power not through a process that involves the prior maturation of revolutionary class consciousness, but through a detour, let's say, that skips this stage.

Foquismo does not conceive of the revolution as a process of struggles, where the masses through the experience of their participation in these struggles and fertilized by the political-ideological action of the revolutionary party that guides them, develops their revolutionary class consciousness, until destroying bourgeois power through a revolution. Rather Foquismo conceives of the revolution as a process of military struggles, parallel to the struggle of the masses, with which it has little or nothing to do with. A process through which an armed minority generates, simply by operating, junctures which end up cornering the masses regardless of their will, until they are obligated to accept a revolutionary outcome that would put that armed minority in power.

The armed practice tends to generate political junctures that would close all doors and close all the ways for action of the masses, other than the way of the armed practice itself. The revolution is not conceived as the culmination, the coronation of a process through which, with their struggle, the masses open a path while developing and maturing their revolutionary consciousness. For Foquismo, the revolution is an outcome, practically independent of the political will of the masses, with whom it is not necessary to confront, but also whom it is not essential to win. The revolutionary outcome can then come about without previously modifying, in depth, the political and ideological consciousness of the masses. The only thing that would be required is not to face them, not to arouse their hostility. It will suffice to obtain their more or less superficial sympathy, or at least their neutrality. At no time will their active participation be required from the beginning of the process. This is so — and it is a fundamental aspect for Foquismo — because, the cause of pushing the masses to the

COPEI

Federación Anarquista Uruguaya

1972

Otherwise, if the worker does not acquire class consciousness — which, according to what has been said, is political and ideological consciousness, which does not arise spontaneously — they will be able to make a thousand strikes for wages, large and even combative strikes — as there are have been so many times in the USA — without ceasing being prisoners of bourgeois ideology. They will carry out those strikes — which occurs frequently now — with a conscience similar to that of their employer: with the awareness of claiming an increase in the price of the merchandise they sell. For that matter, an increase in the price of their labor power, an increase in their salary… and not a change in the social system that would entail the disappearance of property and thus the disappearance of wages, the only way for the worker to stop being exploited. They will demand less exploitation, but not that exploitation disappears. Because in order to demand that exploitation disappears, they have to present another type of society — socialism — and understand their status as exploited. To understand why and how they and others are exploited. And that already implies class consciousness.

The revolutionaries — rightly or wrongly — have always applied themselves to this, to produce that qualitative leap from the economist, sindicalera,[2] "trade unionist" consciousness and class consciousness, to the political conscience. A leap that implies breaking with the bourgeois ideological tendency, which is the dominant one because it is the ideology of the ruling class, and accepting the revolutionary and socialist ideology that expresses the historical interests of the working class. That is, in the capitalist mode of production as the dominated class. Foquismo as a conception intends to skip that stage. It pretends that, as in Cuba, class consciousness is acquired later when the revolution is already in power. Because it intends to come to

[2] "Sindicalera" is a somewhat derogatory way of referring to a syndicalist

ical practice, what would be the point of acting in an organized manner at the union level? In short, Foquismo denies the need for a mass line, for work with and in the masses. It seeks instead to capture the sympathies of the masses and their adherence, decisively through their military actions and the psychological impact that they produce.

Foquismo implies, in this sense, a total alteration of the terms in which political action has always been conceived. It has thus far been aimed toward a gradual and patient conquest of the consciousness of the masses, the gradual processing of the development of class consciousness from the elementary level of the economic struggle. In order to avoid stagnation at that level, for the development of class consciousness to be processed, the economic struggle should be under the political direction of the revolutionary party. This revolutionary ideology "mattered,"[1] as well as the awareness of class political objectives, conscience, the knowledge of their own historical interests, of class, within the working class, which was incapable of rising spontaneously to its understanding based only on experience in the economic level of the class struggle. Because even the perception of one's economic struggle, as a primary level of the class struggle, requires the prior acquisition of class consciousness. Only the worker who understood that their class has historical interests antagonistic to those of the bourgeois class, only the worker, we say, who has already acquired class consciousness, is capable of perceiving the economic struggle as what it is: as a level — the primary level — of the class struggle.

[1] This refers to the Leninist concept of the external implantation of socialist consciousness in the labor movement. A conscience that they believed should be "grafted" from outside the trade union organizations (from the revolutionary party, the professional revolutionaries, an enlightened layer, etc) since it is not something that the experience of the working class itself could develop. This conception is shown to strategically differentiate class anarchists from the Marxist-Leninist currents).

Contents

New Introduction 5

Introduction by "El Combate," 1972 10

Part 1 11

I 12

II 17

III 24

IV 28

V 32

VI 39

VII 45

VIII 49

IX 54

X 60

Part 2 77

VIII

It is the importance, granted practically exclusively by the MLN to the armed operations, which defines its foquista character. It is not, as we said before, that they applied a Blanquist or "putchist" conception. It was not that they wanted to create a secret organization of conspirators that one day, by a coup d'état, would seize power. Foquismo — and the MLN in this case — do not totally and radically deny the role of the masses in the process. The characteristics of that role attributed to the masses, the function attributed to them, is precisely what characterizes Foquismo.

The foquista conception is interested in the masses almost exclusively as support and cover for the specifically military action. They are not interested in the participation of the masses as the protagonists of the revolutionary process as they underestimate and even deny the need and possibility of this happening. Foquismo therefore denies the need for political work or for a coordinating line of work among the masses as well as tasks which could politicize and develop their class consciousness. It denies the need to organize and lead the struggle at the different levels (economic, political, ideological) in which the class struggle takes place. Nor does it consider having an open and public political practice aimed at the masses. It thus denies the need for a political organization, for a party. It underestimates the political importance and the possibility of developing a revolutionary line at the level of economic struggle and the need to intervene in the orientation of union activity from the party with its own line. This is a consequence of their disregard of the function of the party: if there is no public polit-

for a long time, explained little or nothing in their own sense, but were merely exhibited in a brief but shocking reality. They gravitated by their own surprising existence, in a medium so alien to the validity of armed actions. These reached a dimension such that the advertising mechanisms of the system for a long time not only could not hide them, but even amplified them publicly. Through this peculiar version of the propaganda of the deed, the MLN attracted popular sympathy. Time would reveal that the manner and methods in which they obtained these sympathies had clear limitations and even entailed serious risks.

The recruitment mechanisms of a revolutionary organization cannot be confined to the sustained production of shocking armed acts. Proceeding in this way, the entire political practice, the entire revolutionary dynamic, is subordinated to the possibility of operating sustainably. And if the sustained operations do not generate a fast outcome, if it is necessary to operate sustainably for a long period of time, and the dynamics, the development, and the progress, depends on the effectiveness and the psychological impact of the operations, you will be forced to vary the type of operations. If the situation is prolonged further, it will have to increase its dimension and it will be necessary to raise the operational level. If the possibilities of increasing the political influence of an organization lie decisively in its ability to generate a linear and ascending dynamic of armed operations, sooner or later it falls into the trap of a strategy that is too rigid, and therefore exposed to serious risks.

New Introduction

Tommy Lawson, March 2022

The following is the first English translation of the entirety of "COPEI," an internal strategy document of the clandestine Federación Anarquista Uruguaya (FAU) written in 1972.

COPEI is a significant document for a number of reasons. Firstly, as the organisation that articulated the strategy of Especifismo, the works and insights of the FAU are critical to understanding the trajectory and development of the tendency. Especifismo being the theory of the 'specific anarchist organisation' employing federalist practices and united by theoretical and strategic coherency. Especifist organisations organise around a programme and are dedicated to class struggle and the building of popular mass movements autonomous from capitalists and reformist political parties. Especifismo is considered as similar to the other anarchist tendencies known as Platformism and Dual Organisationalism, only developed in the unique context of Uruguay and spread across Latin America.

Throughout the 1950's to the 1970s the FAU showed a level of strategic sophistication relatively unknown amongst other anarchist federations. Nuance and impressive levels of organisation were required to combine and co-ordinate the activities of the clandestine anarchist 'party', the FAU, with the above-ground mass work of the Resistencia Obrero Estudiantil (Workers-Student Resistance — ROE), the Tendencia Combativa (Combative Tendency) union faction and the armed apparatus of the Organización Popular Revolucionaria (Popular Revolutionary Organisation, OPR-33). Hence for the FAU, 'the structuring of the Political Organisation is a

fundamental task in the stages to mold the conditions for the insurrection.' The structuring of the political apparatus being after all, the key insight of especifismo as popular insurrection is the method of anarchism.

Today, understanding the way that the armed apparatus of a revolutionary organisation was integrated into the overall project of social revolution is an often unstudied aspect of the revolutionary project. Material conditions have changed in such a manner that even the possibility of urban guerrillas are rendered redundant across much of the world. However history is not static and we do not know what will emerge from a world beset by new imperialisms, the collapse of eco-systems under rapid climate change, new wars, pandemics, and ever higher levels of inequality. The strategic dimensions that will result from these new contradictions are as yet unknown, and it is worthwhile revolutionaries keep an open mind studying the past.

In 1960's Latin America, it was believed that revolutionary prospects had been opened up by the guerrilla war in Cuba and the subsequent overthrow of the Batista regime. Across the continent armed groups sprung up attempting to imitate the successes of the Cuban movement. In fact, new guerrilla wars were often sponsored by the Cubans themselves. Che Guevara declared the need for 'two, three, many Vietnams' to defeat US Imperialism. In Uruguay, a number of sympathetic groups created a coalition called *El Coordinador*. The FAU were amongst the organisations involved, alongside groups like the Tupamaros. The political line of El Coordinador was argued through its journal, *Epocha, which* articulated the use of armed struggle against the Uruguayan state and US imperialism. While all groups involved agreed on the use of armed struggle, the FAU disassociated from *Epocha* following the first action, a raid on the Swiss Rifle Club. Within a short period all the organisations associated with the raid would also be forced

Why? Because that solution implies socialism. Because that solution is outside the capitalist system, outside the system in which it dominates. That is why the bourgeoisie seeks to change politically and ideologically, to try to avoid change at the economic-social level. And the political and ideological change, which takes the form of a political-ideological crisis, is in a sense, regressive. It seeks the return to political and ideological forms already superseded by their own prior deformed and dependent capitalist development.

On the other hand, the regressive process, in itself, is not free of contradictions. It does not have the more or less linear and fluid character with which the reactionaries used to imagine it. The process of deterioration is reflected and has repercussions in a particular way within the different classes and fractions of classes…and even in the different sectors of the bourgeois state apparatus. But to consider these aspects would take us too far from the central subject.

The fact is that the process of deterioration (for which there is still no solution in sight within the framework of dependent capitalism) imposes the need for a monopoly of violence by the repressive apparatus of the state. It further imposes an attempt to restore the predominance of the reactionary ideology of the ruling classes in the ideological state apparatuses.

In the context of the crisis of dependent capitalism in our country, the violence from below, this anti-capitalist and out of control violence is already intolerable for the system.

Accessing the scope of armed action, organizing and developing it, definitively demonstrating its viability in Uruguay, forcing the unmasking of the ideological myths of liberalism, and contributing to the unmasking of the hidden levers of the real class dictatorship, are historical merits of the MLN, whatever its final destination as a movement.

How did the MLN achieve those clearly relevant results? It can be said that they achieved them almost exclusively on the basis of carrying out armed actions. These created facts, which

opposing it and of lasting for a long time, on the margins and against the bourgeois law, the armed practice becomes a powerful element of disintegration to the system both at the political and ideological level.

Capitalism is today more than ever, in need of unanimous acceptance of the rules of its game. Tangentially in crisis in all its aspects, it is generating a system of domination increasingly more rigid and closed. It is its way of defending itself, of trying to endure.To the extent that the contradictions inherent in the system deepen, it must apply an increasingly coercive policy, more repressive at all levels. Since the capitalist state is the place where all the contradictions are reflected and condensed, it is the bourgeois state apparatus that assumes the leading role in this increasingly tense effort to coercively slow the outcome of these contradictions; their solution.

The Uruguayan social formation is an exemplary case of this. From a process of economic deterioration, whose roots lie in the dependent capitalist structure of our country, there is gradual deterioration at the political and ideological level. The forms, the traditional institutions at both levels, are no longer functional to guarantee the rule of the dominance of the bourgeoisie within the framework of the process of deterioration ultimately generated at the economic level. The ruling classes can not resolve the contradictions that the functioning of dependent capitalism generates. Resolving them would imply their death as ruling classes. The contradictions that slow down and set back development at the economic level can be resolved within the framework of a socialist organization, but this would imply a profound social change: a social revolution.

The ruling classes can not accept it and since — in our social formation until now — they have not found a way out, a model, a capitalist project that allows them to get out of the process of deterioration, their only visible perspective is to repress. In other words, to try to coercively prevent the contradictions of its system from finding a true and definitive solution.

underground, declared illegal by a regime moving rapidly towards dictatorship.

The FAU had become highly critical of the "focuista" strategy imitated by the other revolutionary organisations in Uruguay. "Foquismo" was the name given to the strategy developed by Che Guevara in his manual, *Guerrilla Warfare*. Essentially his thesis can be broken down thus; the objective conditions for revolution already existed in Latin America due to the contradictions exacerbated by US imperialism. All that was needed was a small group of revolutionaries to engage in armed confrontation with the state and the subsequent war would encourage the subjective conditions leading to social revolution. Importantly, in Che's vision the political aspects of the struggle are subordinate to the armed struggle. In Uruguay the primary Focuista organisation were the Tupamaros, also a focus of critique in the document.

This is the second reason COPEI is seminal. Despite supporting and engaging in armed struggle, the FAU believed Foquismo to be a flawed strategy. In contrast to the foquistas, who saw the guerrilla as the par excellence of revolutionary organisation, the FAU saw 'the function of an urban guerrilla [as] not to achieve victory after a direct confrontation with the army' but as a 'necessary preamble and preparation for the insurrection.' Ultimately, 'armed actions are conceived through a political center, and not a political center conceived through armed actions.' That is, the opposite of the thesis of Foquismo. For 'the foquista conception is interested in the masses almost exclusively as support and cover for the specifically military action. They are not interested in the participation of the masses as the protagonists of the revolutionary process.' However, in the vision of the FAU, the revolution must be made by the workers, with the guerrilla as one aspect of preparation for the mass insurrection; 'revolutionary military policy will therefore be a class military policy, which in all its stages must coincide with

the interests of the industrial working class and other working classes.'

The final aspect in which COPEI stands out as a seminal document is its trenchant critique of reformist politics. Indeed, the whole purpose of employing armed struggle as an aspect of the revolutionary movement is to break with the limitations of bourgeois politics; 'the capitalist system will not be destroyed following the rules of the game that they generated themselves to guarantee its continuity. The continuity of the system is maintained by reducing action to only that which bourgeois legality allows, only what the legality created and managed by the bourgeoisie recommends.' Social democratic and other reformist forces, including the Uruguayan Communist Party at the time, were limiting the possibilities opened up by an inevitable crisis and clash with the capitalist state. 'By turning the idea of the "proletarian insurrection" into a myth, the reformists make it into a legitimating pretext for their counterrevolutionary practice, so useful to the system. Far from representing an alternative opposed to it, aimed at destroying it, it becomes daily practice, in concrete and everyday events and in a way "perfects" it, by correcting it in its most extreme and visible manifestations of injustice." This would become visible during the waves of strikes that gripped pre-dictatorship Uruguay, where the Communist party channeled everything into failed electoral efforts while the FAU and the Tendencia did everything it could to prepare the workers for insurrection. As Abraham Guillen noted 'OPR-33 and ROE spurred a series of successful strikes in the metallurgical, rubber and clothing industries. The strike at SERAL, a footwear manufacturer, lasted more than a year. Where the Communist controlled unions failed, OPR-33 and ROE succeeded.'

The new translation of COPEI is part of a discovery of the depth of the history of Latin American anarchism. A region where anarchism has perhaps, at least as influential if not more so than in Europe.

VII

As we said from the beginning, the foquista conception of activity of the masses suffered from a contradiction which was never properly resolved despite different variants in the foquista line.This entailed that, on the one hand, organized activity in the masses was underestimated, based on a very pessimistic evaluation of their possibilities. On the other hand, it was assumed that the same masses had the necessary political aptitude to accept and sympathize with an armed activity conceived as a parallel to popular struggles.

To reiterate, it consisted of simultaneously considering that the working class was too "green" to accept a revolutionary mass line, but "mature" enough to accept an urban guerrilla military practice, parallel to the struggles of those same masses. This military practice would be parallel and neither coincidental or convergent with the workers' struggles insofar as what was involved was the preparation of a clandestine armed apparatus capable of disputing bourgeois power. All of the mass politics of the MLN was subordinated to the achievement of this objective. The sympathies of the masses would be obtained through armed actions. In this way, a peculiar version of propaganda of the deed was developed ("sympathetic" armed acts), complemented by periods with forms of armed propaganda. There are positive and erroneous elements in this criterion.

Revolutionary violence can and does have, here and today, a positive scope of promoting class consciousness at the mass level. It does this through violating the bourgeois "order," demonstrating in deeds the possibility of fracturing it, of challenging it…By demonstrating the possibility of frontally

was sufficient to enable the support for a military practice that logically supposes the existence of a quite elevated level of conscience.The political-ideological backwardness of the working class, it's only "economist" conscience, its "syndicalism," was invoked in order not to "burn" the few available forces initially available by having them promote revolutionary mass work there. But at the same time as they were demeaning them, the conscience demands, the level reached by the economic struggles, and the combativeness demonstrated frequently by them, was invoked repeatedly as proof of the need to create a guerrilla foco that translated that combativity at the political level into an alternative of power. The MLN hoped to overcome this contradiction through ideological revulsion constituted in the exemplifying use of violence.

In 2018, a partial translation was provided by Gabriel Ascui and published on the website of Black Rose / Rosa Negra Anarchist Federation in the United States. This new translation by comrade "Campy Sino" provides footnotes to convey the context of colloquial Uruguayan language and clarify military terms.

Introduction by "El Combate," 1972

In 1967 the Uruguayan government ordered the dissolution of the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation (FAU), which then went underground until 1971. Its activity was restructured according to the new situation: the development of an armed apparatus, the publication of a clandestine weekly, the creation of a network of safehouses for operation and advertising materials, financing and others. The OPR-33 (Organización Popular Revolucionaria-33 Orientales) was launched and as the armed wing of the FAU, it carried out a series of quite successful actions: sabotage, economic expropriation, kidnapping of political leaders and employers, armed support for strikes, factory occupations, etc. With this document of revolutionary military strategy, they also exercise criticism and self-criticism of the foco strategy as used by the National Liberation Movement (MLN), the Tupamaros.

MLN did not nevertheless negate ANY role to the masses in the process. Nor is it fair, it seems to us, for the accusation of "putchism," of "blanquism" that was leveled at them by reformists, before, in a low voice and from the sidelines and now openly. The MLN tried not to be a society of conspirators who, with a surprise coup, would take power. The MLN sought, from the beginning, to arouse the sympathy of the masses. In this aspect their errors were of another type which consisted: 1st) In the way in which they conceived of obtaining the sympathy of the masses and in the tactic which they set up in order to try and obtain it. 2nd) In the role that they assigned within the process to the masses whose sympathy they were gradually obtaining. Both errors reflect, of course, the weaknesses of the conception of Foquismo.

A just revolutionary political practice in Uruguay today must integrate armed action and mass action. But what is central, what is the priority, and what is the main aspect to which the others should be subordinated? The MLN underestimated the possibilities of a revolutionary political practice among the masses. As a result of this, they underestimated the political activity organized within the unions and the public activity (legal or not) of political organizations. They denied the necessity of centering political practice at all levels (trade union, public politics, clandestine political-military, and theoretical-ideological) from a clandestine party. They believed, paradoxically, that it was possible to centralize the orientation of the masses from a solely military core, from the guerrillas, understood according to the conception of foquismo. And thus they wanted to put a military mind toward the masses, yet did not recognize the degree of development necessary to make a viable trade union, ideological and political line, revolutionary at that level, which is the level of the masses. Social unrest, ultimately rooted in economics, was not considered sufficient to make a revolutionary line of masses, it seemed to them, while on the other hand, they felt it

the viability of a revolutionary mass line. They identified the reformist modalities of economic action of the class struggle with the economic struggle itself. This concealed the perspective of a revolutionary practice even at the economic level, the most elementary of the class struggle. Meanwhile, trade union action seemed politically unprofitable, too limited or useless to some revolutionaries, impatient with the slowness with which the working class processes its rise from the level of economic struggle to the level of political struggle. They did not evaluate that this transit can be postponed further and may not even occur, if the economic struggle is directed by reformism. They did not see that the economic struggle, without ceasing to be so, but under revolutionary leadership, is the primary foundation of the development of class consciousness, which is political consciousness, the awareness of historical class interests. But under reformist leadership, this process of maturation can be slowed down, distorted, and frozen for long periods.

Even at the level of political struggle, the ideological backwardness of the dominated classes, their stubborn adherence to bourgeois ideology, electoralism and to the bourgeois parties in the elections, operated in the same direction. What is there to do then?

Faced with this question, the armed struggle appeared to many revolutionaries, as a shortcut that would shorten the process and abbreviate it, by skipping stages. The disappointment about the possibilities of political development of the masses set the stage for the adoption of the foquista conception of the guerrilla and contributed to their belief that two aspects of the same political practice were contradictory. These two aspects, which are valid only if they are dialectically united are: armed action and mass action.

Here is a clarification that we believe is just and useful to make: underestimating the importance of a mass line, underestimating the possibilities and the vital political necessity of an organized work among the masses, the comrades of the

Part 1

I

Important events have occurred in recent months. Events that introduce significant enough variables, as to justify a reassessment of tactics, which in turn demands an adjustment to the new context created by these events. No doubt, one of the most important aspects has been the repressive offensive and its effects, which are already clear enough It seems a priority, before entering into any consideration to make a balance, necessarily synthetic, of those effects of the repressive campaign on the National Liberation Movement (MLN)…and this is our main objective.

Schematically, the results obtained by the repression can be expressed as follows:

- It caused very significant losses in effectives of the MLN
- They managed to dismantle their infrastructure in a serious way (premises, hidden caches and guerilla engineering,[1] vehicles , etc.).
- Much of the armament and safehouses fell into the hands of repression.
- A large part of the predictably better trained cadres acting as the structural backbone of MLN operations have been assassinated or detained.

This is what emerges from the information available and those are the facts on which the reactionary propaganda insists.

[1] *informal* Uruguay

bourgeois sectors can, in essence muddy things, and not even at the stage when it becomes a national war.

We enunciate all this here, in a tone that provisionally can be schematic,but we only bring it up to situate, primarily, the conditioning factors within which the foquista practice was driven. This involved a particular understanding and a peculiar interpretation of these conditioning factors, as we shall see.

Armed action thus expresses the highest level of the class struggle and in Uruguay, as we say, it cannot express anything else. At least initially.

But what has been the level reached by that class struggle here? At an economic level and in certain sectors, this has had a wide expansion and a relative deepening in recent times. There is a trade union movement that is quantitatively important and capable of acting, at times, with enough combativeness for demands of a preferentially wage type, although it also asserts important political objectives, linked above all, to the preservation of the autonomy of the trade unions as class organs (struggles against union regulations or other attempts to integrate them institutionally into the state). But at the political and ideological level, the working classes are, to a great extent, prisoners of the influence of the ideological tendency of the ruling classes. They continue to conceive of political action in the terms proposed by bourgeois ideology. The Communist Party, as the most important gravitating force in the leadership of the workers' movement, through the coherently reformist strategy and tactics it has imposed on the class struggle, both economically and politically, does nothing more than consolidate the predominance of the bourgeois ideological trend. And yet, the Communist Party itself becomes pliant to it, "importing" it into the workers' and popular movement, and at the same time it increasingly sees itself as a prisoner of it.

The weight of the bourgeois ideological predominance in the masses, reinforced by the workers' reformism of the Communist Party, has muddled in the eyes of some revolutionaries,

continue to be fought in the interest of the dominated classes against the interests of the ruling classes. It will represent the interests of the working class, of the working petty bourgeoisie, of the agricultural proletariat and also — in a stage at least — of the traditional urban petty bourgeoisie (owners of the means of production) and of the poor petty bourgeoisie and even the average landowner[1] (smallholders, small and even medium-sized owners and tenants, etc.) . The working classes are beneficiaries of a socialist regime with which, of course, they have no objective contradictions. The petty-bourgeois sectors do not have to have antagonistic contradictions, immediately with the revolutionary process. Yes, the ruling classes do. The big landowners, the commercial fraction of the importing and exporting bourgeoisie, linked to imperialism, the industrial bourgeoisie associated or linked to imperialism, the imperialist monopolies, the financial fraction of the bourgeoisie, etc. In short, the entire bourgeoisie which here, as in all of Latin America, is increasingly dependent, and the imperialism on which it depends. All of them are and will be counterrevolutionary.

The guerrillas and the war in our country, therefore, cannot start being "patriotic" or "democratic." Although it may become, in its development, "national" and eventually, "democratic," it was born socialist and in the end, it will be its dominant trait. Therefore, it will be confronted, from the onset by all the ruling classes. It has the character of a class war even though it acquires, at an advanced stage, a character of a national war as well, because if the process advances, the bourgeoisies of neighboring countries will intervene.

This armed struggle is the highest level of a gritty and crude class struggle, where no possibility of alliances with "national"

[1] Small rural owners/tenants, quite common in the Pampean and Río de la Plata areas of national capital who, often "could"(with lots of quotes) enter into contradiction with the big landowners and latifundistas (allied to international capital) and carry out some "progressive" tasks in a popular strategy, especially in the tasks of "national liberation."

But, in addition, two results of a political nature can be deduced:

1. The potential that the MLN had developed has been unequivocally revealed, making clear an example of what can be done in this matter.

2. It has been demonstrated how a really important armed apparatus can be disarticulated, dismantled, and reduced, in relative terms, to a much lower level of operability and in a short period of time, if the criteria guiding its action is not adequate.

With these results obtained by repression, the reactionary propaganda aims to establish this political conclusion: "Armed struggle is not viable in Uruguay, and violence — as well as crime — does not pay" ...On the other hand, the reformists chant: "Armed struggle not only does not lead to power, but is even counterproductive, compromises mass social insertion, and militants remain stuck in this framework."

The selectivity of the repression that shakes up and strikes, occasionally at reformism, but in short, "condones" it, also tends to the following:

It spares punishment to those who move politically within the guidelines provided by the system.

Furthermore it leaves an exit open, a legalized and controllable escape for social tensions. By selectively striking the revolutionaries, reformism is politically benefited.

It is in this way that the repression seems to indicate that the class struggle must follow a process.

The ruling classes want to ensure that everyone plays by their game. An invented game and predesigned for them, a game where they cannot lose. That well-known game: legal parties, controlled propaganda, periodic elections ... and back to start. In that game they have a card that "kills" all the others.

It is repression. Politically speaking, the dictatorship. To convince everyone that it is so, that it is inevitably so, that their game is the natural thing, that it will always be like that, is the political task of repression.

Succeeding at making all the revolutionaries ask themselves: "If they did this so quickly with an organization like the MLN, what will they do with others?" To facilitate the reformists and capitulators of all kinds in the presumed confirmation of their counterrevolutionary thesis: "violence does not pay," "the adventurists," while suggesting to the hesitant, the path of "the good and the law." Searching within the capitalist system for the way to make it less bad … saving the system as such. All this and much more is the "lesson" they want to be learned. Many doubt. At the level of public opinion it is almost inevitable that the great ebb of disillusionment will arise in the face of the alleged failure of the armed route, from which many expected a more or less immediate revolutionary outcome. Many are afraid and fear paralyzes them. Many will be "burned out" by the negative experience.

All of this happens every time the revolution suffers a defeat. And what seems to be the dismantling of the MLN apparatus is, let us say these words well thought out and with all clarity, a serious defeat for the Uruguayan revolution. It is an important lost battle. It is not, it cannot be nor will it be the end of the war. It is not, it cannot be, of course, the end of the class struggle either. It exists and will exist, under different forms, with different levels at each moment, in each stage, until the system collapses. This is how it will be, because that struggle arises from the capitalist system itself, from its own exploitative and oppressive essence. It is a product of its organization and function. As long as that system exists, there will inevitably be class struggle.

The defeat today is not the end of the armed struggle either. It exists and will continue to exist as a level of the class struggle, as long as the socio-economic and political process of our

VI

In Uruguay, when they began to operate the foco, there was no colonial situation. Uruguay is, of course, a dependent capitalist country but it is now perhaps one of the countries where the action of imperialism is exercised through less visible mechanisms for the masses. Imperialism exists, but it is much less visible than elsewhere. It would therefore not be an anti-colonial war.

There was no dictatorship. There was of course — and continues to be — bourgeois class dictatorship, common to all capitalist countries, but exceptionally well veiled here by the bourgeois-democratic state form. Democratic liberalism is deeply rooted, as an ideology in the consciousness of the people, including in the working class. The traditional parties, the petty-bourgeois and worker's reformism (embodied especially by the Communist Party) invariably contribute to consolidate the influence of the bourgeois ideological tendency within the dominated classes. Meanwhile, workers' reformism, which continues to designate itself, however, as "Marxist-Leninist," is becoming increasingly integrated into this trend.

But if it is not anti-colonial, nor "democratic," what is the nature of the war that the Foquista guerrillas started?? In general terms, what is the character of the armed action in Uruguay, at least in its initial stage and for an extended period of time?? It has and will have for a long period, a decisively social character, a class character. It will have, therefore,a clearly socialist imprint and will be perceived as such by the ruling classes who, starting with Cuba, see any armed popular action as a danger, no matter what they say. The armed struggle began and will

To recap, If we are to refer to either the historical experiences of victorious urban guerrillas or to the triumphant experience of Latin American foquista guerrilla warfare in answering the question from the beginning: what are the guerrillas to be used for and what are their objectives?, we must answer: they have been for the political independence of colonies or to restore bourgeois-liberal democracy.

(2nd) To the second question: when do the guerrillas start and when do they end? We are already, of course, in a position to answer this. The anticolonial guerrilla begins when there is maturation of a local dependent bourgeoisie, who operating under the protection of a favorable international conjuncture, launches a national movement. It ends when formal political independence is achieved. The anti-dictatorial, democratic guerrilla begins when the dictatorship, losing its social base, becomes "unbearable" for the majority of the people, including important sectors of the bourgeoisie. It ends with the restoration of bourgeois democracy.

In Uruguay, when did the guerrillas begin to operate: Was there a colonial situation? NO. Was there a situation with a dictatorship? NO. But if it was neither anticolonial nor democratic, what was the point, what was the character, and what were the objectives of the armed struggle that was beginning? Responding to these questions involves explaining the errors and successes of the MLN in solving two basic problems that we cited at the beginning: a) that of the link between the guerrilla and the masses and b) that of the military destruction of the repressive apparatus.

country continues to exist within the current terms. Because that level of armed struggle emerges as a need posed by the characteristics of the process of socio-economic and political deterioration, of which the ruling classes have neither found nor will find an outlet for. It is this deterioration without exit, which raises the need for a level of armed struggle, and as long as the process of deterioration continues, there will still be conditions for armed activity. There will always be organizations that assume that task for which the conditions have given.

The armed struggle will not end, in short, because there are organizations in a position to continue it. And it will continue.

What should not endure is the mistaken conception that has prevailed here up to now. What is in crisis, hopefully definitively, is the concept of "Foquismo." The defeat that the Uruguayan revolution suffers under this orientation today is for us, revolutionaries, also our defeat.

The path of the revolution does not take place in a flowery meadow. It is difficult, tortuous and is paved with difficulties. Through it one advances and in it one learns and even falls. How often? How long? There is no crystal ball or magicians in these things that can predict the future. Here, you also make your way by walking. The march is long, we know. The only decisive thing is the willingness to move forward. Not to burn for good, for the sake of blind faith. But because the conditions in which the process unfolds make it essential and possible. We will only abandon the path of armed action if a very important change in that process would indicate to us that it is counterproductive for revolutionary ends.Nothing that indicates this change has occurred. On the contrary the process of deterioration is clearer and more serious than ever. Nothing indicates, therefore, that we have to change the strategy, and in that strategy, armed struggle occupies a fundamental place.

Armed activity has been oriented until now predominantly through the conception of Foquismo. With that conception, we have disagreed from the beginning, we saw and pointed out

its weaknesses, we did our best because they were overcome, and we oriented our practice according to another line. Against all appearances, over our own inadequacies, our own mistakes, time and facts have proven us correct . We are not happy to confirm that. In the face of so many comrades of the MLN assassinated, brutally tortured, prisoners, with all that marvelous construction developed over the years, and through the effort of so many who struggled for the revolution and that today seems to be collapsing. We can not feel satisfaction for the facts that what we envisioned years ago being promptly fulfilled.. Those dead are our dead, those tortured are our tortured. As well as our comrades in our organization who today are now enduring the most brutal tortures and are paying with their lives defending the principles, life and line of our organization.

Far from us, then, to be smug. Much further, obviously is the despicable attitude of the reformists, opportunists and cowards, who spit now, ostentatiously, the counterrevolutionary hatred that they hid hypocritically when things were going better. The road is long, tortuous, and paved with difficulties. It is almost impossible not to stumble, nor even to fall. Especially in the complex conditions, so particular of Venezuela.[2] But from stumbles and falls, you have to learn. Yes, the march is long and difficult. That is why it would be unforgivable to stumble twice on the same stone. In order to not do so, to learn, we must analyze as objectively as possible what has happened in these hard months, and based on the conclusions of that analysis, we must be more precise about the technique, and expand upon it in more detailed terms.

[2] This is referring to the series of coups in Venezuela, particularly the 1948 one which overthrew the elected Center-Left government.

themselves all the people in a short time, including the Cuban colony, to send funds to the movement of "Doctor Castro" that came out, without problems, with photographs on the covers of "Life."

What had imperialism been expecting? At first they supported Batista. When they saw that he was spent they abandoned him. The "Marines" did not land there as they would do a few years later in Santo Domingo. They resigned themselves to the fact that "Doctor Castro" — after all a ultimately young and inexperienced Liberal guerrilla, they thought — would overthrow the military dictatorship. Later, the bourgeois political trips to that little neighboring island would see to it that things were put back on track democratically…in favor of imperialism and its dependent bourgeoisie.

These Yankee forecasts seemed to be fulfilled at first. A bourgeois lawyer, Dr. Urrutia, received the presidency from the hands of the victorious Fidel. Miró Cardona was prime minister and respectable figures formed his cabinet. It took some time after Batista fell that the radicalization of the Cuban Revolution began to occur,with its rapid turn towards new objectives: towards socialist objectives. We are not going to describe that process, as it would take us away from our subject. Suffice it to say that Urrutia had to resign, that Miró Cardona fled to Miami,and that several ministers from this early period joined the counterrevolution …

Imperialism and the bourgeoisie expected a mere replacement of government personnel and came out of it with a change in the social system. Never again would they be exposed to such surprises in Latin America. Every revolution, henceforth, would count on foreign intervention backed by the local bourgeoisie. In the Uruguayan case, when bourgeois domination is ever in danger, an intervention will occur. According to what can be predicted now, it is most likely that the bourgeoisie of Brazil will intervene. This is another element that is important to remember.

classes. It is useless, therefore, to try to arouse the support of bourgeois sectors around a revolutionary policy, no matter how "national" it may be. The tasks of the Uruguayan revolution are aimed at a transition to socialism and the national aspect of these tasks is inevitably subordinated to that, at its core-content.

There have been guerrillas whose objective has been to simply achieve changes at the political level (to overthrow a military dictatorship, for example) and to carry out certain socio-economic reforms (such as agrarian reforms). This was the case of the guerrillas in Cuba in its characteristic guerrilla stage of the Sierra Maestra. The guerrillas did not start there with socialist objectives, although there were already militants acting within its ranks from the beginning who were, without doubt, socialists like Che.

The ideology of Fidel in his plea "History will absolve me" after the attack on the Moncada barracks, is the ideology of a petty bourgeois, both liberal and reformist. No more. The economic program of the "26 of July" movement, under the influence of economist Felipe Pazos, was developmental and postulated as a national capitalist development program that included, as always in these cases, and as ECLAC advised, measures of agrarian reform and diverse social reforms. The political objective was to overthrow Batista's military dictatorship in order to restore parliamentary democracy… as bourgeois liberal democracy. The socio-economic objective was the reform of land ownership, the fight against foreign monopolies, "national" capitalist development,and capitalist… "social justice,"

Tribute was paid to the petty-bourgeois utopia of an independent capitalism, without the "injustices" and "abuses" of foreign monopolies. A pre-monopolist and "humane" capitalism with the worker…

With this program and faced with a corrupt dictatorship, they applied for the first time in Latin America, the strategy of a rural guerrilla foco and the guerrillas grouped around

II

Like any revolutionary victory, the triumph of the Cuban Revolution had a stimulating effect in Latin America, helping to advance the process of struggle throughout the continent. It demonstrated the viability of armed struggle, evidenced by the existence of conditions to initiate it. It showed that, indeed, in certain precise and concrete conditions, victory could be obtained in a relatively short time. That was the Cuban experience. We do not want to expand here on the vast and varied repercussions that the Cuban Revolution had. The revolutionaries learned many things from Cuba. As did the counterrevolution.

Today we refer only to a conception of the armed struggle, which was presented as based on the experience of Cuba.This concept known as "focus theory" or "Foquismo" systematized at the time by Régis Debray, especially in his work "Revolution in the Revolution?" pretended to be a conceptualization of the Cuban experience. He tried to specify in some quite precise strategic-tactical criteria, the lessons that, according to his supporters, could be drawn from the guerrilla war in Cuba. These strategic criteria were presented as generalizable, as applicable in most Latin American countries. Its influence was very great, motivating very intense polemics at the time, especially on the subject of its formulation by Debray.

In our country it was also polemicized in this regard, where the influence of these conceptions was strongly exerted. These conceptions were the ones that guided, basically, the practice of the MLN. Let us hasten to clarify that the line of the MLN was not, however, an application in lets say

a classic, orthodox, foquista criteria. Throughout its years of activity and even from its beginnings, this movement introduced variants and corrected or adapted the foquista concepts. The strategic-tactical line of the MLN has not been a mechanical transfer of the first and original foquista line. These adaptations constitute what is original, what is the same, and what is specific to the urban guerrilla experience (the Tactical Combat Units), of which the MLN takes center stage in Uruguay. But nevertheless, in spite of the great and very valuable creative effort applied to the adaptation of Foquismo to local conditions, this effort did not alter the basic foquista assumptions which inform the practice of the MLN. This constitutes an undoubtedly original and specific variant of Foquismo. For this reason, given the great importance that movement's activity has had in the process of the struggles in our country, it is useful before analyzing its performance, to make an evaluative balance of the criteria that constitute the foquista conception of armed struggle, such as they were formulated by their theorists, especially by Debray.

Our Organization disagreed with Foquismo since its emergence as a concept. We understand that the failures experienced today by the MLN and with it the Uruguayan revolution, correspond to the fact that the weaknesses of the foquista proposal was not overcome by the MLN in a timely manner. This largely occurred because their efforts pointed to an adaptation of Foquismo and not a break with it. This leads us in the first place to briefly express the characteristics that we understand to be the most salient of the foquista approach.

These are:

1. The need to initiate the armed struggle as soon as possible, provided there are certain economic and social conditions that make it viable. It was assumed that these conditions were met in almost all Latin American countries (Debray said that Uruguay and Chile were the exception,

italism, ie: socialism. Thus the "national interest" of the bourgeoisie has nothing in common with the national interest of the working classes. But in anti-colonial revolutions it is generally the bourgeois nationalist ideology that predominates and unites the entire population behind the local ruling classes. The reality of the class struggle is then obscured, behind "patriotic" ideology. In that case it is easy to mobilize all the people, without distinction, behind the guerrillas. It quickly obtains "national" support for a "national" war …a bourgeois war. If the war is not anticolonial but social — and this will be the case in Uruguay — there will be as many "patriot-isms" as social classes are able to generate ideological tendencies.There will be a bourgeois "nationalism" that will be the ideological cover for the real imperial dependence. And there will be a worker and popular nationalism of socialist theory and the ideological content founded on it, that will be projected at the level of the national question.

The urban guerrilla will never have the support of "the whole nation" here, no matter how much it proclaims itself nationalist. It will only have the support of those classes that are interested in socialism.This is the way it will happen because our revolution will be social and not anticolonial. Because it faces and will face a bourgeoisie that, in reality, no matter how dependent it is, economically, politically and ideologically, it formally has already completed political independence and has already structured its state as a "sovereign" state. Thus it is useful to retain the conception that a national, anti-imperialist struggle is not possible here on the margins of the class struggle. Put another way: the central and overriding priority is the revolution against the dependent national bourgeoisie and only through it will the real struggle for the national cause of the people develop.

Any revolutionary military policy will therefore be a class military policy, which in all its stages must coincide with the interests of the industrial working class and other working

pendent national bourgeoisies, on the other hand, when the revolutions are social and anti-capitalist, resist to the end.They must be defeated militarily and destroyed. This forced military task puts to the fore, from the outset, an essential difference between bourgeois revolutions for political independence and the revolutions of the dominated classes for their national liberation.

Of the three anticolonial revolutions that we mentioned before, the respective urban guerrillas had the essential task to generate political conditions that oriented compromise solutions between the ruling classes of their countries and those of the imperialist countries. In Uruguay, where formal independence is already achieved, the function of the urban guerrilla is to contribute toward overthrowing the power of the local ruling classes, allied to imperialism. Therefore, its political-military task is much more complex and essentially different. Hence, it is not possible for us to simply collect as a "model" the experiences of those anti-colonial urban guerrillas, a temptation to which those who meditate or write about these issues do not always evade.

The objectives of the revolution condition all revolutionary politics, not excluding its military aspects. Hence, it will prior to any other consideration in defining objectives, or in general terms, the nature of the revolutionary process in which political-military practice will be entered into.

In the wars for independence, the cause is "national," which means that it is the cause of the local ruling classes, assumed in general at the level of concrete militancy, by the small local bourgeoisies, imbued with the ideology of those ruling classes. This point needs to be made since it is impossible to conceive of an idea of a nation, of a "patria,"absent of class content. The nation is nothing more than the bourgeois nation, where the bourgeoisie dominates, when this concept is handled by the bourgeoisie. From a class perspective, the only acceptable concept of a nation is one which involves the disappearance of cap-

that in both countries these conditions did not exist), as a consequence of their underdevelopment and backwardness.

2. The political and even ideological conditions (called "subjective conditions") would develop as a consequence of the activity of the armed "focus"(foco). From there, the existence or not of revolutionary political parties was considered as secondary and certainly not a priority. The sympathies aroused by the military activity of the foco should be framed in organizations whose function was, almost exclusively, to contribute to the effort and military victory. More than parties, properly speaking, what was sought were support organizations and support of the military effort, with tasks of coverage,[1] logistical support and propaganda, recruitment, etc., focused on the development of the operational potential of the armed foco and its expansion. The development of the struggle would be measured in terms of growth in operational capacity; success in terms of military success and the victory was the military victory in the war. The expectation and confidence in that victory, which would emerge from armed action, was the achievement and the essential requirement on the ideological plane.

[1] Coverage tasks: a term widely used in the political-military organizations of the time (especially the South American ones) and occurring repeatedly by the FAU. It refers to specific tasks of the armed front. "Coverage" can be both a task of distraction ("fun" they also called it) in the middle of a military operation, it can be a political cover (it became mythical that when the Tupas put together the great escape from Punta Carretas, "The abuse" , groups of militiamen and collaborators set up barricades and threw Molotov cocktails in neighborhoods such as Cerro to distract the repressive forces and journalistic attention there). A "cover" can also include setting up a legal mechanical workshop in a space belonging to a local supporter as a front to retain Molaguero, for example. Something that is "covered," it is masked from something else but it fulfills a tactical-strategic function.

3. The war would be conceived in terms of guerrilla warfare, centered on the rural environment, under the protection of suitable geographical conditions (mountains, jungles, etc.) that would make possible the concealment of the guerrillas and the tactics of "hitting and disappearing" by always moving, characteristic of the rural guerrilla. In its classic, original formulation, Foquismo denied the viability of the urban guerrilla. By definition "always in the presence of the enemy" always achievable by the latter, the urban guerrilla, it was said, was condemned to a rapid annihilation. The armed and urban activity would only fulfill a complementary function to the rural guerrilla, which would be the protagonist of the confrontation and who through many small and partial victories,would conquer the final victory by reducing the opposing army to impotence.

4. The military activity of the foco would inaugurate a process where each action, each operation of the foco would cause a generalized replication, a response of repression. To the extent that the guerrillas were operating with greater intensity, at higher levels, repression would harden and would be generalized. Insofar that the harsh generalizing repression affects an increasingly broad sector of the population, the greater the sympathies that the foco would arouse and the greater, therefore, its possibilities of development. In this ascending dialectic of action-repression, socio-politico conditions that are ever more favorable to military action would be generated, until culminating in an ideal situation in which important sectors of the population, supporting the guerrillas, their armed vanguard, would impose the fall of the despotic government,supported only by the privileged minority and the repressive apparatus, defeated in its efforts to militarily suppress the guerilla.

(1st) What is the guerrilla for, what are its objectives, its program? There have been guerrillas whose objective was only the conquest of national independence. Putting it into class terms, this independence means substituting direct political domination by the imperialist metropolitan bourgeoisie, exercised through the bourgeois, metropolitan state apparatus, substituting it, we say, for the domination exercised by the local bourgeoisie, through a local, "national" bourgeois state apparatus.The national bourgeoisies in the current, imperialist stage of capitalism are-we know-dependent bourgeoisies and the states they create are only half sovereign.

We do not want to downplay the importance of these processes of struggle for political independence, nor deny the possibilities of revolutionary action that they can enable at certain junctures. We simply want to pick apart, from a class point of view, the essence of an issue around which there is more hubbub and confusion.

Wars for independence were those that were spearheaded by, for example, the IRA in Ireland, led by the bourgeois nationalist De Valera; the IRGUN ZVAL LEUMI led by the Jewish fascist Menahem Begin in Israel; the EOKA led by the Greco-Cypriot fascist Colonel GRIVAS in Cyprus. All of those guerrilla wars for national independence were anticolonial and against English domination. They were not wars of liberation in a socialist and anti-bourgeois sense.

The English imperialists did not want to leave, of course. The guerrillas in the three cases cited, almost exclusively urban, waged relatively brief wars against them. We will not give details here, but brief and journalistic information, sufficient for our purposes, is found in books such as "The War of the Flea" by Taber.

England — a decadent empire like France-resisted to some extent. When the balance of economic and — fundamentally — political costs was clearly causing a deficit, they left. Because the colonial armies can leave. The "national" armies of the de-

V

The practice of urban guerrilla warfare in our country by the UTC of the MLN meant, from the beginning, the introduction of variants in the schema of orthodox Foquismo. The most obvious being: the urban character of the guerrilla, which at the time many had denied as viable.

But the guerrillas basically reframe two political problems:

1. The problem of the characteristics that, in conditions of urban guerrilla warfare, includes the link between the guerrillas and the masses as well as the policy to be developed in relation to this.In other words, the problem of the concrete modalities according to which, when the guerrillas act in an urban environment, they politically capitalize on the popular sympathy that can promote their action;

2. The nature of the process by which military destruction of the repressive apparatus will occur through urban guerrilla practice, a prerequisite for the destruction of bourgeois power.

The mere formulation of these two questions clearly leads us to ask two preceding questions, because the answers that are offered will depend on the type of solution we give to the two problems raised above.

The two questions are: (1st) What is the guerrilla for, what are its objectives, its program? (2nd) When does the guerrilla struggle begin and when does it end?

The generation of this dynamic — in short, the central core of Foquismo — would emanate from the armed successes.These would generate the prospect of victory capable of attracting the masses in the framework of increasing political repression. The activity of the guerrillas and the repressive response that it would inevitably produce, would close all the doors to the masses, all the ways that were not the route of armed struggle, necessarily turning the people to the side of the revolution. Thus a short, simple and direct path would proceed to the "politicization of the masses," its nucleation[2] behind the armed guerrilla vanguard. From this point of view, the importance of all mass activity (trade union, propaganda, public politics) not directly aimed at favoring the war effort was underestimated. Mass activity supposedly distracts forces in aspects considered secondary or even negative, insofar as they could open expectations and perspectives that would compete, eventually, with the path of armed struggle. For the rest, it was based on the premise that every organization, every public activity, would be quickly swept away by repression once the action-repression mechanics triggered by the guerrilla foco has been set in motion.

The time that has elapsed, the intense, rich and often painful experiences produced from these years by the Latin American revolutionary movements have clarified the fatal errors of Foquismo.

1. The simplicity of its conception of the necessary conditions to start and especially to carry out the armed struggle.This subject, vast and of defining importance,obviously deserves a particularized consideration, which goes beyond the framework of this brief reference. It involves the analysis of the relationships between the conditions of the economic level, of the class struggle,

[2] Nucleation is the first step in the formation of either a new thermodynamic phase or a new structure via self-assembly or self-organization.

and the political and ideological levels (subjective conditions of the same and the consideration of the role of armed activity in relation to them).Furthermore it delineates between the reformist currents, and leads necessarily, to elucidate theoretical points of view and to the critique of the social and ideological roots of the Foquista conception itself.

2. The development of political conditions, much less that of ideological conditions, do not derive from guerrilla activity in the rather mechanical terms foreseen by Foquismo. The activity of the armed foco has not been shown as an adequate substitute, not even as a possible and viable substitute for party activity. This insufficiency is plain to see as the struggle is prolonged. The political responses, both of the dominant classes as well as the dominated, do not conform to the overly schematic and rectilinear[3] forecasts of Foquismo. It is evident that an overly simplistic perspective of the structure and functioning of the political and ideological levels weighed on this conception, the importance of which was notoriously underestimated. On the other hand, the possibility of forcing a change of the political conditions, as well as the mentality and beliefs of the people through armed activity was notoriously overestimated. The delay in the advance of the so-called subjective conditions continued to weigh on their activity, frequently producing the isolation of the rural foco, and thus creating the conditions of its annihilation.

3. The rejection of the possibility for the urban guerrilla and the exclusivity reclaimed for the rural guerrilla is judged by the facts. There has been and there is extensive

[3] rectilinear: contained by, consisting of, or moving in a straight line or lines

is with the violent destruction of the bourgeois state. That there will only be violent destruction of the state, of bourgeois power, with an adequate political-military practice, are all contributions made in these years by the armed organizations of the continent. In other words,no organization is truly revolutionary until it addresses and solves the problems of the violent, military aspect of its political practice.

There is no revolutionary politics without revolutionary theory. There is no revolutionary politics without a revolutionary military line. All of this has become clear and clarifying this has been an invaluable contribution. It has advanced the class struggle at all levels.

But reality is dialectical. When certain findings have been made, new problems arise from these findings. When you have reached a higher,more elevated level of comprehension, practice, and experience (and understanding — except for coffee house charlatans — always indicates experience and practice) new problems, also at a higher, finer level , they require our attention and must be resolved.

Our country has not been, as some predicted, an exception in the process of advancing the Latin American revolution.Here we have also largely lived those experiences. Here there has been and continues to be a vast and prolific political-military practice. To analyze it, delve into its content, and really understand the causes and the meaning of its advances and setbacks, is a decisive task of today that we can not escape.

destroy bourgeois political power — the bourgeois state — the ultimate objective of all revolutionary political practice.

Destruction of the capitalist state, destruction of bourgeois power, that is necessarily violent and cannot be achieved by (assuming that it can be …) traversing through elections to occupy certain official positions (in the Chambers or even of the Presidency), as those are only some elements and not even the most important ones, through which bourgeois power operates.And as it is impossible and has never been seen, nor can anyone sensibly claim that the capitalist state is "extinguished" to make way for socialism, nor that the bourgeoisie will "peacefully" donate its properties to the people, or will peacefully renounce its domination and its power, they must be destroyed by force.

Only those with bourgeois shamelessness, knowingly lying, speak of capitalism as having changed in its essence. That it is now "capitalism of the people" as the Yankee and Korean ideologues say here, with Rafael Caldera repeating them. Only the wise guys — or simpleton — reformists believe that they will change it, little by little, with "wise" parliamentary laws. Or that there may be a "good" capitalism, led by a "national bourgeoisie," which some people invent whenever things get half ugly …

The affirmation of that necessity for revolutionary violence, the necessity for revolution, and the theoretical-practical overcoming of petty-bourgeois reformism (nationalist or democratic, "populist," as they say) or worker (social-democratic, Trotskyist, or communist , "Marxist," as they say) has been the fundamental contribution that the armed organizations of Latin America have made to the ascending process of the struggles of our peoples.

An organization is only truly revolutionary if the problem of power is really posed and resolved and the problem of power is solved only with an adequate line on the practice of violence, that is, with an adequate military line. The demonstration of which is that there will only be socialism with revolution, that

practice of urban armed struggle. However, it is conspicuous that the latter has been acquiring further development in Latin America and even worldwide.

4. The cumulative and ascending mechanics of action-repression, which would lead to a favorable polarization of forces, generalizing and isolating the repression, and developing and taking root in the foco, does not usually occur. Repression has learned to maintain its selectivity, the ruling classes can and do take countermeasures that hinders and reverses this dynamic. In its strategy, the counterrevolutionary activity of reformism and the handling of the old ideological myths of bourgeois liberalism (elections, legality, etc.) have played an important role that Foquismo did not foresee.

III

Most of the failures experienced in the years after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution can be attributed to the influence of Foquismo. It was not the armed struggle that failed, what clearly failed was the short-sighted expectations that Foquismo entails. In the midst of these failures, it is undeniable — nevertheless — that the widespread practice of armed struggle decisively contributed to modifying the patterns and characteristics of political action in Latin America.

Armed practice radically modified the way of perceiving and facing the problems of the revolution. It caused the reconsideration of it in concrete and precise terms.It brought to the table with pressing reality and urgency, the issues related to concrete ways to achieve with violence, the destruction of bourgeois power. Since then there has been an unavoidable problem regarding which methods to employ, in order to develop the armed route to the revolution. The problem of revolutionary military strategy. All this entailed a revaluation of the utilization, at all levels, of revolutionary violence.

For several decades, the revolution has been repeatedly talked about in these countries. But for a long time, little was concretely done for it. Nothing was raised regarding the concrete ways in which the revolutionary process would take shape. In general, the void without a foreseeable solution that this problem left, was filled with the myth of the so-called "proletarian insurrection," conceived in terms of a generalized popular uprising, with people leaving en masse to the streets, barricades, etc. This myth was inherited from the last century, the Paris Commune of 1871, the Soviet October, or the Catalan

This has been and is the core of the reformist, electoralist political approach. Based on that approach all violence should be rejected because it endangers the elections, and therefore, the possibility of coming to power. This "argumentation" is complemented by identifying legalism with the possibility of carrying out any type of mass activity. Even at the union level, "contact with the masses" can only be maintained by acting "legally." Violence only gives "pretexts" for repression, repression that fatally "isolates," and thus part of the reasoning that reformists make. At the level of the economic struggle, violence acts as a "pretext" for repression, isolates and harms mass activity and is even offered as a pretext for the reaction to hinder the only way — necessarily electoral and therefore necessarily legal — to reach power. It would then be "infantilism" and "spontaneity" and the reformists prey on the errors of anarchosyndicalism, accusing it of subordinating, effectively, the political level to the economic level of the class struggle; by not proposing a clear solution to the problem of the destruction of bourgeois power, it offers too easy of "a gift" for criticism by the reformists.

For years on our part — we have repeated it for the doubters — we maintain that the objective of violence at the level of the economic struggle, IS NOT ONLY and NOT even principally the obtaining of economic demands in themselves. Rather, the violence in the economic struggle has as a function to contribute — let it be clearly understood, TO CONTRIBUTE — to raising the level of those struggles to a political level. To contribute (together with the other means: propaganda, ideological struggle, public and legal struggle or not) to elevate the economic struggle, as much as possible, to the level of political struggle. To contribute toward raising the union awareness of economic interest that animates the economic struggle. To contribute, as we say, to elevating it to political consciousness, of political interest, which is the consciousness necessary to

IV

The development of the struggle in recent years has totally changed the terms by which the struggle in Latin America traditionally arose. It meant overcoming, surely definitively, a long stage in which that struggle had been conceived according to two patterns:

a. At the economic level of the class struggle: mass activity, trade union, with vindicating content, primarily concerning wages and processed via traditional methods (stoppages, strikes, events, etc.) practiced within the framework of bourgeois legality.

b. at the political level of the class struggle: activity of legal parties with their traditional methods (public venues, events, propaganda, publications, ideological diffusion, etc.) aimed decisively at obtaining electoral results.

The way to reach power (falsely identified with the government) was the vote. Obtaining increasingly numerous parliamentary representation signified stages towards that outcome. Violence at both the economic and political levels of the class struggle, they said, was negative since it implied putting up obstacles, "pretextual" obstacles to the electoral path.Conceived as the only possible path to reach "power" and this being the cardinal problem of political practice, everything had to contribute to keeping this path open. In other words: if it is politically decisive to obtain power by the electoral route and the elections meant something "legal," you had to be within the law to be able to vote … and thus be able to come to power.

July 18th, concretizing it with realities and helping to keep it alive in the imagination of the people.

It is not that insurrections of this type cannot be carried out. Nor are they, under any conditions, impossible. The "Cordobazo" of May 69' and similar uprisings in Rosario, Tucumán, and other cities, sufficiently show and with very close examples, that the era of widespread, popular street insurrections are far from over. The problem is that the insurrection becomes a myth, a comfortable myth, opportunistically manageable, if it is isolated from concrete, habitual, and daily political practice. And that is what reformism has been doing for many years. That is what the social democracy of the old socialist parties did first and ended up by expressly renouncing violence, insurrection, and revolution.This is what the neo-socialists of the communist parties did and continue to do, who still talk about revolution while doing everything possible to prevent it from coming.

Reformism places the insurrection in the sky of unattainable ideals. By verbally exalting it, they try — in fact — to prevent it from being prepared. In this disagreement, in that incoherence between their counterrevolutionary political practice and their verbalism about a final insurrectionary outcome, they seek to base their eternal affirmation that "conditions are lacking," whenever there is an attempt to advance the process of political struggle, applying means not included in their very limited recipebook.This is basically limited to two things: a) at the economic level of the class struggle, wage action, developed with the utmost respect for bourgeois and therefore peaceful "legality"; b) at the political level, parliamentarism, electoralism, as a way to capitalize politically on the results of the economic struggle. By confining its practice at all levels within the increasingly narrow frameworks of bourgeois legality, reformism creates the conditions for its ever greater integration into the system. It obstructs and tries to prevent the development of the conditions for its destruction.

It is obvious that if the design and the revolutionary project are not present guiding the daily practice of the struggle at all levels, the conditions for a revolutionary outcome will never be rendered.The capitalist system will not be destroyed following the rules of the game that they generated themselves to guarantee its continuity. The continuity of the system is maintained by reducing action to only that which bourgeois legality allows, only what the legality created and managed by the bourgeoisie recommends. That is why only ever greater reformism can emerge from the reformist line and an ever greater retreat from the famous insurrectionary outcome that they postpone until an indefinable "opportune moment."That is why they can not formulate, nor do they want to, any strategic-military guideline.

By turning the idea of the "proletarian insurrection" into a myth, the reformists make it into a legitimating pretext for their counterrevolutionary practice, so useful to the system. Far from representing an alternative opposed to it, aimed at destroying it, it becomes daily practice, in concrete and everyday events and in a way "perfects" it, by correcting it in its most extreme and visible manifestations of injustice.

It is important to insist on this, because the myth of an incomprehensible future insurrection, suddenly and miraculously arisen, without anyone preparing it, as the paradoxical end of an ultralegalist practice, is the counterpart of another rooted myth: of the invincibility of repression. "The revolution will be possible when there are conditions" say the communist parties and with them all the reformists add "the day of the revolution will arrive." "But those who violate the laws before that day, wielding weapons, will be fatally defeated," they say. And from there they always condemn those as "putchists," "adventurers,"and "free-loaders" who do not resign themselves to transit through the electoral impasse,waiting for that hypothetical day when the revolution miraculously descends

from the idealistic sky in which it is confined by the cheap chatter of the capitulators.

This absurd conception, disguised with pseudo-scientific phraseologies, was for a long time the predominant one on the left. Faced with each failure, faced with each defeat of the revolution,they are once again rehabilitating it as an inviolable dogma. Faced with each triumph of the revolution they are adopting it and inventing pseudo-demonstrations attempting to show that in reality, the revolution advances when applying the doctrines …of the reformists.

But despite their inexhaustible "polemical" resources, the reformists can not and will not destroy the facts. And it is in the terrain of facts that the viability of armed struggle has been demonstrated and already definitively incorporated into the political strategy of the revolutionary organizations.

The prevailing problem concerns the precise characteristics that this strategy must cover in each social, national or regional formation.

A polemic concerning the adoption of the urban or rural guerrilla as exclusive or excluding forms is not what is being offered.The core of the useful analysis which can be made regarding the experience of past or current armed struggle does not lie there. Rather, the central theme is the analysis of the foquista conception, which in its primary and orthodox formulation held up the rural guerrilla as a priority and exclusive form, but which later was also adapted to urban guerrilla forms . It is this foquista conception, in all its variants that is in crisis and not armed struggle, which maintains its validity. We conceive of armed struggle as a fundamental aspect of the political practice of a clandestine party that also acts at a mass level, based on a harmonious and global strategy. It is this correct conception of the struggle,which is reaffirmed by the collected experience.

Federación Anarquista Uruguaya
COPEI
1972

Retrieved on 2022-04-09 from redblacknotes.com/2022/04/02/copei-commentary-on-armed-struggle-and-foquismo-in-latin-america-1972-new-and-complete-translation
Translated by Campy Sino, 2022. Translated from federacionanarquistauruguaya.uy/copei-1a-parte-documentos-de-fau-1972 and federacionanarquistauruguaya.uy/copei-2a-parte-documentos-de-fau-1972

usa.anarchistlibraries.net

side of the revolution, is, more than the revolutionaries…the counterrevolution itself.

The function of the foco is to arouse and provoke, with its sustained activity, a process of political reaction that suppresses all other expectations and possibilities, while cornering and pushing the masses towards the revolutionary path and victory. To the extent that this takes place, there will be a crescendo of mass support to the foco, which will result in the amplification of military action of the foco itself. In other words, the foco that it tries to generate — is clear in the MLN and which allows it to be characterized as foquista — is a dialectic of armed action-repression. Each operation produces a repressive response. Everything consists in being in a position to survive and to carry out a counter-response, a major — or different — operation from the previous one. Why greater or different? Because in addition to provoking a response, every operation tends to produce a psychological impact on public opinion. This dramatic effect is vital because in the absence of presence in the masses, it is what can signify and give political relevance to the foco. The frequent demonstration of the bravery, audacity, and effectiveness of the guerrillas, is the only thing capable of keeping on the table, the existence and validity of a political practice that does not seek another form of externalization. On the other hand, persistence and the operational dimension create the prospect of victory, of success capable of producing the necessary recruitment to broaden the foco. This would be locked in a military practice only and lived on the basis of the successes that it obtained in the military field.

IX

When we began this series of notes we pointed out that the experiences of urban guerrillas (Israel, Ireland, Cyprus) had developed within struggles for political independence. Cuba, an inspiring experience of the foquista conception, offered the example of anti-dictatorial guerrillas undertaken for the restoration of the institutions of bourgeois democracy. We have said that neither of these two situations occurred in Uruguay when the foco began to operate: it is formally, at least, an independent and "democratic" country. The emergence of the foco was therefore based on reasons of a social nature.

A contradiction could then appear between the chosen method — the foco — and the — social — objectives of its action. A contradiction that emanates from the fact that social (socialist) objectives impose the need for mass participation — which implies a mass politics — conceived in terms differently from indiscriminate "multi-class" popular support, which the non-socialist objectives (national or democratic) of the other guerrillas could arouse. Especially when-as we have already seen — after Cuba, the dependent bourgeoisies of Latin America have tenaciously opposed any fracture of the bourgeois "order."

This contradiction imposed various adjustments on the MLN's conception of Foquismo. It was based on the premise that if the guerrilla action could be given an ascending continuity, if it managed to produce more, more frequent, and greater impacts, it would also produce increasingly harsh and widespread repressive measures. Before each important operation the supporters of the MLN waited for the military

strike or the blow given by the MLN itself. To avoid the hostility of the masses, the MLN took care for a long time to choose "friendly" targets and where possible tried to perform bloodless operations without confrontation: expropriations, destroying equipment, propaganda or obvious reprisals. The alternative emerged clearly: if institutional normality persisted, the repression appeared to be rather inefficient. Once a certain degree of development had been reached, the foco generated a dynamic of growth, maintained of course, based on a "crescendo" of operability.This growth, while compromised by eventual tactical errors, seemed not to stumble for some time with decisive obstacles in the framework of a "democratic" regime. The other possibility was that democracy would give way to more authoritarian, even dictatorial forms, which although they could be more effective in repression, would generate more favorable political conditions for the foco to extend its influence. Within the democratic framework, repression was ineffective; outside the democratic framework, a political situation of the type that traditionally consolidated guerrilla armed struggle was created. Faced with a dictatorship, the guerrillas would then go on to embody the struggle for lost democracy, generating a situation of the Cuban variety. The MLN seems to have moved within this perspective for a long time. As a result of this function, the underestimation of the ideological and political struggle was consolidated.

Any form of public activity, they said, was "wasting"[1] militants and sympathizers, feeding a future in which only those who were able to organize themselves for combat in the strictest secrecy would subsist. Therefore, they said, it was negative to "give a face" by holding a political line in public or participating in union political activity. Politics was then, it was said, the patient preparation of a clandestine armed apparatus capable of contesting the power of the bourgeoisie.

[1] The literal word used here was "burned"

With slight variations, this line was applied until the end of 1970, when the proximity of elections posed a difficult problem to Foquismo.

During the entire period from 1966–1970 in the expectation of the dictatorship that would sweep all forms of political activity and even public unions, the MLN shied away from any controversy with reformism. Reformist positions were only discussed and confronted around particular events in specific places. This was all the easier to do because, by virtue of its own foquista conception, the guerrillas lacked "visible representatives" at the public level of the masses and did not even postulate a line or criteria for work at this level, which was generally considered negative.This then created a well-known and characteristic situation of parallel action without interference between the urban guerrillas of the MLN and the Communist Party, which, without clashing with it, continued to develop its reformist practice at the mass level. When throughout Latin America the guerrillas were splitting with the Communist Parties, in Uruguay both coexisted peacefully without attacking or interfering. Each one simply left on record their disbelief in the other's methods and entrusted themselves to an indeterminate future, to negotiate that "tactical" difference on which they did not even insist.

The guerrillas could then grow without questioning or compromising the reformist predominance at the mass or union level, all the while under the cover of the abandonment that Foquismo proclaimed with respect to mass action. Of course, in reality, the reformist practice and the guerrilla practice were contradictory. The "agreement" and the distribution of zones of influence could only be transitory. All revolutionary practice is objectively contradictory to any reformist practice. In those sectors — the students, certain unions — where the sympathies for the MLN took on more or less organized forms, the clash with the reformists inevitably occurred. Only the efforts of the leaders and the weight of their authority based on the pres-

tige of the military apparatus, allowed that clash, implicit in the reality of things, not to become generalized or acquire the dimension of controversy, of ideological struggle along anti-reformist lines.

Of course, the leadership of the MLN reconciled to this compromise based on the notion of its transience. Because it was thought that, within a short period, the action of the foco would generate the death of democratic forms of bourgeois "legality." And with it, the death of reformism. Since the subsistence of legality is vital for the Communist Party, once legality disappeared, the Communist Party would be out of the game and would be — what was left of it — forced to fall in line with the MLN, the only organization that, due to its characteristics, would have been in a position to survive operating under the harshest political and repressive conditions. The MLN under these conditions, would polarize — as had happened in Cuba — all anti-dictatorial opinion and vanguardize the struggle for democratic restoration. Arms gave them the possibility of leading a struggle of which it would be the military and political vanguard. The embodiment of a military practice, then fully validated, would be inevitably shared by all, since the dictatorship would have closed all other doors and would have blocked, by its very existence, all other avenues. Thus, by generating a qualitative modification with its armed practice at the political level (the dictatorship and a foco of armed resistance to it) the guerrillas would find themselves, after acting against the grain of the situation, a period of "introduction" in a situation of being socially validated at the mass level. This would occur at the level of the entire people, arousing multi-class support, since — as in Cuba — the anti-dictatorial struggle would be of multi-class interest. The guerrillas then, disentangled from the reformist or any other type of "competition" by the dictatorial repression would thus, without "sterile polemics," without "theoretical talks," without "divisions," almost without the need to speak, except with their actions and without ever ceasing to

be foquista guerrillas,would thus acquire the leadership of the masses. This would follow since it would be the only thing left standing and with a military aptitude then totally "functionally" transformed within the conditions of the anti-dictatorial struggle.

Reformism, for its part, bet on the survival of democratic forms, avoiding everything within reach which generated situations that could compromise its validity. Relying on foquista disregard, it clung to its leadership of the mass movement, carefully trying to remove it from any activity that could compromise the observance of the laws. They refrained from publicly criticizing — although they conducted an incessant ideological campaign surreptitiously — toward the guerrillas, to which they even dedicated, sometimes, very discreet smiles. The leadership of the Communist Party trusted that the repression would crush the foco before it could generate a volume of armed operations sufficient to question the "institutional legality," which their reforms, — and all reformisms — need to live.

The absence — by virtue of the foquist conception — of a political practice at the level of the masses, converging with the revolutionary military activity of the guerrillas, enabled this policy, since in this way, the existence and development of the armed foco did not come to interfere nor question its control over the leadership of the mass movement. Where the supporters of the MLN organized and acted with their own criteria, they were harshly attacked by the Communist Party. But since this happened only occasionally and in limited sectors, it was not necessary for the Communist Party either, to launch a generalized polemic specifically against the MLN. This is how this curious parallelism could subsist for years, this "peaceful coexistence" between guerrillas in ascension and a Communist Party that has predominance in the leadership of the mass movement.

But from this situation, it was deduced that the Communist Party still had a considerable advantage. Those who in the revolutionary field tried to develop a revolutionary line at the level of the masses, those who tried to make the two aspects of revolutionary political practice, the military and the masses converge, found themselves pressed and surrounded between two forces that that did not mutually interfere, but rather developed in parallel without facing each other. Those who postulated the need for armed action now, but simultaneous and convergent with mass action, obviously suffered at the same time from the attacks of reformism at the mass level and the competition at the military level of the foquista action which channeled, decisively since 1968, the sympathies of the sectors most disposed to revolutionary action. The polarization of the greatest revolutionary forces towards the MLN and its conception of foquismo, which would not play in the struggle against reformism, notoriously weakened the revolutionary line at the level of the masses and ensured the subsistence of the reformist predominance at that level.

It is true that the action of the MLN developed the forces of the revolution. But its foquista conception did not allow a sufficiently strong revolutionary position to be developed at the mass level for the political-ideological reach of the reformist line of the Communist Party be sufficiently clarified at a general level. That is the ambiguous political result — a predictable result on the other hand — of the foquista development in our country. What would certainly grow would be the military potential of the MLN, the foquista guerrilla. Would that be enough?

X

In April we can approximately locate the moment in which the noted weaknesses of the foquista conception caused a crisis within the M.L.N. This crisis was even recorded in internal documents captured and publicized and had been reflected in the very clear visualization by the leadership of the MLN of two problems to which we had alluded when starting this series of works.These two fundamental problems are: 1st.) The difficulties that are presented to the urban guerrillas when attempting the destruction of the repressive apparatus through the guerrilla military practice exclusively. 2nd.) The problem of widening the circle of popular sympathies aroused by the guerrilla action. Based on the findings from that date (and always, according to published documents) the MLN leadership considered that it had already politically capitalized on the sympathies of those sectors who, by possessing a greater politicization, would be in a position to be captured through the foquista military practice. Of the two issues, one had a "technical" appearance, the other more ostensibly political. The pressing validity of both problems showed that the foquista practice was beginning to reach the limits of its development possibilities. As such, these two problems are intimately linked. They are two aspects, on different planes of the same political problem for which the foquista conception cannot offer, under any circumstances, a definitive solution.

Let us begin with the first aspect, which is the more specifically "technical" problem, constituted by the difficulties that the urban guerrilla (or any urban guerrilla) faces in achieving final victory through an exclusively guerrilla practice and within

tary sphere and in the sphere of public action. Both failures are just the two sides of the same coin. Failure in both spheres will continue to be inevitable to the extent that Foquismo does not thoroughly review its conception. To the extent that it does not stop being foquista, no revolutionary movement will be able to effectively channel the efforts of the Uruguayan revolution. On the contrary, it will contribute toward conditions capable of endangering the whole process.

Foquismo, the validity of the foquista conception, can only contribute to aborting the development of the Uruguayan revolutionary process. Of course, this does not prevent the recognition of the motivation and the revolutionary nature of the activity of the comrades who, sharing the erroneous foquista conception, developed the MLN. Wherein does the recognition of these comrades as revolutionaries lie? They definitely validated the military practice they introduced in Uruguay. Their attitude implies a profound and definitive rupture with the current power structure. They attacked it in the most sensitive sphere, in the sphere of questioning the monopoly of force by the bourgeois state. They contributed to some extent, partially and indirectly, to deteriorate the bourgeois ideological hegemony over the masses, even acting from a non-proletarian, petty-bourgeois perspective. Are the comrades who have participated in the foco activity revolutionary? Yes. Is Foquismo an effective revolutionary conception? No. Foquismo is an erroneous revolutionary conception and as such negative and dangerous for the revolution.

political training of the militants. After receiving a few blows, the climate of demoralization won over the movement and hastened its defeat.The decompartmentalization then manifested its disastrous effects.

The precariousness of the political framing achieved for supporters of the foco makes evident its limited utility. It even became impossible to orchestrate a sufficient public campaign against the torture. A great paradox occurred where in the totally inadequate ideological framework of the MLN, a repressive action with characteristics similar to those of Brazil or Algeria could be surreptitiously experienced, without this provoking a public reaction of sufficient importance. A movement of sympathy does not equate to a political party. An ideologically amorphous movement of sympathies, lacking in short, another strategy and tactic other than mere sympathy with the armed actions and the emotional adherence to them is not enough. A political party is something else.

The foquista conception accepts the framing of sympathies in movements of sympathizers with military action. The foquista conception does not tolerate the existence of a party, which is incompatible with it. But the movement of sympathizers demonstrates its inefficiency as a form of public action. It is still valid that Foquismo continues to exclude a public political practice despite the appearances that it came to have in its Uruguayan version. Only a true political party with insertion in the masses and with public action, is capable of assuming at the mass level, the responsibilities inherent to its link with military practice. An amorphous movement of sympathizers is not capable of properly assuming those responsibilities.The Uruguayan experience proves this conclusively. The failure of this kind of public action of the foco necessarily correlates with the foquista conception in the military level. Despite its adaptations, which we have accounted for throughout this series of works, the Uruguayan version of Foquismo conclusively demonstrated its error, its invalidity, both in the mili-

the framework of a struggle that is neither anti-colonial nor "democratic."

In previous work we had pointed out that urban guerrilla practice, as it occurred in international experience, — we have appropriately cited the cases of the IRGUN in Israel, the IRA in Ireland, and the EOKA in Cyprus — had the fundamental objective of obtaining national liberation or national independence through anti-colonial struggles. We then added — and repeat it now for the benefit of recap — that in other situations, the urban guerrillas also had as their political objective, the struggle against dictatorial situations. In other words, in some cases, it was about obtaining formal national independence and in others, about the restoration of bourgeois "democratic" regimes. When we insist on raising the difficulties of the urban guerrilla as a form of military action that is capable of achieving a final victory, we are referring to those cases such as the MLN, in which the urban guerrilla action does not have as its fundamental objective, either independence or "democracy," but profound social transformations. We believe that the specific military difficulties that arise for urban guerrilla action, to the extent that it is oriented towards social transformation objectives, are real and of a general nature. In our opinion, the difficulties in obtaining military victory over the bourgeois repressive apparatus while operating as urban guerrillas, are not exclusive to Foquismo, but rather have a general scope and validity. We think that whenever the urban guerrilla activity has goals of profound social transformation, the specific forms of armed action embodied by the urban guerrilla practice is insufficient, by itself, to achieve victory, that is to say, the destruction of the repressive armed apparatus.

In the aforementioned cases of anti-colonial struggle, the urban guerrilla habitually operated as a factor of political pressure rather than as a decisive factor in the military field. The urban guerrilla in Israel, in Cyprus, and even in Ireland, only operated as a contributing element toward obtaining a com-

promise solution, always feasible, insofar as the objectives pursued, that is the attainment of national independence, did not compromise the foundations of the capitalist system. In other words, obtaining independence in all these countries appeared to be compatible with the existence of the capitalist system in them. A colonial power represses and resists independence movements until the balance of costs (military costs and above all political costs and costs to prestige) outweigh the advantages. At the moment when the military and political costs of preserving the colony is greater than the advantages derived from it, the colonialists negotiate and — as in the cases cited — they leave.

Why is this possible? Because normally those who acquire power and who exercise domination after obtaining formal independence are the local ruling classes, the local bourgeoisies, that in a way achieve a "modus vivendi" even with the previously dominant imperialist powers. There is no rupture with the previously dominant capitalist system there. There is no rupture with the capitalist system there. There is only, shall we say, a readjustment within it. This does not imply underestimating the importance of anti-colonial struggle movements for independence, nor the possibilities that they generate. But it is useful to clarify the true scope of the objectives pursued by these movements, because they condition the possibilities and validity of the urban guerrilla as a form of armed action. And since we are talking about the Uruguayan urban guerrillas, we always refer to the examples of anti-colonial struggle based on this methodology of military action.

In the case of dictatorships, that is, of political regimes located outside of bourgeois "legality," a somewhat similar phenomenon occurs. Dictatorships resist as long as they can, but if the situation of armed conflict sustained by the guerrillas is prolonged, that is, if the dictatorship proves ineffective as a factor in restoring "order," the ruling classes finally end up abandoning the dictatorship and negotiate the restoration of

tice. And this is incompatible, as such, with the political ideological conception, which is what enables the possibility of joining armed practice with the predominant ideology. The attempt to reconcile a revolutionary practice with the bourgeois ideological hegemony, materialized in the search to revolutionarily channel the democratic-liberal and national conditions of the masses.

How to avoid the "anesthesia" generated sooner or later by operative persistence? How to avoid the negative repercussions of unpleasant actions? The MLN never found another solution to this problem other than an increase in the operational level and the success of this alleged solution meant that, given the increase in the level of operation, certain responses of a political nature were going to be given by the enemy. The collapse of the MLN lies largely in that the enemy's responses were not as predicted. Made vulnerable by its own quantitative development, the foquista armed apparatus, however, was not able through its military practice to produce the expected political changes. Like the numerous clandestine army that it was, it was left gradually isolated from the masses, enduring the vulnerability of its inadequate dimension, without however reaping the necessary mass support. Using torture, the repression hit the MLN where it was weak, at the level of training of its militant cadres, in the lack of homogeneity of its political leadership, which was fissured at the intermediate levels, and and at its head by betrayal. Through the effects of torture, the infrastructure was also quickly dismantled. The inadequate quantitative dimension then demonstrated its danger. The mass arrests of militants proved this

Acting as an enormous impediment, the immense equipment accumulated by the MLN with a view to a "war" defined in specific terms of harassment, ended up being one more factor of weakness. The fall of large numbers of safehouses and large depots of arms and ammunition impacted morale in a negative sense and accentuated the bad effects of the deficient

the actions. An armed apparatus can not fix its strategy with the need to always perform actions in a linearly ascending sense or by varying its field. A prolonged conception of struggle implies the acceptance, as in Vietnam, of different levels of operability, always reversible. A strategy that presupposes the foreseeable increase on the part of the enemy becomes unadaptable to the political situation of society in general. Even within the framework of a process of socio-economic deterioration and deterioration at all levels, this process has different rhythms. It can even go back in its development. Situations temporarily favorable to the bourgeoisie can be created. And an armed apparatus that operates on the assumption of an ever-increasing level of operations is not in a position to relax its military practice in response to these facts. Therefore, receptiveness in the masses can be difficult or even inadequate.

The military practice inevitably implies at a certain moment, or at a certain level of its development, the usage of "unpleasant" actions. The acceptance of unpleasant actions supposes the previous modification of the ideology in increasingly broad popular sectors. Only then will they be in a position to accept the unpleasantness that inevitably results from military practice at a certain level of their development. It is a basic error of Foquismo to assume that military actions can become unfailingly sympathetic, if the ideological conquest of the masses is dispensed with, if the ideological conquest of the masses is disregarded, at a certain moment they become unsupportive. But the ideological conquest of the masses supposes the activity of a party, and the acceptance of a long-term struggle.

The creation of a party, that is, the existence of a public political practice linked to the activity of the armed apparatus, supposes ideological definitions, it supposes sooner or later the adoption of theoretical positions. It supposes of course the public confrontation with hostile ideological currents. It supposes, in short, everything that involves a public political prac-

liberal-democratic forms. This is also possible, as in the previous case, insofar as the dictatorial collapse and the "democratic" restoration do not imply profound social transformations. Such is the case exemplified by the Cuban Revolution throughout its entire first stage, ie: in the guerrilla stage. As is well known, the process of radicalization and deepening of the Cuban Revolution occurred after the arrival of the guerrillas to power, that is, after the collapse of the dictatorship and the liquidation of its repressive apparatus. The radical character of the elimination of the repressive apparatus was precisely what made the subsequent process of radicalization feasible. It is well known that usually these bourgeois-democratic revolutions stumble, in short, with the obstacle of a persistent organized structure of the repressive apparatus in the dictatorial stage. The fact that this has not happened in Cuba does not change the bourgeois-democratic character of the Cuban Revolution in its initial stage. It is well known that it took on a social, radical reformist and ultimately socialist turn, throughout a process that spanned a couple of years after the collapse of the Batista dictatorship.

In short, if the foquista rural guerrillas could gain power in Cuba, it was because the objectives that it postulated, even in this case, were incompatible with the capitalist system and the country did not have a deeply ingrained reformist character that made the objectives non-viable within the framework of the capitalist system.

The guerrillas, urban or rural, as a form of armed struggle, will have the possibility of obtaining victory insofar as the objectives that they propose are not incompatible with the validity of the capitalist system.

We understand victory as the achievement of the objective pursued. In other words, we understand that the anti-colonial urban guerrilla obtains victory to the extent that it achieves independence, which is the end that is formulated. Whereas the guerilla of democratic restoration — let us call it that — obtains

victory insofar as it achieves the collapse of the dictatorship, which is the end that is proclaimed.

What happens with the repressive apparatus? In the first case, in the case of the colonial wars, the colonial occupation army leaves for its country. Because the occupying army CAN leave the occupied country. In the second case, in the case of the "democratic" guerrilla, the army changes leadership or demobilizes, as in Cuba.

What both processes have in common is that the capitalist system is still standing. The capitalist system does not appear questioned by the guerrilla action and that is precisely where the possibility of victory lies, through the concrete form of military action involved in guerrilla activity.

What happens instead if it is a revolution of clear social content? What happens if the profound change of the social system is implicit in the activity of the urban guerrilla, if what is at stake is the system itself? The ruling classes in this case can not yield. In Latin America, especially from the Cuban experience, it has become very clear, both for imperialism and for the local ruling classes, for the local bourgeoisies, that there is no longer any room to negotiate. The ruling classes cannot, in effect, negotiate their disappearance and cannot even negotiate, at this point in the process, changes that are too radical within the social system, even if they do not immediately imply the disappearance of the capitalist system as such.

The possibility of the system to "digest" reforms in the economic-political context of the continent is extremely limited. The alternative, therefore, for the Latin American ruling classes and imperialism, is to resist any type of armed movement that questions their domination until the end. As a result, the army that depends on these classes cannot leave their country.This army of the local bourgeoisies can not take ships and planes and leave, they have to fight, succeed, or capitulate. Nor can it accept that the "seditious" of yesterday be the rulers of tomorrow. Those local armies will resist. Their

which this deterioration at the economic, social, and political level hardens the forms of political domination; and on the ideological plane in breaking the bourgeois ideological hegemony over the masses.

None of these conditions was generated when the foco began to operate as such, nor have they been generated at the moment. Nor will they be generated with adequate characteristics if the process only works spontaneously. This makes political action necessary in the structuring of a party that operates at a public level, at a mass level, and clandestinely as a military practice. Non-foquista military practice, of course, since the conditions for the foco are not created. Naturally, to the extent that these conditions of social desperation of the masses, of hardening of the political structure, of deterioration of the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie, are generated and accentuated, the military aspect of political work will acquire greater and greater relevance, to the extent of clearly predominating over the aspect of public action, not militarily, but at the level of the masses. The military aspect of the work will grow to the extent that the situation at the level of the masses has conditions that are increasingly favorable to a revolutionary outcome. However, at no time will action at the mass level, the public action, the specifically political action of the party, be expendable and cease to be necessary. In the perspective of an insurrectionary outcome, this is obviously indispensable. As we have said, insurrection means the active participation of an important sector of the masses. It means carrying out prior political work within the army, especially of course, in its lower echelons of troops, as an essential requirement, in addition to the prior development of a relatively important armed apparatus.

There is one aspect that we do not want to omit. In April the leadership of the MLN considered one of the main obstacles leading to stumbles in its action. It consisted of the so-called "anesthesia" of the masses in the face of the impact sought by

essary political homogeneity at the leadership levels. Nothing that has happened is too strange if one starts from the content of the foquista conception. It is politics that should direct the arms and not the arms that direct the politics. War is not just a technical problem. It is — neither more nor less — than politics by other means.

Under what conditions could an armed apparatus by itself successfully carry out a revolutionary action? Answering this question implies, to a certain extent, defining the chances of success of possible new foco attempts. These would be viable as soon as the material living conditions of the masses have experienced a very marked decline, while the bourgeois ideological predominance begins to seriously break down. It would be viable when the channels enabled by the system, that is, the union struggle, electoral action, public propaganda action, are obstructed, or even being open, are of obvious ineffectiveness for the masses.This of course would have been objectified in that situation, in dispositions, and concrete acts of repression. In short, an armed apparatus could develop political activity on its own, without a party, when the spontaneous evolution of the process generated widespread, intense, and highly pressurized social unrest. Foquismo would only be viable in the context of great desperation of the masses who did not find political channels to express themselves.

Foquismo would be viable, in short, when social motivations had a much greater dimension and depth than they currently have. This would permit it, in the name of these social motivations, to generate a dynamic of massive popular support for the foco. It would make it possible to effectively massify the process of armed struggle in a short period of time. Only under these conditions would Foquismo achieve an insertion or effective political capitalization of the masses. The configuration of these conditions may still require a more or less prolonged period; this will depend on the speed that the process of socioeconomic deterioration is acquired and the effectiveness with

defeat will be the end of the system and therefore they will resist until the end.

It is worth crudely asking: Can the urban guerrillas alone achieve the destruction of the repressive apparatus within the military sphere? In other words: Is the urban guerrilla a militarily suitable form of consummating a revolution with objectives of radical social transformation, toward a socialist revolution? Of course, also in the case of a social revolution, the central purpose of the urban guerrilla is to set in motion the political conditions that lead to the collapse of the armed apparatus of the ruling classes; a collapse that would not occur as a result of a military defeat in a direct military confrontation, mano a mano, let's say, with the guerrillas. Everything seems to indicate that its function is not to look for victory in such a confrontation with the army. Its function is to generate the political conditions that enable this victorious military decision. But to arrive at that victory it is necessary to develop other forms of struggle, which are no longer of the guerrilla type.

In short, if it is a question of social revolution, the urban guerrillas seem to have the ideal function of preparing the leap, the qualitative transition to another form of struggle, through which decisive victory can be achieved within the framework of war in the urban areas, which is the insurrection.

The urban guerrilla, we therefore believe, is only legitimized as a necessary and essential preamble and preparation for the insurrection. Of course the insurrectionary process can take different forms, but it always involves a certain volume of participation of mass sectors. In fact, it is impossible to conceive of an insurrection without mass participation. The criterion that must underpin this matter will not be found in a plebiscite, nor is it electoral. Although this may seem obvious, it should nevertheless be clarified, because often, perhaps due to the weight of the electoralist ideology itself that the ruling classes introduce into the proletariat, there is a tendency to assume or conceive of an insurrectionary process as a kind

of plenary mobilization, or slightly less, of the masses. This is what is frequently translated through popular statements that are usually heard, such as "go out into the street," "something is going to happen here," etc.

An insurrectionary process, of course, can include mass demonstrations on the street, but clearly that is not what is substantial. Like all armed action, an insurrection is mainly decided by operations, by armed combat and not by demonstrations on the street. Therefore, when we refer to the necessary participation of the masses in an insurrectionary uprising, we are referring to a series of mass actions at different levels with the understanding that the most dynamic sector of the masses participates.

If we start from the basis that the direct participation of the majority of the population or the majority of the working class, even, is necessary, there would never have been an insurrection with those characteristics. It is assumed that, when speaking of the masses, the most conscious, most combative sectors are alluded to, that is, those sectors of the masses that effectively, due to previous political work developed by the party, are in a position to take an active part in a movement of that type. Mass participation is what happened in Spain in 1936, it is what there was in Santo Domingo. By mass participation, it is understood to mean the participation of a section of the masses, not necessarily half plus one of the members of the population or of the working class.

Another insurrectionary possibility that in no way can be ruled out in Latin America, such as the case we already cited of Santo Domingo, is one that can open a path toward confrontation between military sectors. This could occur where one of them has been won politically, through deliberate political work or through a situation which drove them into power for the popular cause, for which they received and admitted the support of the masses and eventually the support of the urban guerrillas themselves.

Political activity becomes for Foquismo, a subjective decision of an operative group and not the product of a global process of society. The decision of a more or less isolated group weighs more than the behavior of social classes. This attitude fits in perfectly with the ideological posture of certain petit-bourgeois sectors, in particular the educated petty bourgeoisie (the so-called "intelligentsia") which operates in our country as a social force quite apart from the fundamental social classes, largely as the product of the delayed level of consciousness of the working class. It is difficult to specify at times, to what extent this behavior of petit-bourgeois groups really responds to the interests of the working class or rather to preoccupations of opening a path into the current social hierarchy.

Be that as it may, this foquista conception militarily implies the need to create a clandestine army. The need to create a clandestine army poses a low level of requirements for recruitment. When we say a clandestine army, we are of course not referring to an armed apparatus of considerable quantitative dimension such as the MLN. A low level of requirements for recruitment, coupled with a low level of requirements in terms of the political-ideological training of the cadres, accentuates their vulnerability in the face of repression. Politically ill-trained cadres are particularly vulnerable to this repression. The short-term conception underestimates the need to compartmentalize. Meanwhile, the security aspect is underestimated to the extent that the replacement of lost cadres is considered easy and the period of the struggle is considered short.

We believe that these circumstances are at the root of the defeat of the MLN as of April. It is very difficult for a movement that develops within the framework of the foquista conception to be able to overcome these weaknesses, which are only surmountable based on a long-term approach. Even the open betrayals recorded at the leadership level in the MLN, apart from their anecdotal aspects, show the underestimation of the nec-

the emotional reaches everyone. The theory is of course dispensed with. It is the facts that define.

Fundamentally, it is about sustaining the morale of the movement and the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses through actions. That is why the actions have to be constant, sustained, and increasingly important. It is the ever growing importance of the actions that signifies the advance of the revolution. It is the constantly increasing importance of the actions or changing the terrain on which they are made, which sustains the morale of the movement. Recruitment is defined around the propensity to perform these actions. While the propensity to carry them out is defined in terms of sentiment and emotional feelings. The feelings in turn are generated through the actions. This ideology is viable, obviously, as the engine of a movement conceived in short-sighted terms. It is functional in a movement that is based on the premise that its path will be made up of constant successes, since the possibility of always operating in an upward direction implies permanent success. Having a line sustained on the basis of always operating in an upward direction also implies an underestimation of the enemy, one which is not supported by any analysis of the situation. The facts have shown the ruinous scope of this criterion.

From this short-term conception, follows the relevant need to constantly expand the number of effectives. In order to create a clandestine army as soon as possible. If the political juncture can be forced, let's say, from armed actions, it follows that the greater the armed actions and the bigger the armed apparatus, the easier and faster the political situation will be forced. The voluntarist conception is implicit in this criterion. Also linked to this, is confidence in the multiplying effect of the armed actions. Any type of social, political, or economic structure can be deformed and modified with weapons, in the sense that those who wield those weapons voluntarily wish it.

To our knowledge, any form of insurrectionary action necessarily presupposes prior military practice and the existence of a previously organized clandestine military apparatus with sufficient operational capacity and experience to channel, frame and bring an insurrectionary process to a successful outcome. This should be pointed out because the balance of experiences of urban insurrections carried out in previous periods leads to surprising findings. To that end, it is worth referring to books such as, "The armed insurrection" by A. Neuberg, edited by "The armored rose" in Argentina.The balance of urban insurrections carried out in the the 20's, for example by the communist parties in Europe and China, then animated from the Comintern by a revolutionary orientation, shows that one of the fundamental factors of their failure has been the limited prior preparation. In other words, the scarce prior development of a specific military apparatus, professionalized, let's say, in military practice before the insurrection. Although the participation of the masses evidently appears as an indispensable requisite, essential for the success of an urban armed insurrection, the balance of accumulated experience clearly demonstrates that the development of a clandestine armed apparatus is another no less essential requirement for success. This is valid even in the case that support is obtained from a more or less important sector of the bourgeois army itself.

Of course a third element that must permanently be taken into account — we hope to develop all of this more extensively on another occasion — is the essential need for a political work about the repressive apparatus of the ruling classes.

We can define three requirements as indispensable for the success of an urban armed insurrection: 1) The participation of important sectors of the masses through actions in different levels; 2) The previous existence of a clandestine armed apparatus with already acquired military experience, who are at the vanguard of the process; 3) The existence of prior political work

concerning elements of the repressive apparatus. These three requisites obviously presuppose the existence of detailed prior political work, which can only be carried out by the party as an organization capable of developing, promoting and harmonizing these diverse activities from a common center of decision making.

This conception of the armed insurrection leads, once again, to the conclusion that the structuring of the party is the fundamental goal in the stage of processing the conditions for insurrection and not vice versa. In other words, the armed action is processed through a political center and the political center is not processed through armed action.

Allow us to be more precise, because when we talk about insurrection we run the risk that this term will be a little lacking in content. Since its inception, armed struggle in Latin America has been so steeped in the notion that its fundamental and almost unique form is guerrilla warfare, that in the general mentality, the term insurrection says and evokes little. Or what it evokes is precisely the idea of crowds taking to the streets, etc. When we refer to urban armed insurrections, we refer to them as "Bogotzo" types, the "Cordobazo" type, or the Santo Domingo type, with active participation, further, of an armed apparatus developed earlier, all under the leadership of a revolutionary party.

We understand that in Córdoba, in Bogotá, in Santo Domingo, the conditions existed for mass participation in the insurrection. What did not exist in Córdoba, what did not exist in Bogotá, what did not even exist in Santo Domingo (where that role was assumed by a fraction of the army) was the prior organization of an armed, experienced apparatus, capable of directing the process and in a position to include in the process of mass actions the specific military operations that would have had a critical significance. Of course, we will temporarily leave aside the problem of stabilizing an insurrectionary situation in Córdoba as an example. We are raising the issue

The political channeling of the obtained sympathies does not take the form of a party. This implies that the corresponding movement lacks a clear line in political and ideological matters as well as regarding the masses. The foco in reality dismisses a policy for the masses and rules out the organization of a party, the only way to develop this policy at the mass level. It also rules out deep ideological modification, even of its own militants. Why? Because it is assumed that the armed activity will generate a dynamic, which we described before, that makes all this complex process, (visualized in the foquista conception) as preventable and too cumbersome. The armed struggle abbreviates, it allows the bourgeois's own ideological values to capitalize for the revolution. That is why there is no need to argue, not even with reformism. This is unnecessary, since the dynamics generated by the armed operations will drag reformism to the terrain of the revolution where it will be a caboose or it will be destroyed by repression. In reality, the political function in the foquista conception is deposited in the hands of the reaction. It is repression that is in charge of persuading the people of the advantages of the revolution. For this to be possible and easy, it is necessary that the revolutionaries do not present the people with complex options, ideologies, and problems.

It is necessary that the revolutionary foco sustain an extremely broad ideological position which does not hinder anyone joining, since it is foreseen that the adherents will be massive, in the quantitative sense and massive regarding the ideological level of the adherents. The cause is first social, then democratic and then patriotic. And everyone must be able to enroll in it. The form of propaganda should not have theoretical or ideological complexities, it should be accessible to all. Folklore is the obviously most effective form for this type of preaching. The propagandistic content is emotional, not rational. The rational limits the possibility of adherence and is complicated;

to smash bourgeois ideological structures. Rather, it would capitalize on the very values of bourgeois ideology: liberal democracy and nationalism.The foquista strategy pretends to be a shortcut precisely for that reason: because it would be an attempt to quickly channel the bourgeois ideology itself towards the revolutionary cause.

How would these political effects be achieved? In order to achieve them, impactful actions are needed. The psychological impact requires a "crescendo" of a gradual and sustained intensification of actions. If it returns to already exceeded operating levels, the effect of impact decreases or disappears. The political effects of operability will then become volatile if it does not follow a sustained upward course. However, a similar effect to intensifying or expanding the magnitude of the operations is achieved by varying their nature. Thus the two ways to persist in the achievement of psychological impact is to vary the type of operations and increase their level in those branches or operational variants already made. Such a psychological impact generates sympathy.

In the expectation that the democratic and national revolutionary objectives are achieved by this method, they consequently are not interested in developing this sympathy toward an ideological conversion, so to speak, of a profound modification of the ideology of the people, since this would not be necessary.

The whole process is conceived, of course, as brief, though it does not rule out a period of some years. What is decisive is the operational activity. The only thing that matters substantially is the development of the armed apparatus. The political capitalization can be done in terms of mere sympathy precariously organizable in a mass movement, conceived basically as a fish tank where they can fish, as a place of recruitment with recurrence to obtain the necessary support for the armed apparatus.

and trying to frame it within certain patterns. It is more than questionable, in effect, whether a regime established through an insurrectionary process in the city of Córdoba could be sustained. But we are referring to a specific stage of a process of armed struggle trying to confront other hypotheses from the foquista conception on the subject.

Perhaps it would be useful, to clarify this approach definitively, to compare this conception with what constitutes the so-called "people's war," also called the "Asian model," which was applied in China and now in Vietnam, originally theorized by Mao and subsequently adapted by Giap to the Vietnamese environment. This conception is centered, like the original foquismo, on the decisive importance of the rural guerrilla and supports the need to convert it, through reversible stages, into a regular army. The people's war, the "Asian war," as described by its theorists, is neither more nor less than the process through which the urban guerrilla, conceived of in terms quite similar to those posed in Cuba, is transformed into a revolutionary army. It theorizes how the guerrilla type action is passed to the open campaign, to classical warfare, and to field warfare, through a flexible process, staggered in reversible stages. Given the conditions of the war in Indochina, Mao, and even more so Giap, insists a lot on the necessary preservation of the possibility of retroverting, of reconverting the regular army into local militias and of reconverting even the militia echelon into guerrillas again, if the correlation of forces is too unfavorable. On the other hand, this is what happened in Indochina, at a time when the massive intervention of North American troops led the Vietnamese commanders to return, for a relatively long period, to guerrilla warfare. In the previous stage, when they were mainly fighting the Saigon puppet army, the classical warfare stage had already passed.

In our days the development from the rural guerrilla to the rural war has been reproduced again. Combat is already occurring again in a classic campaign war because of the cor-

relation of forces, and through the process of fighting, it has become favorable again.The Vietnamese war brilliantly exemplifies the degree of flexibility, of malleability which is necessary in all kinds of protracted warfare. Malleability and flexibility that is only possible, naturally, on the basis of a deep level of politicization, not only of the personnel, but of the masses themselves. It would have been impossible for the soldiers and for the Vietnamese people in general, to "digest," without serious demoralization, the need to restructure the regular army (which by 1963 was already operating in field warfare) into guerrillas when the massive North American intervention began, if there had not been a solid political preparation work at all levels: at the level of the armed apparatus and at the level of the civilian population itself.

All protracted war, regardless of the form or methodology that it entails, requires the intensive politicization of military cadres and an effective political work at the mass level, so that the turns and changes that are necessarily involved are properly understood and assimilated. Only from a narrowly short-term perspective could the importance of political work at all levels be underestimated. Only from a short-term perspective can the importance of a party be underestimated, definitively, as the only suitable instrument to carry out this political work.

We thought it useful to make this statement about the basic criteria of the so-called "people's war" to make manifest the fundamental difference between it and the concept of war in urban settings that we are obliged to develop in our setting. These materials we are presenting have no other aspiration than to be a first approximation to enable discussion. Consequently, the fundamental core concept of people's war, is the military outcome and victory within this framework is located on the same plane as classic war. The military outcome of the people's war is sought through the confrontation between regular armies, through campaigns of field warfare.

it must not be liberal-democratic. It must postulate a totally different power structure. This implies the work of conceiving forms of popular power, and the systematic criticism of the juridical-political levels of organization of the dependent bourgeois state, and criticism of the political ideology that sustains and informs this dependent bourgeois-state structure.

Trying to sum up the military aspects of the foquista practice, let us enunciate the following points: Foquismo in the MLN version postulates the criterion that armed activity alone can generate the political conditions of the revolution. But what does the generation of these political conditions consist of? In the first place, the initial activity of the foco polarizes the opinion of the most politicized sectors around it. The sustained activity of the foco would generate repression, and this would sooner or later lead to the alteration of the democratic institutional framework. Following the existence of a dictatorship, the struggle against it would polarize around the foco, the whole of political opinion that was not already revolutionary, not simply the left, but even liberals.To the extent that the foco was sustained, always operating at higher levels, this would end up generating foreign intervention. Such an external threat would then unite the foco with the whole of the country. In political terms, the guerrilla war initiated by social motivations, would later acquire democratic political content and eventually, in the final stage, the content of a national war. The foco would thus generate, starting in reverse, lets say, the political conditions that traditionally (such as in the Cuban case) generated the dictatorship. Instead of being a response to a dictatorship or a stark colonial situation, the foco would generate them. Instead of being a response to open dictatorship, the focus would bring on the dictatorship. Rather than being a response to direct foreign domination, the foco would attract direct foreign domination. By virtue of this, the foco would capitalize without the need for prior ideological struggle, that is to say, without the need

cialist insurrection, or at least one aimed at radical changes, will undoubtedly also be an insurrection for national ends.

We understand that associating socialist values with nationalist ideological values is an important element to expand the sphere of ideological action of the revolution. To this end, we do not want to introduce ourselves here in a theoretical analysis regarding the content and scope of "patriotism" as an ideology. We only want to formulate the hypothesis of its implementation as an ideological element, without implying a denial of the need for adjustments to place it in the general socialist conception. It seems to us that the difference is, since we are already in this, is the assessment that should be made of the liberal-democratic ideology. We have already said more than once, that the operational scheme of the foco supposed the initiation of military activity based on social motivations, then later prolongable towards the rehabilitation of liberal democracy (after this same action had generated sufficient and prolongable repressive factors) and also toward the defense of the national cause, only insofar as it motivated an outside intervention. Regarding the link between the social motivations of the armed struggle and the national struggle, we have suggested something else above.

With respect to the link between social motivations and liberal-democratic ideological values, we think that behavior should be different. We do not believe that liberal-democratic institutions under any circumstances can be vindicated as a goal of the struggle. We think that an authentically revolutionary movement has to be proposed from now on, and objectives of political organization different from the traditional bourgeois-state to the extent that this is possible and compatible with the level of popular understanding. The bourgeois state structure must be denounced and fought on the ideological plane from now on. Therefore, we do not share at all the perspective of a pro-democratic struggle, as the foco would posit. The Uruguayan revolution will be socialist and national, but

The formation of guerrillas, of bases of support with occupation of land, the intermediate steps of local militias, all presuppose and point toward a culmination in the formation of a regular army, capable of defeating the enemy and its regular army in classic pitched battles. The Mao-Giap theory shows, in short, how a regular revolutionary army can be formed, on the margins of the bourgeois or colonial state apparatus, and how it can come to victory in a people's war, in a field war against the bourgeois or colonial army. Mao's protracted war ended. as is known in the 1948 campaign, the year when the communist army "conquered" all of China by defeating Chang Kai Sheck's army in regular warfare. The war against the French in Indochina, ended with the military defeat of the colonialists in Diem Bien Phu, a defeat that turned the French command's calculated balance scale decisively negative and pushed France to negotiate. In the so-called "people's war," therefore, one begins with the rural guerrilla (as in the orthodox Cuban foquista conception) to end with the people's army, which is a field army.

Can this conception be transferred to the conditions of Uruguay where the objectives of armed action are primarily social? Can an army be properly structured within cities on the basis of urban guerrillas? This seems to us extremely difficult at the very least. From a level of armed action in the city, with characteristics of urban guerrillas, one can get to an intense harassment of the enemy forces, but the decisive factor is made through a popular urban insurrection.

The final stage of the protracted war conceived of in terms of "people's war," or the "Asian model" consists of a military campaign within more or less classical guidelines, that is a regular war between regular armies. The final phase of the war that we need to develop in our environment, starting from urban guerrillas, ends in an insurrection that is also fundamentally urban.

We are referring of course to the terms in which this problem arises within the framework of Uruguayan social forma-

tion. Of course, if we project this problem to the general dimension of Latin American, the position of the People's War is not a priori ruled out, although it would have to be subjected to a rather meticulous critique based on the fundamentally true assessments of the "People's War" formulated by Régis Debray in "Revolution in the Revolution?" He pointed out that even in Latin American rural areas, the situation is far from equivalent to that of Asian countries, due to a series of specific circumstances: low population, local establishment of a repressive apparatus, peculiar characteristics of the social structure of the peasantry, etc.

It is evident that the fundamentally urban nature of the struggle in our midst, both in its initial stage of urban guerrilla warfare and in the phase of its insurrectionary resolution, gives it a more grave importance, more decisive if possible, than in the Asian "people's war" to the political dimension of military practice. The military action in urban environments makes the link with the masses decisive in the sense that from the beginning, the operation of the armed apparatus must be guided by a criterion of action by and for the masses.The urban characteristics of the war politically condition it much more than any other type of revolutionary military tactic, because the development of the clandestine armed apparatus does not constitute, militarily speaking, an end in itself, but rather a means of helping to promote a political development of the masses.The successful insurrectionary outcome entails the idea of this previous political work.

The insurrection can only be victorious insofar as this action of prior political preparation (within which the activity of the urban guerrilla is a fundamental element), has been fully developed. This happens because, ultimately, the insurrectionary outcome will not depend centrally on the prior military-technical development of the armed apparatus, but rather on the efficiency with which it has managed to insert itself and gravitate at the level of those masses, with whom

dependence, whose invalidity in the sphere of reality will be increasingly evident to all. If, in the context of its deterioration and growing monopolistic regional integration, bourgeois Uruguay is predestined to integrate with neighboring countries and lose its independence, the only viable way for this independence to last and become a reality is to overcome the bourgeois structure in our country. Within the framework of the capitalist system, Uruguay is destined to gradually lose its independence. Only by ceasing to be capitalist can it preserve its status as an independent nation. In this way, socialism and nationalism truly arrive at a final convergence.

Every conception of a nation is inseparable from a class perspective. The homeland (patria) according to the bourgeois notion is the homeland for the bourgeoisie. The nation in the proletarian conception is only the socialist nation and therefore the claim of national independence and its consecration through a process of armed struggle is identified with the struggle for socialism. Uruguay will be independent if it is socialist or it will not be independent. Capitalism and growing dependence are inseparable terms. Political independence is incompatible with the validity of capitalism in our country, because it leads inexorably to a growing dependency, not only to Yankee imperialism, but rather to the bourgeoisies of neighboring countries who are also dependent, of course. The Uruguayan bourgeoisie will necessarily be dependent on bourgeoisies that are themselves dependent. On the one hand,this process will be all the faster, the greater the neighboring dependent bourgeoisies are developed. It will also be greater, more acute, and irreversible as a product of the socio-economic deterioration to which dependent bourgeois domination drags down the country. A real national independence therefore demands the overthrow of bourgeois power in the country.

Guerrilla warfare based on social motivations at a certain moment will meaningfully acquire national connotations. A so-

Uruguayan revolution as an armed process, that is to say, the fact that it inevitably ends in foreign intervention, seems to suggest the relevance of a very prolonged stage of guerilla struggle before reaching an insurrectionary outcome whose situation must be very precisely chosen.

It is clear from what is stated here, that within the framework of our strategic conception, there is also room for a "national moment" of the revolutionary process, which can establish an apparent similarity with the foco. However, we believe that the moment of struggle for national independence is also subsequent in time to the social moment, that is to the initial social stage, the stage of social motivation of the guerrilla struggle. It is evident that, given the particular conditions of our country, it is practically inconceivable to establish a socialist-type regime, or the realization of profound social transformations without counting on the intervention of the neighboring bourgeoisie. On the other hand, our country is fully immersed in a regional integration process, which is nothing more than the realization of the general integration process, correlative to the stage of penetration of monopoly capitalism in Latin America. In other words, what is happening is that Uruguay, through various means, is becoming increasingly integrated into the economic environment of neighboring countries. It can and does constitute, of course, a zone of friction between the dependent bourgeoisies of these neighboring countries.

Undoubtedly, everything seems to indicate that bourgeois Uruguay would not be viable in the long term. Bourgeois domination in our country, therefore, is largely associated with the prospect of a dependent integration with respect to the bourgeoisie of neighboring countries. The destiny of Uruguay as an independent country under bourgeois domination does not seem to be viable. Bourgeois domination and the persistence of real political independence emerge as contradictory terms. In time, the country is going to lose more and more of its real independence notwithstanding the maintenance of formal in-

it will be possible to obtain a decisive victory through insurrectionary means. The effectiveness with which the urban guerrilla has successfully managed to insert itself will depend more on the correctness of its line and its political action than on its technical development. Without implying, of course, completely underestimating the need for specific technical development of the armed apparatus. As we previously stated, this constitutes an indispensable factor for any insurrectionary success to the extent that they are the protagonists who spearhead[1] the armed actions which determine the success of the insurrection. The correctness of the work in the masses by the armed apparatus of course presupposes the existence and action of a party that directs the whole process and whose political practice widely exceeds the limits of an exclusive military practice. The justness of that mass action, we say, depends on the possibility of developing the conditions for the insurrection.

Some questions could be directed at the hypothesis that it is, if not impossible, at least enormously difficult, to form an army (with regular characteristics) based on urban guerrilla warfare. Thus we are elaborating further in the hypothesis that the urban guerrilla as such, can not obtain an open war military victory over an army in an urban environment. In other words, what we are seeking to substantiate is the assertion that the urban guerrilla can only rise, as a superior form to an insurrectionary outcome and cannot be superior (at least without extreme difficulty),to the formation of a regular army for decisive action in the urban environment. That is, through a military victory in a regular war.

Starting from rural guerrillas, it must necessarily go through an intermediate formative stage into a regular army capable of developing a classic warfare campaign, as a precondition to the military outcome. Whereas, from the urban

[1] Direct translate is vanguardize

guerrilla it is not possible to constitute a regular army and it would be necessary to pass directly to the insurrection. Between the rural guerrilla and victory there exists a regular war.

Between the urban guerrilla and victory there is only an insurrection. Hence the extreme delicacy of the insurrectionary moment, since to a great extent the insurrectionary experience is irreversible. An insurrection either ends in victory or serious defeat. On the other hand, the intermediate stage between the rural guerrilla and the victory, constituted by a period of regular war, does not have as much gravity as a political choice toward an insurrectionary juncture.

As a result, the urban guerrilla is condemned, let's say, to be just that, a guerrilla, an urban guerrilla, up to the moment, necessarily very well chosen, of a generalized insurrection. It would be long and surely untimely to state here all the technical reasons, which in our opinion in Uruguay, decisively impede the conversion of an urban guerrilla into an army capable of disputing victory with enemy in open action, that is, in formal combat. Of course, when we refer to open action, to formal combat, we are not referring to the insurrection that we defined as the necessary culmination of the process of urban guerrilla struggle, but to a kind of previous stage that in the foquista conception of the MLN was intended to be defined as "war." A kind of intermediate stage, inserted between the strictly guerrilla activity and the armed outcome. The insurrectionary hypothesis, never formulated in precise terms by the MLN, could be implicitly assumed to be the culmination of the process it defined as "war" or a "campaign of harassment."

It would seem clear that between the guerrilla and the insurrection, the MLN glimpsed the possibility of a period of frequent, but relatively important operations, which would become the equivalent, in an urban environment, of the period of regular rural war conceived in the "Asian People's War." This hypothesis is corroborated by the clear attempt to extend mili-

tionalization of revolutionary political effects. Then begins the 2nd period of prolonged struggle against foreign intervention, a period in which the fate or destiny of the region is involved and not only of our country. According to this conception, Uruguay would not be playing for the fate of the country alone, but the fate of the revolution in the region.

Uruguay constitutes the point of greatest vulnerability in the regional imperialist chain, to the extent that it is a country lacking viable bourgeois openings. The Uruguayan bourgeoisie has been unable to formulate a project, a development model that allows it to escape from the process of the growing socio-economic deterioration that it has suffered for decades. The tendency toward deterioration in all spheres, far from weakening, is steadily increasing.The deterioration gradually moves from the economic level, the ultimate determinant, to the political and ideological levels. The real capacity of the Uruguayan ruling classes to confront the revolution diminishes to the same extent that the deterioration deepens.

The dominant classes, we insist, have not been able and do not seem to have the means to formulate a project to overcome this situation. Their only response has been to intensify the repression, which although it has earned them success in the military sphere, undoubtedly constitutes a politically invalid response fraught with risks for the future. The polarization of the struggles in Uruguay, due to this circumstance, that is, to the lack of a bourgeois solution, is practically inevitable insofar as the process of deterioration continues. Nothing suggests, day by day, its halting, nor even its stagnation. On the contrary, for periods it acquires a greater velocity. Going forward, it is this situation that fully legitimizes the validity of armed action in our country.

The viability of an insurrectionary outcome must also look to the internal as well as the global situation in the region.The most dangerous aspect of this is rooted in the bourgeois development of Brazil. The inevitable internationalization of the

the strategic defensive and the passage to the stage of a strategic offensive.

The obvious political implications of an insurrectionary process totally exclude the possibility that it could be addressed from a foquista approach. The insurrection requires the prior existence of a party and the development of its own armed apparatus capable of operating for a long period as urban guerrillas. The success of an insurrection can not rely on the spontaneity of the masses and can not rely on the voluntarism of the armed apparatus, operating isolated or more or less isolated from the masses. The insurrectionary conception of the destruction of bourgeois power demands work at two levels: at the level of the masses to create the political conditions of the insurrection; and at the armed level to create the apparatus that, prior to the insurrection, structures its cadres and is the element of shock, of rupture toward the insurrectionary process.

In the concrete conditions of our social/national formation, it cannot be proven that a victorious insurrectionary process is enough in itself to establish popular power in Uruguay. We must start from the basis that the destruction of bourgeois power in our country is only the opening of a new stage of struggle against foreign intervention. It would be absurd to conceive of "socialism in one country" in Uruguay.

From the destruction of bourgeois power in Uruguay, the struggle is internationalized outward and becomes national inward, in the sense that foreign intervention is practically inevitable given the geopolitical situation.The political intervention of the bourgeoisie of neighboring countries or directly from imperialism, necessarily turns the social revolution into a revolution in defense of national independence. At the same time, it transfers the effects of the Uruguayan revolution to neighboring countries. To the extent that the revolution triumphs in Uruguay, it will not by itself, be able to establish itself here alone, but it will be capable of initiating a stage of internatary operations to the countryside. It could be considered that what the MLN tried to put into practice as of April, was an operational modality roughly similar to the one developed by Grivas and EOKA in Cyprus. In other words, an intense urban activity paralleled by the action of operative groups, quite numerically restricted, in the countryside. Of course, this operational stage was not sufficiently defined by the MLN leadership. Thus the terms in which things happened do not allow a clear idea of the modalities and the objectives that the M.L.N. leadership intended to achieve in their evaluation of this operational intensification as "warfare."

It seems quite clear from the published documents and from the facts, that in April, the MLN leadership was considering a qualitative change of the levels of action carried out until then. This would have signified a responsive jump in terms of the dimension of the operations that were being carried out. The fact that these operations did not have the opportunity to be carried out, due to the development of events, does not prevent us from considering that they were aimed at incorporating the defense of "legality" as part of their objectives. Thus, the MLN conceived that it would become the vanguard of a broader popular movement that could eventually adopt the banner of democratic restoration.

If the military repression had been overcome as the police repression had been overcome before, it would have created a very difficult situation for the Uruguayan ruling classes and for its already openly dictatorial government. As such, the MLN policy could have resulted in a foreign intervention. If this were to happen, they would have fallen into the hands of the MLN, which in addition to the banner of the defense of liberal "democracy," would also raise the banner for the defense of the nation. Such an event would have ended up ultimately transforming the social cause into a national cause, with the consequent expansion of the political possibilities of the Movement in the masses.

The guerrillas, initiated by social objectives, would thus be converted to the extent that they endure and overcome the repression of the army in the struggle for democratic freedoms and defense of sovereignty. Since if it overwhelmed the army as it had before with the police, the only recourse left to the ruling classes would be to open the way to foreign intervention.

trol the terrain and have the strategic offensive permanently in their hands.

Military victory requires, in a way, going on the strategic offensive. The impossibility for the guerrillas to move toward a strategic offensive transfers the "effects" of the offensive to the political sphere. The only decisive military offensive in an urban setting that can achieve the destruction of the repressive apparatus is the insurrection, which in turn is an irreversible eventuality. Either the final victory is obtained or it means a serious defeat at the military level.

Ultimately, the urban guerrilla seems to be necessarily confined to the strategic defensive. The possible strategic offensive for the urban guerrilla consists in the insurrection. Since the strategic offensive is an indispensable requirement for victory and since insurrection is its only urban form, only through an insurrection can victory be achieved.

To this end, the insurrection, as we stated before, presupposes three conditions: the availability of a clandestine armed apparatus previously organized and experienced; the support of the masses or mass sectors sufficiently important to gravitate toward the insurrectionary act while participating actively in it; and a previous political work that allows the demoralization or disintegration, as widely as possible, of the repressive apparatus. Of course, an insurrectionary action presupposes a careful evaluation of political factors and it is absolutely impossible to deduce it from a voluntarist decision of the armed apparatus, however important it may be. An insurrection isolated from the masses is totally inconceivable. A campaign of harassment, such as the one proposed by the MLN as of April, to the extent that it does not point to an insurrectionary outcome, will not be capable, by itself, of bringing about the liquidation of the bourgeois armed apparatus. Harassment, no matter how intense, remains locked within the strategic defensive characteristic. Only the insurrection presupposes overcoming

At the end of the day, the scales dip to the side of the infrastructure and the deterioration of the facilities correlative to the collapse of the safehouses. It is precisely there in general terms, where the most vulnerable flank of any clandestine organization opens up and it is that vulnerability which grows in the same measure that the number of people in these organizations spreads or increases.

In another aspect, even though the urban guerrillas are numerous, because they always operate in enemy territory, it presents enormous difficulties in concentrating sufficiently to be decisive in major confrontations. As a result, it is an operational law to avoid this type of confrontation. It is well known that for long periods, especially in the initial periods, it is normal in all guerrilla activity to avoid encounters with the enemy as much as possible. But it happens that without confrontation, without "battles," let's say, there is no possibility for the military destruction of the enemy army. By avoiding confrontations, a decisive armed situation cannot be reached. The urban guerrilla can achieve great political effects on the enemy, but the function of this characteristic that we are noting, shows that it is very difficult for it to achieve important military victories. The difficulty in concentrating, an effect of always operating in enemy territory, determines that in direct confrontations, the urban guerrilla is normally weaker than its opponent, which entails the need to avoid these confrontations altogether and therefore the technical impossibility of achieving the destruction of the opposing army.

In short, the urban guerrilla, until the insurrectionary moment, is confined to the strategic defensive, however much it may circumstantially take the tactical offensive. It can only hit the enemy sporadically, waging a war without a territorial dimension and therefore without fronts and sustained actions. While the enemy doesn't have stable fronts either, since these are created and disappear in each action, they nevertheless con-

Part 2

If this is really what was sought, it implies a serious lack of perspective, a very erroneous evaluation of the military situation, of their own possibilities and that of the enemy, of the correlation of forces. Also, of course, an inadequate evaluation of the political situation. That is, of the possibilities of the system to "digest" very high levels of violence, without being forced to decisively break the ideological veils that conceal its dictatorial essence and that allow it to maintain the ascendancy and hegemony over broad sectors of the masses.

This is not the fundamental aspect that we are interested in analyzing now, but rather in insisting about the specifically military face of this policy that the MLN intended to undertake in April. We believe that the analysis of the characteristics of this change is verified by the enormous difficulties that an urban guerrilla faces to reach higher operative levels, those approximately equivalent to a regular war. In other words, how the urban guerrilla is to a certain extent condemned to be a guerrilla until the moment of the insurrection and can not properly convert into an army.We will necessarily discuss this schematically, because otherwise we would go too far into some of the reasons that determine this.

In the first place, the quantitative development of the effectives appears quite clearly as inversely proportional, say, to the degree of security of an urban armed apparatus, which by definition, is always in the presence of the enemy and exposed in conditions of dispersion to repressive action. We think that one of the determining reasons for the rapid collapse suffered by the MLN lies precisely in having exceeded the limits compatible with security, in terms of the quantitative development of its effectives.

This reasoning explains the small dimension that we systematically see attributed to urban guerrilla movements. To that end, we refer to the description of EOKA troops, for example, which is done in "The war of the flea" and given by Grivas in his book "Guerra de guerrillas"; as well as the description of

the IRA troops in the same "War of the Flea" and "The War of Ireland" by Vicente Talón. Similar references by Menahem Begin were given on the IRGUN of Palestine in "Rebellion in the Holy Land." In general terms, it could be said that practically all the urban guerrillas that have operated throughout history have had extremely small numbers of effectives, measurable in quantities of no more than a few hundred combatants. And never more than that. We reiterate that one of the reasons that seems to us to significantly accentuate the vulnerability of the MLN was their violation of this kind of saturation law.

Another notorious circumstance is that the urban guerrillas lack a rearguard, they do not dominate space, therefore they lack a safe are of retreat on the ground. In the urban environment, the enemy is obviously in possession of the entire territory and the only retreat that remains for the urban guerrilla is the infrastructure that it generates.

The quantitative development of the effectives mentioned above necessarily puts pressure on the availability of infrastructure, whose development in turn, tends to be much slower and more difficult than the recruitment itself. The growth of the combatant personnel inevitably leads, at a certain point, to a "bottleneck" in the field of infrastructure and related facilities. This seems quite clear to us and is what the whole experience indicates. It is much more difficult, especially when reaching a certain rate of operation, to obtain safehouses and the assembly of facilities corresponding to a clandestine organization, rather than in the recruitment of fighters. The experience of the MLN also supports this assertion since, although there was a powerful development of infrastructure, the availability of effectives far exceeded their possibilities. On the other hand, in terms of repression, what has been lost and lost without remedy are the safehouses, which can not move, let's say. And heavy equipment prevents you from relocating with agility. What can most easily evade a repressive action is obviously what can move and in this world what can move the most are people.