viet-Nam, the Australian journalist and writer offers the readers of Tricontinental some interesting aspects of the origin of the PLAF.

The present work is the third chapter of *Why the Vietcong Wins*, a book by Burchett to be issued shortly by the Tricontinental Publishing House. The undeniable importance and positive aspects of this book more than justify its inclusion in *Books of Today*.

HOW DO YOU start building up a modern army from scratch when you have neither state power, arms nor money and only a handful of dedicated men with faith enough to form the first nucleus? Fidel Castro did it by secretly training a few devoted followers in the jungles of Latin America, disembarking 82-strong from the dilapidated boat *Granma* on Cuban shores December 2, 1956 in a seemingly hopeless venture — losing almost all their equipment in getting ashore — reduced to twelve men within a few days of murderous combat. But within two years and one month Castro's band had expanded into a powerful force which smashed the 50 000-man US-equipped army of dictator Batista and took over state power in Havana on January 2, 1959. Ben Bella did it by starting in November 1954, with half a dozen conspirators inspired by the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu, meeting secretly in the Aures region of Algeria with hardly a weapon between them but deciding to take on the French colonial army and in fact fighting through to victory nearly eight years later. Viet-Nam's Vo Nguyen Giap started off on December 22, 1944 with the famous Tran Hung Dao platoon of 34 men armed with 17 bolt-rifles, 14 flintlocks and two revolvers to build up the military machine which was to climax its victories over the French colonial army by the historic victory at Dien Bien Phu nearly 10 years later.

In each of the three cases mentioned the armed forces were founded around the personification of the military and political leadership of the liberation movement. Castro chose as his original instrument of armed struggle the autonomous military column under his personal leadership and after it had been built up to full strength and developed into a hardened, experienced

military unit tempered in the crucible of dozens of fierce battles, when Castro's chief lieutenants Che Guevara, Raúl Castro and others, had completely absorbed their leader's tactics and military technique, a second column was detached from the "mother" unit under "Che" to "go and do likewise," open another front. Then a third, under Raúl and so on, coordination of action being achieved in the beginning only by the complete identity of aims, methods and tactics. Once the struggle in Cuba was victorious one can say the same "growth and split" principle of development was applied on a hemisphere scale, when Che went off to Bolivia to head a new column to open up a new front with the tragic result that was mourned by progressive human beings the world over.

In South Viet-Nam the "growth and split" principle was also the law of development, but in a very different way, partly because of the great experience acquired by the South Vietnamese people during the anti-French war, partly because of the long years of political struggle imposed by the Diemist fascist regime. After the first sparks of spontaneous resistance in widely separated areas of the country had led to a decision to launch generalized armed resistance, armed groups of differing size and quality sprang into being simultaneously all over the country. From these initial groups the "growth and split" process started right from the beginning on a nation-wide scale. There was not just one platoon as Giap had to make do with in 1944, but scores and hundreds of platoons although many of them were armed only with hoes, knives and other rudimentary weapons including dummy rifles which they used to good effect to wrest real ones from the enemy.

During one of my visits to the liberated areas, I asked Le Van Huong, chief of staff of a regiment of the Liberation Army to relate how it had been built up to its present size. And he explained:

Two platoons had been formed in our district soon after the Front issued its call for an armed uprising and the formation of regular, full-time forces. I was in charge of one and Thuong Chien¹ was in charge of the other. We met and agreed to expand each of our platoons (around thirty men) into a company (a hundred men). It took quite a while to do this, not for lack of recruits but for lack of arms. Even when we started to expand, we had only about ten firearms for each platoon. Sometimes a platoon member would loan his weapon to his comrade and the latter would come back a few hours later with two weapons, returning the one he had borrowed. When we made attacks during the first months there was always at least one unarmed man for every one with a weapon, ready to snatch a rifle from the enemy or from our own dead or wounded. When we had two under-strength companies, we fused them as a nucleus for a battalion. With this bigger unit, we could increase the scale of our attacks which in the beginning were almost exclusively to get arms. When we had appreciably increased our stock of weapons we armed a third incomplete company and with a fourth company of reserves, for whom we had no arms at all, we formed our first battalion.

Later on, to form a second battalion we took our first company away

from No. 1 battalion and used this as a nucleus for No. 2 battalion. But growth this time was very slow, so we detached some cadres from No. 1 battalion and incorporated some regional troops and called this No. 2 battalion. In fact it was only at company strength but as it was partly formed from regional troops, we gave it a fairly free hand and it started its own recruiting campaign among the young people of the region and fairly soon it was expanded and we really had a second battalion. Then we pooled the two battalions and called ourselves a regiment. We took 10 cadres from battalions 1 and 2 and incorporated the reserve companies for whom we had gradually been securing arms to form No. 3 battalion which grew much quicker than the first two.

When we first started operating as a regiment, we had plenty of problems. Enemy regiments, even battalions, had far greater fire power. Although by the time we called ourselves a regiment, every man had a weapon, these were mainly an odd assortment of rifles and a few light machine-guns. The NFL sent a few heavier weapons and other supplies, but we were supposed to be as self-supporting as possible. We decided to try and add a medium weapons support platoon to each company with medium machine-guns and 40 or 60 mm mortars and a heavy weapons company to each battalion with heavy machine guns, 81 mm mortars and bazookas. This meant concentrating attention on capturing these sort of weapons. Each company was supposed to try and capture weapons for its support platoon, each battalion what it needed for its support company. And units were supposed to try and get standard rifles — American carbines at that time — otherwise we would have problems with standardised munitions. By and large we have now achieved standardisation of equipment and have built up our medium and heavy support units. Our firepower up to company level is now at least equal to that of the Saigon troops [our discussion took place before US troops were directly committed in South Viet-Nam], only at battalion level do they have advantage of artillery and can call in air support.

Thuong Chien added:

We have the advantage that every man in our unit is a combatant. The local population bring us food, right up to the battle lines; they evacuate our wounded and help us carry booty back from the battlefield.

Le Van Huong continued:

Without the help of the local population we would be in difficulties all the time. On October 10, 1964 we attacked an important enemy post at Go Dau.² We were operating far from our base and in what we consider a "weak" area, politically speaking. But we knew there was a big stock of weapons there needed for our heavy weapons support companies. At first it was impossible to have information about enemy dispositions. But one magnificent woman contacted us and asked what we wanted to know. She was the wife of a well-known former resistance cadre whom we all knew had been killed by the Diemists. Within 24 hours of our meeting

¹ Chien had been introduced as the regiment's political officer.

² Tay Ninh Province.

she had given us exact information on enemy emplacements, how many effectives and their disposition, where the machine gun nests and artillery positions were located. She brought her two daughters with her and each guided one wave of our assault troops right to the starting point. There the question of tending our wounded and burying our dead — it was a big battle — was solved by the local population, organised by this one woman. In a night attack we wiped out 400 enemy troops and seized everything we needed and far more besides. Local people carried off our lightly wounded on Lambretta scooters, the more seriously wounded on stretchers. Practically everyone turned out to help but the women were particularly active. We had to withdraw quickly after the engagement to avoid enemy planes early next morning. There was no time to prepare anything to eat that night. But people brought food for the whole unit, even 5 to 6 kilometers away, better food than we normally eat. Many of them even risked breaking out of their "strategic hamlets" to bring us something to eat and drink.

The political officer explained:

Normally we would have refused this, but as it was a new area for us, it gave us a chance to get to know the people and exchange views. They would have been offended had we refused. People around our own base areas know that we have strict rules not to accept anything from the local population. We are self-supporting and what we lack the Front provides us from its reserves.

When we are not on operations, we cultivate the land for ourselves and also to help the population. We are all former peasants so it comes naturally. During attacks around enemy posts to liberate "strategic hamlets" we dig trenches for ourselves but also for the population to protect them against the enemy's counter action. When it starts, the troops order their shelters to the civilians and if the enemy starts an action against a village, our troops fight back but even under fire they rush to the rescue of the inhabitants putting out fires and rescuing private belongings....

I inspected the arms of several of the support companies and platoons — medium and heavy machine guns, mortars and bazookas, all of US manufacture. It was fascinating in talking to the team members that they could recount the "biography" of each of the weapons, when and how it was captured, in what engagements it had taken part and in some cases "wounds" were displayed — stocks or barrels scarred by bullets and shrapnel and the circumstances duly related. At that time, late 1964, apart from a few old rifles and light machine guns of French make, everything one saw along the jungle trails as at the base camps was exclusively "Made in USA," down to webbing belts and water canteens and even the flour bag knapsacks.

Le Van Huong said:

Many of our first battles we waged exclusively to get arms, but what we discovered, especially once we started large unit operations was that after every operation we got lots of new recruits. Some of them told us quite frankly that if they stayed on in the area there would be a reprisal raid

and all the youth would be press-ganged into the Saigon army. They preferred to join us. They considered their chance for survival was better with us. But the majority said they wanted to throw in their lot with us, defend their own homes and families. In many cases we took them with us for a while and then sent them back to organise self-defence units in their own villages. But it was due to popular support that we had a continuous stream of recruits with very high morale.

As our regiment gathers strength, we have to develop tactics which correspond to our capacities and the enemy's strength. The NFL leadership sent us veteran cadres, but their knowledge is based on the anti-French war. Things have developed since then — the use of helicopters, etc. — and we have all sorts of complicated arms that we never had before. The old cadres cannot cope.

I asked about material support from the North and whether it was not practical to send cadres experienced in modern arms and tactics down to help them. Thuong Chien, the political officer, replied:

It would take almost a year to get anyone from the North down this area. And in fact it is not necessary. They have other ways of helping us. Radio Hanoi for instance recently gave a commentary by a military expert of how its army is preparing to counter a helicopter-borne invasion of the North, describing what sort of tactics would be effective. There was not a word about the South of course, but this advice was very precious for us. It seems it was based on the experience of the Algerian FLN in countering French helicopter tactics which our friends in the Algerian FLN leadership passed on to the North with the idea that it would be useful for us. Of course all our units have transistors and listen regularly to Radio Hanoi.

Apart from helicopters the other major US innovation is the M-113 tank. We salvaged one abandoned after it hit one of our mines and we studied it very carefully to find its weak points. How best to destroy it with the sort of weapons at our disposal. Where to concentrate our fire. We had difficulty with our first bazooka because we didn't know how to aim it. The first one we used was against an enemy river craft. We lashed a rifle to it so that the barrels were exactly parallel. We sighted with the rifle and fired the bazooka. The shell hit just below the water line as we wanted and we sank an enemy boat with our very first shot. Then we understood that the bazooka sights should be used like ordinary rifle sights. The mortars had scales in metres but we had no instruments to judge the distance of enemy positions. In preparing our first attack we had to send scouts with balls of string, unrolling the string as they crawled in as straight a line as possible to the targets. When they came back we counted off the metres, adding five, ten, twenty or fifty metres according to how close the scout got to the target, adjusting the scales accordingly. It worked very well.

Huong Chien continued:

There would be enormous difficulties in moving stuff down from the North; but it would also be suicidal for us at this stage to depend on

weapons and munitions from so far away, or to have weapons for which supplies of shells and cartridges were not easily available. That is why we prefer captured American weapons for which there are ample supplies of local munitions. Our great difficulties were in the early stages when we had literally to wrest guns from the hands of the enemy. Once we had built up sufficient strength to attack enemy posts and depots, and ambush big convoys, weapons supply was no longer a real problem. When we reached a point at which every one had a weapon of some sort, then we started to standardise and there was a curious phase during which we grabbed American weapons during a battle, using them straight away, discarding our outmoded ones. We sometimes laughed at enemy communiques saying they had "captured" so many fire-arms from us during a battle. These were weapons we had "exchanged" on the battlefield. Now we have reached the point where rifles, sidearms, and light automatic weapons captured during a battle or an attack, are distributed to the local guerrillas. We have everything we need, everything we can carry and these are supplemented by what we make in our own workshops, mainly mines and hand and rifle grenades.

We can't expend masses of ammunition like the enemy and we have to make every shot count and one can say that our lads have become very expert in the weapons they use, especially the mortars and bazookas. The enemy has very great respect for the way we handle these weapons.

In fact, when I spoke to the bazooka crews, they were able to tell me the result of every single shot that had been fired by each of their weapons. Other soldiers spoke of the number of engagements they had taken part in but the bazooka crews of the result of every shell fired. At first they only used them at such close range that they were endangered by the explosion of the shells, bit by bit they were able to increase the distance between themselves and the target without any loss of accuracy. Apart from an occasional shell that failed to explode, they claimed 100 percent hits. (And this was so at a much later stage when NFL units started receiving the B-40, a light Chinese-made small calibre bazooka-type weapon, the shell of which released a temperature of 3500° C. sufficient to melt the steel on the most heavily armored US tanks. Accurate up to 120 metres, the NFL troops fired them from 30 to 50 metres with what they claimed was 100 percent efficiency. "One shell, one tank," as a B-40 expert expressed it.)

I asked about instruction in using heavy machine guns and mortars and such techniques as the most economic disposition of men and weapons in ambushes, the use of demolition charges in battles and other complicated, specialised techniques. Le Van Huong said:

I can tell you that in the anti-French war we knew little about such matters. If we captured even mortars, we usually greased them and buried them somewhere in the hope that someone would turn up one day who knew how to use them. That's why the old resistance cadres sent from the Centre are not much help in weapons technique. But we've solved this in different ways. When the decision to wage armed struggle was taken, the NFL sent some young cadres into the ranks of the enemy

to learn weapons' techniques. When they had learned all they could, they returned to our ranks and became instructors. A few were discovered by the enemy, one or two turned traitor for material reasons but the great majority came back to us. A certain number of specialists deserted from the enemy ranks to us and begged to be sent straight into the front line. But we used them to train our own specialists. Gradually our techniques improved. In one of the first battles, after we had taken an important post but suffered rather heavy losses ourselves, we found a scrawled note written on blood-stained paper and thrust in between some bricks. It was written by some anonymous patriot. "You used your heavy machine-guns badly," he wrote, "the bullets all fell short. You should use trajectory fire instead of shooting as with rifles." We immediately took steps to improve the technique of our heavy machine gun crews. It was their lack of proficiency on that occasion which caused us heavy casualties. There were several similar instances of this sort of advice. On another occasion we found a note saying: "Comrades — you hit all the helicopters and could have brought them all down. But you should aim at..." and he told us the weak points — complete with sketches — of various types of helicopters. This, together with the Hanoi radio commentary made us much more efficient in dealing with helicopters.

Another of our difficulties is that almost all our troops are illiterate and even when we have captured enemy weapons' manuals we have only been able to make limited use of them, especially as they are mostly in English. But — and this is not limited only to weapons' techniques but to all other branches of our struggle, medicine, education and so forth — we organise exchange-of-experience classes, between specialists of different regiments and regions. In this way the most advanced techniques learned or developed in one unit or by even some individual, quickly become generalised by word of mouth and some simple diagrams which even the illiterate can understand. We have found this the most effective way of raising technical levels, but we can usually organise such inter-regional classes only in the rainy season when there is not much combat activity. There are classes for questions of general tactics and technique but also for the specialities, weapons, demolitions, communications, assault techniques. Our aim is to make each of our men expert in handling various types of weapons. We can already say that, as distinct from the anti-French war, even at company level our men are already competent to handle any type of weapon that we can capture and carry off the battle-field. Of course, we can't handle artillery pieces. When we capture them we spike their barrels or blow them up. Our weapons are limited to those that can be carried on human shoulders — even if it requires several pairs of shoulders for some of the heavy mortars.

By the time I made my fourth visit to the NFL areas in the second half of 1966, the regiment had become a division, its battalions having been transformed into regiments, companies into battalions, platoons into companies by the same almost biological growth-and-split process by which the regiment itself had been formed. In most cases platoons had been formed around the

nucleus of local self-defence guerrillas, the men having been replaced in the self-defence units by young women who then constituted an important part of the village guerrilla units.

As far as I know this was one of the first NFL divisions formed, but a similar process was going on all over the country from 1965 onwards when it was decided that long-range preparations must be made to deal with US combat divisions. Like other regular NFL units this division was largely withdrawn from combat for consolidation and training and "stock-piling" until the time came for the NFL counter-offensive. Regional troops in the meantime had acquired the sort of armaments, including medium weapons support units plentifully equipped with B-40s, to enable them to deal with US offensives in the area, in coordination with the local guerrillas whose equipment had been improved by early 1965 to about the standards of regional troops.

The fact that US forces hardly ever met the regular NFL forces during the 1965-66 and 1966-67 dry season offensives was something I drew attention to at the time, especially in a "Post Scriptum" dated December 1966 to my book, *Hanoi sous les bombes*³ in which I wrote in relation to the 1965-66 operational season:

None of the three stated American strategic aims had been achieved, that is, to open up communications, regain territory, and return it to Saigon control, destroy NFL main forces. The various offensives had been repelled almost exclusively by local guerrilla and regional forces while the NFL main force units continued their steady build-up for more efficient use later. I found the NFL leaders more confident than ever precisely because what they had been expecting for years had come about — the direct clash with elite US combat divisions — and the NFL forces had come off best in every major encounter....

The light NFL divisions formed along the lines of the regiment I have described are about as perfect a military instrument as could be conceived for the type of conditions in which the NFL have to fight and the type of warfare they have to wage. If US units are highly mobile when it comes to being air-lifted from their bases to a battlefield, once they get on the ground, they are incomparably less mobile than equivalent NFL units. The latter, with equipment that time and again has silenced the adversary's artillery and wreaked havoc among his helicopters and every scrap of which can be carried on human backs and shoulders, move infinitely faster.

The lighter equipped NFL units can run rings around US units in mobility, bring shattering firepower to bear on selected targets and due to their intimate knowledge of terrain and their relations with the local population, they can manoeuvre around to launch surprise attacks against the slow-moving US troops at times and places of their own choosing.

Although numerically an NFL division is perhaps less than half the size of a full US division, the fact that every man is a combatant and they do not have to leave something like a third of their effectives to guard bases and

³ *Hanoi sous les bombes* (*Hanoi under the Bombs*), published by François Maspero, Paris, 1967.

storage areas, in actual combat and unit for unit, by the end of 1967, they were meeting US forces on something like equal terms in numbers and fire power, if one excepts the US monopoly of US heavy artillery and air power. But this advantage was often neutralized because of NFL close-in tactics, "grabbing the enemy by the belt," as they express it. Since the direct commitment of US combat forces, new types of arms from North Viet-Nam and elsewhere in the socialist world started filtering down into the NFL regular forces, including an ultra-rapid firing automatic rifle, the Soviet-made AK-47 and AK-50 which the NFL troops prefer to the famous American M-16. Long before doubts started appearing in the US press about the efficiency of the M-16 because of its habit of jamming at critical moments, the NFL forces had discarded this weapon, of which they had captured considerable quantities due to its "lack of reliability," as it was explained to me in 1966.

One of the incredible aspects of the build-up of the NFL's regular forces, their training and even their movements, is that the US-Saigon Command is constantly being surprised by the existence of such units and their deployments in any given area; despite "spy in the sky" sputniks, infra-red devices said to be able to detect troops concentrations by the heat given off by human bodies; despite round-the-clock air reconnaissance including night photography and everything science has provided the Pentagon with in the way of superdetection gadgetry; despite the infiltration of cloak and dagger "special forces" teams into NFL areas, even the existence of Liberation Army regiments was neither detected nor suspected right up to the moment when, after years of training, the first battle-ready units were set to strike at full strength. I personally attended manoeuvres of a whole regiment in the forests less than 70 kms from Saigon. These included mock assaults on life-size models of the targets to be attacked, carried out in broad daylight for several days on end. I encountered another regiment at the critical Binh Gia battle at the end of December 1964, in an area where the Americans up till weeks previously, had never suspected the presence of even a guerrilla unit.

That the Americans were taken by surprise in the early days of their intervention is perhaps understandable. But this continued to be the case throughout their operations. In late October 1967, General Westmoreland⁴ briefed some selected Saigon correspondents to the effect that the NFL had been forced back to small-scale guerrilla tactics and from then on would never be able to launch attacks at greater than battalion strength and it was doubtful even at battalion strength.

Within days of this prediction, the NFL launched an attack of at least regimental strength at Loc Ninh — Westmoreland claimed that a full division had been employed — and within a few days another attack at Dak To nearly 400 kms to the North which was certainly at divisional strength.

At the end of November 1967, after the two top-ranking US colonels in the Dalat area were killed when they went to investigate a "Vietcong" attack on a nearby village, the whole CIA staff in Dalat were replaced because they had informed General Westmoreland that there were at most 60 to 80 guer-

⁴ General William C. Westmoreland succeeded General Paul Harkins as Commander-in-Chief of the US "Military Assistance Command" in South Viet-Nam in June 1964.



news behind the news

rebas operating in the Dalat area. In fact, as was discovered when what was left of the Dalat Command tried to send a relief force to recover the bodies of the colonels and the two helicopters shot down in the flight, there was at least an NFL regiment, enough to "eat" all the forces at Westmoreland's disposal in the Dalat region, as indeed happened two months later when the NFL took over Dalat completely.

The most fantastic example of being taken by surprise was the simultaneous attack on the night of January 30, 1968 against the major cities in which a minimum of one battalion was used against each of about 140 objectives, each battalion supported by several hundred local inhabitants of each of the towns concerned. The US-Saigon Command was taken by such complete surprise that President Nguyen Van Thieu was away from Saigon celebrating the Lunar New Year with his family. Only routine guards were placed around the presidential palace and the US Embassy in Saigon and NFL commandos succeeded in penetrating the "holy of holies" in every city attacked, the heads of almost all provincial headquarters. In an operation which involved at least two hundred thousand people, including the local inhabitants of the towns attacked, and extending over the whole of South Viet-Nam, the fact that complete secrecy was maintained despite the electronic devices which American commanders in Saigon assured journalists and visiting reporters, were so efficient that no Vietcong could even boil a pot of rice without being detected, is eloquent tribute to the relations of mutual trust between NFL and the people and a harsh commentary on American detection technique, to say the least. To cap it all, the US-Saigon command had to admit that its acoustic devices had failed to detect the tanks which the Vietnamese used to overcome the "Special Forces" outpost at Lang Ve, protecting the big US Marine base at Khe Sanh.

As for Le Van Huong's regiment, it took just six months from the merging of the two platoons until the third battalion was formed and the regiment was going concern, a month or two less than the time taken to build up other regiments that I visited. From the time it started to operate as regiment until it was withdrawn from operations during the big build-up period, this unit carried out an average of one operation a month, except for a period starting at the end of October 1963, when the whole regiment took time off from fighting to take part in a three months' "summing-up course," as Thuong Chien expressed it, "so that we could sum up our good and bad experiences, have a clearer idea of our task, heighten morale and acquire a firmer political stand."

It was typical of the extent to which the NFL held the initiative, even in those days, that a whole regiment could decide to take three months off — just at the beginning of the dry season — and this was typical also of the vital importance the NFL leadership attached to the political aspect of the struggle. Once the course was over the regiment went back to its one-a-month operations with "heightened success because of a sharp uplift in morale," as Chien expressed it. What is clear is that such units could never have been built up at such speed had it not been for the fact that at the time of their formation, the country was ripe for transforming political struggle into armed struggle.



□ On October 11th of last year, a Military Junta seized power in Panama, ousting the recently-inaugurated President Arnulfo Arias.

In view of this new military coup, groups of Panamanian citizens, weary of the domination exerted for years on end by elements of the National Guard (trained, financed, and led by the United States South Command), rose up in arms in Chiriqui Province, bordering Costa Rica.

Subsequent information demonstrates that these groups, far from being wiped out, have been strengthened, and several national guardsmen have been reported wounded in suspicious "accidents," and a Military Junta plane was downed in undisclosed circumstances.

As a result of the tense situation, the puppet Costa Rican Government decided to close its borders with Panama.

As the rebel groups continued to intensify their actions, the Costa Rican administration showed increased unrest. It feared that the example of the Panamanians might encourage its own nationals.

A close collaboration was set up between Panama's gorillas and the Costa Rican demo-representatives from the very beginning. Visits were exchanged and measures adopted to eliminate the insurrectionists.

Under cover of these agreements, the kidnapping and possible murder of one of the insurgent leaders in Costa Rica's territory was carried out. The Government of Costa Rica has dispatched Civil Guard troops to the border zone to co-operate in the liquidation of the armed focus, and asked the Inter-American Peace Commission to intervene in the problem. The object is quite clear: the intervention of this Commission (composed, among others, of Nicaragua, Brazil, and the United States) is nothing but a pretext to "legalize" the co-ordinated action of the governments of Panama and Costa Rica against those who oppose the new gorillas in power in Panama City.

□ The Velasco Ibarra Administration has just gone through its first political crisis three months after its constitution. The resignation of the entire Cabinet and the substitution of Minister of the Interior Blasco Peña-Herrera Padilla, a liberal, was connected with CIA

machinations. The latter, in connivance with the gorillas, is bringing pressure to bear on Velasco's government, leading it ever closer to compromise with the oligarchy and imperialism.

Peña-Herrera, the Minister in charge of the repressive apparatus, had insistently complained in his inner circles about the CIA control, which exerted pressure on him to come into its service. On several occasions he told his closest friends about the CIA's proposals to enlist him.

It was useless for the Minister to order the bloody repression of Machala and Milagros in an effort to get the CIA's pardon and save his post. The pressures of the US Central Intelligence Agency forced him to resign.



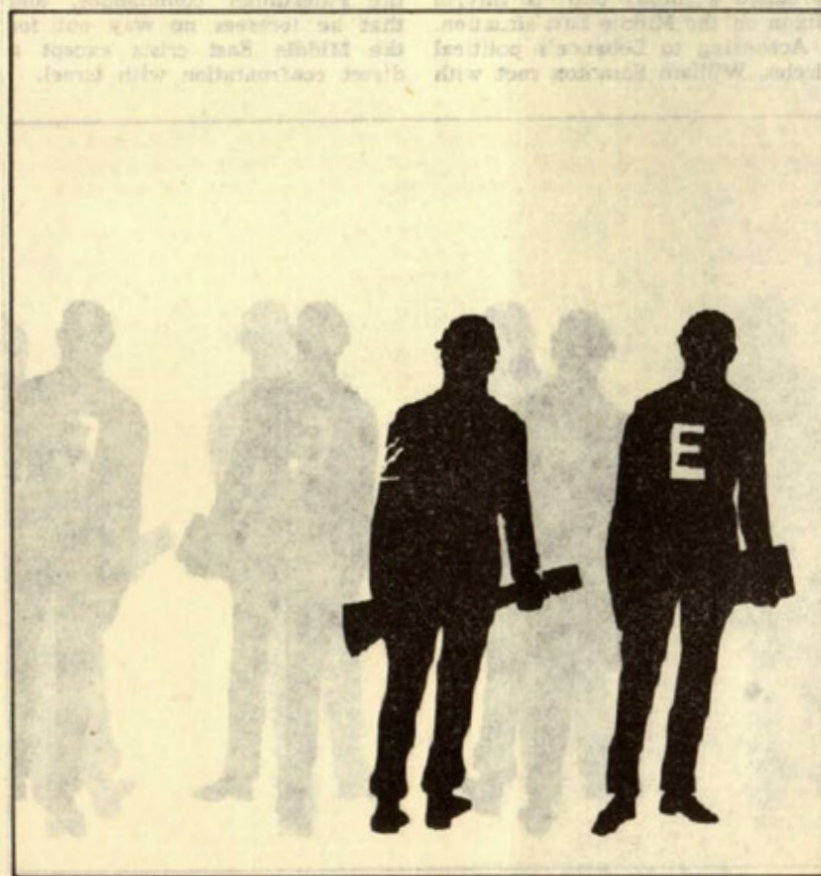
□ In reply to the attacks of General Mobutu in a speech he delivered in Kinshasa on the occasion of the third anniversary of the coup d'état, the Congo Brazzaville Government has issued a statement denouncing — among other things — the diplomatic offensive launched by Kinshasa's Foreign Minister, Justin Marie Bomboko, to discredit Brazzaville's government as well as the provocations carried out against the fishermen along the River Congo, the natural frontier between the two countries, and the attempts at corrupting the officers and other members of the army and political officials.

As evidence of this denunciation, last December 4 the Kinshasa regime captured a ship in Brazzaville en route to the northern part

of the country. Later, the authorities returned the boat and its civilian staff, but withheld the military who were aboard.

The latter were taken to Kinshasa and given accommodations at the best hotel. They were also received by Mobutu himself, with whom they talked for about an hour. Later, they were given a dinner and taken on a tour of the night spots.

Before the return of the military to their country, the Kinshasa press reported that the military had expressed their gratitude for all the considerations that had been extended them. With this, the Mobutu regime was trying to deny the accusations that had been made against it for the kidnapping of the ship and the military.



□ The vacillating stand of King Hussein of Jordan in the face of the Middle East crisis is well known. Hussein, gambling with the blood shed by the Palestinians who have fallen in the national liberation struggle, is seeking a closer approach with the US imperialists.

Coinciding with insistent rumors in UN diplomatic circles of possible direct negotiations between Jordan and Israel, and just as some Arab nationalist newspapers, particularly those of the northern African states, are expressing the fear that something is being plotted back stairs to lead Hussein to bilateral negotiations with Israel, the former governor of Pennsylvania, William Scranton, visited Jordan. The trip was officially called a "study trip" to inform Nixon on the Middle East situation.

According to Lebanon's political circles, William Scranton met with

Hussein in order to reaffirm the bilateral negotiations between Jordan and Israel, based on the plan put forward by the US Government which is nothing but an extension of the one advanced by Johnson at the end of the six-day war. As a result of these meetings between Scranton and Hussein, direct negotiations with Israel were secretly agreed upon and will probably be disclosed after Nixon's inauguration as President of the United States.

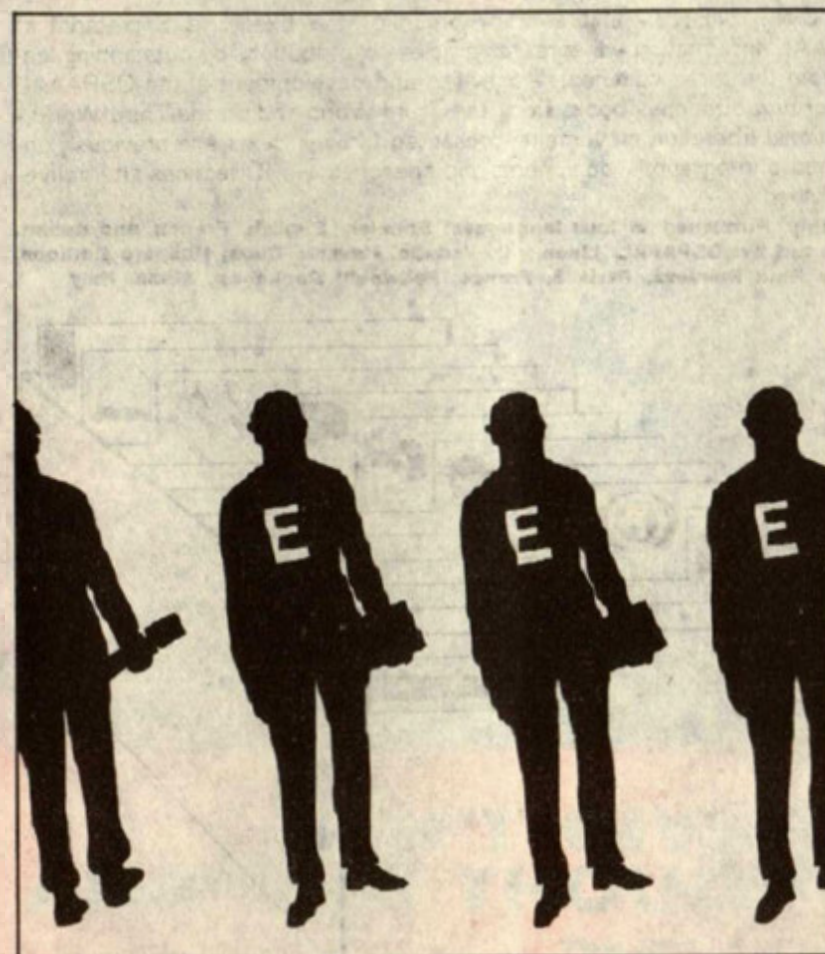
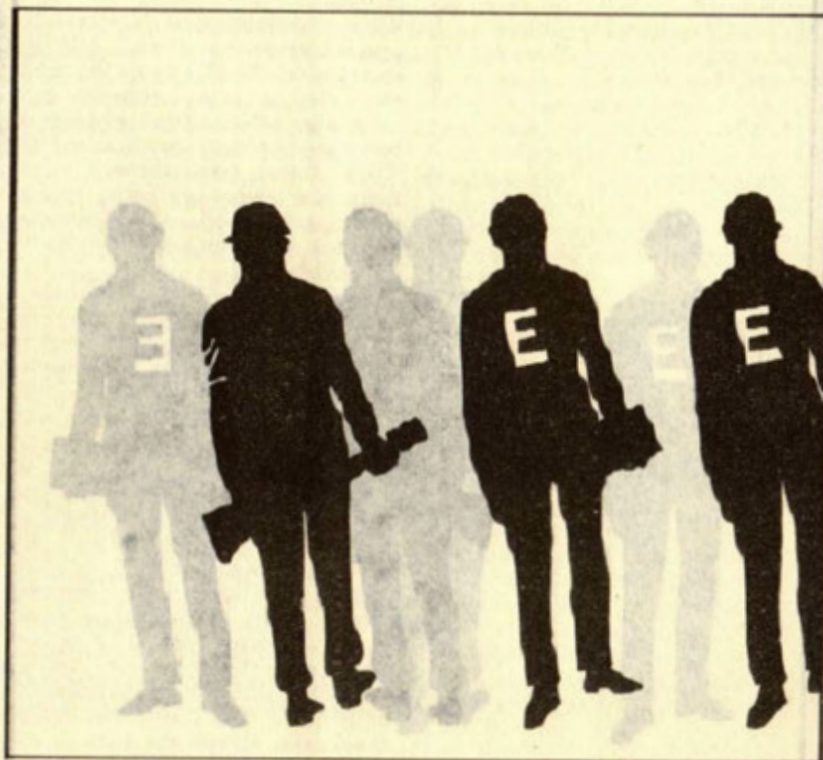
After the accomplished fact, the Jordan monarchy assumes public stands aimed at denying these agreements, as in the case of the recent demagogic statements made by Jordan's Foreign Minister at the UN to the effect that Jordan will continue to support and give aid to the Palestinian commandos, and that he foresees no way out for the Middle East crisis except a direct confrontation with Israel.

□ In the past few months the forces of imperialism and international reaction have intensified their attacks against the People's Republic of South Yemen.

Ever since the youngest of the Arab republics attained its independence, the aggressions, conspiracies, sabotages, etc. — aimed at overthrowing the revolutionary government of that country and restoring the feudalists to power — have been continuous. These aggressions are fundamentally carried out by the US and British imperialists, who use the ultrareactionary and feudal regime of Saudi Arabia as instrument and

base of their operations in this area.

As an example of how far the imperialists have gone in their eagerness to wipe out the liberty conquered by a people with their own blood, and in their aggressive plans against South Yemen, we may point out that at present there are five thousand mercenary troops training in Saudi Arabia who get technical and material aid from the US and Great Britain. This considerable force of aggression, equipped with the most modern weapons and with abundant resources, may be launched into an attack at any moment.



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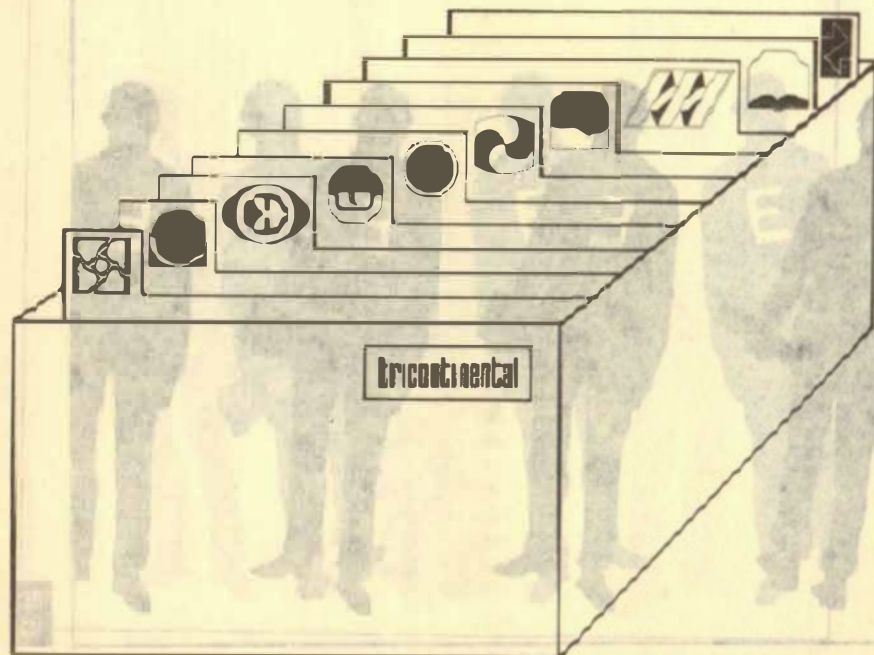
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revolutionary is to make
the revolution.

