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# MICHELE FIRK:

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## "...SHE WAS NOT A LEFTIST, SHE WAS A COMMUNIST AND A REVOLUTIONARY."

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On September 8 in Guatemala, Michèle Firk killed herself by firing a pistol into her mouth as the police were pounding at the door. The investigation made it appear in the press that she was a militant of the Guatemalan FAR who had participated as such in the execution of the North American ambassador, John Gordon Mein, in reprisal for the arrest of Commander and second-in-command of the FAR, Camilo Sánchez. At the age of 31, Michèle had a long revolutionary history. First, as militant in the French Communist Party, she had elected to participate actively in sup-

port of the FLN. All her activity was always based on this notion of support for the peoples in struggle, and her first preoccupation was that this support should not be theoretical and verbal: Michèle was not a leftist, she was a communist and revolutionary; Michèle had graduated from the IDHEC and passionately loved the work of filmmaker, just as she loved to write, and she did all this very well but was eternally discontent because she wanted more; she wanted what she wrote, what she filmed to correspond strictly to what she thought, to what she considered useful. [...]

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### From Michèle's Notebook

**F**IRST night in Guatemala. For the first time in my life, I see small children gazing at inaccessible sweets in a jar, with infinite desire, indefinitely unsatisfied. A little girl begs; she hangs on to me, attaches herself to me, repeats in a singsong voice, sweet, experienced: "*Seño, give me some centavitos, to eat, seño.*" From a distance a collection of children



follows; if I take out my purse they will all fall on me. Suddenly I pretend to cross the street. The little girl follows me, she remains in the middle of the street, astonished, without anger, just surprised. A car grazes her. I feel like crying.

A child drags himself along the sidewalk. His left leg is one deep wound. He drags himself with his right side and the left hand extended. One would say Murillo or Goya. I cross, there is a lump in my throat. Facing me, a woman seated on the sidewalk curb, barefoot and in rags with a pile of newspapers beside her on the ground; on her knees rests the head of a man as miserable as she, stretched out, shaking with spasms. She puts a cloth over his face. I think he is epileptic. Later I will find out he is just drunk.

After 8:30 the streets are deserted. Fear reigns. At 11:30 the people coming out of the movies hurry to their homes. Whistles of the nightwatchmen guarding the stores. On the walls the posters: "The Third Revolutionary Government salutes the workers," "Long live the First of May" together with those of "Red June." The people are hungry.

I return from *Blow Up*: An ambulance grazes me sounding its siren. Silence and darkness. I thought I heard shots (there was almost no one in the movie house, but maybe that was just the film). In the morning, the papers announce five dead, from 19 to 23 years old, assassinated by the police. [...]

The poster of the Third Revolutionary Government that salutes the workers on the First of May: a fine smiling worker, great socialist realism. Other posters: a list of names and photos of presumed communists condemned to death by extreme rightwing groups. [...]

Radio bulletins from all over Latin America. Pepsi-Cola, pharmaceutical products, Bayer, Mejoral, TestiVital, hormones that restore lost vitality. News from the Presidential Public Relations Service, Coué method. From now on, the police will wear helmets. [...]. On the radio, the hits: *Michèle ma Belle*, *Stranger in the Night*, *Guantanamo*.

In the papers, social news: they marry, become engaged, celebrate their birthdays, the "charming, elegant, cultured, admirable, beautiful and most genteel Mrs. and misses, madames and mademoiselles." "Beautiful baby girls" are born, delivered by the stork. Coming out parties, trips abroad, dances, wedding anniversaries.

Conrado looks like a child despite his penetrating and intelligent gaze and the little wrinkles around his eyes. One wants to protect him. His entire face is black from the tires on the wharf where he bathes. One would think he is a miner. He is simple, direct, very modest, very fine. He says: "We need a Guevara here!" We pass in front of some apartment buildings: "After victory, these will be fine houses for the scholarship students. We will have to thank the bourgeoisie for them." [...]

I visit all the libraries. Nothing. North American magazines. Comic books; finally I understand their noxious role as the only source of nourishment for the cultural thirst. Technical books, books on psychology, horoscopes, how to win in the stock market and how to win friends. And above all, the poison that

infiltrates day after day everywhere: in the daily press, the weeklies, on radio and television. *Bohemia*, published in Venezuela. No news except what they want to give. Cultural underdevelopment. Z... tells me that at a dinner where there were people from his profession, they seriously discussed whether or not it was moral to go see *Virginia Woolf*. [..]

The National Park. A military band of less than 50 musicians in dress uniform plays gay and charming marches for a scarce and unenthusiastic public composed principally of fathers out for a walk with the children until lunch time, idle shoeshiners, and a few old men taking the sun. When the band leaves, a few people applaud. Then, silence. [..]

**I**T is hard to find the words to express the state of putrefaction that exists in Guatemala, and the permanent terror in which the inhabitants live. Every day bodies are pulled out of the Motagua River, riddled with bullets and partially eaten by fish [..] every day men are kidnapped right in the street by unidentified persons in an automobile armed to the teeth, without any intervention by the police patrols. Liberal personalities receive menacing letters telling them to choose between "The suitcase or the coffin..."

**R**ADIO patrols, helmets, bulletproof vests, Fast Falcons with red lights on the roof. My heart jumps when I hear their sirens, when I see them tearing through noisily without worrying about the pedestrians. The people are afraid of them. But they are afraid too. They fire on the spot. This morning in the newspapers, next to the announcement of the movie *Bang Bang You're Dead* is the story of what happened yesterday at 11:30 a.m.: from the police bulletin and the story of the witnesses in the bus one clearly deduces that the police fired at random because they were afraid. The bus driver was seriously injured. We live this close to death. Death is near. There is fear but now there is no more fear. [..]

**T**HE urgent problem is to begin to alert world public opinion to the fact that in Guatemala, a country in which a "democratically elected" civil government is in power, "civilian" terrorist groups of the extreme right (which are part of the army when you look more closely) are creating a reign of terror, threaten, denounce, assassinate to an extent never reached by *any military dictatorship*. Like the denunciation of tortures during the Algerian war, like the war crimes in Viet Nam, it is a question of an operation that is less "humanitarian" than "political" in that terror, massacre, torture, kidnapping, physical elimination, napalm bombs, rounding up of civilian population, are no more than the *product*, the consequence of a profoundly *political situation*. The present importance of Guatemala is that at this moment it constitutes a true *labo-*

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**"...they smile when  
they say that  
with luck they'll live  
to be 30,  
if they can walk  
between bullets."**

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ratory of repression and its methods, comparable only to Viet Nam as far as "the war against subversion" is concerned. [...] For the revolutionaries of FAR and MR-13 who have lived in a state of war and underground for years, the situation has changed less than for the "civilians." From now on everyone is involved, not just the guerrillas, not only the peasants, but anyone suspected of thinking, the "intellectuals," the "liberals," members of liberal professions, lawyers, engineers, doctors and even deputies of the Revolutionary Party (sic) in power. [...]

**A** DOLFO and Lalo embraced me one after the other. Two powerful hugs. As for me, tears came to my eyes, as always. The Guatemalans, so fond of nicknames, could call me *The Weeper* — suggested it myself. But I am not — or have not been up until now — excessively sentimental. It may be that no separation ever appeared definitive to me. One thinks: Life is still long and some day we'll see each other again. But now, here with them, it is different. Life is short. The mortality rate is so high that a man of fifty is considered old, if he has the good fortune to reach that age. As far as my brothers, my comrades are concerned, they smile when they say that with luck they'll live to be 30, if they can walk between bullets. Lalo takes off the ring he wears on his finger and slips it on my ring finger: "The girl who gave me this practically saved my life, [he says] that's my love." I don't want to ask if that last phrase applies to the girl or the ring. He adds: "She gave it to me when I came out of prison. I am just lending it to you. It is like a symbol. You will give it

back to me when you return, because you have promised to return." I agree, I promised him and I reaffirm that I'm coming back. This time he says very rapidly: "If I am alive give it to me. But here, you know, one can die at any moment. If I am dead, you keep it . . . And go on with the struggle." Adolfo says nothing more, but winks with an air of connivance and confidence. They leave and I am alone with a lump in my throat. Several days later, Adolfo's brother was assassinated with another guerrilla who was already an old man: he was more than 30 years old. César said to me one day: "I bury the dead. I forget those who have gone. If I didn't I couldn't continue . . ." And he added: "If you don't want me to forget you, come back." They all begged me to come back, and for me it is an honor I do not consider myself worthy of. It is proof of a confidence that once again moves and upsets me. They believe I am giving them something, when it is they who are giving me everything. I never could give myself to the militant life as it is conceived in France: one day one goes to a cell meeting; the next day to the movies. One goes to demonstrations after work and on important occasions one gets home late to eat. The best, the most aggressive are those who raise their fist in front of the US embassy or yell the "strongest" slogans . . . During the Algerian war I felt surprised by these revolutionaries who were ready to compromise themselves, to offer help to their Algerian "brothers" except during vacations, of course . . . The most general idea is to fit the revolution into one's schedule but it is rare that one reaches the point of fitting one's schedule to the revolution. And of course, much less one's life . . .

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**M**ICHELE has repeated, has written that she loved life and that she in no way understood that she was "sacrificing" herself. Her choice was reasoned and maturely weighed. She was at that age when many of her comrades had already taken "safer" courses. She had been assigned responsibilities that permitted her to know all the disillusionments of political action, its constant beginning all over again, its surprises of compromise and betrayal. Michèle was not merely that smiling young person in the photo: she had

weighed everything, and truly for a very long time during those years. She selected her place and justified its selection on grounds of a specific economic and political situation, that of a world divided into guaranteed exploiters and the underdeveloped; the existence of the second being the indispensable condition for the flourishing of the first. She had studied the economic situation in Latin America extensively and was one of the persons who had the clearest ideas and the most precise facts concerning that aspect. [...]

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### Letters to Her Friends

**F**OR four years now, my political thinking has not changed; I continue to believe that guerrilla warfare is the only revolutionary path of Latin America and more than ever I want to participate in it: now that they have given me the opportunity — for which I am deeply grateful — to become better acquainted with the reality of Guatemala, I want to join my destiny to that of the FAR comrades, to be one more militant among them. Wherever it may be, that is my continuing objective. It is probable — and I can understand it if they tell me this — that I lack the qualifications necessary for them to grant me what must be an honor or recompense, but my will is unshakable and so is my desire to learn; I will do it fighting “on the march.” On whatever front I find myself fighting I want to be increasingly worthy of the Revolution, which for me is the truest guide to the internationalist ideal of Marxists, we who aspire to be a part of the great proletarian revolutionary army that will overthrow imperialism’s unjust order and on its ruins build a new society, truly made by man for man.

**T**HREE years have passed, the departure of Che, the Tricontinental, were for me events that filled me with happiness at the same time that I lost heart at the thought of returning again to my country... when I learned, before they captured him, that Régis Debray had left for Latin America, I envied him, it was almost, what shall I call this feeling? jealousy, that he had a chance to go there where I had wanted to go for so long. There was a moment later in which I lost all hope. I have not fulfilled, except to the smallest degree, all that I have to do in Guatemala. But I did come close to the real struggle, in which one’s life is at stake, where risks are taken, where one wins or dies, where neither political, strategic nor tactical victories and errors are judged or commented on in the sidewalk cafes of Paris. I touched Guatemalan soil. I knew its fighters, those worthy, valient youths whose battle is mine. Among them I was one more comrade; I saw their courage and, at times as well, the slight importance they give to life. I saw the determination they placed in the struggle and at the same time the use, the consuming, the waste of energies and human lives. I saw their strengths and their weaknesses. I saw their hopes and their sacrifices. I saw all that I have to learn from them and the little I had to give them in exchange. I saw to what extent — even criticizing them as if I had a right to do so, discussing with them their methods and their concepts — I feel close to them and want to participate in the same fight with them... I love them now like brothers and sisters and I feel that to separate myself from their struggle would be to betray them, to betray myself and to betray the revolutionary principles that they taught me in Cuba. [...]

I should like to explain something to you once more to be certain that I am understood, that there is nothing of the innocent romantic nor the heroic mystic in me. I know what it is to be afraid and I will know it again... But what makes me feel happy now is the certainty that I have found my place, like a wheel, however small, on a machine that is advancing. Since it makes the whole advance, when it is worn out it is replaced and only has utility and a reason for existence because of the position it occupies. Certainly now, I must demonstrate that I am a good wheel on this machine, but here the analogy ends: man's history is not a clocklike mechanism whose advance is determined by a superior will. My role will be what I am

### Basic Chronology

Born in Paris (1937).

At 19 joins the French Communist Party.

Member of a network of support for the FLN in France during the Algerian war.

Founder of IDHEC (Institute of Higher Cinematographic Studies), spirit of the Cine Action Club. Contributor to the magazine *Positif*, and a member of its editorial board, and of *Cinema 58* and *59*.

In 1962, prepares and publishes a special number of *Positif* on the Cuban film industry.

In 1963 visits Cuba for the July 26 celebration, invited by ICAIC. Makes a trip around the whole island, participates in the coffee harvest in Oriente (three months).

Returns to Cuba in 1965. Works on a film on the Cuban Revolution. At the same time, collaborates in the militant work of *Voie Communiste*.

On her return to France, she participates in the demonstrations of solidarity against the Yankee invasion of the Dominican Republic and of Viet Nam.

She leaves for Guatemala for the first time in mid-1967.

There she establishes contact with the militants of FAR.

She leaves Paris in May of 1968 for her second and final trip of Guatemala. At the beginning of September, the newspapers announce that a young French woman whose name was not clear had committed suicide to avoid answering investigations concerning her participation in the capture of the North American ambassador in Guatemala who was executed by a guerrilla commando of FAR in August.

capable of carrying out and all the human factors and all factors linked to human relations will enter into play, from simple physical resistance to the comprehension of psychological problems, general problems, personal problems, going from analysis to practice, from ideological consistency to action, and even from the abstract idea I have of things at this moment to the concrete reality which I will find day after day.

**I**N case you should have to open the letter that I left with a friend, I am explaining very clearly the motives that guide me and expressing my desires that these problems be set forth immediately on their own grounds: the political. Luckily I represent all that the bourgeoisie hates, and there will be neither tears nor orations nor newspaper headlines for me. But neither do I wish to be buried as an "adventurer" — since I am scarcely that — nor do I want you to think that I take things tragically; not remotely so, for me it is an honor that they ask for my help — according to my humble possibilities — in the revolution in America or any place else in the world and I will do all I can to fulfill all that is expected of me, which makes me feel very proud and grateful. Until very soon and as Che said, "Ever Onward to Victory." [...]

**W**E have this last picture of her: a calm young woman sets the table for two friends she is expecting for dinner. The police knock, she says "I am coming" and kills herself. Perhaps she allows her friends to escape. She remains loyal to her organization, FAR, protecting it against any weakness under torture, loyal also to the idea that she had of her work and her position: a discreet and important post. She had lived in the Guatemalan violence and terror, had seen many comrades die, among them that "Miss Guatemala" who was her friend and whose mutilated body was found, abandoned by the police net at the side of a road. She

was prepared for this act. For those who have known Michèle and who have worked with her, their lives will be divided into two epochs from now on: before and after her death. Those of her generation have passed the age of juvenile commitments. Michèle cannot be for them simply the memory of a youth more or less generous and cut short, but rather must be a reminder that the most just positions are very poor alibis which cannot replace concrete action, however imperfect.

Taken from *Michèle Firk, Writings Collected by her Friends*, Eric Losfeld, Paris, 1969.



tricontinental scene



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# **GUINEA:** **PEOPLE'S** **VICTORY**



**I**N its short independent history, the Republic of Guinea, with an area of 245 857 km<sup>2</sup> and some 3 900 000 inhabitants, has been the object of numerous attacks by the imperialist and colonialist powers and the reactionary bourgeois nucleus within the country.

Late last November 23, the armed forces, militia and the people of Guinea smashed the last remnants of the mercenary invaders trained and equipped by Portugal with the support of NATO and the evident complicity of the United States, its chief economic source. Forty hours was sufficient to liquidate the counterrevolutionary attempt initiated in the early morning hours of the 22nd.

The criminal operation whose objective was to isolate the capital and then occupy the entire country — according to President Sékou Touré's statement in a message to the nation — had the support of a war fleet that transported the 400 mercenaries to the Guinea coast where they disembarked. A submarine, whose presence was confirmed and denounced, joined the pirates from Portugal.

The formidable organization and fighting spirit of the Guinean Government and people defeated the Portuguese maneuver in a few hours. When the voices of solidarity of the independent and progressive nations joined in denouncing the vile aggression, the battle was practically over. But this solidarity nevertheless arrived in time to warn the aggressors that neither Guinea nor any other independent and progressive nation stands alone.

The aggression against Guinea implies that any other African state that main-



tains an independent and progressive policy can be the target of a similar act. This was the reason for the unanimity of the agreements made in the recent ministerial conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Lagos, Nigeria, where the common will to liquidate colonialism and condemn with energy the big western powers that practice it was demonstrated as never before.

Alongside Pan-African solidarity pulsed that of all the free nations and peoples. The socialist camp raised its voices of denunciation and solidarity with Guinea. With all this, the UN turned deaf ears to the urgent Guinean plea for military aid and limited itself to creating an "investigatory commission" of the Security Council which reached Conakry four days after the aggression. Once more the UN demonstrated its impotence in the face of such events and confirmed that the people must be prepared and willing to defend themselves from the menace of imperialism, colonialism and their lackeys. Not for nothing did the Democratic Party of Guinea (PDG), following the defeat of the European and African mercenaries who invaded its territory,



issue a call to the people to reintegrate themselves into their daily work but to keep a gun within reach.

The tactic of the aggression was perfectly clear: to isolate Conakry from the rest of the country. A large part of the Guinean capital is on a small island on the west coast, once separated from the continent by a 500-meter swampy strip that the former French colonial government filled. Thus the island is united to the continental territory. Its seizure would have given the invaders a strong position there and further facilitated larger disembarkations in order to continue the occupation of the country. In Guinea-Bissau hundreds of mercenaries joined the troops, ready to complete the operation.

The surprise attack which began at 3 am was directed on the one hand against the Presidential Palace, the Army command headquarters and the police stations, all of which are in district I; and on the other hand a contingent attacked in district II, Presi-

dent Touré's residence, the offices of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), the airport, the headquarters of the Republican Guard and the country's principal military camp, the Alfayaya. The invader encountered firm resistance and the people came out everywhere to fight under the personal direction of Sékou Touré. Imperialism and colonialism once more fell into the error of underestimating the people's force when they are prepared to fight for their rights.

The attempts to overthrow Touré have very specific antecedents and motives. The most recent maneuvers date from last September 26, when various mercenaries were arrested in Labe. They came from Guinea-Bissau, where they were trained, and their mission was to assassinate Touré and effect a coup d'état. For several days, another group with the same aim infiltrated across the Ivory Coast border and last March a plot to overthrow the government was discovered.

The independent and progressive policy of the Democratic Party of Guinea and the support it provides for PAIGC are in themselves strong motives for Portuguese colonialism and its allies to want to change the course of the path taken by Touré to develop the country. Guinea has been and continues to be a dependable rear guard for the PAIGC fighters. The peoples of the two Guineas are united by ties of militant combat, by the rights of Africans to liberty and self-determination. If to this first reason is added the exploitative imperialist appetite for natural resources (rich deposits of dia-



monds, iron, gold and the strategic bauxite, raw material for aluminum, of which Guinea possesses a third of the world's reserves), one understands the frustrated attack. But there is more: Guinea's progressive foreign policy of complete support for all the liberation movements of Asia, Africa and Latin America is disturbing to imperialism.

**U** NDOUBTEDLY, the role played by President Touré in the resounding victory was decisive. Born in Faranah, in 1922, Ahmed Sékou Touré, son of poor peasants, has a long revolutionary history that goes back to 1937 when, at just 15 years of age, he participated in a strike. He was president of the General Federation of Workers of Black Africa, mayor of Conakry, and member of the French National Assembly from 1956 to 1958, the year his country proclaimed its independence in the Guinean people's historic "No" to the French referendum. The single party over which he presides has improved the people's welfare little by little.

In the plenary session of the Central Committee of the PDG held in November, President Touré accused the

imperialist governments of having tried always to destroy the revolutionary order of his country or impede its progressive spirit. On the 30th of the same month, he told his people and the world, by radio: "The hour has come to abandon defensive tactics and move to the offensive in Angola, Mozambique and the other territories in the power of the colonialists."

**S** INCE political independence was attained on October 2, 1958, the government of President Sékou Touré has undertaken patiently but resolutely to change the backward social structure which is the product of 59 years of colonial domination, and to better the living conditions of the broad masses of the country through the reconstruction and development of all sectors of the ruined economy it inherited.

Twelve years of continuous efforts, of creative work very often hindered by numerous attacks from foreign enemies and the reactionary forces within the country have brought more than a few successes attributable to the Democratic Party of Guinea, which orients and leads the workers and other progressive elements in the brother African country.

Thus Guinea has created a monetary system of its own, has implemented planning as the appropriate means to a better directed economy, has nationalized banks, insurance agencies and hydroelectric resources, and with the aid of the socialist countries and Western countries or private capital, has created almost a hundred industries and state companies primarily dedicated to in-

dustry, agriculture, public service and trade.

Moreover, the methods adopted to obtain a gradual increase in agricultural production have lately brought about a considerable increase in production after years of stagnation, which, together with the reorganization of internal trade that has been achieved, has permitted the increase and improved supply of a series of products for the people. The creation of state farms and the stimulation — by furnishing farm machinery, seeds and fertilizer to the peasantry — of agricultural cooperatives based on the official policy of agricultural diversification and the elimination of one-crop farming have contributed greatly to this.

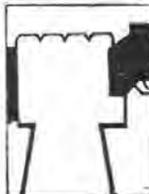
This accumulation of achievements has not, of course, been easy. In the first place there has been a determined battle against administrative corruption, speculation and illicit profit. And in the second place, Guinea has had to face a series of aggressions that run from the flight of capital and technicians to sabotage, assassination attempts

against the leaders, and armed attacks, suffering political pressure and economic boycott by the capitalist powers.

In recent years, Guinea has begun its industrial development in the exploitation of the rich bauxite mines, as well as its iron, diamond and gold deposits.

In presenting a balance of the progress Guinea has achieved, the following must be mentioned: advances in the area of public health; increased school attendance, the literacy campaign and the creation of new teachers' training schools for middle and advanced education; the construction of reservoirs for better use of water resources and the important role of the PDG, the single party which under President Touré's direction, concretizes, within the measure of possibilities, the most elemental interests of the people's masses.

Guinea's achievements demonstrate that the line taken by the government of Sékou Touré is evolving and advancing favorably despite the fact that it has had to travel a road filled with difficulties.



guerrilla fronts



Four Armed Organizations. Revolutionary Strategy  
Ties With the Masses, the Armed Struggle and

# ARGENTINA:

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## MONTONEROS: OPERATION ARAMBURU

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**T**HAT day the Argentine press reported the disappearance of General Pedro Eugenio Aramburu, who in 1955 had participated in the coup d'etat against the Peronist government and later launched a bloody repression against the people's sectors that opposed the gorillocracy.

In a communiqué, a revolutionary organization named the Montoneros explained that it had proceeded to detain Aramburu on May 29 in order to subject him to revolutionary justice on charges of being "a traitor to the nation and the people, and the assassin of 27 Argentines."

One of the leaders of this clandestine movement pointed out in an interview made after the execution of Aramburu that the action signified "the absolute rejection of the regime's system of justice and the beginning of people's power"

and Tactical Actions. Concepts on Peronism,  
the Continental Revolution

## Armed Revolutionary Organizations

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and moreover that "we want to deprive the regime of its most important card in the demoliberal game and thus hit the system hard because Aramburu was the regime's 'extra' man, with the support of the generals and the oligarchists."

The Montoneros, members of the ranks of revolutionary Peronism, consider themselves part of the present expression of the historical process begun 160 years ago with the Argentine war of independence from the Spanish metropolis, which reached a peak moment between 1945 and 1955, and has been expressed in recent years by armed confrontation with the gorilla regime.

The name of our organization is taken from Argentine history and was coined by those who fought the first national and popular struggles for our independence in the last century. Therefore, we feel we don't own the name or the symbol. The name **montonero** fits everyone who fights ceaselessly for the people's aspirations, using all the means his battle post affords him. In other words, all honest Argentines who take part in our struggle have the right to call themselves **montoneros** and can count on our support and solidarity.

One month later, this urban guerrilla movement took the Calera military camp to establish solidarity with the Cordoba mechanics who had suffered government repression for demanding economic improvement, thus seizing arms and money and showing through armed propaganda the national character of the organization and the possibility of carrying out guerrilla actions in cities in the interior of the country.

Both the execution of Aramburu and the assault on the army garrison shook the foundations of the coupist Onganía regime which was overthrown because of gorilla rivalries among the generals, led by the head of the army.

The Montoneros affirm that both actions "opened new perspectives for the armed movement politically as well as militarily, proven in the growth of the people's expectations and in the wave of armed actions being carried out."

The revolutionary strategy of the organization is total war on a national scale and over a prolonged period against the bourgeois state and its armed institution, to seize power and reclaim the country's riches that the foreign monopolies are exploiting.

### The Three Banners of Peronism

**"... like  
San Martín  
and Bolívar...  
today we need  
to unite  
on a continental scale  
to liberate ourselves  
from the  
Yankee yoke..."**

**W**ERE all Peronists even though we come from different backgrounds and sectors. Peronism is a doctrine created in 1945 which was transformed and brought up to date during the 25 years that followed. This doctrine can be summarized in the Movement's three watchwords: economic independence, social justice and political sovereignty.

Today in 1970 these three watchwords are expressed through the need to achieve an independent economic development and a just distribution of wealth, within the framework of a socialist system that respects our history and our national culture. On the other hand, the doctrine was defined by its creator, General Perón, as profoundly national, humanist and Chris-



tian, respectful of the human being above all things.

The true choice facing the country is Peronism or anti-Peronism. We not only think it still valid but we think that the antinomy has become even sharper. What has changed is not the terms of the contradiction but the position of its elements. That is, the change has taken place in the correlation of forces, since sectors of one side have passed over to the other side, and vice versa.

Thus, ever since 1955 the bourgeois sectors and the trade union bureaucra-

cies of the Movement have been going over to the enemy camp, enlarging the ranks of anti-Peronism. Some are joining the Frondizi-Frigerio developmentist sector and others the neo-Peronist or Peronism-without-Perón sectors. Both currents are merging today. On the other hand, the Armed Forces also purged all Peronist elements from their ranks through the use of the firing squad and through the casualties produced in every Peronist uprising. For example, the Movement of National Recovery of 1956 headed by General J. J. Valle and R. Tanco and the uprising of General Iniguez in Rosario in 1960. Thus, two sides have been formed: one, pro-Yankee and dependent on the Pentagon; and the other, nationalist, but without popular support, which always ends up by playing into the hands of the other side. Even so, we do not deny the existence of possible exceptions and it is these exceptions that we call upon to take part in the struggle of the people.

On the other hand, sectors which were anti-Peronist or non-Peronist 15 years ago, have come close to and even joined Peronism, such as the case of Christian lay and clerical sectors, the university students and the left-wing nationalists who understand the revolutionary nature of the Movement.

### **Incorporation of the People into the Armed Struggle**

We think that the military task should never be divorced from the task of organizing the people. And this involves not only building an infrastructure which will allow us to operate militarily in an efficient way, but also the opening of communication channels to win over sympathizers and to neutralize the nonsympathizers, to extend the organization on all levels or fronts of actions: the political, trade union and student fronts.

At this stage, by trying to incorporate the organizational forms and methods of struggle appropriate to an armed organization to the mass struggle, through the use of example. This is what is called armed propaganda.

We believe that the adoption of organizational forms and methods of armed struggle, the assimilation of the underground experience and a correct political line will lead to the gradual and organized participation of the people in the armed organizations.

### **Total, National and Prolonged War**

The revolutionary strategy of the organization is that of people's war. This kind of war has different characteristics: it should be total, national and

prolonged. I say total because it considers the destruction of the capitalist state and army as prerequisites to the taking of power by the people. I say national because its objective is emancipation from foreign control and reaffirmation of the Argentine people. Finally, I say prolonged because we must organize a people's army, which will take time, and also because the enemy army cannot be defeated in one battle; on the contrary, it must be worn out in a long struggle. The strategy of all the armed organizations of Argentina is basically similar. This similarity is expressed in basic points of agreement which we think indispensable to developing joint action later on. These points are the development of a people's war as the only way to achieve the liberation of our country; the conviction that this liberation is possible only in conjunction with that of the rest of Latin America; and that the mass movement that expresses and embodies this revolutionary mission in Argentina is Peronism.

We believe that the armed vanguard of the Argentine revolution will be created with the unification of all the armed organizations in the country. Thus unity is an imperative of the struggle. That's why we maintain the principle of unity of action.

We expect nothing from an electoral farce. Our experience has always been

that when they did not ban us, they annulled the elections we had won. Therefore we are not in favor of either a military coup d'état or fraudulent elections. We repeat that only the people will save the people.

We decided to emerge from anonymity and adopt the name of Montoneros for our organization and its now public acts. We felt we had to fight, that it was time we stopped mourning for our dead. We felt it was time for the others to die, that the time had come for the enemy to mourn.

### **Revolution in Other Countries**

Many years ago, General Perón established the doctrine of the Third Position. Of course, this does not mean putting the imperialist and socialist countries in the same camp; instead, the doctrine is a form of active solidarity with the people of Latin America, Asia and Africa, the so-called Third World, exploited by colonialism and imperialism. In regard to Latin America, not only the doctrine but also a common history determine the fraternal ties among our countries. For this reason, just as San Martín and Bolívar, and

other Hispano-American figures needed to unite in order to win America's independence from Spanish rule, so today we need to unite on a continental scale to liberate ourselves from the Yankee yoke and the native oligarchies.

For the time being, we think that the best thing we can do for the Latin-American revolution is to make revolution in our own country, to respect the specific processes in other countries and thus avoid the imposition of forms and methods which do not necessarily correspond to the realities of those countries. However, for the revolution to take place and to become consolidated, we believe that it must be extended to the entire continent.

We respect and admire the process lived by the Cuban people, which is an example for all our countries. The fact that Cuba has still not achieved economic prosperity only means that if the struggle for the taking of power is difficult, the creation of a revolutionary state and the consolidation of its economy are even more difficult. Evidently, to consolidate this revolutionary process and that of the rest of the continent, we must make revolution in our own countries. We believe that Cuba needs geopolitical integration with a revolutionary Latin America.

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## **FAR: THE MEN OF GARIN**

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**A** fighter in the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) describes the occupation of the small city of Garin, located 35 kilometers outside of Buenos Aires:

We took over the town — which has a population of 30 000 — for 50 minutes: we captured the police station, bank, telephone office (the lines were cut) and a radiotelephone device in a private home. We controlled the train station, which has independent communication, even though we didn't actually capture it, because it wasn't necessary, the two main accesses were controlled, and traffic was detoured. Nobody was allowed to leave but people were allowed to enter after having passed through our checkpoint. (We made a policeman who came up in a car get out and we kept him prisoner until the operation was concluded.) We seized three and a half million pesos, weapons, police uniforms and many other things of value.

The original nucleus had decided to incorporate itself into the National Liberation Army of Bolivia commanded by the Heroic Guerrilla. Some of them came from the traditional left, others from the ranks of Peronism and many were not members of any political organization.

The death of Che in 1967 prevents the participation of this group of Argentine patriots in the Bolivian guerrilla action and it then dedicates itself to building an armed organization and defining its fighting strategy, taking into consideration the variant of revolutionary war.

The strategic concept of FAR concerning the guerrilla unit in the mountainous areas carried with it no depreciation of armed struggle in the cities, which

became the basic line of action of the underground movement beginning last year.

The "Cordobazo" — the Cordoba revolt — produces a strong impact within the ranks of FAR which recognizes the start of a new stage for the organization, beginning with the historic event which, for them, demonstrated that behind its apparent passivity, the working class was hiding resistance to the Onganía regime, although certain "theoreticians" argued the thesis of Europeanization of Argentina and the aristocracy of the working class through the economic policy the gorillocracy was applying.

The men of Garín, as the Argentine people call them, state that any individual and organization that tries to find a real solution for the nation must choose armed struggle because, since 1952, when the Peronist Andrés Framin was unable to assume his position as governor of Buenos Aires, it has been clear that there is no electoral out.

What alternative is there other than armed struggle? FAR asks those who still have confidence in legal methods to regain power — like the Peronist Paladino, who has made various "calls for reflection" to the gorilla regime at moments when even the traditional political parties have seen that the language of force is all the military governors understand.

Marxism-Leninism is the revolutionary ideology of the FAR combatants who use it not as a "political shirt" but rather as a scientific method for analyzing the social reality and adjusting tactics to the objective and subjective conditions of the country.

Thus they maintain that a revolutionary policy must take into consideration that "Peronism is not a worn-out movement, in decline, useless; but on the contrary we believe it has vitality, that from within Peronism emerge new forces as important as those of FAP."

The incorporation of the masses into the revolutionary struggle is a new situation for this armed organization which, according to its statements, developed after the occupation of Garín and which will be realized through political-military work.

It points out that relations between the different guerrilla commandos operating in Argentine cities have their base solidly in armed action, which will lead inexorably to an organic unity, and not in the type of theoretical discussions that have taken place among other revolutionary groups who have sought unity through long and continuous meetings.

"We are very optimistic about the future of the struggle in Argentina" the "men of Garín" stress, maintaining that the war of national liberation in Latin America must grow out of national particulars and be expressed in the diversities of revolutionary war, even against the concepts of the orthodox **foco** theory, which argued continental strategy in the creation of a central guerrilla **foco** in Bolivia to be strengthened initially with the material and human support of the revolutionary organizations of the Latin-American countries, and from which would then come the fighters who would open other guerrilla fronts at various points on the continent.

A leader of the Revolutionary Armed Forces explains that

... it seemed as though we were using the argument of the special characteristics of Argentina as an excuse for saying that there were no possibilities for revolutionary struggle here, whereas this is not true at all; we feel that Argentina has some special characteristics which favor — not oppose — revolutionary struggle. This is especially true because of its working class, which is neither inexperienced nor unorganized, it has a lot of experience in struggle and a high level of trade union organization — which, though not sufficient, is much greater than what other countries have. Our working class has been responsible for important events, and its level of awareness is considerable.

**“We have always  
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### **The Unity of the Armed Organizations**

**T**HOUGH we had started from the premise of a rural guerrilla unit, we never underestimated urban struggle. However, at that time, we didn’t attach as much importance to it as we do now. We always kept it in mind, but we hadn’t succeeded in organizing it adequately within our strategy. It was only last year that we incorporated urban struggle as a basic element of our strategy and started acting accordingly.

We had already started and were in the midst of discussing the importance of armed struggle when the Cordoba uprising took place. This shook us, as it did everyone else, and had the effect of waking us up, and, to a certain extent, it confirmed all those things.

At that point, we began a whole new stage. We tried to define ourselves,



but we always had the characteristic — which we may have gotten from the Tupamaros — that we really didn't write very much. We always said that we put things into practice before we made up the theories about them.

Armed struggle in Argentina is still young, and relations between the different organizations are not yet consolidated enough. There have been many attempts to achieve unity among the revolutionary political groups, but the difference is that those attempts were made at a negotiation table, whereas these are the result of practice and action in which we have participated together with the other organizations. There is a basic identity among all of us who have weapons in our hand.

### The Masses Acclaim a Change

We began as a group that meant to join Che's guerrillas. We learned about the project shortly before it was launched, and were getting ready to join. At the time, we were a small group made up of people from the traditional left, a few Peronists and many new elements without a political background. We all knew each other — were all friends and comrades in political struggle united by a single idea: to serve in Che Guevara's column in any way we could. We hadn't thought about adopting an independent political line. Logically, everything that had to do with the integral development of the organization was left to Che.

But Che was killed. Then, we had to change our way of thinking — we couldn't leave anything for others to do for us any more, we had to start out as an organization ready to use



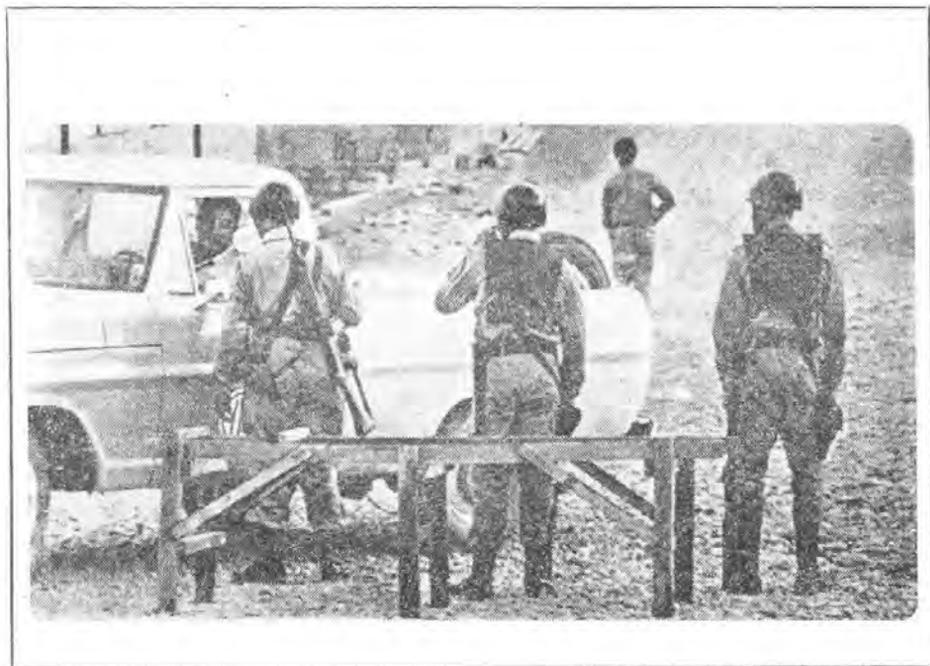
all the different methods called for by revolutionary struggle.

We were confronted with a choice between a national and a continental strategy. In Che's time, it was clear. We also talked this problem over when Inti returned to the mountains, and we held discussions with the National Liberation Army. We didn't agree with the continental strategy proposed by the Bolivian comrades, which consisted — at least this is how we understood it — of considering the Bolivian guerrillas as the vanguard of the revolutionary struggle in this part of the continent — which would be under a

single leadership to which all the national organizations would have to contribute — and waiting until this nucleus of the people's army was established before having its branches spread to the other countries.

In our opinion, this was putting the cart before the horse. There's no doubt as to the continental nature of the struggle, for it's very clear that in Latin America there are more things — starting with our common enemy — that unite than separate us.

We have the same goals and use the same methods; we have the same his-



tory; only a few things separate us, but there are national characteristics which cannot be swept away by decree.

We have always acted in keeping with Che's idea of the need for change and the possibility of change. Today the masses are demanding change — and not just any change, but one with guidance. It is no accident that the people, the Peronists, rejoiced over Allende's victory in Chile, because the people have antioligarchic feelings and anti-imperialist feelings which it is impossible to ignore. I don't mean they're clear about socialism and communism, because that is something else again.

Argentina is sitting on a powder keg, and the southern tip of South America is a volcano about to erupt: Uruguay, Bolivia and now Chile. This is no longer the time for retreat; the time has come for an advance in this area — a more organized advance with the lessons that have been learned. We are very optimistic about the future of struggle in Argentina.

### **The Decisive Role in Revolutionary Struggle**

We feel that Peronism is the political expression of the great majority of the

working class, and a revolutionary policy should be based on that fact. We don't think that it is a movement which is no longer relevant or valid, that it is out of date. On the contrary, we think it is extremely valid, and important revolutionary forces such as the Peronist Armed Forces exist in it. As such, we believe we must start from that point and work to develop the most revolutionary aspects of Peronism.

We feel Peronism plays a decisive role in the revolutionary struggle in Argentina. We are holding serious discussions on the problem of Peronism, and we have very cordial relations with the comrades from the Peronist Armed Forces.

We don't agree with any political classification that draws lines between us, saying "you come from the left, and the comrades of Peronist Armed Forces, from that movement." The fact that some of our members belonged to other leftist organizations doesn't stop us from understanding that Peronism was the highest level of revolutionary experience ever obtained in this country — on a mass level, of course.

Should we join the Peronist movement? Well, this is a question that's still being thrashed out by our national leadership, and I can't speak on behalf of the FAR, because it has a national structure and its national leadership has this whole question of Peronism under discussion at present. I think we've made great progress in this matter, but I, for one, still don't know if we'll become part of the Peronist movement or not.

We consider ourselves to be Marxist-Leninists in the sense that we use it as a method for studying reality — but not as a political straitjacket.

### **Political-Military Work**

We want to develop actions which combine different aspects, but always including expropriations, as, in our opinion, they are basic to organizational development and serve as a demonstration of efficiency, clearly revealing the effectiveness of a method of struggle.

Political factors were not the most important ones at Garin. It was captured primarily for military reasons although, if it would have had a negative political effect, we wouldn't have carried out the operation.

In our opinion, the action impressed the people because of the synchronization and technical resources involved. It really shook up the repressive forces as well as public opinion.

Now, starting from this point, we realized that we were going to enter an era in which we would have to deal with a great problem, a problem which confronts all organizations that have reached a certain level of development: the organization's links with the masses. We consider this to be a serious problem — not in terms of the links with the masses, which we consider will in some way be established through the actions themselves, but in terms of how the masses join the struggle (the famous problem of the transmission belts). We think that it is necessary to do political-military work in order to obtain mass participation.

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## **FAP: ARMED STRUGGLE IN THE PERONIST MOVEMENT**

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**W**ITHIN the Peronist movement there is a political current that proclaims itself for armed struggle: the Peronist Armed Forces (FAP).

Although they take into consideration the fact that, since the fall of Perón, different sectors of Peronism maintain a strategy of overall direction to regain power, they have become convinced that neither strikes nor workers' demonstrations nor elections nor an alliance with the military nor popular resistance will permit the country's return to the social order that existed over the decade 1945-55; but rather that the road of armed struggle is necessary.

This revolutionary organization which supports the principle that "the only way to make the revolution is by being a Peronist" believes that it is the heir to the tradition of the Peronist insurrectional struggle that had its first expression in the bombs of people's resistance that shook the cities from 1955 to 1957 and, moreover, that a social impact was produced in Argentina with the Uturuncos guerrilla movement in 1959 and later with the rise of the rural guerrilla group Taco Ralo in Tucuman province, the realization of the insurrectional concepts of those fighters, inspired by the example of the revolution.

The principal objective of FAP is to organize the people's war by creating a people's army which carries out national liberation, since it states that the bourgeoisie is incapable of generating and guiding a revolutionary process that will inexorably lead to its disappearance as a social class.

Nevertheless FAP does not discard the possibility of taking advantage of a particular political situation to resort to electoral measures, but is certain that

the exploiting classes will not permit a Peronist candidate who advocates social justice, economic independence and political sovereignty to run for president of the country.

Conciliation or compromise on the part of certain Peronist leaders with successive governors is judged by the FAP as a bourgeois attempt to convert Peronism into a sterile movement by detouring its main aim of struggle for power.

The overthrow of the tripartite power— oligarchy-gorillocracy-imperialism — by the forces of revolutionary Peronism, in FAP's opinion does not mean a return to the historic situation of the Peronist decade but rather the deepening and extension of the social process for the benefit of the working classes.

At the same time, the return of Perón as Prime Minister of this South American nation represents for the Peronist guerrillas "an aid to the national liberation process" although they stress that "in the presumed case that Perón were, subjectively, part of some kind of negotiation in which he renounced all he had previously proposed, to ingratiate himself with the regime, at this level we believe he would have no political viability."

The political contradictions between the lines of actions of the various sectors or groups of the Peronist movement are explicable by the organic composition of Peronism as led by General Perón and the Peronist Superior Command, which lays out the movement's general lines without the internal structures of a political party.

For this reason, while Paladino, top Peronist leader in Argentina, supports the electoral path in order to end violence in the country, FAP carries out various armed actions such as the assault on the German Transatlantic bank from which it expropriated 14 000 000 pesos, the seizure of two police posts in Tortuguitas in order to capture the armaments, blowing up the television installations of a channel that proposed to transmit one of Nixon's speeches to Latin America, placing bombs in Yankee industries and other actions.

The violent explosion of people's sectors in the Cordoba revolt of May-June-September 1969 demonstrated for the FAP fighters that "the people were neither tamed, nor asleep, nor fearful" despite the passive retreat over the past four years, and it also teaches that this is not the road of revolutionary struggle that the people's sectors must follow as required by "a methodology useful for fighting."

The Peronist Armed Forces feel themselves to be brothers of the revolutionary organizations of Latin America that wage battles against Yankee imperialism and its lackeys. They express their support of the Cuban Revolution and advocate unity among the armed movements of Argentina based on an identity of methodology, of the enemy and of the final objective.

**"A return to power  
would mean  
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different scope."**

### **Toward the Reconquest of Power**

**W**E believe the Peronist movement to be a movement of national liberation. Starting in 1955, when power was lost, the Peronist movement in Argentina tried to recapture it in one way or another. This explains the resistance, the big strikes, the attempt at a coup d'état by General Valle and the link between trade union leaderships and the military. It also explains the pact with Frondizi which came as the result of a specific set of circumstances and enabled the movement — a heterogeneous movement which had been banned — to present a program for negotiation that offered hopes of winning over the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) and some other things; it also favored the alternative of supporting Frondizi in the elections. It was a tactical decision taken by Perón at the time, and we consider it was correct because it made it possible to oppose the most pro-Yankee and oligarchical sectors of the country by means of a national, popular program which contained ideas of economic independence.

We spoke of reconquering power while referring to an experience of our people that, to some extent, shared power. The three principles of Peronism — social justice, economic independence and political sovereignty — are the foundation for a policy of na-

tional liberation. And, for the most exploited sectors of the people and the ones with the least political education, this means a return to the 1945-55 era. But the great majority of the people of Argentina understand that a repeat performance is impossible. A return to power would mean going beyond what was done then, with different methods and a different scope.

In our opinion, Perón's return is a concrete demand. Anybody who supports this demand is contributing to the process of national liberation. His return is linked to the three principles of the movement: political sovereignty, economic independence and social justice. In our opinion, anyone who in any way expresses his support for this demand contributes to the process of national liberation. Our process of national liberation is many-sided; it isn't as organized as we would like it to be. That is why support for the basic demands of the movement, regardless of who gives it, helps.

The awareness of the people is sufficiently sharp to understand that any individual in Argentina who proposes a Peronism without Perón has no future whatsoever.

### **No Other Way Out**

We feel that this movement for national liberation has no chance of victory if an army of the people isn't

established with an armed political and military organization.

This tactical defeat does not mean we have discarded rural guerrilla warfare in our country. In Argentina we have great urban concentrations on the one hand and areas that are geographically and politically suited to rural struggle on the other hand, which is what will determine that the armed struggle, at this stage, will develop fundamentally in the cities and then extend also to the rural areas.

The Peronists were among the first to raise the issue of armed struggle in Argentina. The first attempt at armed struggle was that of the Uturuncos in 1959, the Peronist guerrilla camp which was captured in Plumerillo; the bank polyclinic of the nationalist sector; and then Taco Ralo. The 1955-57 resistance was a very incipient form of armed struggle. More bombs were set off than in the period of the anarchists. The people really stuck their necks out.

Taco Ralo was carried out under the direct influence of the Cuban Revolution, which had great repercussions in the ranks of Peronism, leading its vanguard to aim for guerrilla warfare.

We believe that the working-class movement was the one that really made sacrifices so that today our eyes are open to this new methodology, because

they suffered the experience in their own flesh. In other words, the masses found out that a military solution was impossible, an electoral solution was also impossible and big strikes and mobilizations were also no good.

Four big organizations and two small ones are operating in Argentina today. They aren't responsible for everything that happens: you read that a bomb exploded here and a policeman was disarmed there but this isn't always the work of an organization. Although many of these commandos may join one of the existing organizations, many are still operating independently and are a product of the Cordoba uprising.

The only way to make the revolution here is to be a Peronist. But this doesn't mean we are in any way denying the value of other comrades who don't happen to agree with this thesis — far from it. They are honest comrades who are on the same operational level as we are. In our opinion, the factors which separate us are not basic, whereas what unites us is a common methodology, a common enemy and a common final objective.

These are the three things that unite us. We do not recognize the need, at this stage, to set up an artificial organization. The front will come as the result of a process. Now we are trying to avoid competition among the revo-

lutionary organizations and to achieve the greatest possible political and technical exchange.

### **The Organization of the People's War**

The foundation of our policy is the organization of people's war. Everything must lead to that. The links of people's war with the masses are very complex. We consider ourselves to be a part of that war, but by no means the elite. We believe that one of our basic tasks as a political-military organization is to respond to the need of the working class to get organized and adopt different methods. Our job is to set up organizational forms that will guarantee links with the people and the continuity and compartmentalization of armed action as well as the existence of a viable relationship between the people and the organization. We believe this complex problem is on the way to being solved, thanks to our work. That is, by providing cadres with a political-military mentality for the process of struggle at the mass level and by trying to extend the methodology of the armed organization on all levels of the masses' confrontation with the regime. We link political with military work and they should always go together. Our people



need methodology for struggle. We are looking for political actions that can be immediately understood by our people. This does not mean that we have been efficient in this sphere; on the contrary, we have had many limitations. Another factor that we bear in mind and which we think is very important is that the people see the action as capable of being carried out not

only by an armed organization, but by anybody who really decided to do it. In other words, big, complicated operations do not interest us, operations that can be carried out only by an organization with a high technical level and by people who have already attained that technical level. On the contrary, the type of action we do must communicate to the people that with



a little organization and a little courage they too can do the same thing.

### **For the People, the Enemy Is One**

We believe that imperialism must be defeated on a Latin-American level. All our nations are faced by the same enemy, and this affects the revolutionary organizations. Having the same en-

emy makes all revolutionary organizations in Latin America allies, and we believe in having as many political ties as possible with organizations in other countries.

This will surely result in concrete agreements at organizational levels. We take advantage of all opportunities to confer with organizations from other countries, hoping to reach agreement.

Revolutionary fraternity means making no concessions and being frank with criticism.

Relations among the revolutionary organizations of Argentina are, fortun-

ately, very good. There is no competition among us and there is real concern about carrying out a policy of collaboration. The Cuban Revolution has all our support and confidence.

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## **FAL: SOCIALISM IS THE ONLY WAY OUT**

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**E**IGHT years ago a new Marxist movement was established in Argentina which stated the premise of armed struggle to liberate the country from foreign domination, expel the oligarchists and militarists from power and apply an economic policy that would lead the homeland of Sarmiento along the socialist road.

The members of this armed organization which is called Argentine Liberation Forces (FAL) criticized the opportunism of those who deceived the people with false solutions proceeding from the legal trenches of the bourgeois regime. Moreover, they were open about their militant support for the Cuban Revolution and for all national liberation movements fighting against the oppression and exploitation of the ruling classes.

At the historic moment in which FAL arose, the Frondizi government had revealed itself to be the servant of capitalist interests and the workers were taking factories and engaging in protest demonstrations against the low salaries and high cost of living.

Since then various sectors of Peronism have begun to propose armed struggle as the only way to install a government that will respond to the interests of the proletariat, and to reject the concept of unity between the people and the army or the democratization of the constitutional armed forces, because the military chiefs have built themselves up to be supporters of the bourgeois social order.

FAL stated that a civil war would break out because the people's struggle has to take the road to national and social liberation that precipitates the working class ascent to power. It also points out that the economic situation of the country leads the Argentine oligarchy to stimulate inflation in order to satisfy the salary demands of the workers and obliges it to repress violently all people's demonstrations that menace the internal security of the capitalist regime.

The militants of the Argentine Liberation Forces are politically trained in the study of Marxism-Leninism because they aspire to represent the interests of the proletariat among whom they expound and spread socialist principles which for them represent "the only real out-we see for the country."

Like other urban guerrilla movements, FAL strikes at bourgeois institutionalism, principally at the armed forces, in order to shake the political and economic solidity of the capitalist state, which is based on the force of bayonets.

On April 5, 1970, the military unit Campo de Mayo, the most important garrison in the country, located in greater Buenos Aires, was seized by FAL commandos who took the arms and ammunition in the arsenal guarded by more than 50 men who put up no resistance at all. Some time later they took the

military post of Tucuman, whose detachment had participated in the bloody repression of the sugar workers; they also occupied the automotive section of the 7th Infantry Regiment where they seized the armaments and tried to burn the trucks and caterpillars that the Yankees gave the Army under the Plan for Military Aid (PAM).

All these guerrilla operations caused a considerable drain on the resources of the organization which on September 24 of last year, expropriated 10 000 000 pesos from the safe of the collection train El Rosarino, while it was travelling between Rosario and Buenos Aires.

One of the armed actions that attracted the greatest notice internationally was the kidnapping of the Paraguayan consul, the purpose of which was misrepresented by the Onganía regime through the publication of a series of false communiqués.

The kidnapping had as its only purpose [a FAL leader pointed out] stopping the tortures to which our comrades Dellanave and Baldú were being subjected. It was successful in halting Dellanave's torture, but Baldú had already died at the hands of the police. We liberated the consul because we had never proposed an exchange; we knew from the beginning that he wasn't important enough for that.

A few weeks ago, in a school located in Las Heras 3086, two men and a woman from FAL appropriated 6 000 000 census forms, among them those of high officials of the gorillocracy such as Generals Rojas, Alsogaray, Sánchez Lahoz, Toranzo Montero, Colonel Desiderio Fernández and Rear Admiral Toranzo Calderón, and those of the Yankee advisers, the native oligarchy and executives of foreign companies. Although it attacks the conciliatory and demagogic tendencies of certain Peronists who play the game of the ruling classes, FAL recognizes and praises the armed movements that raise the three banners of Peronism, but maintains that the return of Perón means "proposing a step backwards for the masses and offering no idea of what has to be faced: a different process in which the people will really be history's protagonists."

The incorporation of the working class, the student movement and the marginal dwellers of the miserable towns into the liberation struggle is the fundamental aim of this Marxist-Leninist organization as it carries out its armed urban actions which, according to its line, will predominate over rural guerrilla warfare although the two must be combined to reach the common goal.

FAL considers itself a part of the national and social liberation movement of Argentina and not the "umbilical cord" of the continental revolution according to Che's guerrilla thesis of creating two, three, many Viet Nams.

**"...we still  
need to advance,  
but we are all  
working for the  
formation of a  
liberation front..."**

### **The Struggle Will Be Continental**

**W**E consider that a triumphant revolution in a single country is practically impossible. But, of course, we don't think we should wait for a favorable continental situation and delay revolutionary action in each country. We think that it is very difficult for a social revolution to triumph in a single country and, therefore, the struggle must be a continental one.

Che's thesis of creating two, three, many Viet Nams we accept completely.

We think that it is a basic contribution to the strategy of world revolution in recent times. We are in favor of a tight-knit continental solidarity. We think that this will be part of a world revolutionary struggle and we consider ourselves part of a world-wide national liberation movement within which we struggle to make all these movements lead to social liberation. We believe in socialism; we believe in Cuba; we believe in Viet Nam.

### **National and Social Liberation**

We think that in our country the struggle is not only for national liberation, but for national and social liberation; that is, the war in Argentina will be not only anti-imperialist but also a civil war. The bourgeoisie in our country is strong, it has expert political and ideological skill and our struggle must have an anticapitalist tinge while at the same time we must try to neutralize or win over some sectors.

Our propaganda is aimed at explaining the meaning of socialism, its content. Another point that we insist on is that of relying on our own forces: the construction of a people's army and finally, it seems to us to be essential, the destruction of the bourgeois state.

We believe that these are vital aspects, substantial ones, which are going to differentiate the revolutionaries, no matter where they are or where they have come from.

The country's vanguard is not yet formed but one is being formed with a number of forces that are already operating. There are many revolution-

ary forces that will make up the vanguard. And this is very positive, because the contemplation of one's navel does not exist among ourselves and this is a cohesive force. We think that we still need to advance but we are all working for the formation of a liberation front which will include different organizations.

We see the Cordobazo as an important event, but one which showed that spontaneity was not enough, that you need an organized, armed vanguard of the people. We think that everybody understands this now as shown by the great acceptance of the revolutionary struggle on the part of the people. Our own growth and that of other revolutionary organizations is not accidental and today this growth is fantastic. The people, when they see a clear choice, one of organized revolutionary violence, do not ask much about the origin, the strategy, etc. They ask themselves if they're in the struggle or not, and then they join it.

### **Spreading Socialism**

We think that you can't travel in Argentina, at least during this stage, on one foot only—that of armed action. Our role is to attack the political and ideological superstructure of the state, disseminate political material in the ideological struggle and also define the

functions of the masses by organizing them and trying to lead them to a liberation process. In other words we do not see the masses as exclusively a source of recruits, but we feel that we must do specific work with them. We carry on this work chiefly in the working class, the student movement and the popular sectors of the misery villages.

We think that in general the forces represent one class: we try to represent the interests of the proletariat. We think that we are not only trying but also defining ourselves in a number of categories: politically and ideologically. We train our militants in Marxism-Leninism, trying to make a profound analysis of the essence of socialism. In our propaganda we try to explain and disseminate these principles, not on a rhetorical level but on the most accessible and simple level possible. Socialism is the only real solution that we see for our country.

### **We Do Not Attack Peronism**

We see three tendencies within Peronism: the conciliatory, which has completely revealed itself and had its expression in the Lonardi government with the game of "neither conquered nor conquerors," in the Frondizi pact, later in neo-Peronism. It is a current whose objective is integration with the regime in power and it does not propose

any change even within the bourgeois system. Yesterday they were with Frondizi and with Onganía and today they are with Levingston, for example the so-called "new current" of the CGT which participated in everything and then started to sabotage the workers' struggle.

The second is the opposition trend of the bureaucratic sector which also played that same game. Today, it is waging small opposition to the regime, trying to gain prestige with some declarations, with some token struggles, to enter the future electoral race in a better position.

Finally, there is revolutionary Peronism, which today has many very important manifestations, fundamentally the Peronist Armed Forces (FAP) who are our comrades, despite our differences. We consider them authentic revolutionaries who have earned our respect.

These comrades believe that by demanding the return of Perón and Peronism, with all its symbols, they are going to receive more support from the people in general. We believe that this is not true today, and the real support the people are now giving to revolutionaries demonstrates this. We even think that this tactic confuses the people since today Perón's return is being demanded by a Paladino and the entire Peronist movement, without distinction. To demand a return to the

past for the people, in my opinion, doesn't give them an idea of what we should fight for: a different process where the people are really protagonists of history. We believe that this viewpoint does not help the process in general.

We hold nothing against the Peronists, on the contrary, a large number of our militants come from Peronism and many of them still call themselves Peronists, but that is not the essential thing. The essential thing is the content of what we propose to the people and what our objectives are.

We don't attack Peronism — that is, we don't attack Perón, much less Evita. Some elements of Peronism have remained with the people and we have taken them and elevated them: the antioligarchic and anti-imperialist feeling in general; the feeling of having participated in power; we develop them as important elements. We should remember that Peronism was the eruption of the masses on the Argentine political scene, but we also think that it left a series of negative elements which still persist in the working class: chiefly, the elements of class conciliation, the delegation of things which belong to their class; the popular force in the Army; paternalism, etc.

Excerpts from "Argentina: with Arms in Hand," by Prensa Latina.



from the  
executive secretariat



# **VIET NAM: A Single History**

**O**N December 10, 1970, the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Viet Nam and the Government of the Republic of Viet Nam issued an appeal severely condemning the new plans and actions of the Nixon Administration against that country, and exhorting all the people and the army to increase their vigilance and be res-

olutely prepared to defeat all these plans and actions, carrying forward to total victory the war of anti-Yankee resistance and for national salvation.

On December 14, 1970, in reply to the above-mentioned appeal, the Central Committee of the NLF and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Viet Nam, issued a declaration restating once more the determination of the people of South Viet Nam to defeat the US aggressors and liberate the South, defend the North and march toward the peaceful reunification of the motherland.

The warmongers of the Pentagon and the White House have suffered ignominious failures in the war of aggression waged against South Viet Nam. The South Vietnamese people have been fighting heroically and untiringly for 16 years against the most ferocious enemy of this era, winning great victories. At this time they appear in every respect as the unquestionable victors over a rival who has very superior means and military potential.



However, regardless of the failures suffered in South Viet Nam, which gradually grow even worse, the Yankee imperialists continue to be very recalcitrant and perfidious. On the one hand they try to deceive US world public opinion by means of their false talks of "peace," "independence," "freedom" and "Vietnamization" of the war, with troop withdrawals measured in dribbles, and on the other hand they invent the fabulous story regarding a "tacit agreement" with the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, seeking a pretext for their threats and acts of war against the North of Viet Nam.

In the press conference held on December 10, 1970, Nixon insolently

warned the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam that if US planes on reconnaissance missions over that nation are shot down, the US Government will order the renewal of the bombings and strafing. His words and acts are the banditry of an international gendarme who arrogates to himself the right to fly over the air space of another country, land his troops in any nation and send his warships to violate the territorial waters of any country he wishes. Nixon has disregarded all the norms of international laws, disparaging the independence and freedom of the peoples which he claims he respects, violating the Charter of the United Nations.

But such insolent and frantic words in no manner or form cow the Vietnamese people of either zone of the country; on the contrary, their effect is to unite the people even more closely and increase even more their decision to fight against the aggressors. Viet Nam is one; the Vietnamese people are one, with the same blood flowing through their veins, speaking the same language, with the same customs and the same



centuries-old culture. No reactionary force will be able to extinguish the sentiments of the Vietnamese people, nor prevent them from fulfilling their sacred duty with their southern compatriots, and vice versa.

The threats and war provocations of Nixon with respect to the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam are further proof of weakness and the deterioration of the present position for the Nixon Administration, and its isolation in the international arena.

The Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL expresses its total approval and support of the appeal issued on December 10, 1970, by the Central Committee of the Viet

Nam Workers' Party and the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, as well as the declaration of December 14, 1970, made by the NLF of the Republic of South Viet Nam, which state the unflinching determination of the Vietnamese people of both zones of the country to continue the struggle. While US aggression persists, the Vietnamese people will continue their struggle. This is not only the correct and resolute position of the people of Viet Nam, but also that of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The time is past and gone forever, when the US imperialists could do and undo as they pleased with absolute impunity.

The peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and of the whole world, including the people of the United States, pledge to unite, shoulder to shoulder, close to the 30 million Vietnamese, intensifying the struggle in their respective countries so that together with the people of Viet Nam, they may defeat the cruelest enemy of humanity. As the Yankee imperialists show themselves more savage and aggressive, in that



measure will the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and all the world unite more closely with the people of Viet Nam, to inflict on them an inevitable defeat. No threat of violence or method of deceit will be able to shake the Vietnamese people's will to struggle nor reduce the determination of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America and of the world to show their solidarity with the struggle of these people against the imperialist Yankee aggressors.

The Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL strongly condemns the lies invented by the US Government regarding an alleged "tacit agreement" with North Viet Nam, as well

as the insolent and bellicose arguments presented by President Nixon during his press conference of December 10, 1970, which serve as a pretext for future attacks against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

The Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL demands that the Nixon Government put an end, once and for all, to the reconnaissance flights, the bombings and strafing over the territory of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, and respect the sovereignty and the security of this independent nation, member of the socialist camp.

The Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL also demands that the Nixon Government put an end as soon as possible to the war of aggression against South Viet Nam: that it withdraw immediately and totally all North American troops and those of the satellite countries from South Viet Nam, without any conditions; that it abandon its traitor lackeys Thieu-Ky-Khiem and leave the Vietnamese people to solve their internal problems by themselves, with no foreign interference.



The Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL exhorts all its member organizations, the international and national progressive organizations, and the progressive personalities of the whole world to condemn strongly and at the opportune time the warlike and adventurous acts of Nixon against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, at the same time that they increase their activities of solidarity and support, in both moral and material measure, and contribute in the most effective manner to further the struggle of the Vietnamese people toward total victory.

The Executive Secretariat of OSPAAAL issues a special appeal

to the progressive peoples of the United States so that they may continue their struggle against the Nixon government's dirty war of aggression in Viet Nam, condemning Nixon's insolent and warmongering words during the press conference of December 10, 1970, and at the same time, gives its strongest support to the correct position and the determination to continue struggling shown by the Vietnamese people of both zones of the country, expressed in the documents issued by the CC of the WPV, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, the CC of the NLF and the PRG of the Republic of South Viet Nam on December 10 and 14, 1970, respectively. We exhort them to remain alert, on guard, ready to condemn and struggle wherever necessary to stop all new military adventures which Nixon may organize against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

The Vietnamese people will win!  
The Yankee imperialists will be defeated!

