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Sandinistas Reply to U.S. War Moves: 'We Must Prepare to Fight and Win'



150,000 rally in León, Nicaragua, on July 19, 1983.

Michael Baumann/IP

Text of Speech by Commander Daniel Ortega

Ernest Mandel

In Defense of the Permanent Revolution

War in Central America key to world politics

By David Frankel

A qualitative shift has taken place in Washington's drive toward a full-scale war in Central America. The speed of the U.S. escalation, the size and scope of the military moves being undertaken, and the character of the statements coming from the White House and the Pentagon, all add up to a gigantic step toward the military confrontation that has been building up since 1979.

With the aircraft carriers *Coral Sea* and *Ranger* and the battleship *New Jersey* already steaming toward Central America, top U.S. officials confirmed July 22 that President Reagan has approved a plan for what the *New York Times* called "preparations for a possible limited military blockade of Nicaragua."

Such a "limited military blockade," or "quarantine" in the State Department's terminology, was what led to the Cuban missile crisis in 1962.

The plan approved by Reagan also includes "preparations so that American forces can be swiftly called into action if necessary," *Times* correspondent Philip Taubman reported.

Among the preparations being made are installation of new radar and electronic surveillance stations in Central America, positioning of large stocks of military equipment in Honduras, and construction of a \$150 million air and naval base on the Atlantic coast of Honduras.

'Not an exercise, a deployment'

Meanwhile, thousands of U.S. and Honduran troops will be carrying out "maneuvers" along Nicaragua's northern border. Scheduled to begin in August, these "are to last a minimum of six months," according to Taubman. The maneuvers, Congressman Michael Barnes pointed out July 24, "are not an exercise, they are a deployment." Only a suitable pretext for all-out U.S. military intervention is lacking.

As the editors of the *New York Times* admitted July 24, "people in Washington now expect — intend? — that provocations will permit the Honduran Army, supported by American forces, to crush the leftists in both" Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Behind Washington's determination to "crush the leftists" in Central America is a single, overriding fact: the socialist revolution is being extended in the Western Hemisphere.

The workers and peasants took political power in the Caribbean island of Grenada in March 1979, and in Nicaragua in July 1979. In both of those countries the toilers are extending their control over the economy and proceeding toward the construction of a new society.

The social gains that have been made in Nicaragua and Grenada have spurred the revolutionary struggle in El Salvador and have inspired the workers and peasants elsewhere in the region. Just as was the case with the Vietnamese revolution in the 1960s, the imperialists are being forced to go to war to defend their system of world domination.

A nationwide war

There should be no doubt about the scope of the war that is being planned in Washington. El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua are already deeply involved. Counterrevolutionary forces have also opened an active front against Nicaragua from Costa Rica, which is receiving increasing amounts of U.S. and Israeli aid.

But even this is just the opening wedge. The Pentagon, for instance, announced July 22 that its aircraft carriers would conduct operations near Grenada and Suriname.

"Cuba would almost surely be drawn in," Tom Wicker noted in the July 22 *New York Times*. The Cubans have repeatedly vowed to come to the aid of Nicaragua if called upon, and they have already demonstrated the value of their internationalist aid in Africa.

A war of this scope would also involve the U.S.-backed dictatorship in Guatemala, which is already trying to beat back opposition by the use of savage repression.

Panama, with its massive U.S. air and naval bases, as well as its facilities for ground troops, is also playing a major role in U.S. military planning. The Panamanian rulers have protested the expansion of the war, fearing that its escalation will touch off an anti-imperialist upsurge in their own country.

What is really being prepared is a war that will engulf all of Central America and spread into the Caribbean as well.

Cuban Vice-minister of Foreign Affairs Ricardo Alarcón was quoted in the July 24 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada* as saying that the imperialists "may be looking for another Beirut, but they're going to find another Hanoi."

Nicaraguan peace plan

Both the Cubans and Nicaraguans have been warning about what Washington has in store for Central America for several years. Cuba has organized half a million men and women into its new Territorial Troop Militia, and imported the weapons necessary to arm them. Nicaragua has also begun organizing a territorial militia that will make it easier to mass larger numbers of fighters than a militia based solely on places of work. And on July 19, Commander Daniel Ortega announced that the Sandinista government would institute military

conscription. (See speech on page 436.)

In his speech on the fourth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution, Ortega noted that "The U.S. administration is bent on a military solution and has given no sign of alleged readiness to negotiate." U.S.-organized attacks on Nicaragua have cost more than 600 lives and \$70 million in economic losses so far this year, Ortega reported.

Cutting through the pretexts and excuses used by Washington to stall peace talks, Ortega presented a six-point proposal for negotiations.

Washington has complained bitterly about supposed arms shipments by Nicaragua to Salvadoran rebels, although it has never been able to come up with a scrap of proof that such shipments exist. At the same time, the U.S. rulers are pouring huge amounts of military aid into El Salvador, while arming counterrevolutionary forces attacking Nicaragua from Honduras. The Sandinistas proposed a halt to all arms shipments to El Salvador and "the absolute cessation of all military aid . . . to the forces opposing any of the Central American governments."

Similarly, while U.S. bases are dotted throughout Central America, Washington has been complaining about nonexistent Soviet and Cuban bases there. Ortega called for a ban on all foreign military bases and a halt to military exercises by foreign armies in Central America.

Washington's response has been to continue its escalation of the war.

Asked on July 21 whether "a satisfactory settlement" could be reached if the Sandinista government remained in power in Nicaragua, Reagan replied, "I think it'd be extremely difficult."

Reagan supporter William Safire put it even more bluntly in the July 24 *New York Times*. "A nationwide war is going on, and that undeniable fact forces us to choose up sides."

Safire declared that "the source of Communist war supplies must be cut off totally, with no hope of being restored."

Right-wing ideologue Norman Podhoretz, writing in the same issue of the *Times*, pointed out that lack of popular support for Reagan's war moves "does not necessarily mean that a successful intervention is impossible." He noted that "even after World War II had already begun, President Roosevelt promised never to send American boys to fight in Europe," but that he eventually did exactly that. Podhoretz might have added that the same was also true in World War I.

Hand-wringing by 'doves'

Despite extensive hand-wringing among ruling-class critics of Reagan's war moves, Congress continues to vote for the hundreds of millions in U.S. military aid that is being poured into Central America. The congressional "doves" have walked a careful line of criticizing and warning against Reagan's policies in hopes of avoiding responsibility for what is coming, while doing nothing that

Our summer schedule

This is the last issue of *Intercontinental Press* before our summer break. We will skip one issue. The next one will be dated September 5.

would seriously hamper the prosecution and escalation of the actual war that is being carried out. By playing this role, they are in reality *aiding* the drive toward all-out war, because they foster the illusion that Congress can be counted on to stop things if Reagan goes too far.

An example of how this works in practice is the ongoing debate in the House of Representatives over whether Washington should provide "covert" or "overt" aid to counter-revolutionary forces in Central America. Public debate on this topic opened in the House on July 26.

But on July 24, administration officials announced an expanded program of CIA paramilitary action in Central America that, the *New York Times* reported, will be "the most extensive covert operations mounted by the United States since the Vietnam War."

Specific acts of war, such as "a campaign of sabotage directed against Cuban installations in Nicaragua" and a substantial expansion of the CIA-organized counterrevolutionary army based in Honduras were cited. The scope of the plans are such that "the C.I.A.'s need for air transport to carry ammunition, weapons and other military equipment to Central America is likely to require the diversion of Air Force cargo planes from other high-priority missions," the *Times* reported.

And on July 23, the Pentagon announced that it would seek to increase the number of U.S. "advisers" in El Salvador from 55 to 125. The Pentagon also wants formal permission for U.S. military personnel to accompany Salvadoran forces into the field.

The message could not be clearer. Congress will debate, the "doves" will fuss and fume and warn Reagan that he is making — in Rep. Barnes' words — "a tragic mistake." But the war will go on.

War at center of world politics

The war itself, along with its implications for the class struggle in Latin America, in the United States, and throughout the world, are the center of world politics. No country will remain untouched by the struggle that is shaping up in Central America.

Ever since the Russian revolution of October 1917, world politics has revolved around the crisis of a dying capitalism and the rise of a working-class alternative to it. The Russian revolution made such a deep impact not only because of the event itself, but also because of the advance it signified in the construction of a new international working-class leadership that could move the struggle for socialism for-

ward. Such a leadership has also emerged in Central America.

New revolutionary Marxist leaderships have been consolidated in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada, and these are carrying forward the process of building new societies in struggle against U.S. imperialism. This process of new revolutionary leadership rising out of the class struggle is also taking place in El Salvador and elsewhere in Central America.

It is a matter of life and death for U.S. imperialism to crush these revolutions. The alternative, as the U.S. rulers well know, is the extension of the socialist revolution throughout Central America — and beyond.

The stakes are just as great for the interna-

tional working class as for imperialism. Within the imperialist countries and in Latin America, the fight against the U.S. war and the collaboration of Washington's partners in carrying it out will be central to the development of a class-struggle leadership within the working class.

As they proved in Vietnam, the U.S. rulers have the power to cause enormous economic damage, millions of casualties, and untold human suffering. But they do not have the power to turn back the tide of history.

Humanity has steadily advanced since the great victory of the Russian revolution. A new stage in that fight for human progress is now opening up in Central America. □

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'We must prepare to fight and win'

Speech by Commander Daniel Ortega on revolution's fourth anniversary

[On July 19 some 150,000 people rallied in the city of León to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution. "All arms to the people! Everyone to defense!" were the slogans under which the mobilization was carried out. The following is the complete text of the speech delivered by Commander Daniel Ortega in behalf of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) and the Government of National Reconstruction. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press* in accordance with the text of Ortega's speech published in the July 20 issue of the Sandinista daily *Barricada*.]

* * *

Many of you have been here since last night. Our visitors will be asking themselves if you are tired? ("No!") Our visitors will also be asking themselves if you have been brought to this plaza by force? ("No!") Our visitors will be asking themselves if you want the traitor Edén Pastora? ("No!") If you are Sandinistas? ("Yes!") (Applause and slogans)

One cannot be in this city of León without a remembrance of Darío¹ and we cannot hold this meeting without a remembrance of Bolívar. (Applause)

From this always heroic and combative city of León, on the 22d anniversary of the Sandinista National Liberation Front and the fourth anniversary of the triumph [of the revolution], we welcome the representatives of friendly governments and peoples and, in particular, the delegations of citizens of the United States, and delegations and individual figures who are friends of our revolution and have come here from different and distant places. (Applause)

We have among us two of Nicaragua's very dear friends. One of them is Julio Cortázar, who at the beginning of this year received the recognition of the people when he was awarded the "Rubén Darío" Order. (Applause)

Our greetings on this glorious day go out to the men who are on our borders, in the front lines of battle, defending the integrity of our territory, the sovereignty of our homeland, and the revolution. (Applause and chants of "They will not pass!")

Our greetings on this glorious day go out to the inhabitants of the small villages, districts, and towns in the border zones; to the men, women, children, and elderly who confront the enemies of the people with a rifle on their shoulder and a machete in their hands.

Our affection and respect go out to the heroic people of Teotecacinate, to the heroic people of Jalapa, to the heroic people of San Francisco del Norte. (Applause)

We celebrate this anniversary remembering those men who with determination left us a legacy of dignity, bravery, love of the people, and love of the homeland. Men like Andrés Castro, men like Benjamín Zeledón, men like Rigoberto López Pérez, men like Carlos Fonseca, and men like Augusto César Sandino.² (Applause)

They are the eternal makers of our history. The revolutionary triumph attained on July 19, 1979, belongs to them. They are present in the small and large tasks. They are alive in our slogans. They are people's power. (Chants of "People's Power!")

1. Rubén Darío was Nicaragua's foremost national poet. He died in 1916.

2. Andrés Castro was a Nicaraguan youth who stood up against William Walker, a proslavery adventurer from the United States who seized control of Nicaragua in the 1850s. Benjamín Zeledón led a 1912 rebellion that was crushed by U.S. Marines. Rigoberto López Pérez, a poet, assassinated Anastasio Somoza García in 1956. Carlos Fonseca was one of the three cofounders of the FSLN in 1961. He was killed in 1976. Augusto César Sandino led a guerrilla army of resistance against the U.S. occupation of Nicaragua in 1927-33. The FSLN takes its name from him.

León was the first territory liberated during the final offensive [against Somoza] and during those days it was made the provisional capital. The Government Junta of National Reconstruction was installed here.

Here, they fought with Sandinista boldness; here the red and black drums³ resounded in Subtiava, El Coyolar, La Ermita, El Laborío, La Estación, La Cartonera, Zaragoza, San Carlos, San Felipe, in all of León's neighborhoods. (Applause)

All of the fury accumulated during long years of struggle, all the thirst for justice stored up from the times of Pedrarias, who was the first Somoza and who — drunk with ambition and rage — sent his dogs to

A new consciousness flowered on July 19 . . .

destroy the Indians. All the accumulated fury took the form of the people organized into the Sandinista Front, which in its final offensive buried for once and for all Somoza and Somozaism, the [National] Guard, the exploiters, those who would sell out the country, the enemies of the people.

A new consciousness flowered on July 19. A consciousness that tells us that individualism, selfishness, greed, overbearing arrogance, demagoguery, and lies must be eradicated. A consciousness that tells us that the love for the people rises above material goods. A consciousness that readies us to work at any time, in any place, and on any task. A consciousness that tells us, as Che did, that we cannot feel totally happy and tranquil while there are barefoot children without schools in our homeland or in any corner of the world. A new consciousness engaged in a limitless war against the vices of the old consciousness. A new consciousness that readies us to give our lives in defense of the interests of the people. A new Sandinista consciousness that makes us worthy sons of Sandino.

And this new consciousness is seen in the tasks taken up with revolutionary enthusiasm, even under the worst circumstances, by men, women, children, by young and old, organized in the Sandinista Workers Federation, in the Rural Workers Association, in the July 19 Sandinista Youth Organization, in the Luisa Amanda Espinoza Nicaraguan Women's Organization, in the Sandinista Defense Committees, in the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers, in the National Employees Union, in the Sandinista Children's Association, in the Sandinista Cultural Workers Association, in the Heroes and Martyrs National Professional Confederation, in the National Association of Nicaraguan Educators, in the Health Workers Federation, in the Nicaraguan Journalists Union. These are the organized lifeblood and energy of the new Sandinista consciousness.

And this new consciousness is the Sandinista National Liberation Front, the political vanguard of the Nicaraguan people, whose members and candidate members become daily more disciplined, daily more humble, daily more ready to face long hours and sacrifices, daily more self-critical and critical, daily more brotherly with their brothers, daily more Sandinista.

And just as the Sandinista Front knew how to lead the people to reach victory, today — in the tasks of defense, in the tasks of education and culture, in the tasks of production, in the social programs, in the organization and mobilization of the working people, in the ideological strug-

3. Red and black are the colors of the FSLN flag.

gle, and in international policy — the Sandinista Front is present as a guide of the revolution, with the National Directorate as its highest leader. (Applause)

The Sandinista Front is present in the revolutionary state through the Government Junta, through the ministers, through the technical cadres and state workers, all of whom carry out the state's policies within the state.

The Sandinista Front is present in the armed forces through the heads of the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior, who are responsible for carrying out the revolution's policies of defense and security.

In the prorevolutionary professional associations, in the auxiliary apparatuses, and in the ongoing organization and mobilization of the mass-

For the first time in Nicaragua's history, not a single case of poliomyelitis has been reported . . .

es, the Sandinista Front is present to carry out ideological struggle, to support state measures, to support defense plans, to support foreign policy.

We can state that, in these four years of revolution, the Sandinista consciousness is the strength of the people synthesized and organized in the Sandinista Front and by the Sandinista Front. This Sandinista consciousness has been reflected in the goals that were met and also in the goals which were not fulfilled.

Today we derive pleasure from the great victory of the literacy campaign, which reduced illiteracy from more than 50 percent to 12 percent. But we cannot sit back while 12 percent of Nicaraguans cannot read or write and, therefore, cannot be considered totally free men.

We have created 2,639 educational centers; 1,252 new school buildings have been built and 16,975 Popular Adult Education Collectives, created. And compared with the 500,000 students in 1978 in the Somozaist past, we presently have 1,005,318 students. (Applause)

It is true that a great effort has been made. But on the other hand, the achievement level of the students is low, and in this area we all have a degree of responsibility: the Sandinista Front, the Ministry of Education, the teachers, and the students. This is a situation we can improve and which must be improved.

In the area of health care, there has been an increase throughout the nation, with a doubling of the number of visits [to health-care institutions], that is, a doubling in service to the public. Also, for the first time in Nicaragua's history, not a single case of poliomyelitis has been reported, and measles has been reduced from 3,784 cases in 1980 to 226 cases in 1982. We could list other successes, which have especially lowered infant mortality.

But we will not hide the serious and grave deficiencies that still exist in the health sector, in the supply of medicines and, above all, in the poor service to the public. These deficiencies must be overcome.

In the industrial sphere, we have reached an acceptable rhythm of production and we must acknowledge the high level of consciousness

The unjust agrarian structures inherited from Somozaism have been pulled out by their roots . . .

and the discipline of the workers and of the technicians, who in the midst of big limitations — above all of parts and raw materials — have been able to maintain production.

It is clear that profound changes are called for in the medium and long term. In the meantime, it will be necessary to continue struggling to maintain production, raising the levels of efficiency and providing more vigilance to prevent robbery and misappropriation of the people's property.

In the agricultural sector, we have advanced in the recovery of na-

tional production. The coffee harvest was an exemplary effort of mobilization by the working people. Under the criminal gunfire of the Somozaist counterrevolutionaries, we brought in the largest harvest in history, some 1,420,000 quintals.⁴

As for cotton, due to the problems imposed by the floods, the goal of [planting] 130,000 manzanas⁵ was not met. But a high yield was obtained. For this year we set out to plant 150,000 manzanas; this figure has already been exceeded with the planting of 171,800 manzanas. (Applause)

Four years after the revolutionary triumph, the unjust agrarian structures inherited from Somozaism have been pulled out by their roots. Under Somozaism, 1,700 landowners had stripped the peasants of their land, and ended up controlling almost 3 million manzanas, which represented 41 percent of the land. In the meantime, more than 100,000 small producers who had farms of less than 50 manzanas owned barely 1 million manzanas, that is, 15 percent of the land, which was also of poor quality.

The agrarian reform has completely transformed this unjust panorama, opening a new future for the farm workers and peasants. The Somozaist landowners have passed into history and the idle and unproductive system of latifundias has been hit hard. Through the confiscation of Somozaist latifundias and the application of the Agrarian Reform Law, 2 million manzanas have passed into the hands of the people to establish agrarian reform enterprises or to strengthen the cooperative movement.

The 80 agrarian reform enterprises that make up the People's Property Sector have played a decisive role in reactivating production,⁶ in improving the standard of living of farm workers, and in developing new investment projects.

The cooperative movement, which has the firm support of the revolutionary state, is already emerging as a powerful source which will play a very important role in the future of our agrarian production and in the organization of self-defense in the countryside.

To support this vigorous movement which brings together more than 60,000 peasants, the revolution has given agrarian reform land titles for 237,209 manzanas to cooperatives as well as 63,352 to individual producers — a total of 300,561 manzanas benefiting 20,236 peasant families.

On the other hand, we must criticize the abuses to which some small and medium peasants have been subjected, having seen their property

The revolutionary government will assume the debts of peasants integrated into defense . . .

invaded with no justification. We must reaffirm here that the revolution guarantees ownership of land to those who work it and does not permit these unjust and illegal occupations, just as we must also have the necessary resolve to start production on the idle lands.

There has been much talk about the debts of the peasants. It has been a much-discussed question. We all know that during the time of Somozaism the peasants became badly indebted and that now, after the triumph of the revolution, they have continued to pile up debts.

Therefore, as the revolution increased credits to the peasants, their debt expanded, because it came on top of an old debt, the old debt from Somozaism.

The National Union of Farmers and Ranchers [UNAG], has been spearheading a whole movement to have the situation of the debt revised, particularly the debt of those peasants who are involved in the

4. One quintal equals 100 pounds.

5. One manzana equals 1.7 acres.

6. At this point *Barricada* indicates that the speech was interrupted by wind. This paragraph and the two that follow it are based on the summary of the speech issued by the Nicaraguan press office.



Michael Baumann IP

Commander Daniel Ortega speaking at July 19 rally in León.

productive area such as in basic grains, and especially the debt of the peasants who are organized in cooperatives.

A few days ago the Government Junta received a delegation from the UNAG. The National Directorate has been keeping abreast of this problem, and has supported the demands of the peasants because it feels that these are just demands. But we feel that here we also have to make a just decision. A just decision must not be paternalistic, but rather fraternal.

Therefore, the Government Junta is directing the National Finance System to proceed to carry out an overall financial restructuring of the debt of the cooperative and small individual producers of basic grains who have used their credit responsibly.

How will this restructuring be carried out? We have not wanted to use the word "cancellation" because we feel that this is not what is involved. The restructuring of the debt will take place in the following way: for the Sandinista agricultural cooperatives or production cooperatives all debts

There is a whole campaign of aggression against Nicaragua being mounted by the United States . . .

accumulated up to the 1982-83 growing season will be taken into account, that is, will be considered, and all the debts they have accumulated up to that date will be lifted. (Applause)

For the credit and service cooperatives the debts accumulated up to the 1981-82 growing season; and for the individual producers the debts accumulated up to the 1980-81 growing season will be lifted, that is, all debts from those dates back will be lifted. (Applause)

Also, the Revolutionary Government will assume the debts of peasants integrated into defense in the reserve battalions, the Sandinista People's Militia, self-defense settlements, or cooperatives that have been damaged by the activities of the Somozaist counterrevolutionaries. (Applause)

We must mention here the problem of food supply. This is a daily problem that cannot be looked at apart from the difficult circumstances under which impoverished countries like ours live, countries that, because they want to be free, are economically, militarily and politically attacked.

We must also bear in mind that the productive sector has not fully recovered from the destruction that took place during the war and that the great efforts that have been made to raise production are still insuffi-

cient. In addition, there are the effects of the prolonged drought that affected our harvest of basic grains and also profoundly affected grazing lands and other livestock feed, resulting in a drop in production of meat, milk, cheese, chicken, and eggs, especially in May, June, and the beginning of July.

The revolution has expanded consumption. The sectors that did not consume, especially in the countryside, the agricultural workers who were superexploited in the time of Somozaism, have begun to consume since the revolutionary triumph due to all the laws that have been aimed at the nutrition of the agricultural workers.

We won't say that it is optimal nutrition. We won't say that it is first-rate nutrition. But it is nutrition that takes place within the measure of our possibilities.

This means that consumption has been expanded, while supply has not grown as fast as consumption, and therefore we have this problem.

The enemies of our revolution will not be able to defeat this revolutionary power, this Sandinista power, with bullets or with ballots . . .

But in addition to this there have been added problems from nature like the drought, as well as problems of economic aggression, because this too affects production.

And there is another problem — the problem of the monopolizers, of the speculative hoarders, of those who have a Somozaist mentality and continue making money on the hunger and needs of the people. When we import food to help resolve this, the monopolists and the speculative hoarders run up the prices on the product.

It is a problem we must find some solution to, even if temporary. The National Directorate is looking into this problem, and the Government Junta is meeting on this problem. We feel that serious measures of a political type, an administrative type, must be taken, in which everyone participates.

Those who don't participate will not have the right to complain later. (Applause)

Among other things, we say that it is necessary to stimulate more energetically the production of foodstuffs and basic goods. You know that perspectives have been laid out and we have been stressing them. But many times due to human failures, weaknesses, and errors, these aims have not been fulfilled.

It is necessary to increase vigilance so that these perspectives are fulfilled, so that we can produce beans, rice, and corn in abundance, and eggs in abundance, and meat in abundance. (Applause) So that we can have everyday food.

Other things can be lacking. Chewing gum can be lacking, but we cannot lack beans. (Applause)

We must punish (applause), we must punish with real severity the speculative practices of monopolization and, generally, all trafficking in the hunger and necessities of the people. The laws are there. The decisions are there. But we need the energy of everyone to force compliance with these decisions. Meanwhile they have continued playing with the people's hunger.

We must in the first place guarantee the nutrition of the children, and the nutrition of men, women, young people, and old people mobilized in armed defense of the revolution. (Applause)

Today as we commemorate this 22d anniversary of the Sandinista Front and the fourth anniversary of the revolutionary triumph, humanity is living through decisive moments, in military terms and in the economic sphere.

In military terms, there are those who would advance a policy of hegemony, which means investing billions of dollars in ever more sophisticated atomic weaponry. Not long ago a United Nations body said that if one-tenth of these resources were used to combat hunger in the world through development programs, hunger could be eliminated, it could be defeated.

They are increasing the resources allocated to the industry of death.

They are rejecting reasonable proposals that are made to put a stop to this irrational arms race. While billions of dollars are invested in armaments, they are cutting aid, they are cutting credits for the poor countries. They are keeping us subjected to economic exploitation in international economic relations, in which the industrialized market-economy countries place the whole weight of their crisis on the poor countries like ours.

This hegemonistic policy, which the present U.S. administration is trying to impose in the military and economic spheres, has meant a larger quota of sacrifices for the people of Nicaragua.

So far this year, the attacks by the Somozaist Guard and the traitor Pastora, directed and coordinated by the Central Intelligence Agency, have already cost more than 600 Nicaraguan lives and \$70 million in losses.

To these economic losses caused by the direct military attacks, we must add the loans to Nicaragua that the U.S. administration has cut; and the blockade it is pushing for in the multilateral international bodies

Nicaragua has always been ready to seek a negotiated political solution to the region's problems . . .

like the Inter-American Development Bank; the cut in our sugar quota to the U.S. market, which we are all familiar with — bringing the total loss to \$354 million.

In addition, we would have to add the losses that Nicaragua suffers with the drop in the prices of our principal export products, which in the past year alone meant losses of \$180 million compared with the prices in 1980. This brings it to a total of \$534 million that Nicaragua has stopped receiving.

But there's still more. If we add the credits that have not gone to Nicaraguan farmers due to shortages in foreign exchange; the roads that have not been completed; the schools that couldn't be built because of suspended loans; the rural development programs that were not carried out, also because of suspended loans; and other such essential productive activities that would have been financed by the blocked loans, the damage caused could be multiplied by as much as five times.

Everyone knows that we are not oil producers. Although multinational companies have made some explorations in the past, the reality is that at present we are not oil producers.

In order to bring an energy plant into use we need bunker fuel, which is an oil derivative. To light a lantern we need gas, which is an oil derivative. To light a kitchen stove we also need this gas, derived from oil. To operate the tractors, the jeeps, transportation in general, we need diesel fuel or gasoline, which are derived from oil.

Despite the efforts made with geothermal and hydroelectric power, we depend on oil. We want to thank Mexico and Venezuela for the support they have given and continue to provide to the Central American countries in terms of oil. (Applause)

We want to use this opportunity to become totally aware of the delicate nature of the situation. We must make a greater effort in saving energy and saving oil. We should, with Sandinista firmness, face up to the extremely grave situation that this presents us in the economic sphere.

We were saying that the economic crisis is not the only thing hitting us, and in fact there is a whole campaign of aggression against Nicaragua being mounted by the United States.

In the midst of the military, political, and economic aggression, we have been making great efforts in institutionalizing the revolution. The Council of State has already discussed a Law of Political Parties, and the majority of its articles have already been approved. Commissions from the Council of State have also been sent abroad to study the experience of other peoples in regard to elections, so that we Nicaraguans can be the ones to decide the type of elections we will have in 1985. (Applause)

But the enemies of our revolution are trying to sabotage this effort. They have not been convinced that they will not be able to defeat this revolutionary power, this Sandinista power, this people's power, with

bullets or with ballots. (Applause. Chants of "People's Power!")

We said that we are subjected to military, political, and economic aggression. They have launched many aggressions, including from the north and from the south.

The first attempts have failed. They launched the Somozaist Guards, with the support of Honduras' army chief. They launched the traitor Edén Pastora. But the Guardsmen and the traitor have ended up like Uncle Coyote, with their teeth broken. (Applause and chants of "A single army!")

The U.S. administration is bent on a military solution and has given no sign of an alleged readiness to negotiate.

Nicaragua has always been ready to seek a negotiated political solution to the region's problems. We have shown our readiness on numerous occasions, especially by supporting the Contadora Group. (Applause)

We also give our support to the call for peace recently made by the bishops of Honduras, which, we are sure, has been well received by the fraternal people of Honduras, who do not want war and who do want peace. (Applause)

Today when the threats of aggression seem very close; today when the dangers of war engulf the region; today when the heroic Salvadoran people are being attacked and the U.S. military intervention in Central America is increasing, the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front wants to make public the following basic points for overcoming the crisis that afflicts the region.

We do not want war. We want to avoid greater sacrifices by the people and therefore we are obliged to make the greatest efforts in a responsible manner. The National Directorate makes the following declaration:

"With responsibility before history, taking into account the grave situation the Central American region is going through, having been turned into an important focus of international tension as a result of the present U.S. administration's policies, the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front feels that it is the inescapable moral obligation of all the governments of Central America and of the political leaders of the United States to spare our peoples the tragedy of a generalized war.

"Therefore, due to this pressing as well as noble objective, it recognizes the value of the positive proposals that came out of the meeting of heads of state of Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, and Panama last weekend in Cancún, Mexico, which gives a big impetus to the search for peace that motivates the Contadora Group.

"The National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front shares the criteria expressed by the heads of state of the Contadora Group, that 'the use of force as an alternative solution does not solve but rather aggravates the underlying tensions. Central American peace will only be a reality to the degree that the fundamental principles of coexistence among nations are respected: nonintervention; self-determination (applause); sovereign equality of states (applause); cooperation for

The Sandinista people's revolution is an irreversible political reality . . .

economic and social development; peaceful solution of controversies; as well as the free and authentic expression of the people's will.'

"We share these criteria because our ideals and principles — people's power, the socioeconomic transformations to benefit the great majority of the nation, the sovereignty and full independence of our homeland, the determination to build a new free, democratic, and pluralistic society without exploitation — are facts and convictions deeply rooted in the hearts of millions of Nicaraguans.

"The Sandinista people's revolution is an irreversible political reality, with national and international repercussions recognized by the whole world.

"Nicaragua has no expansionist ambitions, nor does it want to impose its sociopolitical system on other countries. We have no economic investments abroad, nor do we have dreams of imperial domination. Therefore our people do not need and do not want war. For Nicaragua

the commitment to *never* attack any country is a matter of principle.

"The Sandinista National Liberation Front, which has fought and will continue to fight to assure our people an existence of peace and security, is conscious of the deterioration that has taken place in the situation in the region. In line with the latest constructive steps of the Contadora Group, it has decided to make a new effort to contribute to peace, despite our absolute conviction that the greatest threat to the peace of the region requires bilateral solutions.

"The Government of National Reconstruction will accept that the initial phases of the process of negotiations sponsored by the Contadora Group would have a multilateral character, in order to put an end to the excuses (applause), and so that those who claim to be interested in peace should take concrete steps to develop the process that can lay the foundation for peace. (Applause)

"Furthermore, taking into account that the heads of state have entrusted their ministers of foreign relations to work out specific proposals to be presented for consideration by the Central American countries at

We have no economic investments abroad, nor do we have dreams of imperial domination . . .

the next joint meeting of foreign ministers, and taking into account that the biggest dangers to peace in the region can arise out of the worsening of the already existing military conflicts, the Sandinista National Liberation Front proposes that a discussion immediately begin on the following basic points:

"1. A commitment to end any existing war-like situation through the immediate signing of a nonaggression pact between Nicaragua and Honduras."

Brothers and sisters, do you agree with this proposal? (The people answer, "Yes!")

"2. The absolute end to all supplies of arms from any country to the conflicting forces in El Salvador, so that these people can resolve their problems without outside interference."

Nicaraguan brothers and sisters, do you agree with this proposal? (The people answer, "Yes!")

"3. The absolute cessation of all military aid — in the form of arms shipments, training, use of territory to launch attacks or any other form of aggression — to the forces opposing any of the Central American governments."

Nicaraguan brothers and sisters, do you agree with this proposal? (The people answer, "Yes!")

"4. Commitments to ensure absolute respect for the self-determination of the peoples of Central America and the noninterference in the internal affairs of each country."

Do you agree with this point? (The people answer, "Yes!")

"5. An end to aggressions and economic discrimination against any Central American country."

Are you in agreement with this point? (The people answer, "Yes!")

"6. No installation of foreign military bases on Central American ter-

We must prepare ourselves to defend the revolution from the new attacks our enemies are organizing . . .

ritory and the suspension of military exercises in the Central American area with participation of foreign armies."

Are we in agreement with this proposal? (The people answer, "Yes!")

"Progress in the solution of these points will automatically contribute to the discussion of other points that also worry the Central American states and that are included in the agenda of the Contadora Group in order to find an acceptable and lasting solution for the security and stability of the countries of the region.

"If agreements are reached with the help of the Contadora Group and with their approval, the United Nations Security Council, as the highest

international body charged with overseeing international peace and security, would have to supervise and guarantee compliance with these agreements by all countries.

"Nicaragua states in advance its readiness to accept with full responsibility all commitments that flow from such accords. And it demonstrates this by accepting the view of the heads of state of the Contadora Group that the task of settling specific differences between countries must be initially undertaken with the signing of a memorandum of understanding and the creation of commissions that would allow all parties to develop joint actions and guarantee effective control of their territories, especially in border areas.

"While these initiatives are being worked out in practice, the people of Nicaragua will remain completely mobilized, ready to raise a wall of patriotism and rifles, against which all the aggressors will shatter. (Applause)

"León, July 19, 1983,
"Year of Struggle for Peace and Sovereignty"

(Chants of "They will not pass!")

This is the peace proposal that the National Directorate submits for the approval of the people of Nicaragua. Are we in agreement with this peace proposal? (A unanimous "Yes!")

A peace proposal that the Government Junta of National Reconstruction will take up. (Chants of "People's Power!") We make this proposal because we really want peace. To continue building schools, we want peace. To continue raising production, we want peace. To improve attention to the people's health, we want peace. To wipe out hunger and poverty, we want peace. In order that mothers, children, brothers, families do not live through the martyrdom of war, we want peace.

But we want an honorable peace. We don't want the peace of the tomb, we don't want a cowardly peace. Rather than that, we would prefer to suffer, we would prefer to fight, we would prefer to die, but never to yield. (Applause and chants of "They will not pass!")

In the meanwhile, we must prepare ourselves to defend the revolution from the new attacks our enemies are organizing. The government of the United States is behind those plans, in which the Somozaist Guards and the traitors are in the first rank, followed by the army of Honduras, and behind it the U.S. soldiers.

We must prepare ourselves to repel them and defeat them with the fighting spirit of [Sandinista heroes] Pedro Aráuz, of Germán Pomares, of Selím Shible, of Hilario Sánchez, of Oscar Danilo Rosales, of Gil-

It is the decision of the National Directorate to submit the draft of a law establishing patriotic military service . . .

berto Rostrán Barvis, of Guadalupe Moreno, of René Carrión, of Fanor Urroz, of Félix Pedro Picado, of Marcos Somarriba, of Félix Pedro Carrillo, of Mauricio Martínez, of Erick Ramírez, of Sergio Saldaña, of José Rubí, of Luisa Amanda Espinoza.

We must prepare ourselves to fight and win with all the formidable strength of the organized people, and it is the decision of the National Directorate, which has been accepted by the Government Junta, to submit as soon as possible for its approval the draft of a law establishing Patriotic Military Service. (Applause and chants of "They will not pass!")

And it is the decision of the National Directorate, accepted by the Government Junta, to deliver in an orderly, organized manner — to the furthest corner of the country — all arms to the people (applause and chants of "All arms to the people!") so that the people, organized territorially in the Sandinista People's Militia, can have their combat weapons to defend the land; all arms to the people to defend the gains of the revolution; all arms to the people to defend people's power; all arms to the people to defend this new society; all arms to the people to defend peace; all arms to the people to defend this Free Homeland or Death; all arms to the people! (Thunderous applause and chants of "We are fighting to win. They will not pass!" "National Directorate, give the order! They will not pass!") □

Repression vs. mass radicalization

Regime's divide-and-rule policies fail

By Ernest Harsch

Officials of the white minority regime in Pretoria frequently talk about the "revolutionary threat" confronting their system of racist rule. In public speeches, in leadership meetings of the ruling National Party, and in the pages of the major white-run newspapers, cabinet ministers, army generals, and corporate executives stress that the next few years will be crucial ones.

The emergence of an independent Black union movement and the growing strength and following of the main national liberation organization, the African National Congress (ANC), have heightened the white supremacists' sense of urgency. But against these challenges they have no new solutions. Their only answer has been more repression and a further application of their general policy of divide-and-rule.

Clubs, guns, and prison cells

While the pressure of South Africa's powerful Black working class has forced the regime to allow the formation of new, predominantly Black unions, the most militant of those unions have been the targets of constant police repression and harassment.

For example, Thozamile Gqweta, the president of the South African Allied Workers Union, has been repeatedly detained and subjected to beatings and electric shock torture. In March 1981, his house in Mdantsane, near East London, was set on fire while he was inside; although the door had been wired shut from the outside, he managed to escape through a window. Later that year his mother and uncle were burned to death in another mysterious fire. At their funeral, Gqweta's companion, Deliswa Roxiso, was shot to death by the police. As recently as March 1983, Gqweta was detained yet again.

Hundreds of strikers have been briefly arrested or detained. Some have been shot. In 1982, a score of leading unionists were picked up in a major police sweep directed against the Black union movement. Earlier this year, Phillip Dlamini, the general secretary of the Black Municipal Workers Union, was sentenced to a year and a half in prison.

Political rallies, marches, and demonstrations are likewise frequently attacked by the police. The authorities have been careful not to unleash another massacre on the scale of the Soweto slaughter in 1976, but protesters are still shot quite often. A number have been killed.

On April 2, Saul Mkhize, the leader of a Black farming community in Driefontein, was

slain by police during a peaceful rally held to protest government plans to forcibly move the community.

In a further effort to terrorize political opponents, the security police have continued their practice of torturing to death political prison-

This is the last of three articles on the freedom struggle in South Africa. The first dealt with the emergence of a strong Black union movement, and the second, the growth of the African National Congress' activity and influence in recent years.

ers. Well over 50 have died in this way in police detention since 1963, when civil rights groups started keeping track; a majority of them have been killed since the 1976 rebellions. The most recent victim, ANC fighter Tembuyise Simon Mndawe, died in a police cell in Nelspruit in early March.

Such acts of reprisal are not reserved for political activists alone. They are directed against the Black population as a whole, in an effort to instill generalized fear and beat Blacks into submission.

The authorities often carry out massive police and army raids on Black townships, sealing off the exits and conducting house-to-house searches for pass-law violators.

In the year from July 1979 to June 1980, the daily prison population for the first time surpassed 100,000 — one of the highest rates in the world. Of the nearly half a million who were jailed at some time during the year, 173 were sentenced to death. On average, more than 100 Blacks are hanged each year.

While the repression against whites is in no way as extensive or brutal as against the Black majority, it has been increasing as well. This reflects the government's fear that its political influence over the white population is slipping.

Over the past few years, a number of white student, political, and trade-union activists have been banned, a form of house arrest. Among them was Andrew Boraine, the president of the National Union of South African Students, the main white student group. The authorities have been particularly harsh toward those whites who have been working with the predominantly Black unions or with the ANC.

A new law has been introduced that would require all whites to have their fingerprints taken and recorded in a central register and to produce an identity document on demand. Up to now, such control measures had only applied to Blacks.

The apartheid regime's use of armed force

extends far beyond South Africa's borders.

As the ANC has become more of an immediate threat to the white minority regime, it has also become more of a target for Pretoria's security police. Special assassination and sabotage squads have been set up to attack ANC leaders and offices in other countries. In the past two and a half years, these have included:

- A South African commando raid against ANC refugee houses in Maputo, Mozambique, in January 1981, in which 12 ANC members were killed.

- The July 31, 1981, assassination of Joe Nzingo Gqabi, the ANC representative to Zimbabwe, in the Zimbabwean capital.

- The March 14, 1982, bombing of the ANC's offices in London.

- The June 4, 1982, killing, by car bomb, of Petrus and Jabu Nyaoase, two ANC leaders based in Swaziland.

- The Aug. 17, 1982, assassination by parcel bomb of Ruth First, a leader of the ANC and South African Communist Party, at her offices in Maputo.

- The Dec. 9, 1982, South African commando raid on ANC refugee houses in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho, in which 30 South African refugees and 12 Lesotho citizens were killed.

- The May 23, 1983, air attack on ANC houses and other sites in Maputo.

South African officials frequently threaten neighboring African states with direct retaliation if they offer sanctuary to South African or Namibian refugees and freedom fighters.

Against Mozambique, Pretoria has armed and trained thousands of members of the so-called Mozambique National Resistance (MNR), which has carried out numerous sabotage and terrorist activities in that country.

The apartheid regime allows armed members of the Basuto Congress Party to operate from South African territory against the Lesotho government.

The most persistent and massive attacks have been conducted against Angola, which provides assistance to both the ANC and to the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), the Namibian liberation movement. Pretoria provides considerable military and financial support to the terrorist bands known as the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). It also carries out direct military attacks. Since Angola won its independence in 1976, these attacks have cost 10,000 lives and \$7 billion in damages.

To carry out such operations and to battle SWAPO's growing influence in Namibia, the

apartheid regime has been allocating more and more funds to build up its military strength, already the most powerful on the African continent.

In 1972-73, military spending was less than R400 million; by 1983-84, it had risen to more than R3 billion (one rand = US\$1.09). It is the largest item in the South African budget.

One key problem Pretoria faces is a shortage of personnel. Because it draws its police and troops from the white minority — and does not trust Blacks to serve in the regular military — its armed forces are stretched rather thin. This has been exacerbated by a sharp increase in the number of young people who leave the country to avoid military service (several thousand each year).

Plans are now under way to extend the period of required service in the army from 240 days over a period of 8 years, to 720 days over a period of 12 years. The new Defence Bill would enable the authorities to call up every white male between the ages of 17 and 60 for service in the commandos, a backup militia force that is now composed of volunteers — and therefore greatly understaffed.

Divide and rule

It is precisely because of the apartheid regime's narrow base of support within the country that it must constantly find ways to keep the Black majority divided and disorganized, and to seek Black collaborators.

Its main instrument for this is the Bantustans. South Africa's 10 Bantustans are the fragments of territory, comprising only 13.7 percent of South Africa's entire land area, that the regime has set aside for African occupation. The land in the Bantustans is among the least fertile in South Africa. They have practically no industry. Unemployment is overwhelming, and most of the adult males work on a contract basis in the "white" cities. Some 30,000 African children die of malnutrition each year in the Bantustans.

Yet these are the places the apartheid regime has arbitrarily declared the "homelands" of the African majority. Almost every African has been designated a "citizen" of one or another Bantustan, whether he or she lives there or not. By politically tying Africans to these impoverished rural enclaves, the regime hopes to weaken the struggle for Black majority rule over the entire country.

As part of its drive to deprive Africans of even more of their rights within South Africa as a whole, the regime is pushing to declare all 10 of the Bantustans "independent." Four have already attained that dubious distinction — the Transkei, Ciskei, BophuthaTswana, and Venda. With "independence," the Africans assigned to them have automatically lost the few remaining rights they had as citizens of South Africa.

The vast majority of Africans oppose the Bantustan scheme. Elections to the Bantustan administrations are widely boycotted, especially among Africans in the major urban centers. Out of several hundred thousand Tswana-

speakers in Soweto, for example, only 120 voted in the elections for BophuthaTswana in October 1982.

Yet the Bantustans nevertheless provide a vehicle for enticing a layer of Africans into direct collaboration with the apartheid regime. Offers of salaried administrative posts and favored commercial and business deals within the Bantustans have won over a number of African tribal chiefs and a sector of the African petty-bourgeoisie to Pretoria's side. Their main responsibility is to police the Bantustans on Pretoria's behalf.

In an interview in the Dec. 6, 1982, *Rand Daily Mail* of Johannesburg, the Ciskei's security police chief, Maj. Gen. Charles Sebe, declared, "There is an enormous difference between what Ciskei was before independence and what it is now. Take my department, for instance. We never had a department of State Security before independence. After independence, the department is now manned by well over 887 men."

Sebe then went on, "The ANC and the South African Communist Party under Joe Slovo are the main political problem facing Ciskei."

In Venda, which borders Zimbabwe and is close to the Mozambican border as well, the "government" of Patrick Mphahlele has launched a drive against suspected "subversives" in an effort to counter the ANC's recruitment and activities in the area. Scores have been detained and several have died in police detention.

The most prominent of all the Bantustan leaders, Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu, has denounced those who engage in armed struggle, has sent groups of thugs against student demonstrators, and has singled out Black and white radicals for condemnation. The authorities allow him to travel abroad to lobby for greater foreign investment in South Africa. Most recently, he has praised the International Monetary Fund's decision to loan \$1 billion to the South African regime.

Yet Buthelezi and a few other Bantustan figures also reflect the pressures they are under from the masses of Africans. Buthelezi rejects "independence" for KwaZulu and has at times criticized aspects of the apartheid system. For that reason he retains a degree of popularity among Zulus, which he has sought to hold on to through his Inkatha movement, a Zulu-based political formation.

This reluctance of Buthelezi and a few others to go along completely with Pretoria's policies has caused the authorities some difficulties.

Indian and Coloured resistance

Parallel to its Bantustan policy, the regime of Prime Minister Pieter Botha has launched new efforts to split Coloureds and Indians away from the African majority. This comes in direct response to the closer unity that has been forged between the three sectors of the Black population over the past decade.

In the 1960s, the apartheid regime had set up Coloured and Indian "advisory" bodies, simi-

lar to the Bantustan administrations, that were composed of collaborators from those communities. But they failed to win the allegiance of many Coloureds and Indians.

In 1977, the regime announced that it was planning to revise South Africa's constitutional setup in order to bestow some legislative powers on these quisling bodies. There would thus be three chambers of parliament, one each for whites, Coloureds, and Indians. Executive power would be held by a new "president's council," a predominantly white body that would also include a few Coloured and Indian members.

This proposal remained on the drawing boards for a while, however, both because of opposition from the more ultraright currents within the white ruling class and because of the indifference or outright hostility of most Indian and Coloured organizations.

Only 10 percent of eligible Indian voters turned out for elections to the South African Indian Council in 1981, in face of a vigorous boycott campaign by opponents of the council. Although voting for the Coloured People's Representative Council has been higher, most Coloureds cast their ballots for the Labour Party, which claimed to be against the regime's divide-and-rule policies.

In January 1983, the regime made its first significant breakthrough. An annual congress of the Labour Party reversed its previous rejection of Botha's constitutional plan and agreed to participate in the proposed tricameral parliament and president's council.

Botha hailed the Labour Party's new stance as a "constructive policy." Now that the regime had won the collaboration of the most prominent Coloured organization, it officially introduced its constitutional bill into parliament in early May.

However, the response of Coloureds and other Blacks to the Labour Party's decision reveals the limitations of Pretoria's divisive maneuvers, as well as the important changes that have been taking place in the consciousness of all sectors of the Black population.

At the Labour Party congress itself, a number of leaders of the party resigned in protest against the decision. In Cape Town, which has a majority Coloured population, some 60 trade unions, civil associations, student groups, and other organizations issued a statement declaring, "We reject the Labour Party as being in any way representative of the oppressed in their struggle for a nonracial, democratic South Africa."

In a report from Cape Town, *New York Times* correspondent Joseph Lelyveld estimated that "the opposition appears to have a stronger organizational base here" than the Labour Party.

Attempts by Labour Party leaders to hold public meetings to try to explain their policy have been met with militant demonstrations. As a result, some meetings have been cancelled and police have at times been called in to protect party leaders. Jac Rabie, the party's leader in the Transvaal, warned that the party

was forming a "military wing" to deal with opponents, who he accused of being manipulated by "Andropov and his lieutenants in Moscow."

Although the authorities had hoped that the Labour Party's about-face would lead to greater friction among Africans, Coloureds, and Indians, the opposite has happened. The widespread rejection of its move among Coloureds has helped lay the basis for new initiatives toward Black unity.

In the Transvaal, dozens of Coloured, Indian, and African groups, including a number of the Black trade unions, have formed the United Democratic Front (UDF) to fight against the regime's constitutional plan. Similar coalitions have emerged in Cape and Natal provinces.

Nthato Motlana, one of the most prominent political figures in Soweto, declared after the formation of the UDF, "For the first time since the sixties the three non-white groups, namely the Coloured, the Indians and the Africans, have once more a chance to cooperate, to collaborate in their total opposition to apartheid. . . . I think it's really significant that, in fact, this united front should have been thrown up by what outwardly would appear to be liberalizing attempts by the Government. It shows how people have, in fact, read the true situation into these proposals, and I think it should play a very significant role in mobilizing opinion — both black and white — in opposition to what is, in fact, a charade."

The uproar among Coloureds over the Labour Party's betrayal, the widespread opposition among Indians to the regime's South African Indian Council, and the equally massive African rejection of the Bantustans point to the essential failure of Pretoria's divide-and-rule tactics.

In a similar way, the growing support among whites for the struggles of Blacks — and even the involvement of some whites in the national liberation movement — shows that the apartheid regime's effort to turn the white population as a whole against the Black majority is weakening as well.

Deep radicalization

While the South African ruling class can do nothing except introduce new variations on its old policies, Black activists — and the Black population in general — have learned many important political lessons over the past decade of struggle. This has been an important feature of the radicalization in South Africa. More than ever before, fighters for Black liberation are becoming conscious of what it will take to win.

The regime's massacres of 1976 shattered whatever illusions were left that it was possible to bring about any significant change through pressing for reforms or through peaceful means alone. Many realized that it would take a revolution to end the apartheid system.

This realization has been shown not only by the thousands of youths who have decided to become guerrillas, but also by the willingness of many Blacks in the cities and countryside to

actively assist them. Surveys conducted by Lawrence Schlemmer, a noted researcher at the University of Natal in Durban, found that half of all Blacks in that province thought that many or most people would cooperate with or shelter ANC fighters if asked to do so quietly.

The idea — quite common among some in the 1970s — that students and intellectuals were the "natural" leaders of the Black population has also dissipated. The failure of the student-led protests of 1976–77 to win any real concessions from the government and the example of the emerging Black union movement have now focused much greater attention on the role of the working class as the leading social force in the South African revolution.

Most of the key organizations within South Africa that oppose the apartheid regime now stress the role of workers in the struggle for national liberation and recognize the importance of the independent unions. Union speakers at public rallies are now the norm rather than the exception.

As part of this developing class consciousness in South Africa, more people are discussing and becoming attracted to Marxist ideas.

"A generation educated through the liberal nationalism of black consciousness are now increasingly finding their answers in the Marxist-Leninist texts," an article in the Jan. 7, 1982, *Johannesburg Star* warned its white readers.

The very nature of South African society provides a strong impetus toward the adoption of anticapitalist positions. Class and national oppression are very closely intertwined. The capitalist class is all-white, while the vast bulk of the working class comes from the oppressed Black majority. The apartheid system as a whole — the pass laws, racial segregation, the denial to Blacks of their most basic political and human rights — is designed to ensure that Blacks have little option but to work for the white employers, at the lowest wages possible.

Therefore, any struggle against national oppression, any fight for Black rights, inevitably strikes at the capitalist system itself. The fight for national emancipation is thus a form of the class struggle — and in South Africa it is the primary form.

The ANC has for some years pointed to the class dynamics underlying the national liberation struggle in South Africa. A document entitled "Strategy and Tactics," adopted in April 1969, stressed the class dynamics influencing the South African liberation struggle. While noting that the "national character of the struggle must . . . dominate our approach," the ANC went on:

But it is a national struggle which is taking place in a different era and in a different context from those which characterized the early struggles against colonialism. It is happening in a new kind of world — a world which is no longer monopolized by the imperialist world system; a world in which the existence of the powerful socialist system and a significant sector of newly liberated areas has altered the balance of forces; a world in which the horizons liberated from foreign oppression extend beyond mere

formal political control and encompass the elements which make such control meaningful — economic emancipation. It is also happening in a new kind of South Africa: in which there is a large and well-developed working class whose class consciousness and independent expressions of the working people — their political organs and trade unions — are very much part of the liberation front.

The ANC's emphasis on linking national liberation with steps toward social and economic emancipation has helped stimulate wide-ranging political discussions among its members and leaders. Many within its ranks are strongly attracted to revolutionary socialist and Marxist ideas.

In seeking to understand the character of the South African revolution, ANC members and cadres pay particular attention in their study classes and readings to the experiences of revolutionary struggles in other countries, including the Soviet Union, Cuba, Vietnam, Iran, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.

Majority for socialism

The political discussions among activists in the liberation struggle are taking place at a time when millions within South Africa are already favorable to socialist solutions.

Citing three major surveys of Black political opinion, an editorial in the May 4, 1979, *Johannesburg Star* pointed out that "the majority of urban blacks prefer to call themselves communists, marxists or socialists."

The *Sunday Tribune*, published in Durban, reported in its Jan. 10, 1982, issue, "A student said that homeland independence and township community councils had taught him and millions of others to be less suspicious of socialism and its class interpretation of society's ills. 'The Matanzimas and Sebes [Bantustan officials] taught us it was not a black-white thing, it was not only whites exploiting and oppressing us. We looked for an explanation and found it in a class analysis of society.' The young man, son of a factory worker father and a street vendor mother, is not alone."

The report went on to note that the words of an old ANC song, "We Will Follow Lutuli" (referring to Albert Lutuli, a former ANC president), have been adapted. Instead of Lutuli's name, the names now sung are those of ANC leaders Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela; Joe Slovo, a leader of the South African Communist Party; and Marx and Lenin. "The singers are young and idealistic — but never naive. Even the youngest remembers his baptism of fire on the township streets in 1976."

Politically, the struggle for Black liberation and class emancipation has come a long way since those 1976 rebellions. This political evolution has already had a big impact on the mass movement, though its full force has not yet been felt. But when it does, it will make all previous upsurges pale by comparison.

That is what has the apartheid authorities so clearly terrified. And that is what South Africa's working people are preparing themselves for. □

In defense of Permanent Revolution

A reply by Ernest Mandel to Doug Jenness

Editor's Introduction

The following article, "In Defense of the Permanent Revolution," by Ernest Mandel, is part of a continuing public debate on the continuity of communist strategy from 1848 to today. At the heart of this discussion is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat — the touchstone of Marxist strategy.

The debate began following the publication of an article in the *International Socialist Review* (a magazine supplement to the U.S. weekly *Militant*, which reflects the views of the Socialist Workers Party) in November 1981, celebrating the 64th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. On that occasion the *International Socialist Review* featured Lenin's 1921 article, "On the Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution." This was the first time it had been published in the *Militant* or the *International Socialist Review*. A brief commentary by *Militant* editor Doug Jenness accompanied Lenin's article.

Ernest Mandel, like Jenness a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, took issue with this article describing the Bolsheviks' strategy. Mandel's polemic, entitled "The Debate Over the Character and Goals of the Russian Revolution," appeared in the April 1982 *International Socialist Review*.

Jenness responded in "Our Political Continuity with Bolshevism," published in the June 1982 *International Socialist Review*.

This unfolding discussion has also been appearing publicly in French in *Inprecor* and *Quatrième Internationale*. All the articles that have appeared in the *International Socialist Review* are available in magazine format for \$1.25 from the Socialist Workers Party, 14 Charles Lane, New York, N. Y. 10014, U.S.A.

For those who may not have read the earlier articles in this discussion, it is useful to review briefly the key issues under debate.

Four years of Russian revolution

Lenin's 1921 anniversary article reviewed the stages in the development of the Russian revolution since the workers and peasants established their rule in October 1917. He explained, "The direct and immediate object of the revolution in Russia was a bourgeois-democratic one, namely, to destroy the survivals of medievalism and sweep them away completely, to purge Russia of this barbarism, of this shame, and to remove this immense obstacle to all culture and progress in our country."

Lenin pointed out that once the workers and peasants republic had consummated this task "as nobody had done before," it advanced "towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing that it is not separated from the bourgeois-democratic revolution by a Chinese Wall, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) *struggle alone* will determine how far we shall advance, what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories" (emphasis in original for all quotations).

Lenin stated that four years of experience of the revolution "have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct."

Lenin also noted that all of the Bolsheviks' opponents in the working-class movement during the First World War had "derided our slogan 'convert the imperialist war into a civil war.' But that slogan proved to be the *truth* — it was the only truth, unpleasant, blunt, naked and brutal, but nevertheless the *truth*, as against the host of most refined jingoist and pacifist lies."

It is impossible for working people to escape the inferno of imperialist

war, Lenin explained, "except by a Bolshevik struggle and a Bolshevik revolution."

Jenness' accompanying article pointed to the historic importance of the Russian revolution for working people. It altered the relationship of class forces internationally between the imperialist rulers and the toiling masses in favor of the latter, he said. And it offered the world working class its richest experience yet in applying communist strategy.

Jenness observed that "Lenin was the central leader of the Bolshevik party and of the Soviet workers state in its early revolutionary years. The best place to learn the lessons of Bolshevism — to understand how the Bolshevik party was trained, carried through the October revolution, and led the organization of the world's first workers state — is Lenin's writings and speeches."

Democratic and socialist revolution in Russia

Jenness commented on and amplified the points in Lenin's article regarding the relation between the democratic and socialist revolutions in Russia. He referred readers to *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, a polemic written by Lenin in 1918 against Karl Kautsky's condemnation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia. Kautsky was a prominent leader of the Second International.

Jenness quoted Lenin's brief summary of the principal contending strategies in the Russian labor movement before the Russian revolution:

"The Russian revolution is a bourgeois revolution, said all the Marxists of Russia before 1905. The Mensheviks, substituting liberalism for Marxism, drew the conclusion from this that, hence, the proletariat must not go beyond what was acceptable to the bourgeoisie and must pursue a policy of compromise with it. The Bolsheviks said that this was a bourgeois-liberal theory. The bourgeoisie, they said, was trying to bring about the reform of the state on bourgeois, *reformist*, not revolutionary lines, while preserving the monarchy, landlordism, etc., as far as possible. The proletariat must carry through the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the end, not allowing itself to be 'bound' by the reformism of the bourgeoisie. The Bolsheviks formulated the relation of *class* forces in the bourgeois revolution as follows: the proletariat, joining to itself the peasantry, will neutralize the liberal bourgeoisie and utterly destroy the monarchy, medievalism, and landlordism.

"The alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry *in general* reveals the bourgeois character of the revolution, for the peasantry in general are small producers who stand on the basis of commodity production. Further, the Bolsheviks then added, the proletariat will join to itself *the entire semi-proletariat* (all the toilers and exploited), will neutralize the middle peasantry and *overthrow* the bourgeoisie; this will be a Socialist revolution, as distinct from a bourgeois-democratic revolution (see my pamphlet *Two Tactics*, published in 1905 and reprinted in *Twelve Years*, St. Petersburg, 1907)."

Jenness then turned to *Two Tactics* to show the continuity between the Bolsheviks' pre-1917 strategic orientation and Lenin's evaluation of the revolution after 1917. In this work Lenin explained that the working class should forge an alliance with the peasantry *as a whole*, that is, with capitalist farmers as well as with exploited and semiproletarian peasants with small land holdings, to overturn the monarchy and landlordism.

"Such a victory will assume the form of a dictatorship," Jenness quoted Lenin from *Two Tactics*, "i.e. it is inevitably bound to rely on military force, on the arming of the masses, on an uprising, and not on institutions established by 'lawful' or 'peaceful' means. It can only be a dictatorship, for the introduction of the reforms which are urgently needed and absolutely necessary for the proletariat and the peasantry will call forth the desperate resistance of the landlords, the big bourgeoisie and tsarism. Without a dictatorship it will be impossible to

break down that resistance and to repel the counterrevolutionary attempts. But of course it will be a democratic, not a socialist dictatorship."

Jeness cited Lenin's explanation that the workers and peasants dictatorship, after carrying out the democratic revolution, "shall at once, and precisely in accordance with the measure of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organized proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution. We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop half-way."

Jeness noted that Lenin's assessment of the popular mass committees and delegated bodies, called soviets, that arose during the 1905 revolution "gave a glimpse of how the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship might emerge."

He pointed out that when the soviets were established again in February 1917, on a much more extensive basis, Lenin recognized and promoted them as the basis of a new government based on the workers and peasants. Through these organs, the workers established their rule in October 1917 and proceeded to carry through, at first with the peasantry as a whole, the democratic revolution. When the semiproletarian and poor peasants launched a struggle against the capitalist farmers (kulaks) in the spring and summer of 1918, the Soviet republic advanced toward the socialist revolution.

Jeness concluded that the course projected by the Bolsheviks before 1917 "gave an accurate portrayal of the line of march the Russian workers would follow and how the revolution would unfold. It armed them to participate effectively in the class struggle and to assume a leadership role in the revolution."

Marx and Engels on Russia

Mandel, in his article "The Debate Over the Character and Goals of the Russian Revolution," began by presenting his view of Marx and Engels' positions on Russia and their relations to the Russian narodniks (populists) in the latter part of the 19th century.

Mandel argued that "after some hesitation," Marx — in correspondence with populist leader Vera Zasulich in 1881 — "arrived at an unambiguous position: Russia could 'leap over the stage of capitalism.'" "Through this analysis," Mandel said, "Marx provided support" to the narodniks against a current led by Georgi Plekhanov, evolving toward proletarian communism away from populist positions.

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, following Marx's death, according to Mandel, Engels drew the conclusion that history was not bearing out Marx's 1881 hypothesis. Only then did Engels give "his full support to the first nucleus of Russian Marxists around Plekhanov."

In "Our Political Continuity with Bolshevism," Jeness responded, "From Mandel's description of this debate . . . one might draw the incorrect impression that Marx and Engels, in the 1870s and 1880s, adapted to populism. It is important to be clear on this, since Lenin consciously and explicitly rooted himself in the continuity of Marx and Engels's writings."

Jeness pointed out, "Marx and Engels's views on the development of Russian society and their relations with the emerging movement there were quite a bit richer and more complex," than indicated by Mandel. "In fact, they provide a model both of a materialist analysis of a concrete social and economic situation and of how proletarian revolutionists approach fighters struggling against oppression who show potential to evolve toward scientific communism."

Mandel, in his latest contribution, does not return to this issue.

In his April 1982 article, Mandel sharply disagreed with Jeness' evaluation of the Bolsheviks' strategy and offered his own interpretation. He argued that the Bolsheviks were correct against the Mensheviks in rejecting a political bloc with the bourgeois parties in order to carry out the bourgeois-democratic revolution. However, Mandel said, the Bolsheviks made many serious errors in their strategy that were not reversed until April 1917.

Lenin's strategy

These mistakes included Lenin's "erroneous dogma" of dividing the Russian revolution into two distinct stages — the democratic revolution and the social revolution. In Lenin's strategy, Mandel argued, "the goal

of the democratic revolution was to be *the unfettered development of capitalism.*"

The Bolsheviks were educated by Lenin in the "spirit of limiting the 'first stage' of the revolution to purely democratic tasks." Lenin favored the "'self-limitation of the proletariat,' that is the refusal to move beyond the realization of the most radical bourgeois-democratic demands."

For Lenin, he said, "The capacity of the Russian proletariat to begin to resolve the socialist tasks of the revolution. . . . did not exist."

As a result of Lenin's errors, Mandel concluded, the Bolshevik party found itself disarmed following the February 1917 revolution. "When *all* the Bolshevik leaders and *all* the Bolshevik cadres favored 'critical' support to and even collaboration with the provisional coalition government."

Mandel said, "Unlike the Mensheviks, Lenin, in line with his own position, called for Social Democratic participation in a revolutionary insurrectional government, and even for an insurrectional process culminating in a revolutionary government under Social Democratic leadership. . . ."

But Lenin's view of an "insurrectional government," Mandel stated, did not include advancing to the socialist revolution following the consummation of the democratic revolution. Lenin, according to Mandel, believed this government "will have to give up or lose power later on, given the bourgeois character of the revolution."

In conjunction with this, Mandel added that Lenin radically rejected "any notion of 'revolutionary communes,' any notion of a state (in contrast to an insurrection) based on soviets. . . ."

Mandel said that Lenin explicitly corrected himself in his April Theses of 1917 and "now in fact stood for the same positions Trotsky had defended since 1904-1906. . . ."

Trotsky's pre-1917 position

Leon Trotsky, before the 1917 revolution, was one of the leading Russian Social Democrats who stood outside both the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions. Shortly after his return to Russia from exile in May 1917, Trotsky joined the Bolshevik party. He remained a Bolshevik, defending the principles of revolutionary communism until his assassination in 1940.

Mandel stated, "Beginning in 1904, Trotsky developed an entirely new and original position on [the] character and perspectives of the Russian revolution. He and his supporters alone defended that position against both the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks."

Trotsky correctly agreed with the Bolsheviks, Mandel said, in opposing the Mensheviks' practice of supporting the liberal bourgeoisie. He was also correct in opposing the Bolsheviks' "erroneous dogma" of a prolonged capitalist stage, during which Russia would undergo modernization and industrialization through a "rapid development of capitalism."

Trotsky was also right, according to Mandel, in defending "the impossibility for the peasantry to constitute a political party or force that would be independent both of the bourgeoisie and the working class," while Lenin "was certain that the revolutionary peasantry had to *take political power.*"

Jeness responded in "Our Political Continuity with Bolshevism" that Mandel's article "is an erroneous presentation of the Bolshevik strategy and a distorted picture of the differences in the Russian workers movement leading up to the 1917 revolution."

Jeness rejected Mandel's statement that Lenin saw the "goal of the democratic revolution" in Russia to be a "prolonged" period of "unfettered development of capitalism."

Lenin, Jeness said, often explained the elementary historical materialist precept that the "complete elimination of the remnants of medievalism and serfdom, together with the overturn of the autocracy, would create the best conditions for the development of capitalism, especially in agriculture." However, Jeness added, this "neither meant that the bourgeoisie would lead it or support it, nor that the government issuing from it would put the bourgeoisie in power."

Jeness argued that Lenin, following the 1917 revolution, saw the

fundamental outlines of the question in the same way as he did before. He quoted Lenin in 1918 on the import of nationalizing the land immediately following the October Revolution. "This laid the foundation, the most perfect from the point of view of the development of capitalism (Kautsky cannot deny this without breaking with Marx), and at the same time created an agrarian system which is the *most flexible* from the point of view of the transition to socialism."

Relationship of class forces is key

Jeness also took issue with Mandel's statement that the Bolsheviks' strategy was to "self-limit" a revolutionary upheaval in order to confine it to accomplishing bourgeois-democratic measures, thus assuring an inevitable capitalist takeover of the government. Rather, he argued, the Bolsheviks favored establishing a revolutionary dictatorship of the workers and peasants that would forcibly repress the big capitalists and landlords, carry through the democratic revolution, and advance the socialist revolution as rapidly as the class relationship of forces would permit.

Jeness quoted Lenin in 1905 that "to try to calculate *now* what the combination of forces will be within the peasantry 'on the day after' the revolution (the democratic revolution) is empty utopianism. . . . We shall bend every effort to help the entire peasantry achieve the democratic revolution, *in order thereby to make it easier* for us, the party of the proletariat, to pass on as quickly as possible to the new and higher task — the socialist revolution."

Rejecting Mandel's statement that Lenin did not have any notion before 1917 of a state based on soviets, Jeness pointed to a 1906 polemic with the Mensheviks where Lenin wrote, "The organs of authority that we have described [Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Railwaymen's and Peasants' Deputies] represented a dictatorship in embryo, for they recognized *no* other authority, *no* law and *no* standards, no matter by whom established."

Jeness also pointed to the theses adopted by the Bolsheviks in October 1915, which specified the initial moves a workers and peasants dictatorship under Bolshevik leadership would take to remove Russia from the war. These theses ruled out participation in a government with "revolutionary chauvinists" (Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries) who were supporting the imperialist war aims.

Sharply differing with Mandel, Jeness argued that it was not the Bolsheviks' strategic perspective that disoriented some Bolshevik leaders in Russia after the February 1917 revolution. To the contrary, the actions of the Bolshevik conciliationists who politically supported the capitalist provisional government "had nothing in common with the positions adopted by the Bolshevik party congresses and carried in its press since 1903. In particular, it would be hard to find any questions that the Bolsheviks were better armed against than conciliationism toward the Mensheviks and opposition to defending the imperialist government's war."

Jeness argued that "the fact that some Bolshevik leaders accepted a conciliationist course and abandoned the Bolshevik line on the war testifies to the profound pressures on the party, especially on those sectors most removed from the working class."

Did Lenin adopt Trotsky's view?

Jeness also took issue with Mandel's argument that Lenin came over to Trotsky's pre-1917 political perspectives on the revolution and that Trotsky came over to Lenin's view of party organization. "The Bolsheviks' strategy for the revolution can't be divorced from the kind of party they built," Jeness said, "any more than Trotsky's 'new and original position' can be separated from his organizational conciliationism toward the opportunists and his other errors on the organizational question."

Jeness pointed to the importance of Trotsky's difference with the Bolsheviks on the place of the peasantry in the Russian revolution. Trotsky dismissed the "alliance between the working class and the peasantry *as a whole*," Jeness said.

He pointed out that Trotsky's difference with the Bolsheviks on this question widened during the First World War. He cited what Trotsky had to say in January 1917 on the eve of the February revolution. "There is less hope now," Trotsky wrote, "for a revolutionary uprising of the peasantry as a whole than there was twelve years ago. The only ally of

the urban proletariat may be the proletarian and half-proletarian strata of the village."

Unlike Lenin, Trotsky "tended to dissolve the democratic-peasant revolution into the class struggle of the working class against the capitalists," Jeness concluded.

Jeness argued that Trotsky's differences with the Bolsheviks on the alliance of the working class and the peasantry as a whole in the democratic-peasant revolution were part and parcel of other fundamental differences he had with the Bolsheviks, including those on the war question.

The Bolsheviks argued that a military defeat of the imperialist government would facilitate a social revolution. Trotsky countered that "while war may give an impetus to revolution, it may at the same time create a situation such as will make extremely difficult the social and political utilization of a victorious revolution." His alternative slogan was "Neither victory, nor defeat."

"The historical record clearly shows," Jeness concluded, "that it was the strategy of Bolshevism that was confirmed in the Russian revolution, and that became the programmatic basis of the Communist International. It was not a fusion of one part Bolshevism with one part Trotsky's pre-1917 centrism."

Mandel's article in this issue of *Intercontinental Press* has extended the debate by challenging the view that the continuity of revolutionary Marxism on the strategy for establishing soviet power in the semicolonial countries is rooted in the resolutions and reports prepared by Lenin and adopted by the Bolshevik-led Communist International. "More than Lenin's writings is . . . needed to find one's way around" on this question, Mandel writes.

Differences go back before 1963

Finally, it should be noted that Mandel says that "for more than two decades we [the reference is unclear] systematically warned the comrades leading the SWP of the dangers" in its "sectarian and dogmatic position" on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Mandel thus dates the continuity of his differences with the SWP leadership on such questions as Cuba and the workers and farmers government to before the reunification of the Fourth International in 1963. These positions were presented primarily in the writings of Joseph Hansen, and in resolutions of the SWP over two decades, including most recently those on Nicaragua and Grenada. In 1977 Hansen explained that both the Cuban revolution and a review of all the overturns of capitalism since World War II made clear that a workers and farmers government is the "first form of government that can be expected to appear as the result of a successful anticapitalist revolution." (See Hansen's introduction to the SWP educational bulletin, *Workers and Farmers Governments Since the Second World War*, by Robert Chester.)

These SWP positions, according to Mandel, are a "simplistic and mechanistic . . . conception of the leadership of a revolutionary process that ended with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Mandel's article also refers to another public debate taking place in the Fourth International, a debate that also relates to the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and one that is converging with the discussion thus far described. This other debate began in 1979 following the overthrow of the murderous Pol Pot tyranny in Kampuchea and Peking's invasion of Vietnam.

Vietnam and Kampuchea

Some leaders of the Fourth International, including Mandel, condemned the use of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea and called for their immediate, unconditional withdrawal.

Others, including leaders of the SWP, supported the actions of the Vietnamese government, which allied itself with revolutionary workers and peasants in Kampuchea to overthrow the Pol Pot regime. They said it was a big step forward for the class struggle in Indochina and a blow against imperialism.

Mandel argued that a socialist revolution took place in Kampuchea in 1975 and a workers state was established by the Pol Pot regime.

The SWP leadership, on the other hand, rejected the idea that a work-

ers state or workers and peasants government had come into being in Kampuchea. Instead, the Kampuchean workers and peasants had been murderously crushed by a regime that instituted policies that in no sense marked an historic advance in the interests of the Kampuchean toilers.

The main documents in this debate are "Behind Differences on Military Conflicts in Southeast Asia," by Ernest Mandel (see *Intercontinental Press*, April 9, 1979); the majority and minority resolutions presented to the November 1979 World Congress of the Fourth International (see *Intercontinental Press*, June 4, 1979); "War and Revolution in Indochina — What Policy for Revolutionists?" a reply to Ernest Mandel by Steve Clark, Fred Feldman, Gus Horowitz, and Mary-Alice Waters (see *Intercontinental Press*, July 16, 1979); and "The 21 Theoretical Errors of Comrades Clark, Feldman, Horowitz, and Waters," by Ernest Mandel (see *Intercontinental Press*, May 4, 1981).

* * *

By Ernest Mandel

Comrade Doug Jenness' article "Our Political Continuity with Bolshevism" (*International Socialist Review*, April 1982) opens a new stage in the debate on revolutionary strategy for the less developed countries. In his first contribution,¹ Comrade Jenness limited himself to coming up with a "new reading" of Lenin's writings. Now, he has moved to a direct attack on Trotsky and the theory of permanent revolution — often explicitly, sometimes by feigning a polemic with me.

A false method

Comrade Jenness' article examines the vital problem of revolutionary strategy for the less developed capitalist countries by means of a thoroughly false method. Instead of looking at *real revolutionary processes* as they developed from the Russian revolution of 1917 until today, studying the way social classes acted during all these revolutions, the strategies followed by the various parties and political currents that influenced or led these revolutions, the results of these strategies — the victories or defeats that ensued — he essentially concentrates on *a study of the texts*, an examination of what Lenin, Trotsky, Marx and other authors wrote on the question. This method is not materialist. It is dogmatic.

The error in Comrade Jenness' method is not just dogmatic. His dogmatism is also scholastic — he selects quotations to try and demonstrate a preconceived thesis. He can't be bothered with reading these works to find out what the authors really thought on a given topic. This is obvious from a large number of cases.

1. Basing himself on a quotation taken out of context from a polemical article written by Trotsky in 1933, *The Class Character of the Soviet State*, Comrade Jenness attributes to Trotsky (on page 35 of his article) the idea that the workers state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, was not created in Russia starting from the 1917 October revolution, but only from autumn 1918, or even 1921, or later still. There is no basis for such a supposition.

In that article, Trotsky was in fact polemicizing against those who want to apply absolute (and therefore false) norms to the definition of the dictatorship of the proletariat so as to deny the existence of a workers state in the USSR in 1933. With fine irony, he shows how such arguments lead to absurd conclusions. He tells them: if we were to follow your use of absolute norms, then the dictatorship of the proletariat would not have existed after October 1917, it would not have existed in 1918, nor in 1920, and it would not even have existed during the NEP. In other words, since you deny that it exists under Stalin, it never could have existed. But Trotsky unravels this argument to its absurd conclusion, *not because he agrees with it, but because he rejects it*. For the very paragraph Doug Jenness took the quote from ends with these words, which Comrade Jenness omitted to quote:

"To these gentlemen, the dictatorship of the proletariat is simply an



Trotsky during civil war, when he commanded Red Army.

imponderable concept, an ideal norm not to be realized upon our sinful planet" (Leon Trotsky, *Writings 1933–1934*, 1972, p. 106).

In the same article, Trotsky explicitly states:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat was established by means of a political overturn and a civil war of three years."

And:

"So long as the forms of property that have been *created by the October revolution* are not overthrown, the proletariat remains the ruling class" (op. cit., p. 104 — our emphasis).

He defended without fail, until the end of his life, the idea that the dictatorship of the proletariat was indeed achieved by the socialist revolution of October 1917.

2. Comrade Doug Jenness states (p. 36):

"using the scientific criteria for a workers state that Marxists have used since the 1930s, based on our analysis of the bureaucratic degeneration of the Soviet workers state — a workers state did not come into existence in Russia until at least the autumn of 1918, as Trotsky explained in the 1933 article."

Comrade Doug Jenness does not produce the shadow of a proof that Trotsky or other revolutionary Marxist authors have supposedly modified, "since the 1930s," the definition of the October revolution as establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the other hand, we could quote numerous documents written after the 1933 article which state exactly the opposite:

• In *The Workers State, Thermidor, and Bonapartism*, written in 1934, Trotsky stated:

"October 1917 completed the democratic revolution and began the socialist revolution. . . ."

• *The Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, starts with the following sentence:

"Owing to the insignificance of the Russian bourgeoisie, the democratic tasks of backward Russia — such as the liquidation of the monarchy and the semifeudal slavery of the peasants — could be achieved only through a dictatorship of the proletariat."

• In *Ninety Years of the Communist Manifesto* (October 1937), he wrote:

"Marx later counterposed the state of the Commune type to the

1. It appeared in the *International Socialist Review* inserted in the *Militant*, Vol. 45, No. 42, November 13, 1981.

capitalist state. This 'type' later took the very much more graphic form of the Soviets."

- In the *Transitional Program*, written in 1938, Trotsky wrote:

"The power of the soviets, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat."

- In his article *From a Scratch to the Danger of Gangrene*, dated January 24, 1940, Trotsky spoke of "the social foundations (of the USSR) established by the October revolution."

- Many authors who are members of the SWP hardly express things differently. In his preface to *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, published in 1973, Joseph Hansen wrote this, concerning the conception of the Russian revolution defended by Trotsky:

"He [Trotsky] did this in his theory of the permanent revolution, which correctly predicted, twelve years in advance, the course taken by the October 1917 revolution."

- Comrade Dick Roberts wrote in the September 1973 issue of *International Socialist Review*:

"In October, after the Bolsheviks won a majority inside the Soviets, Trotsky and Lenin led a socialist revolution against the provisional government, overthrowing it and establishing a proletarian dictatorship."

- And Comrade Doug Jenness himself, writing in 1970, stated:

"Although Lenin was in total accord with Trotsky's analysis that the capitalist class could not lead the Russian Revolution, before 1917 he believed that the revolution would be 'democratic' rather than socialist, i.e., that it would not go beyond the bounds of bourgeois democracy. In addition, his justified emphasis on the importance of the peasantry in the Russian Revolution led him, in describing the dynamics of the revolution, to put forward an intermediate formula ascribing to the peasant allies of labor a joint leadership role they were unable to assume. He called for a 'democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry' and not in Trotsky's correct formulation, a dictatorship of the working class supported by the peasantry" (Doug Jenness, "Introduction" to *Leon Trotsky on the Paris Commune*, N.Y.: Pathfinder, 1970).

3. On Page 37 of his article, Comrade Doug Jenness suggests that Lenin in his polemic with Kautsky (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*) had implied, or even explicitly stated ("Things have turned out just as we said they would"), that the proletariat marched alongside the peasantry as a whole in the democratic revolution, and then with the poor peasants alone, in the socialist revolution. But Lenin does not at all say that in his 1918 pamphlet. In fact, he states the contrary. For he is referring to the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry after the conquest of power by the proletariat in October 1917, that is, after the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and not at all in the course of a so-called democratic revolution in February–March 1917, or some time prior to the October socialist revolution. Comrade Doug Jenness seems to have forgotten even the title of Lenin's pamphlet, which is *The PROLETARIAN* [proletarian and not bourgeois-democratic!] *Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. But here are some exact quotes:

Page 413: "Finally, between August and September 1917, that is before the proletarian revolution in Russia (October 25/November 7, 1917). . . ."

Page 430: ". . . the power of the soviets, that is the dictatorship of the proletariat in its given form."

Page 437: "He [Kautsky] does not say that in these theses (of December 26, 1917, on the Constituent Assembly) the question was treated . . . in relation to the break which emerged in our revolution between the Constituent Assembly and the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Page 480: "However, a state of the Commune type, the soviet state, tells the truth openly and without ambiguity to the people, and explains to them that it is the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry" (our emphasis in all these quotations; translated from the French).

The list of quotations could be extended further. But what would be the use?

4. Furthermore, Comrade Jenness suggests in his article (pp. 37–38) that Lenin maintained after April 1917 that his 1905 positions were confirmed by the course of the Russian revolution of 1917. Apart from the fact that the quotations transcribed by Doug Jenness do not say that at all, but refer only to particular aspects of Lenin's position of 1905 and not to the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," Com-



Lenin addressing mass meeting in 1917.

rade Doug Jenness eliminates a little detail throughout this passage. In 1905, Lenin said: "But of course it will be a democratic, not a socialist dictatorship" (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 56).

By contrast, after his April 1917 Theses, Lenin never again used the formula "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," (why?) but referred many times to the Russian revolution as establishing (or having established) the dictatorship of the proletariat (the power of the soviets). His entire book *State and Revolution* is given over to this issue.

The Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People, written by Lenin on January 4, 1918, and submitted by the Bolshevik fraction to the Constituent Assembly — a document which, for the Bolsheviks, had an historical importance, since it was meant to be the proletarian "counterpart" to the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen* of the great French bourgeois revolution — begins with the following words:

"Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies. All power centrally and locally is vested in these Soviets" (Lenin, *CW*, Vol. 26, p. 423). We already know that for Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, soviet power was synonymous with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Further on, point 5 of this *Declaration* states:

"To insure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the reestablishment of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants, and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed," (Idem, p. 424).

Is there any other state than a workers state, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that can decree the disarmament of the bourgeoisie, the arming of the workers, the formation of a socialist army?

The Soviet Constitution adopted in July 1918, before the nationalizations of the factories, established preferential voting rights specifically for the proletariat, and stipulated in article 23:

"In the interests of the working class, the Soviet Socialist Federal Republic shall deprive of their rights individuals and groups of individuals who use them to the detriment of the socialist revolution."

The program of the Bolshevik party, adopted in 1919, begins with the following words:

"The October revolution in Russia established the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The A.B.C. of Communism, a popular presentation of this program, written by Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, stated:

"The proletariat, which took power in October 1917. . . ."

The first congress of the Communist International, which met in 1919, adopted Lenin's theses on "Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat," which state:

"The form of the dictatorship of the proletariat which is already being practically worked out, that is the power of the soviets. . . ."

". . . what defines the power of the soviets is that all soviet state power, the whole state apparatus has a single and permanent basis, the mass organization of the classes that were oppressed by capitalism, that is the workers and semiproletarians. . . ."

The point is clear: Comrade Doug Jenness can only establish an alleged "continuity" with the 1905 positions of Bolshevism on strategy for the Russian revolution by first junking the whole continuity of the positions of Lenin, the Bolshevik Party, the Communist International, Trotsky, the Left Opposition, and the Fourth International, from April 1917 until today.

5. Comrade Doug Jenness protests against my statement (although it is taken literally from Trotsky) that one of the reasons for the differences between Lenin and Trotsky from 1905 to 1916 was the fact that Lenin expected that a victory of the Russian revolution under "the democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants" would inaugurate a long period of *capitalist* development in Russia, the economic and social prerequisite for the later victory of the socialist revolution (the old thesis of the whole Russian Social-Democracy first formulated by Plekhanov and reasserted in the Party program drafted jointly by Lenin and Plekhanov, which only Trotsky had challenged in 1905-1906).

To support his point, Doug Jenness quotes the famous sentence from Lenin's 1905 pamphlet *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, a sentence in which Lenin asserts that one should not erect a Chinese wall between the democratic and socialist revolutions. In our opinion, this sentence refers not to the *victory* of the socialist revolution (i.e., the seizure of power by the proletariat) but to the *beginning of the struggle* for the seizure of power. The whole context demonstrates this. At any rate, Comrade Doug Jenness' quote is selective to the point of being scandalous. For the fact is that in the *same pamphlet*, Lenin writes exactly what Mandel (and Trotsky before him) claimed he did concerning the possibility of a *capitalist development of Russia* as a result of the victory of the democratic revolution:

". . . under the present social and economic order this democratic revolution in Russia will not weaken but strengthen the domination of the bourgeoisie. . . ." (Lenin, *CW*, Vol. 9, p. 23).

"Finally, we will note that the resolution, by making implementation of the minimum programme the provisional revolutionary government's task, eliminates the absurd and semi-anarchist ideas of giving immediate effect to the maximum programme, and the conquest of power for a socialist revolution. *The degree of Russia's economic development* (an objective condition), *and the degree of class-consciousness and organisation of the broad masses of the proletariat* (a subjective condition inseparably bound up with the objective condition) make the immediate and complete emancipation of the working class impossible" (Idem, p. 28, emphasis added).

We should add that this "maximum programme" scarcely mentions classless society and gives the "complete emancipation of the proletariat" the meaning of the establishment of . . . the dictatorship of the proletariat.

"Marxists are absolutely convinced of the bourgeois character of the Russian revolution. What does that mean? It means that the democratic reforms in the political system, and the social and economic reforms that have become a necessity for Russia, do not in themselves imply the undermining of capitalism, the undermining of bourgeois rule; on the contrary, they will, for the first time, really clear the ground for a *wide and rapid European, and not Asiatic, development of capitalism*" (Idem, p. 48 — emphasis added).

"In countries like Russia the working class suffers not so much from capitalism as from the insufficient development of capitalism. The

working class is, therefore, *most certainly interested* in the broadest, freest, and most rapid development of capitalism. . . ."

"That is why a *bourgeois* revolution is *in the highest degree advantageous to the proletariat*" (Idem, p. 45-50 — emphasis in original).

A few months later, Lenin wrote *Socialism and the Peasantry* and stated even more clearly:

"Bourgeois in its social and economic essence, the democratic revolution cannot but express the needs of all bourgeois society" (Idem, p. 307).

"The mass of the peasants do not and cannot realise that the fullest 'freedom' and the 'justest' distribution even of all the land, far from destroying capitalism will, on the contrary, create the conditions for a *particularly extensive and powerful development of capitalism*" (Idem, p. 309 — emphasis added).

Similarly, in his 1905 article entitled "The Petty-Bourgeoisie and Proletarian Socialism," he stated:

"In Russia, just as was the case in other countries, it is a necessary concomitant of the democratic revolution, which is bourgeois in its social and economic content. It is not in the least directed against the foundations of the bourgeois order, against commodity production or against capital. . . . *Consequently, full victory of this peasant movement will not abolish capitalism: on the contrary, it will create a broader foundation for its development, and will hasten and intensify purely capitalist development.* Full victory of the peasant uprising can only create a stronghold for a *democratic bourgeois republic* within which a proletarian struggle against the bourgeoisie will for the first time develop in its purest form" (Idem, p. 440 — emphasis added).

Lenin's article on "The aim of the struggle of the proletariat in our revolution," written March 9-21, 1909, is sometimes quoted to make the opposite point: it does discuss the proletariat as "the guide," "the leader" of the revolution, "drawing the peasantry in behind it." The same article gives an important role to soviets along with participation in the revolutionary government (Lenin, *CW*, Vol. 15).

But an objective review of the context clearly shows that what is being discussed is still the role of soviets in a *democratic, non-socialist, non-permanent revolution*, that is, in a situation in which the social and economic foundations of capitalism have not been shattered but rather are being intentionally *fostered*.

This follows clearly from a comparison of the stated article with another one Lenin wrote, a few months later, and entitled *Some Sources of the Present Ideological Discord* (November 28, 1909). This article states with no possible uncertainty or misunderstanding:

". . . the bourgeois development of Russia is now a foregone conclusion but it is possible in two forms — the so-called 'Prussian' form (the retention of the monarchy and landlordism, the creation of a strong, i.e., bourgeois, peasantry on the given historical basis, etc.) and the so-called 'American' form (a bourgeois republic, the abolition of landlordism, the creation of a farmer class, i.e., of a free bourgeois peasantry, by means of a marked change of the given historical situation). The proletariat must fight for the second path as offering the greatest degree of freedom and speed of development of the productive forces of capitalist Russia, and *victory in this struggle* is possible only with a revolutionary alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry" (Lenin, *CW*, Vol. 16, pp. 87-88 — emphasis added).

"The proletariat must put its stake on democracy, without exaggerating the latter's strength and without limiting itself to merely 'pinning hopes' on it, but steadily developing the work of propaganda, agitation and organisation, mobilising all the democratic forces — the peasants above all and before all — calling upon them to ally themselves with the leading class, *to achieve the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry' for the purpose of a full democratic victory and the creation of the best conditions for the quickest and freest development of capitalism*" (Idem, p. 94 — emphasis added).

Unless one assumes Lenin contradicted himself not only between March and December 1909, but also inside the very article he wrote in March 1909 (which contains formulations of the same type as that of December 1909), there is no room for doubt. The revolutionary government he speaks of, as well as the soviets, are in his eyes formations akin to those of the Jacobins of 1792-93, and of the *Jacobin clubs*, i.e.,

bodies meant to carry out a bourgeois-democratic revolution, to open the road not to expropriations, but to the take-off of capitalism.

In light of all these quotes — and many others could be added both from 1905 and from the period stretching to 1916² — it is a genuine falsification of Lenin's positions to claim that the great Russian revolutionary did not, in 1905, foresee a lengthy capitalist development in Russia (as occurred in other countries which underwent a bourgeois revolution, i.e., Great Britain, the United States, France, etc.) or only foresaw it in agriculture. Lenin says: a purely capitalist development, the rule of Capital; how could they possibly exist if capital was destroyed in industry and banking?

6. No doubt, the algebraic formulas of the Bolsheviks in 1905 allowed for interpretations that imply support for the bourgeois provisional government of February–March 1917, although other interpretations were also possible. Hence the need for rearming the party after the outbreak of the February 1917 revolution. Hence the historically decisive function of Lenin's April Theses, which we emphasized in our first article.³

Comrade Doug Jenness systematically plays down the importance of the *turn* represented by the April Theses. He even goes so far as to deny that there was a real turn, and heavily emphasizes instead the continuity. He quotes a passage from Marcel Liebman's book *Leninism Under Lenin* dealing with the allegedly correct position of Shliapnikov and other Bolshevik leaders prior to Lenin's return to Russia. It so happens Jenness is mistaken even in this minor detail. But that is not the main point.

The main point, once more, is that Jenness has Liebman say exactly the opposite of what he actually said. Here is what Liebman actually writes on the "turn" of the April Theses:

"Thus the difference between Lenin and the Bolshevik leadership in Russia was deep-going and wide-ranging. . . . In the last analysis, all these political disagreements were derived from a more important cause. Lenin saw differently from his chief supporters the fundamental problem that faced the Russian labour movement in 1917, and which was bound up with the very nature of the revolution in progress. The entire tactic adopted by the Bolshevik leaders in Russia, with its caution, moderation and concern for unity with the Mensheviks, reflected a belief that the Bolshevik leaders shared with the Right-wing Socialists. As they saw it, the fall of Tsarism was the first victory in the bourgeois revolution, which must be followed up by other successes, and in this way consolidated, without there being any question of going beyond the limits of such a revolution and undertaking socialist tasks. . . . This was an opinion Lenin had held for a long time and that only the 1905 revolution led him to question albeit without replacing it with a sufficiently elaborated new perspective" (Liebman, *Leninism Under Lenin*, London, Merlin Press, 1975, p. 127).

7. Because he systematically downplays the turn represented by the April Theses, Doug Jenness must distort the facts, the historical truth. He keeps mum about the first vote of the St. Petersburg party committee which rejected the April Theses 13 to 2 with one abstention,⁴ and of the Moscow and Kiev party committees which did likewise. Nor does Doug Jenness mention that Lenin himself proclaimed: "*Old Bolshevism must be abandoned!*" (Lenin, *CW*, Vol. 24). "*Old Bolshevism*" obviously meant the 1905 positions on the nature of the revolution and revolutionary strategy — positions Doug Jenness now wants to uphold *against*

Lenin's advice, rather than abandoning them. Nor does he utter a word about the fact that *all* the interpretations of the April Theses until the mid-20s, that is, until the victory of counterrevolutionary Stalinist monolithism, unanimously considered the Theses represented a decisive turn.

Here is what Stalin himself — who scarcely needed additional attention drawn to the event, since he was among its main instigators — wrote as late as 1926:

"[The party] adopted a policy of Soviet pressure on the provisional government on the question of peace, and did not immediately decide to take the step that would have carried it from the old slogan of dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, to the new slogan of power to the soviets. . . . this was a profoundly mistaken position" (*On the Opposition*).

8. Comrade Doug Jenness reproaches us with having stated that Trotsky discovered the law of uneven and combined development, which he claims is intrinsic to historical materialism (p. 47). But the quote he produces to back up his contention refers to the law of uneven development, that Marx obviously knew. The law of uneven *and combined* development is a *second* law. It was, indeed, discovered by Trotsky. Let us examine the following quote and ask ourselves whether Marx, Plekhanov, or Lenin, ever wrote anything of the kind (at least Lenin before 1917):

"Russia entered the road of proletarian revolution not because its economy was the ripest for socialist transformation, but because that economy could no longer develop on capitalist foundations. The socialization of the means of production had become the necessary condition above all to lift the country out of barbarism: *such is the law of combined development for backward countries*" (*The Revolution Betrayed*; translated from the French — emphasis added).

"Russia's evolution is characterized above all by its lateness. A historical lag does not mean, however, a mere repetition of the evolution of advanced countries, with a delay of one or two hundred years, but gives birth to an entirely new, 'combined,' social formation in which the latest achievements of capitalist technology and structure take root in the social relations of feudal and prefeudal barbarism, transform them and subordinate them, thereby creating an original relationship between classes" (*Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution*; translated from the French — emphasis added).

Moreover, we would like to know whether Comrade Doug Jenness



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2. "The international proletariat undermines capital in two ways: by transforming Octobrist capital into democratic capital, and by transplanting it among the savages — by chasing Octobrist capital from its home. This broadens the basis of capital and brings it closer to its doom. In Western Europe, there is already almost no Octobrist capital left because all capital is democratic. Octobrist capital migrated from England and France towards Russia and Asia. *The Russian revolution and the revolutions in Asia are the struggle to chase Octobrist capital and replace it with democratic capital*" ("Letter from Lenin to Gorky," January 3, 1911, p. 14, *Lenin Briefe 1910-1911*, Berlin 1967; translated from the French).

3. Ernest Mandel, "Nature and Perspectives of the Russian Revolution", *International Socialist Review*, inserted in the *Militant*, April 1982.

4. This figure is quoted by the very official *History of the USSR*, by Aragon, Vol. 1, p. 51. Liebman mentions three votes in favor of Lenin's Theses.

will reject the testimony of the following witness, as well as what the witness himself now thinks of his rather definitive assertions of 1973:

"Trotsky himself made *prodigious theoretical contributions to Marxism* in his celebrated theory of the permanent revolution, *in his formulation of the law of uneven and combined development*, and in his program for the regeneration of workers democracy in an unhealthy workers state" (George Novack, "Introduction" to *The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973 — our emphasis).

9. Doug Jenness protests against Mandel's assertion (which is really Trotsky's) that Lenin went over to Trotsky's pre-1917 position on the strategy of permanent revolution (p. 46). But he keeps mum about the fact that, as early as the April Theses, Lenin speaks of the need for a *workers government* in Russia. He keeps mum about Joffe's testament which states Lenin explicitly told Joffe that Trotsky had been right on the question of permanent revolution. Did Joffe lie about this on the eve of his suicide?

Jenness remains silent on Trotsky's 1927 statement that:

"Upon our group's arrival in Petrograd, comrade Fedorov, then a member of the Bolshevik Central Committee, welcomed us in its name at the Finland station and in his speech of welcome posed sharply the question of the next stages of the revolution, *the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist course of development*. The reply I gave was in full accord with Lenin's April Theses which, for me, flowed unflinchingly from the theory of the permanent revolution. As comrade Fedorov told subsequently, the fundamental point of his speech had been formulated by him in agreement with Lenin, or, more accurately, at Lenin's direction" (Leon Trotsky, *The Stalin School of Falsification*, p. 5 — emphasis added).

Did Trotsky lie? Moreover, where did Comrade Doug Jenness fetch the assertion that Trotsky had become "Leninist" on the question of revolutionary strategy for Russia the moment he joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917? Doug Jenness produces not the slightest shred of evidence, not a single document, not a single quote, to support his contention, which is false from A to Z. The truth is that from 1904 to his death in 1940 Trotsky did not change his position one iota on the applicability of the theory of the permanent revolution to Russia. He only extended it, subsequently, beginning in 1927, to other less developed capitalist countries — as did the Fourth International, and as did the SWP (that is, its founding nucleus, the Communist League of America, when it joined the International Left Opposition).⁵

The nub of the issue

On this question of the theory of the permanent revolution, Doug Jenness manages to pile confusion upon contradiction upon deplorable mistake. Yet it revolves around a single and central problem: *under what government, in what state, could the bourgeois-democratic tasks of the revolution on the agenda in Russia, be accomplished?* What flowed from this in terms of the inevitable dynamic of the revolution?

The Mensheviks said: because the tasks of the revolution are bourgeois-democratic, only a bourgeois government and a bourgeois state can accomplish them. Any attempt by the working class to take power "prematurely" would lead to a revolutionary setback and a catastrophe for the revolution.

Trotsky answered: in the imperialist epoch, given the extent of capitalist development in Russia and the weight of the proletariat on the one hand, and the close intertwining of land ownership and capitalist property on the other, the bourgeoisie will inevitably go over to the camp of counterrevolution. If the bourgeoisie maintains its hegemony within the revolution, the revolution will be defeated.

5. The first programmatic document of the International Left Opposition, of which the Communist League of America led by James P. Cannon was part and parcel, stated: "Rejection of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry formula as a specific regime different from the dictatorship of the proletariat drawing the peasant masses, and the oppressed masses in general, behind it. Rejection of the anti-Marxist theory of the peaceful transformation of the democratic dictatorship into a socialist dictatorship" ("The International Left Opposition, its tasks, its methods, February 1933," *The Congresses of the Fourth International*, Vol. 1, p. 62; translated from the French).

The only class capable of leading the revolutionary process is the proletariat. To do so, it must ally with the poor peasantry, and win the support of the majority of the peasantry (the majority of the nation). But it can do so only by destroying the bourgeois state and dominating the government. In this endeavor, lest it demoralize itself and thereby cause a defeat of the revolution, it cannot limit itself solely to implementing the revolutionary-democratic tasks of the revolution; it must simultaneously *begin* to resolve the socialist tasks (not all of them, and not instantly, of course, but at least some of them).⁶ By the same token, any notion of a "two-class" government, not to mention a "two-class state," is a complete utopia. *The tasks of the national-democratic revolution will be accomplished by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat allied to the poor peasantry*, that is, by the destruction of the bourgeois state and the creation of a new type of state, the state of the Commune, the state of the Soviets, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only the proletariat and its *decisive predominance* within the government can guarantee the revolution will move forward to victory. Every other strategic line of march will lead the revolution to defeat.

Prior to 1917, Lenin had adopted an intermediate position in between these two clearly counterposed positions. His outlook fluctuated over the years. Trotsky was therefore right to characterize it as based on an *algebraic formula*. Like Trotsky, Lenin rejected any notion that the bourgeoisie, or a coalition government with the bourgeoisie, could realize the tasks of the national-democratic revolution in Russia. Like Trotsky, he held that these tasks could only be accomplished against the bourgeoisie. But, unlike Trotsky, he did not specify, prior to April 1917, that their accomplishment also required the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus, that is, not the establishment of a bourgeois-democratic republic (see the 1905 quotations mentioned above), but the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of the soviets. The reason for his hesitation was that he did not exclude the hypothesis of a revolutionary government in which the proletariat would not be hegemonic, in which the proletariat and peasantry would have equal weight, or even one with a peasant majority.

True, Lenin, under the direct impact of the 1905 revolution — especially in 1906 — shifted his position closer to Trotsky's, even spoke of the proletariat with the poor peasantry alone,⁷ and mentioned a rapid transition to the "socialist phase" of the revolution. But, following the victory of the counterrevolution, he basically reverted to the 1905 formulations: *bourgeois-democratic republic*; development of capitalism in Russia; shift of the workers party into the opposition as soon as the democratic revolution triumphed.

What was the nub of this difference? It had nothing to do with any

6. The Cuban leaders themselves clearly state that the national-democratic tasks overlapped and intertwined with the anticapitalist tasks in the twentieth-century Cuban revolution. They are therefore more "Trotskyist" than Comrade Doug Jenness:

"The content of our revolution which, in the colonial period, could not go beyond the limits of a national liberation movement based on the liberal principles of the last century, necessarily had to shift, by virtue of the capitalist development of our country and the emergence of the working class, towards a revolution that was also social. To the task of freeing the nation from imperialist domination, was added inevitably, thenceforth, the task of liquidating the exploitation of man by man in our society. These two objectives were already part of our historical process since the capitalist system that oppressed us from the outside as a nation, oppressed us and exploited us from the inside as workers, and since the social forces that could free the country from the inside from oppression, that is to say the workers themselves, were the only forces that, on the external plane, could support us against the imperialist power that was oppressing the nation" (Fidel Castro, *Balance Sheet of the Cuban Revolution*, Report to the First Congress of the Cuban Communist Party, December 1975; translated from the French — our emphasis).

7. See Lenin, "The crisis of Menshevism," *CW*, Vol. 11, December 1906: "Larin states that the disturbances in the countryside cannot be stopped. Did he prove it? No. He took no account whatsoever of the role of the peasant bourgeoisie which is systematically corrupted by the government. He gave little attention to the fact that the 'reliefs' obtained by the peasantry . . . intensify the break among the rural population between the counterrevolutionary rich and the poor masses" (translated from the French).

"underestimation" of the peasantry by Trotsky. That is a legend of the Thermidorians, the epigones of Lenin, passed on and amplified by the various anti-Trotskyist Stalinist and post-Stalinist factions (including the Maoists), a legend which Comrade Doug Jenness now suddenly wants to make his own, although the SWP combated it all along the fifty years of its existence. Trotsky always emphasized the decisive role of the peasants in the Russian revolution, given the predominant weight of the peasantry in the active population. Like Lenin, he rejected the putschist, "Blanquist," notion of a revolution supported only by a minority of the masses of the people (the working-class minority). Like Lenin, he emphasized the need for a *broad soviet organization of the peasantry*.

The real difference lay elsewhere. Trotsky rejected the idea that the peasantry could form a *political party, a political force, that was truly independent*, both of the bourgeoisie and proletariat. Yet, willy nilly, a government must be composed of political parties, or of groups acting as de facto parties. For Trotsky, "a coalition government" of workers and peasants parties could only lead to the victory of the revolution if the latter followed the leadership of the proletariat in moving towards the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatus, that is, if they were not bourgeois peasant parties but peasant "parties" or "groups" that were satellites of the proletariat. For Lenin until 1916, the possibility of genuine peasant parties, independent of both the bourgeoisie and proletariat, was not excluded. Hence the imprecise nature of his formulas on the government and the state that would lead the revolution to victory.

But beginning in 1917, Lenin resolved this question in the same way as Trotsky. We see the following:

"A mass Social-Democratic movement has existed in Russia for twenty years (if one takes the great 1896 strikes as its beginning). One can see over this great time period, through two powerful revolutions, through the whole political history of Russia, that the same essential question was raised: will the working class lead the peasants forward, towards socialism, or will the liberal bourgeois take them backwards towards a reconciliation with capitalism?" (V.I. Lenin, CW, Vol. 25, September 11, 1917, p. 303; translated from the French).

"Our experience taught us — and this is confirmed by the development of all the revolutions of the world, if one considers the present epoch, that is, the last one hundred and fifty years — that this was so everywhere and always; all attempts by the petty-bourgeoisie in general, and by the peasants in particular, to become aware of their own strength, to lead the economy and politics in their fashion, led to a failure. Either they were placed under the leadership of the proletariat, or under that of the capitalists. There is no middle ground. Those who dream of a middle term are but dreamers, empty-dreamers" ("Speech to the Congress of Transport Workers," March 29–30, 1921; translated from the French — our emphasis).

Dictatorship of the proletariat or 'two-class government': the historical balance sheet

The real criterion for judging the problem of permanent revolution is not, of course, what Trotsky, or Lenin, or whoever, wrote in 1905, 1906, 1909, 1917, or 1921. It is what actually happened in history. The balance sheet, here, is clear and illuminating. Wherever the historical tasks of the national-democratic revolution as a whole — above all the agrarian question — were accomplished, this was due to the fact that the proletariat, with the support of the poor peasantry, had previously taken power, smashed the bourgeois state, and built a state of a new type, that is to say, the dictatorship of the proletariat, even though this may have taken place in a highly bureaucratized form and under the leadership of an extremely bureaucratized workers party (except in Cuba). Wherever the bourgeois state was preserved, the solution of the national-democratic tasks of the revolution remained in abeyance. In fact, the counter-revolution eventually won out, even though sometimes in a "diluted" form, as in Algeria. But it often was not that diluted: remember Iraq, Egypt, Bolivia at the end of the 1950s and in 1971. And many times it meant counterrevolutionary bloodbaths: China in 1927, Indonesia, Iran after Mossadegh, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Turkey, to mention only a few instances.

But nowhere, in no historical case, was there something in between: a country that would have experienced a broad popular revolution in which millions of workers and peasants actively participated, which led neither to the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat nor to a victory of the counterrevolution, but to the implementation of a thoroughgoing land reform under a "two-class" regime or government in which the working class and peasantry would have shared roughly equal power, that is, with no clear and definite proletarian hegemony.

Is this what happened in the Yugoslav revolution? Then, where was the "independent peasant party" or "independent mass organization" in the 1945 Yugoslav government? Is this what happened in the Vietnamese revolution? Then when and where did we see such "independent" peasant formations appear in the Vietnamese revolutionary government, formations comparable in weight to the VCP? Did it happen in the Cuban revolution? Where and when were such "peasant formations" comparable in weight to the July 26 Movement, part of the Cuban governments of 1958, of 1960, or 1961? Has this happened even in the Nicaraguan revolution? Where can we find such "representatives of the peasantry" in the Revolutionary Directorate or governments that have ruled since Somoza was overthrown, to say nothing of representatives comparable in weight to the Sandinistas?

Comrade Doug Jenness refers to the case of the coalition government which existed in Soviet Russia between December 1917 and March 1918. He considers the Bolshevik-Left SR government was the very model of the "workers and farmers government" without clear proletarian hegemony, that is, without the dictatorship of the proletariat. This gets him entangled in some chronological problems. According to him, the dictatorship of the proletariat was only established in October 1918.

Yet the Left-SRs only left the government in March 1918. What then was the purely Bolshevik government from March to October 1918? A "workers and peasants government" without peasants? Or could the "governmental representatives of the peasantry" have infiltrated the very ranks of the Bolshevik Party itself?

The real problems are far more serious. First of all, the Left-SRs never had equivalent weight with the Bolsheviks, whether in the government or the Executive Committee of the Soviets. Bolshevik hegemony was clearly established everywhere. Moreover, the Left-SRs never represented "the peasantry as a whole." Otherwise, how could one explain the split within the SRs? What would the Right-SRs, who had an absolute majority of peasant votes in the Constituent Assembly, have represented? Finally, one has to resort to extraordinary acrobatics to portray the Left-SRs as a "peasant party." This was a party which advanced the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of the soviets, the elimination of capitalist private property (including in the countryside) and wage slavery (including in the countryside). Can Comrade Doug Jenness produce a single other instance, anywhere in the world, where a "peasant party" had a program and an orientation of that kind?

In order to fit the real historical process into his preconceived schema, Comrade Doug Jenness is forced to uncover "representatives of the peasantry" inside . . . the workers parties (or the bureaucratized and petty-bourgeoisified workers parties) themselves, that is, to move from the revisionist formula of "two-class government" to the even more revisionist formula of "two-class parties." This emerges clearly from his reference to the Chinese revolution:

"(It's ironic that Mandel, more than three decades after the Chinese revolution, should still be defending the view that there cannot be peasant parties and peasant organizations and that a peasant revolution cannot play any independent role in a social revolution. In China a peasant army headed by a peasant party and with a petty-bourgeois Stalinist leadership made a revolution that opened the door to historic conquests, however badly deformed, of the Chinese proletariat — that is, the establishment of the Chinese workers state.)"

A social revolution means that state power passes from one class to another amidst tumultuous events including the smashing of the state apparatus of the old ruling class and the formation of a new state that serves as the instrument for the rule of another class. Comrade Jenness would have us believe that this event did not take place in 1949, in full view of the entire world, but only in 1953 or 1954, when no one noticed, except a few Trotskyist theoreticians. He would have us believe that the

People's Republic of China, established in 1949 by a revolutionary government, was a bourgeois state led by a "peasant government" (or in the best of cases, by a "workers and peasants government under peasant hegemony," since the army was "peasant").

But he runs into a slight problem: it was *this state and this government* that, without any break in continuity, destroyed not only capitalist private property but even peasant private property! When, then, was there a change in the Chinese Communist Party, or in the Chinese army, between 1949 and 1954? Is not the idea of a "peasant" party and a "peasant" army that destroy peasant property, pushing things a bit far from the standpoint of Marxism? Is this not turning dialectics into gross sophistry?

Moreover, if we moved, *without a new revolution*, from the bourgeois state of 1949 to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" of 1953, does not this mean that we can pass from the one to the other by peaceful, gradual means? Are we not then beginning to rerun the whole "reformist scenario," to borrow a formula from Trotsky? Does not that mean abandoning the whole Marxist theory of revolution after abandoning that of the state?

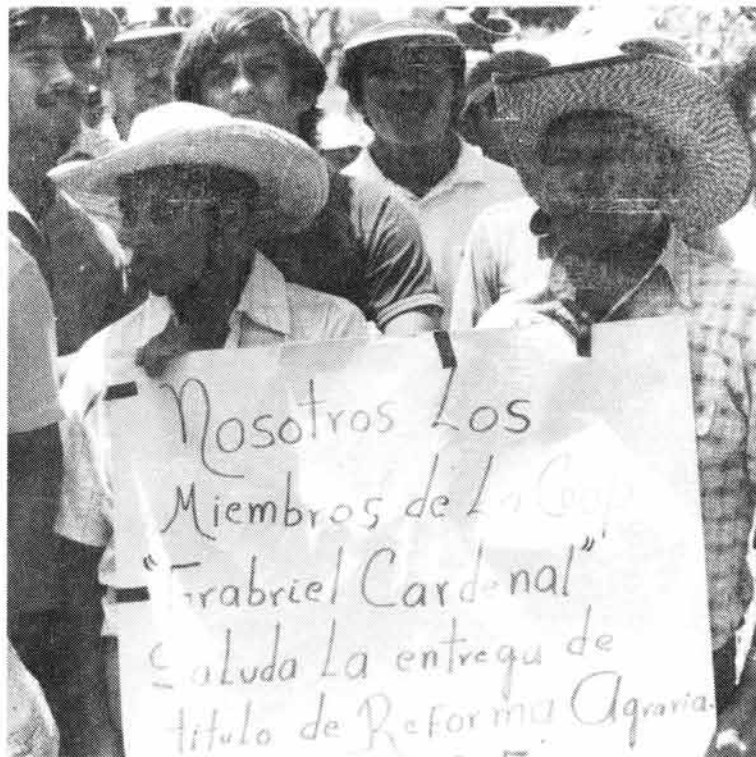
Comrade Doug Jenness' error obviously arises from the fact that he confuses the largest social component of a party or an army with its actual structure, including its command structure, the objective role it plays in society, and the class interests it serves historically. If we look at the class composition of an imperialist army, it is mainly proletarian. Yet no one can seriously doubt that it is a bourgeois army, because of its command structure, because of the role it has played and still plays as an instrument that defends the bourgeois state and the interests of the bourgeoisie, even when there are "bourgeois workers parties" in the government, as in Great Britain under the Labour government or in France under the Mitterrand-Mauroy regime. Likewise, despite its predominantly working-class social composition, the Peronist party of Argentina is a bourgeois party. Likewise also, the Chinese People's Liberation Army, not to mention the Chinese Communist Party, which have been the historical instruments of the destruction of capitalist property and peasant property, can only be considered a "peasant" army or party by emptying Marxist class analysis of all its substance.

Thus the case of China confirms most resoundingly Trotsky's prediction and the verdict of the Russian revolution. The peasantry, although capable of mobilizing by the millions, and by the tens of millions, in the course of a revolutionary process such as the Chinese, is incapable of playing, at least on a national level, a political role independent of both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Its colossal revolutionary forces are centralized either under bourgeois leadership — in which case the revolution heads for certain defeat — or under proletarian leadership (even though it may be extremely bureaucratized, as in China) and in that case, and that case only, the victory of the revolution is possible.

In China, it was the Chinese CP, a bureaucratized proletarian party, a petty-bourgeoisified workers party if you wish (we decidedly prefer the first formula over the second), a party that had inscribed the dictatorship of the proletariat in its program and that had charted a course towards establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat *in fact* if not in theory,⁸ a party that was able to centralize and unify under its command — and not under the command of some "independent peasant force" or other — the immense revolutionary potential of the peasantry. This is what allowed the Chinese revolution to be victorious through the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Why is the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatus, of the seizure of political power, so decisive for the future of a people's revolution in a less developed capitalist country? From the intertwining of the interests of landowners and capitalists, of the "national" bourgeoisie and im-

8. At the time, the Chinese CP wanted to defend at all cost Mao Tse-tung's erroneous theory on "new democracy" and persisted in denying what it had done in 1949, that is, establish the dictatorship of the proletariat with the support of the peasantry. Later on, it rectified its theoretical position, and now states that from October 1949 onwards, the dictatorship of the proletariat has existed in the People's Republic of China. See the new Statutes adopted at the 1977 Congress: "The state established after victory in the new-democratic revolution was a People's Republic under the dictatorship of the proletariat."



Michael Baumann/IP

Nicaraguan peasants at land distribution ceremony.

perialism, of the *compradore* bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie, of usurers, bankers, and finance capital, which is characteristic of the less developed capitalist countries' economy, there follows that, as the popular revolution unfolds, as the mass mobilizations extend, as their anger deepens and their militancy sharpens, the masses threaten "to take their destiny into their own hands," that is, to implement *themselves* the expropriation of landowners, usurers, imperialist properties, and even some "national bourgeois" sectors.

The bourgeoisie is perfectly aware of this. It strives, doubtless through all sorts of maneuvers, including alliances with opportunist workers parties (sometimes disguised as "peasant parties"), to postpone the time of reckoning. But the moment of *the beginning of its expropriation* gets inexorably closer, *because of the very logic of the mass movement*, whatever learned (that is, hemming and hawing) tactic the conciliatorist leaders of the workers movement may use.

This is why the entire fundamental strategic orientation of the bourgeoisie in the revolution is to prepare a counterrevolutionary coup to disarm, or to smash, the masses. This was the case in France in 1848 and 1871. This was the case in Spain in 1931–37. It was so in China in 1925–27 and in 1946–49. It was so, too, in many other revolutions. It was so in Russia in 1917–18. The fundamental line of the Russian bourgeoisie was not the bourgeois-democratic revolution, not the Constituent Assembly, but Kornilov, Krasov, Denikin, Koltchak, Wrangel.

To foil this strategy, it is necessary to arm the workers and peasants, to centralize their armed power, that is, to establish their political power, that is, to constitute a dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry. *The irony of history makes the survival of the bourgeois state in the epoch of imperialism (and already before then) the main obstacle to the implementation of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.*

Comrade Doug Jenness managed the feat of writing 35,000 words on the problem of the permanent revolution *without saying a single word to answer this burning question in all twentieth century revolutions.* We have entered this debate in defense of the theory of the permanent revolution with passion, neither out of some filial piety towards Comrade Trotsky, nor out of some "obstinate traditionalism" toward the program



Chinese People's Liberation Army transport corps during 1940s.

of the Fourth International, but *because one hundred years of historical experience confirms that the real revolutionary processes of our century actually are permanent revolution processes.*

It follows that one cannot cast the lessons of the theory of permanent revolution overboard without causing the defeat of millions and tens of millions of workers and peasants. We discuss this question with passion because it concerns the life and blood of our class, not just some written formulas in books. The sharpest clarity is needed on this question lest the proletariat, the poor peasants, and their vanguards, be drawn into a bloody trap, under the guise of apparently confused formulas that actually spell doom for the revolution.

What we are speaking of is *the strategic orientation* that revolutionaries must adopt to move towards smashing the bourgeoisie's power and state, that is, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, and not of the agitational slogans to be used on the road to power. That kind of confusion was promoted by the Thermidorian epigones of Lenin after 1923, and revived by the various Stalinist and post-Stalinist factions, until, alas, Comrade Doug Jenness took his turn at it.

No sensible person, beginning with Trotsky, ever said that one could establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, take power, by mobilizing the masses under *the slogan* of "dictatorship of the proletariat" or "workers government," independently of the concrete social, economic, political, and military situation of a given country at a given moment.

The famous slogan "Down with the tsar; for a workers government" never was Trotsky's slogan, neither in 1905 nor in 1917. By contrast, opportunist leaderships, on the grounds that slogans should be flexible and appropriate to carefully analyzed concrete situations, have led innumerable revolutions to their doom, by refusing to chart a course towards the conquest of power and the destruction of the bourgeois state when this was possible.

The pretext of the "stage" of "the coalition with the peasantry as a whole," *without the previous destruction of the bourgeois state*, was also used on innumerable occasions, including by the opportunist leadership of the Sri Lankan LSSP, which claimed to be Trotskyist, when it presented its alliance with the bourgeois SLFP as an alliance "with the peasantry." This is the deadly opportunism to which the vac-

illations of Comrade Doug Jenness on the dictatorship of the proletariat have now opened the way.

There is no state that is neither a bourgeois nor a workers state, and there cannot be. The revisionist Kautsky believed that between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat there stood a coalition between the two. For revolutionary Marxism, between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat, there is a phase of dual power, that is, of struggle to the death between the old ruling class and the new class aspiring to rule.

This dual power can take the most diverse and unforeseen forms. Each new living revolution generally reveals another variant, as is the case with the current revolution in Nicaragua. This struggle to the death does not stop with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It may continue with a civil war despite the existence of the power of a workers state. The dictatorship of the proletariat, once established, may even subsequently be overthrown, as was the case in Hungary in 1919. But in all of these cases we are dealing with *antagonistic forms of state power pitted one against the other*, not property forms pitted one against the other. Dual power ends either when the organs of proletarian power, or when the remains of bourgeois political power, have disappeared *on the level of the state* (the army, police, judiciary, constitution, law and administration). Moreover, this does not exclude the possibility that they may later revive; but "reviving" is precisely different from "surviving." The former implies that they previously *disappeared*.

Any revolutionary Marxist knows this since 1917. It was definitively clarified in Lenin's *State and Revolution* and the documents of the first four congresses of the C.I. But Doug Jenness has now smeared a thick layer of confusion over it. He writes:

"Lenin and other Bolsheviks at this time used many different formulations to characterize the soviet government: 'workers and peasants government,' 'socialist republic of soviets,' 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' 'dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry,' 'people's government,' and so on" (p. 34).

We should stress that *we are not dealing with different formulations*. If one leaves out the formula "government of the people," which is never found in any document of the slightest programmatic importance, *all these formulas are synonymous*. The Transitional Program explicitly asserts: "For the Bolsheviks, the workers and peasants' government formula was used prior to the October revolution as a synonym for dictatorship of the proletariat." Will Comrade Doug Jenness claim that Comrade Trotsky was deliberately or unconsciously falsifying history when he asserted this in 1938?

We do not challenge the fact that if one goes through Lenin's writings, *one can* find in 1917–1918 ambiguous and even contradictory formulas. But only a sophist would rip one or two paragraphs in a polemical text out of their context and place them on an equal footing, or even above, *the dozens* of quotations from programmatic texts and theoretical writings that assert exactly the opposite. The correct method is to reinterpret these few slips of the pen in the light of the *theoretical continuity* embodied by *all* the Communist programmatic documents from 1917 to 1923, and the revolutionary Marxist ones from 1917 until today.

We know of many revolutions that were *lost* because a counterposition was deliberately created between, on the one hand, the need to mobilize the peasantry, the importance of democratic demands, the "bourgeois-democratic nature of the tasks of the revolution," and, on the other hand, the need to orient towards the seizure of power by the proletariat allied to the poor peasantry. Doug Jenness' ambiguous formulas reintroduce this counterposition, albeit only in undertones, into the ranks of our movement, which until now had been most effectively armed on the programmatic level against the danger of turning democratic demands, or "the democratic stage of the revolution," into a "noose tied around the neck of the proletariat," as the Transitional Program put it. We know of *no revolution* that was lost because it prematurely entered on the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin, of course, cannot be made to bear the least responsibility for any policy of revolution by stages that implies an alliance with the bourgeoisie, or with bourgeois parties, or with bourgeois parties coming forth as "representatives of the peasantry as a whole" during the course

of a broad popular revolution. The historical continuity is rather that of the Mensheviks, of Martynov, of the Thermidorian epigones of Lenin (Stalin-Bukharin), and then of the various Stalinist and post-Stalinist factions of the "international Communist movement." Nevertheless, Lenin's algebraic formulas of 1905, and 1906–1916, did leave the door ajar to erroneous interpretations of that type. Trotsky had resoundingly slammed that door shut; Doug Jenness is tugging it open again. It is a sad business, a sorry business.

At the same time, while the utmost clarity on the question of the theory of the permanent revolution, especially on the need for the conquest of power by the proletariat allied to the poor peasantry, is *indispensable* for a revolution to be victorious in a less developed capitalist country, it is by no means *sufficient* to that end. You still need a favorable relationship of forces: a sufficient weakening and decomposition of the ruling classes, a sufficient revolt and mobilization of the popular masses. You need a revolutionary vanguard, that is, a party, with sufficient strength, with sufficient roots in the masses, with already some sufficient level of political authority — gained in the period before the revolution — with a sufficiently concrete and rich analysis of *all* the objective conditions of the country, of *all* the social and political forces at hand, with sufficiently refined tactics, to succeed in bringing the majority of the nation together around the goal of conquering power. At any rate, no one, beginning with Marx and Lenin, ever tried to enumerate the conditions *guaranteeing* a revolutionary victory. That was not the point; the point was to reject the strategies that guaranteed defeat in light of the rich and tragic revolutionary experience.

Finally, when we say that between 1905 and the April Theses of 1917 Trotsky was right over Lenin on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is, of the theory of the permanent revolution, we are by no means saying that Trotsky was a better revolutionary than Lenin, or that we are Trotskyists rather than Leninists. Trotsky was wrong against Lenin on many questions prior to the Russian revolution of 1917: not only on the question of organization, which was essential, but on that of electoral tactics, on that of unity with the Mensheviks beginning with the second split, on revolutionary defeatism during the First World War. Today no revolutionary Marxism exists, and no revolutionary Marxism can exist, based solely on the continuity of the political and strategic positions of a single source, be it Trotsky or the Bolsheviks of 1905.

Revolutionary Marxism today integrates what was essential in Marx and Engels, a good number of the advances made by the Second International, the theory of organization and most of the tactical choices and theoretical contributions of Lenin and the Bolsheviks prior to 1917 (e.g., his theory of imperialism and his theory of the state), the theory of the permanent revolution of Trotsky, a good deal of the political contributions (not all of course) of Rosa Luxemburg and the German Socialist Left, the main documents of the first four congresses of the Communist International, some of the theoretical advances of other non-Russian Communist leaders between 1919 and 1923, some of the main theoretical conclusions to be drawn from the victories (Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Cuba) and defeats of the world revolution since 1918, the Trotskyist theory of the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR and of the necessary antibureaucratic political revolution, the Trotskyist theory of fascism.

How could it be otherwise? How could a supporter of historical materialism think that revolutionary strategy had already been entirely worked out in 1905–1906, that is, even before the first revolutionary victory had been consolidated and without any knowledge of the three dozens of revolutions that have occurred since 1905?

Comrade Doug Jenness asks a rhetorical question: "Mandel argues that Lenin came over to Trotsky's pre-1917 strategy for the Russian revolution, while Trotsky came over to Lenin's view of party organization. But this is not true. In fact, it makes no sense at all. How can a historical materialist explain this supposed complete dichotomy between program and strategy, on the one hand, and their organizational expression, on the other?"

This is rather strange: historical materialism, according to Doug Jenness, would entail a correspondence between an organization's strategy and program on the one hand, and the organization itself on the other. We always thought rather that historical materialism asserted a corres-

pondence between an organization's links with a given class (or fraction of class), i.e., *the social interests in which it is rooted objectively on the one hand*, and its program and strategy on the other. What is distinctively Lenin's, his main contribution to Marxism, is *his conception of the organization, his organizational theory and practice* that have become part of the revolutionary Marxist program. This was the decisive question on which Lenin was right against Trotsky.

But, in 1905, at the time Lenin formulated his theory of the "democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants," the "organizational expression" of that conception was a tiny group of 2,000 revolutionaries. It is precisely the excessive narrowness of this group, its lack of real experience in a popular revolution, that was one of the factors (not the only one of course) that made for the ambiguous and algebraic character of his strategic conception. In 1905, *the building of the party had begun; it was far from completed*. To complete it, not only was the historic experience of the revolution of February 1917 necessary. There also had to be the mobilization, self-activity, and self-organization of the Russian proletariat on a qualitatively higher level than occurred in 1905. Above all, there had to be a *massive influx of militant vanguard workers into the Bolshevik Party*, which jumped, in the course of a few weeks, from 15,000 to nearly 100,000 members (the figure most commonly mentioned is 80,000). In many ways it was a new organization, in which the proletarian component weighed incomparably more than in 1905, that helped Lenin in the highly charged aura of the revolution to overcome the errors and reticence of the old Bolshevik cadres who were products of 1905 and not 1917. Their correct organizational conception and the education of the intermediate cadres in uncompromising class independence finished the job. That is the materialist, Marxist, nonhagiographic explanation of what happened to the Bolshevik Party in April 1917.

We obviously never spoke of a "total dichotomy" between the Bolshevik program and the Leninist conception of the organization. We did speak of that program's lack of clarity on *one single* question: the nature of the state and government that could lead the Russian revolution to victory. The program was correct on all other questions, particularly in its rejection of any class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. It was the source of generally correct tactics. What was involved was therefore a partial, not a total, dichotomy. It is neither surprising nor unique in history.

Engels and Lenin completely endorsed — aside for a few details — German Social-Democracy's Erfurt program. They endorsed even more wholeheartedly that party's conception of organization; Lenin explicitly drew his inspiration from it. And yet, by 1908, the party's strategic conception of power was *completely* deficient — infinitely more so than the Bolsheviks' in 1905 — to say nothing of its clear failings on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know the price humanity had to pay in 1914 and 1918–1919 for this "partial deficiency." History thus delivered its scathing answer to the simplistic and mechanistic theses on the automatic "correspondence" between the general program, the general education of the cadre, the organizational conceptions, and the current tactics on the one hand, and the ability to orient correctly in a revolutionary situation, that is, the precise strategy for power, on the other.

Dictatorship of the proletariat and peasant war

Comrade Doug Jenness further weakens his case by referring to the problems of "peasant war," that is, to *the concrete fashion in which the worker-peasant alliance was achieved in the course of the Russian revolution* (and later in the course of the Yugoslav, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cuban, and Nicaraguan revolutions, with the inevitable variations in each case, variations that, on balance, turned out to be minor). This set of problems involves several distinct questions:

1. When did the peasant risings that led to the takeover of the land by the peasants actually take place?
2. What layers of the peasantry participated in them?
3. What social class wielded political power when the agrarian revolution was implemented?
4. What was the concrete political form of the worker and peasant alliance?

There were peasant risings before the October revolution. One could,

perhaps, characterize these risings as "risings of the peasantry as a whole." These risings were obviously supported by the Bolshevik Party although it played only a minor, if not a negligible, practical role in them. But these were scattered risings that, while they prepared the ground for the October revolution, while they undermined the social and political bases of the Provisional Government's power, of the bourgeoisie's power, and of the landowners' power, which had the support of the Mensheviks and Right-SRs, neither attacked it nor overthrew it. Only indirectly, through the soldiers' soviets, did the peasants participate in preparing and carrying out the October 1917 revolution. It would be difficult to contend that the majority of soldiers' soviets represented "the peasantry as a whole." How then could one account for the minority, yet rather important, segments of these soviets that continued to support the Right-SRs before, during, and after October?

The real peasant risings, the real "peasant war," the real conquest of the land by the peasants, took place after the October revolution, under the military and political protection, and with the active aid and collaboration of the soviet power, of the dictatorship of the proletariat. *This is the concrete way in which the worker and peasant alliance was achieved in Russia.*

The Bolsheviks, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the power of the soviets, were able to conquer power because they promised the peasants the land. They were able to stay in power because they kept their promise. With the support of the working class alone, that is, of a small minority of the toiling population, it was impossible ("putschist") to conquer and stay in power in Russia. *Trotsky never advocated such nonsense*, contrary to the diehard Stalinist slander to which Comrade Jenness is beginning to make concessions.

At the November-December 1917 All-Russian Congress of Peasant Soviets, a very significant minority emerged that *opposed* transferring power to the soviets and the October revolution, a minority based mainly among the Right-SRs.

Was this merely a political difference, or did this division also reflect divergent social interests, namely roughly the difference of interests between the rich peasants, the *kulaks*, the rural bourgeoisie, the more prosperous middle peasants, on the one hand, and the agricultural workers, the poor peasants, and the most impoverished middle peasants, on the other? We staunchly subscribe to the second interpretation, which is also supported by Marcel Liebman's book to which Comrade Doug Jenness refers, once again very "selectively."

In the Ukraine (where a large fraction of Tsarist Russia's peasantry lived), in Georgia and elsewhere, the question of the peasants' attitude was closely tied, *from the outset*, to the national question. This applied even more to Finland and Poland. It is beyond doubt that in all these regions, the majority of the peasantry, that is, the whole rich peasantry and a good share of the middle peasantry *opposed the October revolution*, albeit for nationalist reasons, and at first supported counter-revolutionary governments often directly backed by imperialism (German in most cases, British and French in the others). (It *later* changed positions, but that is another story.)

The kulak uprisings took place prior to the nationalization of industry and were not mainly the result of "fear" of seeing "their land collectivized." They were class reactions to the measures taken by the soviets to confiscate their food stocks *in the immediate economic interest* not only of the workers and toilers of the cities, but also of the poor peasants who were often threatened by famine as a result of the disorganization of transportation especially.

We have now arrived at the heart of the matter. The differentiation between poor peasants and rich peasants does not occur after "a prolonged development of capitalism in the countryside" supposedly set off by the victory of the revolution. This differentiation occurs roughly *prior to the revolutionary victory itself*. It is written into the particular pattern in which capitalist, semi-capitalist, and precapitalist relations of production and exchange interconnect in the villages of the countries affected by permanent revolution.

In Russia in 1917 the opposition between the rich and the poor, between the exploiters and the exploited, no longer pitted semi-feudal landowners against "the peasantry as a whole." Rather, it pitted landowners, substantial traders-usurers, rural bourgeois and rich peasants

against poor peasants and the less-well-to-do middle peasants. Recognizing that there were many *remains*, vestiges, of precapitalist exploitation, including serfdom, in Russia, which the rich peasants were interested in fighting as much as the poor peasants, is one thing. But it is another to claim that it was possible for the poor peasants to rise, without *simultaneously* rising both against these various forms of serfdom, against the bloodsucking usurers, and against the capitalist exploiters who were all driving them to starvation, to claim that the poor peasants were in a position to "distinguish" stages: first with the usurers (since they are capitalist) against the semi-feudal nobility; then with the agricultural and industrial workers against the rural bourgeoisie.

Such "peasant wars," drawn from an abstract theoretical schema that does not take the law of uneven and combined development into account, have never existed since World War I, with the possible exception of extremely backward countries. At any rate there were no such wars in Russia, Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, Cuba, nor in the innumerable cases of popular revolutions that ended in defeat. In every single one of these cases, the differentiation and latent and sometimes open civil war within the village, erupted in the first stage, from the onset, of the revolutionary process. *They were rooted in the social and economic reality of the village produced by the imperialist epoch* (let us repeat, except in the most backward countries, but, as Trotsky specified, the theory of the permanent revolution does not apply there anyway due to the nearly total lack of an industrial proletariat).

Let us take a typical case from today's world, that of India. At this time, there is no revolutionary situation in that country. The political rule of the Indian bourgeoisie appears to be stable at the national level. The workers movement is going through a temporary ebb rather than an impetuous rise. And yet, at the level of the Indian village, a latent and sometimes open civil war is slowly and inexorably rising with the underground force of a mighty volcano, and pitting the poor peasants (many of whom belong to the *pariah* castes) against the rich peasants who are organizing genuine terrorist armed groups to prevent the poor peasants from defending their immediate class interests. Will Comrade Doug Jenness, mechanically aping Lenin in 1905-1906, claim that the Indian proletariat should first march together "with the peasantry as a whole"? Or will he claim that Indian capitalism is today much more highly developed than Russian capitalism was in 1917, and that that is the reason why "the situation has changed"?

But if the differentiation between poor peasants and rich peasants is not the result of a learned political strategy of "revolution by stage," but the product of *the social and economic reality* of the village in the most important semi-colonial countries, not to mention the less developed imperialist countries, then any attempt to *compel* the poor peasants and agricultural workers, their natural allies, to *limit themselves* to a struggle for "democratic, anti-feudal, and anti-imperialist" goals, at any "stage" of the revolutionary process will mean in practice *compelling them to trample underfoot their own immediate material interests*.

The difference between such a "strategy" and that of the permanent revolution is therefore by no means that the advocates of the latter "underestimate the peasantry." Quite the contrary, it is that its opponents refuse, in practice, to mobilize the poor peasants and the majority of the laboring peasants, and to encourage their self-organization in soviet-type organs, because they fear that such a mobilization will substitute for the utopian and unrealistic alliance of the working class with "the whole peasantry," the real and feasible alliance of the working class with the poor peasantry, an alliance that is sealed on the backs not only of imperialism and the semi-feudal forces, but also of the urban and rural bourgeoisie including the rich peasantry.

Only if one *limits* the goals of the national-democratic revolution to *purely political goals*, as the Mensheviks did in 1905-1906, can one hope for any kind of "political alliance" with the peasantry as a whole. As soon as one broaches the problem of achieving the historical goals of the national-democratic revolution *as a whole* — and that is what the theory of the permanent revolution is about; it never claimed that *none* of the goals of the national-bourgeois revolution could be achieved without a dictatorship of the proletariat; it only asserts that they cannot be achieved *as a whole, overall* — one has to grant the agrarian revolution the *highest priority* among the goals of the revolution, and *one has to*

conclude that in the imperialist epoch, such a revolution can no longer be achieved by a mobilization of the peasantry as a whole, but requires a spontaneous development of the class struggle between rich and poor in the countryside, which does not mean, obviously, a class struggle for or against socialism in the countryside, or for or against the collectivization of the land. Indeed, it matters little to a rich peasant-trader-usurer whether the poor peasant wants to cancel his debts because he is a "supporter of socialism," or "simply" to escape from unbearable poverty. What does matter to him is the danger of losing his property, his fortune, and even his life. This is the basis on which he will react.

We say that we are here at the very heart of the debate around the theory of the permanent revolution. For it is around this problem of the prior, inevitable, social and economic, differentiation within the peasantry that the question of the organized political forces and of the nature of the state set up by the revolution is posed from the Marxist, materialist, point of view. The vacillations of the petty-bourgeoisie, the petty commodity producers, i.e., of the peasantry, that Lenin so often refers to, are reflected in concrete events by two diametrically opposed types of political behavior.

Either the "peasant parties" (which are, at any rate, in nine cases out of ten, bourgeois parties with bourgeois leaderships), and especially the peasant mass organizations, follow the rural and urban bourgeoisie and, as soon as the poor peasants mobilize and organize for their own class goals, they will turn to counterrevolutionary behavior on the same pattern as the urban bourgeoisie. In this case, the counterrevolution is victorious (the victory of the counterrevolution in Bolivia, after the 1952 revolution, was due in great part to the alliance of the peasant organizations with the MNR). Or else, the class struggle deeply penetrates the countryside; the poor and less well-off middle peasants mobilize and organize to defend *their own immediate interests*, in which case the worker and peasant alliance can march forward towards victory. But it can only get there if the exploiters of the cities and country are unable to

drown the "peasant war" in blood, that is, if their army is unhinged, cut to pieces, beaten back, that is, if the proletariat and poor peasants are armed, that is, if the state is a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat (or, what amounts to the same thing, if the civil war between the decomposing bourgeois state and the newly developing workers state has reached the stage where the latter is able to effectively protect the poor peasants against the bloodthirsty repression of the ruling classes).

When the parties that lead the workers refuse to take power, they are displaying not some "more profound understanding of the peasant question," but a *lack of understanding* of the social and economic reality of the village which leads to the "peasant war" being smashed. *The peasant war can only win under the protection of the dictatorship of the proletariat.*

In the light of this analysis, it is now possible to tackle the question of "stages" within the process of permanent revolution. These "stages," to which Trotsky refers in his *Permanent Revolution*, have to do with the sequence in which the concrete goals of mass mobilizations emerge. This is a practical question, a matter of "concrete analysis of a concrete situation."

The revolutionary process (the stormy mobilization of the masses) may be triggered by an issue arising in the struggle against imperialism, by the question of national independence, by one of the particular aspects of the agrarian question, by a "national minority" question, by an issue in the struggle against dictatorship (release of political prisoners), or even by the problem of famine, of sharing existing supplies (after all, that is how the February revolution began in Russia in 1917). Any attempt to establish, in advance, a political hierarchy of issues of this type and to deduce it from a general definition of the "stage of development" of these countries, would be totally inoperative. In this field, events will always bring forth unforeseen variants.

Moreover, although it may tremendously upset the schematic think-



Cuban workers and peasants during October 1959 mobilization against U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary attacks.

ers, it is perfectly possible for a permanent revolution process to be triggered in an already partly industrialized underdeveloped country by the spark of a "typically" working-class demand. The question of the nationalization of the mines played no small role in setting off the Bolivian revolution of 1952. It was not a "purely" anti-imperialist demand; the same is probably true of the nationalization of the Suez canal in Egypt.

But what sets these "stages" within the permanent revolution process apart from the stages so dear to the Menshevik-Stalinists and their imitators, *is that at no stage* of the process do the political demands rule out of the struggle and mobilizations and self-organization of the masses of workers and peasants, their immediate material and historic social and economic interests. These masses can only be forced into such a schema by blocking, by smothering, and by repressing their own mobilizations, that is, let us repeat it once again, those of the workers *as well as of the exploited peasants*. These are the stakes of the real political choice.

Political alliance, "class" alliances, "anti-imperialist united fronts," yes, occasionally, punctually, for well-defined goals *to be struggled for*, and with strict compliance to the rule "march separately, strike together," we do not exclude these. But not at any price. Not at the price of putting a brake on the mobilization of the workers and poor peasants for their own interests, and on their self-organization to this end, even if this means that in real life the "anti-imperialist united front" will fall apart, because the "national" and (or) rural bourgeoisie prefers to capitulate to imperialism, to dictatorships, to "semi-feudalists," etc., rather than allowing itself to be surrounded by the surging flames of the peasant war and workers strikes with factory occupations, which are a deadly threat to it.

We are now in a position to answer another sarcastic remark of Comrade Doug Jenness which demonstrates once more that he often does not even realize what the discussion is about. He writes:

"The October revolution, Lenin says, created the foundation for the 'most perfect' development of capitalism in the countryside. (Mandel cannot deny this without breaking with Marx and Lenin.)"

Let Marx and Lenin rest in peace. Let us rather examine the problem both in light of the facts, that is, of historical experience, and from the theoretical point of view.

The facts show that there was not "the most perfect development of capitalism in the countryside" (remember that Lenin is speaking of a development "on the American pattern"), neither after the October revolution, nor after the victory of the Yugoslav revolution, nor after the victory of the Chinese revolution, nor after the victory of the Cuban revolution, let alone the Vietnamese. In all these cases what occurred was mainly a development of *petty commodity production* with an embryo of capitalist agriculture, and not "the most perfect development of capitalism in agriculture." Whoever does not understand that "the most perfect development of capitalism" implies a massive development of farm machinery and a massive development of the agricultural proletariat, has not understood much about capitalism according to Marx.

Where was there a private accumulation of capital in the hands of the Russian, Chinese, Yugoslav, or Cuban kulaks after the revolution on a scale that would have allowed them to massively purchase agricultural machinery which was, at any rate, not available in those countries? Lenin, who understood Marx, obviously meant to say: the nationalization of the land could serve as the point of departure for the most perfect development of capitalism, provided that a whole series of *additional* conditions were fulfilled, at the top of which the condition that the dictatorship of the proletariat not exist, would have a prominent place. Doug Jenness' simplistic shortcut transforms that correct observation into utter nonsense.

In fact, because we understand the law of uneven and combined development, we understand that the nationalization of the land under the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat could lead to "the most perfect development of capitalism in the countryside" (to agribusiness, because that is what we are talking about), only on condition that the workers state had supplied the kulaks with massive deliveries of farm machinery and authorized them to hire millions of farm hands to be exploited by them. But long before such a process could have come to

fruition, it would have dealt a deadly blow to the dictatorship of the proletariat, it would have destroyed it. This would have been verified in the economic field (because the private accumulation of capital would have gotten the upper hand over "socialist primitive accumulation," and the law of value would have prevailed in Russia as a result of the links between the world market and the kulaks), and in the social field: the proletarianized and pauperized poor peasants would have revolted against the kulaks, and if the state had not supported them, the worker-peasant alliance would have been shattered.

This is why Lenin could peremptorily proclaim as early as 1917: "Do the SRs fool themselves, do they fool the peasants when they admit and spread around the idea that transformations of that magnitude are possible without overthrowing the dominance of capitalism, without placing all state power in the hands of the proletariat, without the peasants' supporting the most vigorous measures of the proletarian power against the capitalists. . . . The transition of political power to the proletariat, that is the main thing" ("Workers and Peasant," September 1917, CW Vol. 25, p. 308; translated from the French).

What a far cry from the "democratic republic" and "the rapid development of capitalism in the European-style" of 1905! The person who persists today, against all the evidence, in placing a "continuity" sign between the two sets of analyses, suffers from the worst kind of blindness, the blindness of those who *refuse* to see.

Paradoxically, even in a bourgeois state, the "most perfect development of capitalism in the countryside" can no longer be reproduced in the imperialist epoch in the less developed countries despite many more or less consistent, and more or less limited, land reforms. Here too, the cause lies in the law of uneven and combined development: the inextricable overlap of agriculture and industry, of agriculture and credit, of usurious and banking capital and finance capital, of national and international capital, of the bourgeois state and capitalist agriculture, of the semi-colonial and (or) dependent bourgeois state and the international imperialist system. At bottom, the problem is that "the most perfect development of capitalism in the countryside" precisely requires an *American-style* overall capitalist development in all its complexity. But, in the epoch of imperialism, "a second America is no longer possible." Doug Jenness started off by accepting this assertion — that only the theory of the permanent revolution can account for in all its dimensions — as a commonplace. But, a minute later, he implicitly rejects it.

This is why even the initial successes of the "green revolution" in the countryside of the most evolved dependent countries (Mexico, South Korea, some parts of India) have not led to "the most perfect development of capitalism in the countryside," but to a partial, hybrid, combined, mongrelized, simultaneous development of development and underdevelopment that keeps these countries far below the conditions of the laggard imperialist countries, not to mention Western Europe, Canada, Australia or the United States.

The question of the self-limitation of the proletariat

In the section of his article which is an open polemic against Comrade Trotsky, Doug Jenness reproaches him with the prediction that a "two-class" government would run the risk of repressing or limiting the struggle of the proletariat for its own objectives (p. 41). He peremptorily asserts that the "two-class government" established in October 1917, far from acting as a brake on the workers demands, including that of seizing the factories and expropriating the capitalists, actually helped the proletariat to achieve them. Trotsky's prediction is therefore allegedly mistaken.

This "refutation" is meaningless. We have already established that according to Lenin and all the programmatic documents of the Bolshevik Party and the C.I., the government that rose to power through the October insurrection was not "a two-class government," but the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was so not only in a "general historic" sense, but also in a concrete and immediate sense.

The workers were armed. The bosses were disarmed. The workers exercised power through their soviets. The bosses were bullied, despised, insulted (read the details in Victor Serge's *The Year One of the Russian Revolution*) and chased from their villas, mansions and apartments by the workers, before being legally expropriated (how "anar-

chistic" this magnificent workers revolution was, to use an insult Doug Jenness is fond of, but which Comrade Lenin looked upon rather as a compliment in his *State and Revolution*).

Obviously, *under these conditions*, no one in Russia could put a brake on or limit the workers demands. The fact that the Bolsheviks had to revise several times the calendar they had projected for the various nationalizations, under the impact of the battering ram of the spontaneous workers mobilizations, is nowhere mentioned by Doug Jenness although it is a fact recognized by all serious historians. The fact that Lenin and the Bolsheviks complied without the slightest hesitation, cheerfully, that they preferred a thousand times the real revolutionary process to preestablished schemas, testifies to their admirable revolutionary fiber, a fiber we never called into question.

But Comrade Doug Jenness is careful not to ask the question which arises logically from his way of tackling the problem of "class alliances." What happened *in every single case* where the leaders of the revolutionary process actually allowed themselves to be drawn into a "two-class government" that could only be a coalition government *with the bourgeoisie*, since no "peasant party" independent of the bourgeoisie and proletariat ever appeared on the scene of history? What happened even in those cases where the parties leading the revolutionary process, while breaking *in practice* with the bourgeoisie (and its "peasant parties"), tried to express their political orientation through the old formulas of the revolution by stages? *In every single case*, there were attempts, often successful unfortunately, to limit the mobilizations, the self-organization and the self-activity of the *proletariat and poor peasants*, against their will, insofar as these mobilizations did not correspond to the preestablished schemas.

In the worst cases, the result was not only a repression of the masses, but the defeat of the revolution as a consequence of the demoralization caused by that repression. In the best of cases, the result was the emergence of workers states highly bureaucratized *from the outset* as a result of the lack of self-organization of the masses. Disastrous consequences ensued for the solution of the problems, difficulties and conflicts, that inevitably arise on the road to socialism; the transitional society born under these auspices was "blocked" and unable to move forward towards socialism; this in turn had no less disastrous consequences on the consciousness of the international proletariat and the dynamic of the world revolution, which itself boomeranged back and further worsened the tension and waste afflicting the bureaucratized transitional societies.

About all this, Comrade Doug Jenness keeps mum. Comrade Trotsky had no small merit in perceiving, as early as 1905, most of these problems that, together with those of the permanent revolution, overshadow twentieth century history. That one could reproach him today with such farsightedness instead of admiring it, is good cause for dismay.

We have already drawn attention to Comrade Doug Jenness' rather selective method of "reading" Lenin. It consists in drawing one or two quotations from a book of 100 to 150 pages in order to "demonstrate" a preconceived thesis, without wondering why the book contains twenty quotations that say the opposite and whether, therefore, one ought not first seek to ascertain the overall opinion of the author as it emerges from the work as a whole. But Doug Jenness attempts to enlist even the works of Marx on behalf of his preestablished thesis. This is only possible thanks to an even more "selective" reading of the works of Marx and Engels.

In this instance, what is alarming and marks a further slippage towards a broader and more complete revision of Marxism, is the fact that he repeats in 1982 one of the last paragraphs of the *Communist Manifesto*, written *before the revolution of 1848*, as if it were still politically valid *today*, as if the Bolsheviks had applied it not only in 1905 but even in 1917, without even explaining what political-strategic thesis is implied in the passage, without asking whether the prediction was borne out by reality in 1848 and whether Marx and Engels continued to uphold it.

What does the passage at hand say? That Germany is on the eve of the bourgeois revolution; that this bourgeois revolution will triumph under the leadership of the bourgeoisie; that it will be the immediate prelude to the proletarian revolution.

Of these three predictions, only the first was verified. The other two were disproved by events. The German revolution was not victorious, and could not be victorious precisely because it remained under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. Nor was it the prelude to the proletarian revolution. The concrete experience of the German and French revolutions of 1848 led Marx and Engels to drastically revamp their revolutionary strategy. In the *Address to the Central Committee of the League of Communists*, written in March 1850, Marx and Engels summarized their balance sheet of the 1848 revolution thus:

"We have already said, in 1848, that the German liberal bourgeoisie would come to power and immediately turn their newly acquired power against the workers. You saw how the business was carried out. The bourgeoisie could not achieve this goal without an alliance with the feudal party that had been brushed aside in March, and even without abandoning power, in the last analysis, to that feudal absolutist party" (Marx-Engels, *Selected Works*; translated from the French).

The historical sequence therefore was not: victory of the bourgeois revolution leading to the beginning of the proletarian revolution, but beginning of the bourgeois revolution leading to a victory of the counter-revolution. The bourgeois' fear of the proletariat got the upper hand over its desire to do away with the semi-feudal remnants.

Marx and Engels drew two strategic conclusions from this which had not been present in the *Communist Manifesto*: firstly, that the proletariat must form itself into an independent political party with its own specific tactics *even before the bourgeois revolution breaks out* and before the "revolutionary" role of the bourgeoisie and democratic petty-bourgeoisie comes to an end, and this *in spite of* the bourgeois character of the revolution; and secondly, the implementation of the strategy known as "permanent revolution," for it is in the *Address to the League of Communists* that this term is used for the first time by the founders of Marxism.

One should not forget that the *Communist Manifesto* calls upon Communists to join workers parties only in Britain and the USA, which remained outside the revolution of 1848. In the two main countries of that revolution, France and Germany, the *Communist Manifesto* explicitly advocates that Communists join petty-bourgeois parties (the party of Louis Blanc in France, the democrats in Germany) and *not* set up independent parties of the working class. Here is the balance sheet of this tactic drawn up by Marx and Engels in the March 1850 *Address*.

"A great part of the members [of the Communist League] directly involved in the revolutionary movement, thought that the time of secret societies had passed and that it was sufficient to operate openly and publicly. The different districts and locals relaxed their relations with the Central Committee and let them gradually come to rest. While the democratic party, the party of the petty-bourgeoisie, organized thus more and more in Germany, the workers party lost its solid basis, remained organized in only a few localities, for purely local purposes, and thereby got in the general movement completely under the domination and leadership of the petty-bourgeois democrats. One must put an end to this situation; the independence of the workers must be established" (Marx-Engels *Werke*, Vol. 7; translated from the French).

Underlying this strategic turn, there also was the experience of the class struggles in France, of the June 1848 insurrection of the French proletariat, of the bloody clash between the bourgeoisie and proletariat *in the very course of the revolution*, before it had completed its tasks, before an institutionalized "democratic republic" had been born. Here also, life, the class struggle, historical experience, demonstrated that the bourgeoisie had become *politically reactionary and counterrevolutionary* long before it had fulfilled its historic economic tasks. To deny this "break" in the thought of Marx and Engels, to proclaim that the Marx and Engels of June 1848, of 1850, of 1871, stood "in the political continuity" of the aforementioned paragraph of the *Communist Manifesto*, and to add on top of that that the Lenin of *State and Revolution* and of the October revolution stood "in continuity" with this paragraph, amounts to turning Marx and Lenin into half-Mensheviks, or even vulgar Mensheviks; it amounts to treating the true history of revolutionary Marxism with intolerable flippancy.

In the course of the German revolution of 1918-1919, a Left Social-Democratic leader (it did not take much to be "to the left" of Noske!)

wrote a pamphlet entitled "How to Lose a Revolution." In it, he counterposed the "scientific," balanced, correct, well-thought-out position of the *Communist Manifesto* to the insane, in fact, the "anarcho-Blanquist," position of the Marx who supported the June 1848 insurrection of the Paris proletariat. The latter had no chance of succeeding "since" the bourgeois revolution had not yet been entirely completed, "since" capitalism had not yet "exhausted all its economic potentialities." As a result, the only possible outcome of this "insane" insurrection was to drive the bourgeoisie into the arms of the counterrevolution.

The Menshevik (correction: Left Social-Democratic) author of this pamphlet had not yet understood, seventy years after the event, that the fact that the French bourgeoisie had gone over to the camp of the counterrevolution in France, was not the result of the "insane insurrection" of the Paris proletarians, but quite clearly that of the *inexorable maturation of the class contradictions between Capital and Labor*, given the development of capitalism, of the workers consciousness, and of the workers movement. The workers insurrection was a response to this evolution of the bourgeoisie and not its cause. The name of this genuine supporter of the "self-limitation of the proletariat in the democratic revolution" was Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein: you have heard of him, haven't you? And of the kind of revisionist logic that led Bernstein to his conclusion?

Theoretical roots of the errors of Doug Jenness

How was it that comrades educated for decades in revolutionary Marxist theory and traditions could "founder" and sink towards such deeply erroneous positions? We see essentially three causes, all interrelated, that illustrate yet another time in the history of the Marxist movement the terrible "objective dialectic of ideas," a logic over which Doug Jenness and his cothinkers seem to have lost all conscious control: "Du glaubst du schiebst und wirst geschoben" ("You think you push, and you are pushed"), as was put so neatly by that great dialectician who went by the name of Goethe.

• It all began with the present leaders of the Socialist Workers Party's faulty understanding of the way in which Trotsky and the Fourth International had used the criterion of the nationalization of the means of production as the basic criterion showing the USSR remained a workers state, despite the monstrous bureaucratic dictatorship that held sway over it. For Trotsky, that nationalization was the *decisive residual element*, that is, as he often put it, what *survived* from the October revolution. But he never dreamed of *reducing* the conquests of October, and still less the nature of the October revolution to this nationalization alone, and to consider as "less important," or "less decisive," the destruction of the bourgeoisie's state power and the creation of the new power of the soviets.

For Trotsky, as for Lenin, as for Engels, as for Marx, what is decisive in a social revolution is the transfer of power from one class to another, and not the instant and complete abolition of a given form of property. The *Communist Manifesto* already stated explicitly:

"We've already seen that the first stage of the workers revolution is the formation of the proletariat as the dominant class, the conquest of democracy.

"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest *little by little all capital from the hands of the bourgeoisie*, to centralize all the instruments of production in the hands of the state, that is, of the proletariat organized as the ruling class, and to increase as fast as possible the amount of productive forces" (translated from the French — our emphasis).

The new theoretical problem with which Trotsky and all revolutionary Marxists were confronted beginning in the 1930s was that of a state that was born out of an undeniable victory of the proletarian revolution, but in which "the proletariat organized as a class" no longer wielded political power, no longer enjoyed "political supremacy," and where proletarian democracy no longer existed. Could one still speak of a workers state under those conditions, despite the dictatorship of the bureaucracy? Yes, answered Trotsky, insofar as the nationalization of the means of production and the monopoly of foreign trade born of the October revolution still *survived*. It was a new criterion for a new problem, that of *the class nature of a bureaucratically degenerated workers state*. It

was by no stretch of the imagination a new "scientific criterion for the creation of a workers state" to be applied by Marxists to all workers states.

• Driven by the will to "systematize" this wrong criterion for the definition of all workers states — which they had already applied to all the victorious socialist revolutions, including by the absurd denial that the Paris Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat — the SWP leaders who share Comrade Jenness' current ideas began to revise *the whole* Marxist theory of the state. They began to identify "state" and "society," forgetting that the state is, by its very Marxist definition, *a set of apparatus*, of bodies of specialized men (mainly, but not exclusively, "armed men") that take over functions previously exercised by society as a whole, and this in the interest of a ruling class.

The class nature of a state is determined by answering the following question: "what class interests do these special apparatus fundamentally serve on the scale of history?" and not by the question: "what property forms are developed or preserved in the immediate period under the rule of this state?" The state of the absolutist monarchy was a semi-feudal state, despite the fact that semi-feudal landed estates may have declined or even disappeared in this or that country, in one or another period. Yet there is no doubt that, on the whole, this state continued to defend the interests of the semi-feudal nobility and upper clergy, and that if it had not existed, or after it had been destroyed by a bourgeois revolution, the fate of these social classes would have qualitatively worsened.

Similarly, in the epoch of capitalism's decline, the bourgeois state can nationalize not unimportant sectors of the means of production (not only under nationalist-populist regimes in the semi-colonial countries, but also in the imperialist countries, both under parliamentary-democratic regimes and under authoritarian and fascist regimes), and still remain a bourgeois state. If it did not exist, the breadth of the nationalizations would be far greater, the interests of the bourgeoisie as a class would be damaged definitively and comprehensively, rather than partially and temporarily.

This theoretical error is especially serious for revolutionaries in semi-colonial countries, because it can lead them to completely false conclusions on the class nature of certain states that seem, at first sight, to have nationalized the means of production as, or more, extensively than the USSR under the NEP, yet remain bourgeois states. This is demonstrated by the entire subsequent evolution of Egypt, Iraq, Algeria, Syria, the People's Republic of the Congo, that belonged in that category; and events will unfortunately confirm that, barring new upheavals, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Yemen should be classified in the same category.

Comrade Doug Jenness uses a strange argument to justify this revision of the Marxist theory of the state: since the October revolution did not "immediately" abolish private property of the large means of production, it allegedly preserved the bourgeois state, since this state (that is, the ruling soviets!) acted to "protect" and even "defend" that property. In other words: if you bring a knife to the throat of a fascist mass murderer who brutally assaulted you after slaughtering several other people, yet do not immediately cut it, in order to check if he has an accomplice who might attack you from behind (you "only" cut it a quarter of an hour "later"), you are "protecting" him, you are "defending" him, you are "saving his life." The knife that cuts the throat becomes a "protecting knife." Truly irresistible "logic!"

Right from the moment they seized power the Bolsheviks proclaimed their intention of socializing the Russian economy. On December 25, 1917, Lenin already wrote in his article "How to Organize Competition":

"The lackeys of the money-banks, the mercenaries of the exploiters, the gentlemen among the bourgeois intellectuals tried to scare the people away from socialism, whilst it is precisely capitalism that condemns them to forced labor, to a barracks-like existence, to excessive and monotonous work, to a life of famine and direst poverty. The first step towards the emancipation of the workers from this forced labor, is to confiscate the estates of the landowners, to introduce workers control, the nationalization of the banks. The next steps will be: the nationalization of factories and enterprises, the compulsory centralization of the whole population in consumers' cooperatives that will serve at the same

time as distribution cooperatives, the introduction of state monopoly over trade in wheat and other basic necessities" (CW, Vol. 24; translated from the French).

A state that proclaims that intention, *from the moment of its creation*, and carries it out without the slightest new revolution or internal transformation; a state that, a few weeks later, proclaims "the socialist homeland threatened," and ends that February 21, 1918, appeal with the words "Long Live the World Socialist Revolution" (p.312-313), allegedly is a "bourgeois state" led by a "two-class government?" Need we emphasize once again the absurdity of such "conclusions" that provide sufficient ground, in and of themselves, to condemn Comrade Jenness' entire sophistry as devoid of the slightest theoretical and political value?

- The third theoretical error, which is connected to the previous two, was a false, because excessively simplistic and mechanistic, conception of the leadership of a revolutionary process that ended with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Comrades who share Doug Jenness' opinion are, by the same token, locked in an antinomy: either the dictatorship of the proletariat was established under the leadership of a party, and then this party *must* be a revolutionary Marxist party; or there is no revolutionary Marxist party and then, either there is no dictatorship of the proletariat or it was established despite and against the leading party, "under the pressure of the masses."

This error first led to a systematically sectarian attitude toward the Yugoslav, Chinese, and Vietnamese CPs that were falsely labelled as "Stalinist parties," which also led to long delays in recognizing the emergence of new workers states. That attitude was associated with a scholastic and dogmatic conception of "Stalinism" that reduced it to "theoretical conceptions," independently of the real links which may have existed with the Soviet bureaucracy, and more importantly, *independently of these parties' real political practice* and objective role in the revolutionary process of the class struggle. All this led to a crassly spontaneist conception of the Yugoslav, Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions, in which the role the CPs of those countries played in preparing and leading the overthrow of capitalism was completely denied (vestiges of these conceptions are still found — but for how long? — in Comrade Doug Jenness' article, with regard to the Chinese CP).

For more than two decades we systematically warned the comrades leading the SWP of the dangers in such a sectarian and dogmatic position that, moreover, had failed the test of history, but to no avail. Black and white are not the only colors just as "counterrevolutionary Stalinism" and "revolutionary Marxism" are not the only alternatives. There are intermediate categories. There was the Paris Commune, established without a "revolutionary Marxist" leadership, under a leadership that included some Marxists (a minority), Proudhonists, Blanquists, and others. There was the dictatorship of the proletariat established in Hungary, under a mixed leadership including Left Social-Democrats and Communists. The dictatorship of the proletariat was established in Yugoslavia, China, Vietnam, and Cuba by *pragmatic revolutionary leaderships* that had a revolutionary practice but a theory and program that was adequate neither to their own revolution, nor especially to the world revolution.

The fact that they carried out a socialist revolution — a fact that is infinitely more important than their lack of an adequate theory — means that it would be the height of sectarianism to call them "counter-revolutionaries." To call them "Stalinists" would amount to giving Stalinism entirely new merits. However, the fact that they did not and still do not have an adequate overall program for constructing a socialist world means that calling them "revolutionary Marxists" would be entirely out of place. They are pragmatic revolutionaries, we would say "left centrists" from a theoretical point of view, without giving the slightest pejorative coloration to that term. But the lack of a correct program is not a tiny little wart on a face radiating with beauty. It is a serious deficiency, which has *negative practical consequences* both for their intervention in the world revolution and for the construction of socialism in their own country.

The sectarian-dogmatic position first began to crumble under the hammer blows of the Cuban revolution, then of the Nicaraguan revolution. However, Doug Jenness' cothinkers remained locked in their



1943: Yugoslav anti-Nazi partisans led by Communist Party.

"black or white" simplistic outlook, and simply reversed their position within the same antinomy they had created. The generalization of the concept of the "workers and farmers government" as something other than the dictatorship of the proletariat, and its extension even to the October 1917 revolution, is the instrument with which the reversal will be "systematized."

The slogan for a "workers government" or for a "workers and farmers government" (in countries where the peasants are still an important part of the working population) is an indispensable *transitional slogan*. It crowns all the transitional demands. Its pedagogic, propaganda, and sometimes agitational function, is to bring the masses through their own experience, and starting from their really given level of consciousness, to pose in practice the question of overthrowing the bourgeois government, to take all the power, and destroy the bourgeois state.

This is why it is an eminently algebraic slogan whose concrete formulation depends on a series of conditions that vary from one country to another and from one conjunctural situation to another: the acuteness of the class struggle; the level of mass mobilization; the seriousness of the bourgeoisie's political crisis; the extent (and precise forms) of self-organization of the masses; the amount of confidence they still retain in their traditional organizations; the emergence, or non-emergence, of genuine revolutionary parties with mass influence, even though still real minorities, etc.

But it is a necessary slogan, *not a necessary stage* in the revolutionary process, not an alleged intermediate stage between the bourgeois state (the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie) and the workers state (the dictatorship of the proletariat). In practice, it turned out not to be necessary, and it turned out that it had no actual concretization (except as synonymous to the dictatorship of the proletariat) in Russia, in Yugoslavia, in Vietnam, or even, in our opinion (but this is no longer controversial inside the FI), in China. When it is concretized as something different from the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is only, as specified both by the Resolution on Tactics of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International and the *Transitional Program*, because the (or one of the) leading parties of the revolutionary process believes that it should not immediately push its break with the bourgeoisie to the end (or else *cannot im-*

mediately push it to the end because of the extremely backward nature of the country).

We are speaking, of course, of a *political* break, of a break with the institutions of the bourgeois state and their destruction, and not of the "immediate and total" elimination of private property that no sensible person, beginning with Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, ever thought was a precondition for establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. Moreover such a "total elimination" exists nowhere on earth. Even today in the USSR, 65 years after the October revolution, 6–8% of the means of production, and some 25% of agricultural production are still private.

In the past, all those who were not Trotskyists were counter-revolutionaries. Now, all those who are not counterrevolutionaries are revolutionary Marxists (you can bet that it will not be long before Doug Jenness attributes that virtue first to the Vietnamese CP, and then, who can say, also to the Chinese CP). In the past, getting enthusiastic about the victorious Yugoslav, Chinese, and Vietnamese *revolutions* was "capitulating to Stalinism." Now, expressing the slightest criticism of the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and even Vietnamese *leadership*, has become "sterile sectarianism." Either uncritical support or sectarian rejection: the comrades who agree with Doug Jenness cannot escape this dilemma. Yet its solution is quite simple: *combining* total support for the revolutionary process with justified criticism of its leadership every time it acts against the interests of the ("national" or "international") proletariat.

After accusing us of "opportunism" towards the living revolutions, the comrades who agree with Doug Jenness now accuse us of "sectarianism" towards their leaders. Both accusations are false.

But since the world revolution forms a whole (albeit a whole structured by three deeply interrelated sectors), the increasingly clear adaptation of the comrades who agree with Doug Jenness to the pragmatism of the leaderships that led real revolutions since World War II cannot save them from the pitfall of sectarianism. It is in fact leading them to increased sectarianism towards all sectors of the world revolution and the world mass movement that do not fit into the simplistic schema of "campism" based on states: increasing sectarianism towards *Solidarnosc* militants; increasing sectarianism towards the activists of the *Labour Party* left; increasing sectarianism towards the activists of the mass antiwar movement; increasing sectarianism towards the trade union left struggling against capitalist austerity; increasing sectarianism towards the proletariat confronting so-called "anti-imperialist" bourgeois governments, etc.

The source of this increasing sectarianism (combined with opportunism towards the Fidelista current) is still the same: *the inability to judge a movement above all in relation to the objective consequences of its political practice in the class struggle*; the systematic substitution of a dogmatic-idealist criterion to this Marxist, materialist criterion, namely, the attitude of the leaders of this movement towards a political question determined to be "central" (without the slightest theoretical justification): previously it was the question of "Stalinism"; now it is the question of "the defense of the USSR."

This is not the place for a review of the trajectory of the Nicaraguan revolution. Our movement has already done so in several documents; it will continue to do so at the Twelfth World Congress. But one thing is sure: nothing in the real course of the Nicaraguan revolution confirms the existence of some two-class "power," "government" or "state," or worse yet, of a revolutionary government that would destroy the bourgeois state apparatus while maintaining — a bourgeois state.

There can be dual power between the power of two antagonistic classes in a situation where history has not yet settled the question of which class, which power, has defeated the other. But there cannot be a "two-class government" in the sense that it would be neither under the hegemony of the proletariat, nor under that of the bourgeoisie.

In obfuscating this decisive question, the comrades who agree with Doug Jenness are entering, without being aware of it, the path that leads to justifying some of the main revolutionary defeats of the twentieth century. Precisely the same line of argumentation was used to justify the course that led to defeat in Spain in 1936 and to defeat in Chile in 1973, to mention only two examples. If, at the level of real power, there is an "intermediate solution" between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and

the dictatorship of the proletariat, pray tell us why workers parties could not exercise *genuine power* in the framework of a "truly weakened" bourgeois state. The whole of Leninism is being poured down the drain despite all the oaths to continuity . . .

From abandoning permanent revolution to abandoning the antibureaucratic political revolution?

Three years ago, in our article on "The Twenty-One Theoretical Errors of Comrades Clark, Feldman, Horowitz, and Waters" (dated September 15, 1979, and published in *Intercontinental Press combined with Inprecor*, Vol. 19, No. 16, p. 456, May 4, 1981), we predicted that the leading comrades of the SWP who agree with Comrade Doug Jenness' ideas would consummate an explicit break with the theory of the permanent revolution. Now that course is appearing more clearly. We still have to find out what its practical political consequences will be; (fortunately!) the SWP leadership has not yet elaborated them fully.

Today, we will be so bold as to venture a second prediction: if Comrade Jenness and his "cothinkers" do not stop in time their advance down this revisionist path, they risk being drawn, unawares and unwillingly, at least at this time, into gradually abandoning the Marxist theory of the Soviet bureaucracy, and especially into abandoning our strategy of antibureaucratic political revolution, in favor of some meek perspective of "gradual democratization" of these states, and worse yet, "democratization from above."

What is the basis for this prediction?

First of all, a fundamental fact of the international workers movement. The Communist movement has only given birth to two fundamental ideological currents that lasted a long time and were present everywhere: the Stalinist current and its byproducts, and the revolutionary Marxist current, that is, mainly the Trotskyist current. Between these two currents, there is no space for a stable, lasting current, not even an "authentically Leninist" one, for the simple reason that Lenin stopped writing in 1923. Over the last sixty years, innumerable phenomena of great historic importance took place for which Lenin's works only provide a few points of reference, but no proposals for overall solutions that can be verified or invalidated in the light of experience.

More than Lenin's writings is therefore needed to find one's way around. Let us mention the following items to be remembered: the question of fascism; the question of the bureaucratic degeneration of the USSR; the question of the relationship between socialist democracy and the economic problems of building socialism; the question of the strategy for power in the semi-colonial countries; the question of nuclear weapons; the place of workers management in the fight against bureaucracy; the question of the connection between the decline of capitalism and the strategy for workers power in the imperialist countries, etc.

Under these circumstances, it is not by chance that, as Trotsky himself wrote:

"We can say that all of Stalinism considered at the theoretical level, issued from a critique of the theory of the permanent revolution as it was formulated in 1905" (*Three Conceptions of the Russian Revolution*).

"A critique of the theory of the permanent revolution," "all of Stalinism": let Comrade Doug Jenness and his cothinkers ponder the fateful meaning of that analysis by Trotsky. Since 1923, in the history of the Communist movement, in the history of the revolutionary movement, every turn against the need for a *direct* seizure of power by the proletariat has always begun with an attack on Trotskyism.⁹

The denial of the theory of "socialism in one country" (that is, the theory that says that the construction of socialism not only can, but must, *begin* in each country where the socialist revolution has already been victorious, but that it cannot be completed there) is part and parcel of the theory of the permanent revolution. As it were, the interconnection between the international revolution and a victorious revolution in one or several countries implies also an interconnection between the process

9. Let us add that *almost all* the arguments used by Comrade Doug Jenness against Comrade Trotsky come down to us in a straight line from the polemic of the Thermidorian epigones of 1923-1928, from the polemic of neo-Stalinists like Mavrakis (*On Trotskyism*) or can be found in the Soviet bureaucracy's pamphlet written by M. Basmanov, *Contemporary Trotskyism: Its Anti-Revolutionary Nature*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1972.

of bureaucratization of these workers states and the defeats of the international revolution, an interconnection which flows from the same source as the theory of the permanent revolution: *a correct judgment on the relationship of forces between social classes* on the eve of, during, and after the revolution, both within the less developed countries and on an international scale. The same lack of understanding of the key role of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the proletariat in insuring the victory of the revolution in those countries lies at the root of the lack of understanding of the key role of the proletariat in clearing the way for the elimination of the obstacle of bureaucratic dictatorship, an obstacle on the path of both the international revolution and the construction of socialism.

Wherever one may look for the solution, be it in the economic, social, political or cultural field, it always involves *a strengthening of the objective and subjective weight of the proletariat in the revolution and in the state* (which is linked to a beginning withering away of the state). International extension of the revolution; accelerated industrialization; the broadening of socialist democracy; the return to genuine soviets; real democracy within the party; soviet party pluralism: all these proposals, this whole strategic line, this whole revolutionary Marxist "counter-project" set against the strategy inspired by the material interests of the bureaucracy, rest on a single internal logic: *the qualitative increase of the weight and power of the proletariat in the society and the state, establishing, extending, and generalizing the power of the workers councils (soviets).*

It must be understood that the socialist revolutions that were victorious after World War II took a particular form, different from that of the October revolution, above all because — aside from the subjective, historical factors — of the fundamental fact that, in the countries where they were victorious, the urban proletariat was not the majority class and did not have sufficient weight to impose its own forms of action and specific forms of self-organization and make them hegemonic within the revolutionary process. But this is no longer the case in today's world, in all the imperialist countries, in most of the semi-industrialized dependent countries, and in all the bureaucratized workers states. This is the reason why any proletarian revolution in a large country, and especially any victorious proletarian revolution, including an antibureaucratic political revolution, will lead to the formation of workers councils whose rule is the unifying goal that brings together all the various aspects of our world revolutionary strategy.

This is the link between the second and third fundamental theses of the theory of the permanent revolution and the theory of the antibureaucratic political revolution, since a self-reform of the bureaucracy is excluded as all of history has shown since 1923. It is enough to quote Stalin's famous outcry, "These cadres will not be eliminated short of a civil war." Insert "bureaucrats" instead of "cadres" and you have understood the inevitability of the political revolution.

Finally, since the elimination of the bureaucracy, of its monopoly over power, is impossible without a revolution, as confirmed most recently by the Polish events, because for the bureaucracy this monopoly over power ("the leading role of the party") is the source of enormous material privileges which the bureaucrats cherish as the apple of their eye, the question of political revolution now concerns over one-third of humankind, almost one-third of the world proletariat. Any subordination of the political revolution to some alleged "priority" of the "anti-imperialist struggle," associated with a parallel subordination of the uncompromising defense of the proletariat's own interests in the semi-colonial and dependent countries to the same alleged "priority" of the "anti-imperialist objectives," *reduces more than half the world proletariat to the role of auxiliary* (in the best cases), or victim, of the alleged "struggle between the two camps," which are no longer real class camps, but camps made up of states and governments independently of their concrete relations with the real proletariat.

From then on, the unity of the world proletariat, the dialectical unity of the three sectors of the world revolution which expresses this unity, is broken. From then on, the orientation towards the real world revolution which can only be this dialectical unity, is postponed to better days, if not till Doomsday (The day when imperialism will have been defeated? How? Without a victory of the international proletariat?). When

one abandons the theory and practice of the permanent revolution, that is the only alternative path which remains open.

Is the problem merely an attempt to "adapt our language" to "facilitate a dialogue" with the Castroist and Sandinist comrades? After all, "workers states," "bureaucratically deformed workers states," "bureaucratically degenerated workers states," "bureaucratized workers states," this is the "jargon of sectarians": no one should be expected to make head or tail of this hokus pokus. Why not use "current language," "common language," when we speak with the "new revolutionary vanguards," and simply say "socialist" states, even if we have to specify that the bureaucracy exists, etc.

But remember that the beginning revision of the theory of permanent revolution had also begun with a simple change in formulas. Then came the revision of the content, and it all ended up with the current rejection of both the formula and the content. This is cause for further thought.

Moreover, the possibility of a regeneration of the CPs is already being raised, albeit (for the moment) only for Central America. But why stop there? What about the CPs of the rest of Latin America? What about those of Africa (the South African ANC, notoriously CP-led, is already projected by some as an emerging "revolutionary leadership")? What about some Arab countries? What about Vietnam? What about Ireland? Are not we slowly evolving towards envisaging the possibility of a regeneration ("democratization") of ruling parties of the bureaucracy in Eastern Europe too?

All moot or even slanderous speculation? Let's hope so. But we noticed that in the *Militant* of October 1, 1982, Comrade Ellen Kratke wrote:

"Many [workers] know there's a struggle going on in the world between two economic systems, capitalism and socialism."

So, an "economic system of socialism" already exists, even if it is a "socialism" with a money economy, a market, large-scale commodity production, wage-labor and many other "niceties" like "socialist" firing of strikers and "socialist" bans on strikes, "socialist" censorship of communist ideas and bookstores, "socialist" internment of oppositionists in psychiatric clinics, etc. So, "socialism in one country" is possible after all?

Just a slip of the pen? Again, let's hope so. But let's note that Comrade Doug Jenness is the editor of the *Militant* and has accustomed us generally to much more "Leninist vigilance."

The reason we are provoking Comrade Jenness in this way is neither because of some hostility nor because of some desire to paint the devil on the wall, as a German proverb puts it. It is because it is the duty of the Fourth International, of all revolutionary Marxist cadres and activists, to pull the alarm signal, to solemnly warn that a scratch is about to turn gangrenous. Our polemic has only one goal: to save the *Socialist Workers Party* for revolutionary Marxism, for the American revolution, for the world revolution. But it will be saved only if it stops the march of some of its leaders towards a break with Trotskyism in time. This is also how the "outside world" that watches us and observes us, has assessed the evolution of Comrade Doug Jenness and his cothinkers, as is obvious from the following quote from the formerly pro-Stalinist and still anti-Trotskyist American weekly, *The Guardian*: "The SWP has been quietly dropping overboard some of its Trotskyist baggage" (July 14, 1982).

December 1, 1982

10. The non-Marxist nature of "campism" is revealed most clearly in its assessment of China. During China's military conflict with Vietnam, some campists even called it a "fascist country" or "fascist government." China had become "hegemonic," "reactionary," or even "imperialist" for the apologists of "campism." Yet the relations of production in China and the nature of the state are identical to those of the USSR. Does the conjunctural alignment of a state in the game of diplomacy determine its social nature, and not its social and economic foundations? Was not this the erroneous method of the Shachtmanites at the time of the Stalin-Hitler Pact?

The Third World's debt crisis

Protests erupt in Brazil against IMF austerity plan

By Will Reissner

Striking workers brought São Paulo, Brazil's largest city, to an almost complete halt on July 21 in a protest against the military government's latest round of austerity measures.

Mass demonstrations also took place that day in Rio de Janeiro, Brasília, Porto Alegre, and Belo Horizonte. The scope of the actions outside São Paulo is difficult to determine because Brazilian authorities ordered journalists to suppress news of the protests.

Earlier in July, tens of thousands of workers in Brazil's auto plants and oil refineries walked off their jobs to protest the austerity measures.

The anger focuses on a government decree limiting cost-of-living raises to 80 percent of inflation. This year inflation is already running at a rate of nearly 130 percent, and is expected to rise to 170 percent by year's end.

Measures to cut real wages and slash social spending are being carried out at the insistence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the big imperialist banks as their price for further credits and loans to the Brazilian government.

The Brazilian military's decision to cut wage indexing and slash social spending followed a confrontation with the IMF over \$1.1 billion in additional credits. Brazil is now \$1 billion in arrears in its loan repayments.

The Brazilian government is especially vulnerable to IMF blackmail because of the size of the country's foreign debt — nearly \$90 billion — and the fact that Brazil is unable to keep up its repayments.

As old loans fall due, the Brazilian government must go hat in hand to the imperialist banks and financial organizations to beg for new loans to pay off the old ones.

Increasingly, Brazil must borrow new funds simply to pay the *interest* on its existing loans. The country's foreign debt has climbed from \$12.6 billion in 1973 to nearly \$90 billion today.

Mushrooming debt burden

Brazil's situation is not unique. In 1973, Third World countries had a total foreign debt of about \$100 billion. Ten years later, its foreign debt has soared to more than \$700 billion. In fact, last year alone the underdeveloped countries paid out far more in interest and loan repayments — \$131 billion — than the total they owed a decade earlier.

The mushrooming debt burden is particularly acute in Latin America, where 46 percent of the Third World's foreign debt is concentrated. And 80 percent of that is owed by just four countries — Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and Venezuela.

Country after country has been unable to keep up its payments and has had to turn to the

IMF for new loans.

But to get an IMF loan, the borrowing country has to agree to squeeze the working people so that every possible penny can be diverted to repay loans to the imperialist banks.

Typically, the IMF demands that the borrowing country:

- Cut real wages. When purchasing power is reduced, the demand for imports drops. Hard currency previously spent on imports can be diverted to the imperialist banks. Consumption of local products is also cut, forcing businesses to seek new export markets.

- Cut social services. In this way a larger portion of the national budget can be used to repay the foreign debt.

- Devalue the currency. This makes imports more expensive in the local currency and exports cheaper in world markets. By slashing imports and increasing exports, more foreign currency is available to repay foreign debts.

But how did the Third World countries get into this bind in the first place?

Imperialist pillage

The answer is naked imperialist pillage. The rape of the Third World takes a number of forms, beginning with foreign investment. Contrary to imperialist propaganda, foreign investment does not develop the Third World. In fact, far more money leaves the Third World in profits than is invested there.

Between 1970 and 1980, for example, imperialist corporations directly invested \$62.6 billion in the underdeveloped countries. But they sent home more than *twice as much* in repatriated profits — \$139.7 billion.

Another form of pillage takes place through interest payments and unequal trade. Increasingly, Third World countries have had to resort to private bank loans to finance development programs.

In theory, these loans would be repaid by increasing exports from those areas of the economy developed through the borrowing. But with the economic downturn in the imperialist countries since the mid-1970s, exports from the Third World have been restricted by declining demand and growing protectionism. This has led to a sharp drop in the prices of the commodities that make up a large part of Third World exports.

But the price of imports from the advanced capitalist countries has continued to rise, as a result of inflation and because of the big shift in the exchange rate that favors the dollar against other currencies. Much of what the Third World countries import is priced in dollars.

The wealth that leaves the country through repatriated profits, the declining export earnings, and the higher prices for imports are at

the root of the financial crisis of the semicolonial countries.

Unable to repay their foreign loans as they came due, the semicolonial countries have had to take out new loans to repay their old ones. But the new loans are at much higher interest rates, with shorter repayment periods. And the private banks insist on acceptance of IMF-sponsored restructuring programs as a condition for further loans

Playing with fire

When Brazil's military rulers demand that workers and farmers tighten their belts another notch, they are playing with fire.

Even under the best of circumstances, Brazilian workers live on the edge of destitution.

In São Paulo, Brazil's industrial and financial center, one-third of the workers make less than \$75 *per month*. Only 30 percent of the city's housing is connected to sewers, and half the homes have no piped water.

Living conditions are much worse in other cities and in rural areas.

As a result of its burgeoning debt and the international capitalist crisis, Brazil has already been mired in recession for the past three years. One in five urban workers is unemployed and many more are underemployed. Business failures and layoffs are a daily occurrence.

International health organizations estimate that 38 percent of Brazil's population is seriously malnourished, and 25 percent of all Brazilians remain illiterate.

The military government's acceptance of the IMF-sponsored austerity program will cause the number of jobless to grow, and social ills like malnutrition will spread as living standards of workers continue to plunge.

Protests in Chile

The situation in Brazil is being duplicated elsewhere in Latin America. In Chile, for example, the economy shrank 13 percent in 1982, battered by plunging copper prices on the world market. Nearly one-third of Chilean workers are unemployed and real wages have dropped by 16 percent.

Since May, massive monthly protests led by the trade unions have shaken the military dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet.

On May 11, workers organized the first nationally coordinated mass protests since the CIA-engineered coup that overthrew and murdered President Salvador Allende in 1973. On June 14, hundreds of thousands of people went into the streets of the country's major cities as part of a National Day of Protest. Two days later, copper miners went on strike, and on June 23 truckers, coal miners, steelworkers, and others responded to a call for an indefinite general strike.

Mass demonstrations again took place on July 12, despite the imposition of a national curfew. Residents of Santiago and other cities banged empty pots and pans, and barricades went up in working-class neighborhoods. □