

People's War:
Road of Armed
Struggle in Brazil

Central Committee
Communist Party of Brazil

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Preface

Regarding this document, the advanced revolutionary Brazilian organization Nucleus of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Studies has stated: “In January 1969, the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil made progress in its formulations, the main expression of which was the drafting of the document *People’s War: Road of Armed Struggle in Brazil*. This document, of paramount importance in the history of the communist movement in our country, at the same time as it represents a step forward in the party’s assimilation of Maoism, will also be the limit of this development. It represents an extremely important theoretical effort, especially considering the historical limitations of the party’s development. This advance is the result of a certain impetus from the internal struggle, constituting a relative assimilation of Maoism and its fusion with the Brazilian revolution. It makes an important contribution to the critique of petty-bourgeois militarist con-

ceptions, formulating quite correctly the fundamental postulates of People's War as a military theory of the proletariat and its application to Brazilian reality."¹

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¹A Nova Democracia, "*Guerra Popular, caminho da luta armada no Brasil*"*, 2012.

January 1969, Rio de Janeiro.

THE military who seized power are terrified of the specter of revolution. Everywhere, in any event, no matter how trivial, they see subversion and revanchism. It's no longer a question of fear in the face of workers' strikes or powerful street demonstrations.

Such are the crimes they commit that a timid criticism in the press, a theater scene against tyranny, a simple song extolling freedom, sends the generals armed to the teeth into a panic. And the more they are tormented by fear, the more ferocious they become and the more violence they commit against the people.

The dictatorship that was installed in the country with the coup of April 1st² is squarely against national interests. No government like the current one has been so tyrannical and predatory. Democratic and patriotic movements are being harshly persecuted.

The popular masses suffer the consequences of the nefarious dictatorial policy and when

²RedLibrary: On April 1, 1964, the Brazilian armed forces, with U.S. backing, had successfully couped the Brazilian government and established a military dictatorship.

they rise up to fight for their demands they have to face the police and army troops.

But the U.S. imperialists and their agents enjoy every privilege. They take over entire branches of production, seize vast areas of Brazilian territory and exercise direct control over the public administration.

In recent years, thousands of people have been imprisoned and countless political prisoners have been barbarously tortured.

Many Brazilians have been murdered in public squares.

Supervised by the CIA, terrorist gangs have attacked universities, theaters, and popular demonstrations. Churches and convents were invaded.

Priests were arrested and beaten for expressing the feelings of their parishioners. With their organizations underground, students are treated like criminals.

The intelligentsia, victims of odious restrictions, cannot freely develop their activities. Opposition politicians are discriminated against and marginalized. The mandates of parliamentarians are revoked and the political rights of citizens are suspended.

The Brazilian people, who have always wanted to build a homeland free from oppression, misery and backwardness, do not accept the infamous regime that prevails in Brazil. In the face of the military's banditry, they have taken up the fight and are holding energetic protests.

Never have the demands for freedom been so loud, never has the condemnation of Yankee imperialism and its lackeys been so vehement. The idea of revolution is maturing in the consciousness of the broad masses. More and more Brazilians feel the imperative need to overthrow the dictatorship through armed struggle.

Since February 1962, in its Manifesto-Program, the Communist Party of Brazil stated that the ruling classes were making the pacifist road of revolution unfeasible. The communists are convinced that the people, sooner or later, will have to resort to armed struggle.

Not out of a love of violence or an absurd desire to shed blood. But as a response to the terrorist policy of domestic reaction and U.S. imperialism. Where there is oppression, revolutionary struggle becomes inevitable.

Brazilians have no choice: to rise up with

arms in hand against the backward military and the Yankee imperialists, or to live in submission to the country's reactionaries and foreign plunderers.

There is no doubt that the vast majority of the nation will choose to take up arms and not submit. The history of the popular masses in Brazil is marked by rebellions against tyrannies and armed movements against tyranny.

The development of the road of armed struggle to overthrow the current regime and win true national independence, progress and freedom is a decisive problem that concerns broad popular sectors and various political currents on the left.

Essential elements of this road have been presented by the Party in some of its documents. But this is not enough. Now, based on Marxism-Leninism, on Mao Zedong's brilliant contributions to people's war, the Party must examine the premises for the emergence and development of the armed struggle and outline, on a more general level, the likely course of this struggle.

The form, strategy and tactics of the armed struggle emanate from certain historical condi-

tions, revolutionary experience and certain national characteristics. It is necessary to take this into account in order to correctly chart the revolutionary road.

I

Factors that Influence the Definition of the Armed Road

Brazil is a dependent country with very strong pre-capitalist features. Land ownership is monopolized by a small group of people and the vast majority of those in the countryside have no land to work.

Archaic production methods hinder the development of agriculture and extensive livestock farming occupies most of the land. U.S. imperialist domination is increasingly felt in the country. Key sectors of the economy are in the hands of the Yankee monopolists. This domination increases day by day and tends to turn Brazil into a colony of the United States.

Despite its immense natural wealth, Brazil is still underdeveloped. It is home to a few advanced industrial centers, such as São Paulo and

Guanabara, and numerous regions whose economy and way of life are little different from colonial times.

The pace of its growth is too slow and, in relation to advanced countries, its backwardness is progressive. The overwhelming majority of Brazil's 90 million inhabitants are going through all kinds of difficulties, while a small minority live in luxury and abundance.

Despite being a single nation, Brazil actually contains two Brazils: the Brazil of the big cities, with relative economic and cultural development, and the Brazil of the countryside, almost completely abandoned. Two-thirds of the Brazilian population live in regions close to the coast.

While population density is high in Brazil's big cities, it is very low in the countryside, although there are areas of relative concentration of peasants and agricultural workers. There are huge voids in the vastness of the national territory.

Over the last fifty years, the people have tried in different ways to pull the nation out of backwardness and foreign dependence. It has lived through experiences of armed struggle,

such as that of November 1935, and has seen periods of a powerful rise in mass struggles, such as 1945 and 1963-1964.

It has created a democratic and anti-imperialist movement of a certain size that is growing in combativeness and revolutionary spirit, despite the low level of organization of the masses.

Large sections of the population are becoming aware that without liquidating the landlord system and imperialist domination, it is impossible to achieve a better life. Increasing numbers of the population become supporters of armed action.

A Marxist-Leninist party is active in the country, the Communist Party of Brazil, which has accumulated revolutionary experience and has undergone the sieve of a fierce ideological struggle against opportunism and revisionism. Its program corresponds to the tasks of the current stage of the Brazilian revolution, has clear objectives and is guided by a vanguard theory. It has the conditions to successfully lead the emancipatory struggle of the Brazilian people.

Brazil is also a country of continental dimensions. It has mountainous regions and a large part of its territory is covered by dense

forests. This gives the revolutionary forces immense room to maneuver.

Taken together, these characteristics are favorable factors for the revolution.

On the other hand, the Armed Forces, the main instrument of oppression of the people, are strong to a certain extent. The Brazilian army is the most numerous and well-armed in Latin America, trained and equipped by the United States. It tightly controls the Military Police in every state.

Currently, the Armed Forces hold the command levers of the country's administrative life. Most of their personnel are concentrated in the big cities. They are closely linked to the Pentagon, from which they receive support and aid, and are part of the global strategy of U.S. imperialism.

The Brazilian people do not yet have their own armed forces and their experience of armed struggle in recent decades has been very limited. There is no tradition of major struggles in the countryside. The revolutionary movement in the countryside is developing slowly, lagging behind what is happening in the cities.

Contrary to what happened before 1930,³ when the inter-imperialist contradictions in Brazil were accentuated and, as a result, the dominant classes were divided, supported by this or that imperialism, today the U.S. influence predominates in the country in an almost total way, penetrating every pore of the nation's life.

The division between the ruling classes is fundamentally between those who are linked to certain national interests and those who are more directly linked to the Yankee monopolies.

In the struggle for power, there are also clashes between bands of the ruling classes, some of which are linked to the United States, but these clashes are tempered by U.S. interference. The possibility of an armed conflict between the ruling classes, supported by rival imperialist groups, is unlikely.

These three aspects of reality—a strong enemy, the absence of armed forces of the people and the predominance of U.S. influence—are

³RedLibrary: In late 1930, a coup took place where Washington Luís (1869-1957) was replaced as the president of Brazil by Getúlio Vargas (1882-1954), who was later deposed in 1954.

unfavorable factors and indicate that the armed struggle in Brazil will be hard and protracted. But these factors are transitory.

While it is true that the reactionary armed forces are strong today, their tendency in the course of a protracted struggle is to weaken.

In turn, the Brazilian people, who at present have neither armed forces nor sufficient military experience, will acquire this experience and create their own army in the course of a protracted struggle. The revolutionary movement in the countryside, which is still weak at the moment, will be transformed into a powerful and combative mass movement in the course of a protracted struggle.

The favorable factors, on the other hand, act permanently and tend to have an ever more favorable influence. The existence of the land monopoly, for example, will make the peasants turn more and more to the side of the revolution.

Likewise, the growing domination of U.S. imperialism will awaken more and more patriots to the revolutionary struggle. The democratic and anti-imperialist movement will march towards becoming ever stronger. And the party

of the working class will also grow and its influence will extend continuously.

II

The Road of Armed Struggle

The factors favorable and unfavorable to the revolution, inherent to the Brazilian reality, are essential elements in defining the road of armed struggle and from them stem the basic aspects of the course of the revolutionary war in Brazil.

What are these aspects?

1. The armed struggle in which the Brazilian people will engage will have a profound popular content, encompassing the broadest masses of the population. The fact that Brazil is a dependent country and that the land is monopolized by a small minority of landlords gives the revolution a national and democratic character, which allows the mobilization of immense social forces to overthrow the current reactionary regime.

The ruling classes cannot resolve the contradiction between the rapid increase in population and the ever-increasing shortage of jobs, education and care.

Nor can they avoid the increasingly shocking contrast between the Brazil of the big cities and the Brazil of the countryside. All this is causing growing discontent among large sections of the population, whose aspirations will only be satisfied by the revolution.

The fact that the Brazilian people have already enjoyed certain freedoms in recent periods of democratic upsurge and have greatly raised their political consciousness pushes them to fight more and more against reaction and imperialist domination.

An armed struggle with a profoundly popular content cannot be led by the national bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie, inconsequential social forces. The leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil, the party of the proletariat and intransigent defender of the interests of

the poorest masses, will allow the revolutionary struggle to embrace the overwhelming majority of the population and have the necessary consequences. Thus, the armed struggle of the revolutionary forces will have an eminently popular character, it will be a people's war.

2. The big cities cannot be the main scene of the war of liberation of the Brazilian people. The most numerous and strongest contingents of the enemy's armed forces are concentrated there.

In urban centers like Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Porto Alegre, Recife, Belo Horizonte, Salvador and others, there are military garrisons with huge resources and trained to crush the people's struggles. These garrisons are able to surround and defeat the rebellious masses who do not have enough weapons to confront them.

This doesn't mean that the big cities don't have an important role to play. Not only in the preparation, but throughout the course of the people's war.

The urban centers are home to 3 million workers and a large layer of the petty bourgeoisie, who, together with the peasants and agricultural wage earners, constitute the driving forces of the revolution. The cities have a tradition of broad and militant mass movements.

In recent years, the student movement and the workers' strikes have reached a high level of combativeness. These struggles are undermining the power of the ruling classes and forcing reaction to maintain large military forces in the cities.

The action of the revolutionaries can reach the enemy's political and military decision-making bodies, as well as its logistical base, located in the urban centers. A large number of patriots will be sent from the cities to the countryside to join the people's armed forces.

The correct and close coordination of revolutionary activities, armed and unarmed, in the countryside and in the cities, is the way to make the people's

forces victorious. The mass political movement in the cities helps to prepare and unleash the armed actions in the countryside and these, in turn, will give impetus to the mass struggles in the big centers.

The countryside is the breeding ground for the people's war. There is a population living in abandonment, ignorance and misery. At the most diverse levels, the peasants are engaged in the struggle for their rights. Due to the brutal repression of the landlords and the police, the actions in the countryside soon take on a radical character. Armed clashes with land grabbers are frequent, especially in squatter areas.

As the Party's Sixth National Conference emphasized, the peasant masses are a great force to be mobilized in order to achieve national and democratic goals. It has expressed its aspiration for land ownership countless times.

It represents a great revolutionary potential which, although it is not awakened

at the moment, is sensitive to the highest struggles and capable of providing the main mass of fighters in the people's war.

The countryside is the weakest link in the domination of the reactionary forces in the country. They don't have enough military personnel to occupy the vast rural areas. Not even a few million soldiers, Brazilian or American, will be able to occupy the harshest regions of Brazil.

In these regions, the reactionary troops will operate in an adverse environment: a geographical situation that favors the people's fighters and hinders the action of the repressive units; difficult or non-existent means of transport; the absence of sources of supply for numerous regular forces; unfavorable social conditions, etc.

As well as being precarious, the lines of communication to these places are very vulnerable. Huge contingents will be needed just to secure them.

The more regions they are forced to occupy, the more the troops of reaction

will disperse their forces and thus weaken themselves because they will be forced to subdivide, leaving themselves exposed to the blows of the revolutionaries.

Inside, the people's armed forces will have at their disposal a wide field of maneuver that will allow them to avoid encirclement, save and accumulate forces. This will ensure the survival of the fighting groups in the difficult initial phase of the people's war. Therefore, the countryside will be the fundamental terrain in which the people's war will develop.

3. Brazilians cannot expect a quick victory in the fight against their mortal enemies. To make the revolution victorious throughout the country, it is necessary to destroy the armed forces of the reactionaries—the Army, Navy, Air Force, and other instruments of repression.

It will also be necessary to defeat numerous U.S. troops who will undoubtedly be sent to Brazil. Such is the importance of Brazil in the imperialist plans of the

United States that they will not easily renounce their domination of the country.

The task of defeating such powerful enemies involves enormous difficulties and will therefore take a long time. Although the revolutionary forces will, over time, come to dominate large regions and create people's power in them, it is clear that the complete victory of the Brazilian people will only be achieved after an arduous and protracted struggle.

In order to strike demolishing blows capable of annihilating the enemy's living forces, it will be necessary to mobilize, organize and arm the great masses of millions of Brazilians, to gain power and experience.

All of this implies a huge amount of political and ideological work to pull the masses out from under the influence of the landlords and the bourgeoisie. Such tasks will only be accomplished in the course of a war lasting several years.

The duration of the people's war will be determined by the greater or lesser

mobilization of the people, the degree of their participation in the struggle and the greater or lesser combat capacity of the enemy in the face of the revolutionary forces. In this way, the war of liberation of the Brazilian people will be protracted.

4. The people's war will require huge human and material resources. It is not easy to feed, clothe, arm and supply armed forces that will expand more and more, when you are operating in regions with few resources and when the enemy, with superior forces, will do everything to prevent the revolutionaries from receiving supplies.

This task will have to be carried out by the popular forces, based on their own efforts. There should be no illusions about logistical support from abroad. Brazil's borders are home to reactionary countries.

Fundamentally, the material resources will be obtained in the country. It is up to the Brazilian people to carry out the people's war. No one from outside can

replace them in this historic mission. But they are not alone. It has the solidarity of the revolutionary peoples and the support of the popular masses of Latin America. This will help them a great deal in the struggle they will wage based on their own efforts.

Most of the arms and equipment of the people's forces will have to be captured from the enemy, although the people will have to produce them as far as they can. When there are liberated areas, then it will be possible to manufacture weapons and other equipment needed for the war in larger quantities.

Food will have to come from the countryside. For this reason, from the outset, the combatants, in addition to their military activity, will dedicate themselves, together with the peasants, to productive work, so as not to overburden the local population with the supply of food. In this way, the people will wage their war based mainly on their own strength.

5. Guerrilla warfare will be the main form

of struggle in the initial phase of the people's war. It is through this type of struggle that armed action against the nation's enemies can be initiated and the people's armed forces can begin to be structured.

It is the means by which groups of combatants, inferior in numbers and weapons to the enemy, will achieve victories and gradually become a regular army.

In a way, guerrilla warfare has already been used in various popular movements in Brazilian history. In the black quilombos of the time of slavery, in the Cabanagem in Pará, in Canudos in Bahia and in the Contestado on the borders of Paraná and Santa Catarina, among others, the fighting tactics had a lot of guerrilla warfare in them. Particularly in the Canudos resistance, the combatants avoided frontal combat as much as possible.

They were always on the run from the government's military expeditions. They frequently harassed and harassed them. During ten months of combat, the gov-

ernment troops felt the presence of the men from Canudos at all times, but had enormous difficulties locating them outside the camp.

The *sertanejos*,⁴ with rudimentary weapons, acted by surprise and ambushed the army, causing confusion. On the run, they even killed the commanders who were moving away from the protected areas.

The Brazilian people, when resorting to guerrilla warfare, will fight in their own way, creating the most diverse methods of struggle according to local peculiarities.

In the conditions of a country like Brazil, guerrilla warfare will only develop taking into account the strength and situation of the enemy, the topography of the terrain, the roads and means of communication, climatic factors, the mood of the population at a given time and place and the situation in which the guerrilla force

⁴RedLibrary: “*sertanejo*” roughly translates to “rural person.”

finds itself. It can only grow with the support of the masses.

The guerrillas will avoid attacking the adversary's strong points and will attack the weak points; they will always ensure their freedom to advance and withdraw; and they will be prepared to engage in small, quick-decision battles.

Mao Zedong summarized the tactics of guerrilla warfare as follows: "The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue."

Because the Brazilian people do not have armed forces and the enemy does everything to prevent them from being formed, guerrilla warfare is the appropriate instrument for starting the armed struggle and the starting point for building the regular army.

From it will emerge cadres capable of commanding large military units. Thus, guerrilla warfare will be an essential element of the people's war.

6. In order to defeat the armed forces of reaction and the troops of the U.S. imperialists, the people will have to forge the weapon capable of opposing them and annihilating them. This weapon is the people's army. Mao Zedong, the great teacher of people's war, teaches that "Without a people's army the people have nothing."

The people's army can only emerge in the course of the struggle itself and will only master the art of fighting in the war itself. Its embryos will be small groups of fighters who will use the guerrilla method.

It will have to be an army made up fundamentally of the poorest masses of the population, i.e. the peasants, agricultural wage earners and workers, and also incorporate students and intellectuals.

It will be at the service of the people and will be completely different from the current army of reaction. It will be guided by conscious discipline and its members will have to be examples of heroism, detachment and devotion to the revolutionary

cause.

As the guerrilla war develops, there will come a time when the armed groups will increase in number and combat capacity to such an extent that it will become possible to employ military units at company, battalion, regimental, etc. level.

A regular army will be formed. The people will then have in their hands the most effective instrument for confronting their oppressors. Only by creating a people's army will it be possible to wage decisive battles to seize power. It will therefore be essential to build a people's army.

7. Building support bases in the countryside is vital to the success of the people's war. These bases have a strategic character and without them it is impossible to develop guerrilla warfare and build a powerful people's army.

By strengthening and expanding the support bases, the people's armed forces will extend the siege of the enemy until its total annihilation.

The reactionary armed forces have their bases firmly established in the big cities, while they are relatively weak in the countryside. On the other hand, the people's armed forces must build their bases precisely in the countryside because there is enormous revolutionary potential there—the peasant masses—and it is where the subsistence economy is very widespread, a fact that makes possible an economic and social life that is, to a certain extent, autonomous.

Building support bases in the countryside is the fundamental guarantee for the preservation and development of the revolutionary forces, the basis for sustaining the guerrillas and the people's army for a protracted war, allowing the establishment of solid rearguards that will give rise to the training of cadres, the resting of the troops and the recruitment of new fighters, the accumulation of forces, the organization of permanent sources of supplies, the creation of medical services, etc.

Support bases can't be created overnight. In the run-up to the people's war, it is essential to target areas that are ripe for the creation of support bases and to work on them with this in mind.

These bases will be established in the course of the armed struggle itself. The guerrillas will operate in specific areas, always aiming to build support bases. They will be highly mobile, not attached to the defense of territories, but they will never be wandering groups.

Their primary function is to win over the masses to the revolution, and they try to put down deep roots among the inhabitants of the area in which they operate.

They help the workers in the countryside solve their problems and defend them from the violence of the *jagunços*⁵ and soldiers of the reaction, they try to awaken their political consciousness and

⁵RedLibrary: A *Jagunço* is an armed unit hired by a landlord to maintain their exploitative ownership of the land.

stimulate their organization for the struggle.

As they become closely linked to the local population, the local population will become increasingly hostile to the enemy and increasingly sympathetic to the revolutionary forces. Over time, those areas will become solid footholds for the people's war. There, power will be in the hands of the people. Thus, the people's war will require the formation of support bases.

8. The people's armed forces cannot set themselves immediate objectives that they cannot achieve. They will fight battles that are advantageous to them and will not accept those that could cause them a certain amount of damage.

Even battles that offer them momentary advantages, but which could also cause serious difficulties for the development of the people's war, will be avoided. In the first phase of the struggle, they will be guided by the principles of strategic

defense, because they are weak and the enemy is strong.

The enemy is on the offensive, because it has control over the country. However, strategic defensiveness does not mean passivity. The revolutionary armed forces need to take the maximum initiative and wage numerous struggles, without putting their very existence at risk.

Only when the correlation of forces between the contenders changes, i.e. when the revolutionaries become strong, will the phase of the balance of forces emerge and then that of the strategic offensive, which will take place when the popular forces have acquired superiority on the military terrain and are in a position to strike mortal blows at the enemy.

But even so, it is likely that factors will arise that alter the phase of the balance of forces or the phase of the strategic offensive, forcing the people's fighters to return to the previous phase. This would happen, for example, if serious mistakes were made or if reactionary armed forces

from other countries intervened with powerful expeditionary armies.

Everything indicates that the strategic defensive phase will be the longest of the people's war. The task of transforming small groups of fighters into a regular army will take a lot of struggle and a long time. Therefore, in order to accumulate forces and acquire power, the people's fighters, in the first phase of the people's war, will have to develop their struggle within the framework of the strategic defensive.

9. Without a just political orientation, the people's war cannot succeed. Being a war of the masses, it must express the most heartfelt aspirations of the people. For this reason, its primary objective is to rid the country of U.S. domination, of the old structures that hinder Brazil's progress and of the current reactionary regime.

It aims to create a revolutionary people's government that will ensure national independence, freedoms for the people,

culture and well-being for the masses, land for the peasants and full economic development of the nation. If the armed struggle presents a political program that does not correspond to reality, it will be doomed to failure beforehand.

In the present situation, in which a despicable military dictatorship prevails, which is turning not only against the workers, peasants, and students, but against all citizens who do not agree with the tyrannical regime, the people's war must unfurl very broad political flags and really become the great hope of the overwhelming majority of Brazilians.

The people's war, in the areas where it achieves victory, will create people's power and carry out its program. It will end oppression and give freedom to the masses. It will respect the democratic rights of all citizens, except those who stand against the people. It will respond to popular demands and try to solve the land problem.

By mobilizing the popular masses, it will

organize the economic, political and social life of the region according to the interests of its inhabitants. It will respect religion and the family. Within the existing possibilities, it will develop education, provide work for all and promote medical care for the needy. Thus, the people's war must be guided by a correct policy.

In short, the road of the armed struggle has the following basic aspects: it will be a people's war, it will be fought fundamentally in the countryside and will mobilize the great peasant masses, it will be protracted, it will have to rely on the country's own resources, it will employ the method of guerrilla warfare on a large scale, it will forge the people's army, it will establish bases of support in the countryside. It will have to be guided, for a long time, by the principles of strategic defense and it will have to be guided by a correct policy.

People's war is not a static concept. All its basic aspects are complex and inter-

dependent processes, which are in permanent movement. The way to look at them must start from the idea that small becomes big, non-existence gives way to existence, weakness becomes strength.

The people's war is not fully formed. It has its preparatory phase and its beginnings are fraught with difficulties. Many of the elements that make it up are, at first, mere embryos that will assert themselves in the course of the struggle.

“A revolution or a revolutionary war”—says Mao Zedong—“in its emergence and growth from a small force to a big force, from the absence of political power to the seizure of political power, from the absence of a Red Army to the creation of a Red Army, and from the absence of revolutionary base areas to their establishment.”⁶

⁶RedLibrary: Mao Zedong, *Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, 1936.

III

Critical Evaluation of Other Roads of Armed Struggle

In drawing up the road of armed struggle in Brazil, the road of people's war, the experience of a whole period of mistakes and successes in the struggles of the Brazilian people was also taken into account, as was the critical examination of false theories about armed struggle.

In Brazil, over the last 50 years, various roads of armed struggle have been tried in order to achieve more or less far-reaching democratic and patriotic goals. Barracks uprisings were the most common method used.

In 1922-1924, soldiers from the petty bourgeoisie, expressing their discontent with the system of government in place at the time, revolted in barracks in different parts of the country. These attempts failed.

In 1931, in Recife and Terezina, there were barracks uprisings led by corporals and sergeants. Their content was popular and reflected the dissatisfaction of the poor masses of the people. Restricted to the barracks, they did not succeed.

In 1935, under the leadership of the National Liberation Alliance, barracks rebellions broke out in Rio de Janeiro, Recife and Natal against the fascistization of the country and for a revolutionary national people's government.

These rebellions did not have a strictly military character, since they arose within the framework of a broad mass movement, anti-imperialist and democratic, carried out throughout the country.

They were events of historic importance, of which the revolutionary movement in Brazil is proud. But the insurrection of 1935, despite its positive sides, was fundamentally limited to the struggle in military units and therefore did not achieve success.

The barracks uprising, which is not based on the action of the masses or subordinated to the needs of the revolutionary movement, is a method that leads the people into passivity. Following this method, it is not up to the masses to

play an active part in the armed struggle.

They must wait for the victorious uprising in the barracks. Thus, the realization of the revolutionary struggle in its highest form becomes the work of the conspiracy of a small number of people.

Another road of armed struggle in Brazil was the one taken by the Prestes Column, from 1924 to 1927. This is an experience that should be studied. For two and a half years, in the countryside, the Column endured the persecution of the government forces, which were far superior in terms of manpower and weapons. It did not allow itself to be defeated, despite the enormous difficulties it faced.

But it didn't achieve victory. In the end, it interned and dissolved itself in foreign territory. In this way, it proved not to be the true road of the Brazilian people's armed struggle. Covering more than 20,000 kilometers, from the south to the north of the country, it did not succeed, nor could it succeed, due to its nomadism, in putting down roots in the populations of the countryside.

It despised the peasant masses and its political objectives did nothing to awaken or mobi-

lize them. Without settling in any territory, the Prestes Column was unable to organize armed forces capable of defeating the enemy.

It had an exclusively military conception and its purpose was to provoke barracks uprisings in different parts of the country. In today's circumstances, with the development of the means of communication and the greater use of aviation as a combat weapon, a war waged along the lines of the Column would have much less chance of success.

During Goulart's government,⁷ the sergeants' uprising in Brasília took place in support of democratic demands and lasted only a few hours. Also during this period, under the influence of reformism, a good part of the popular masses harbored illusions in a road that relied on the government's so-called military apparatus.

They trusted that the officers considered to be democrats and patriots would prevent the coup action of the more reactionary military and that, in this way, the popular movement would advance through successive reforms. But

⁷RedLibrary: João Goulart (1919-1976) was the president of Brazil from 1961 up until the April 1st 1964 coup.

in March-April 1964, despite the fact that the democratic and patriotic movement had the sympathy of Armed Forces officers, especially sergeants and sailors, there was no resistance to the military coup.

Support for the military apparatus of rulers considered to be nationalists is nothing revolutionary and is extremely deadly. It puts the masses behind the bourgeoisie, breaks their fighting spirit and instills false hopes in the people of a pacifist solution.

After April 1964, the idea began to spread that the road of armed struggle for the Brazilian people would be the one advocated by the “focus [*foco*]” theory. This theory does not take into account the objective situation, the class forces present, and the political process underway.

It is a voluntarist conception. According to the “*foco*” theorists, the guerrilla movement develops harmoniously, “from a single central nucleus,” located in regions that are not very accessible and with combatants from the cities.

This nucleus grows into a master column which, when it reaches 120 to 150 men, gives rise to another column which, in turn, gives rise to

another and so on. Its existence and maintenance depend fundamentally on urban centers.

Its method is not aimed at winning over the masses so that they can wage their own war. The "*foco*," according to its advocates, by itself, through the heroic acts of small groups, attracts new fighters and leads the revolution to victory. The revolutionary party of the proletariat is unnecessary. The guerrilla is the party itself.

This idealistic, petty-bourgeois theory has proved to be completely false in practice. It failed in Peru, Argentina, Bolivia and other countries, despite the heroism and detachment of many guerrillas who were guided by it.

In Brazil, there were two attempts at armed struggle based on the "*foco*" theory: that of Colonel Jeferson Cardim, in Rio Grande do Sul, and that of a group of ex-military personnel and civilians in the Serra de Caparaó. Both were short-lived. The first lasted a few days and was defeated. The other never came to fruition. There are still political groups in the country that advocate "focoism."

The "*foco*" theory leads to the renunciation of work among the masses and does not trust their ability to assimilate revolutionary ideas

and launch into struggle. For this reason, guerrillas based on the “*foco*” are alien to the masses and dedicate themselves almost exclusively to armed actions.

“Focalism” is a purely military conception of the revolution. Its adherents don’t understand that the revolutionary war involves three inseparable aspects—the military, the political and the mass—and that the political aspect is the determining one. They also don’t understand that the revolution is the work of each people and aims to carry out a program that corresponds to the objective conditions of a given country. It cannot be a continental revolution, as the “*focoists*” want.

The “*foco*” conception denies the need for the Party, contrasts the guerrilla with the Party and argues that the armed group is the political vanguard of the revolution. It is therefore very harmful.

Without the existence of a revolutionary party, which prepares and directs the armed struggle in all areas and at national level, it is impossible to achieve victory. The struggle of the people against their mortal enemies cannot be reduced to the action of an armed group.

It is much broader and more multifaceted. It is simply ridiculous to deny the need for the Party in carrying out the armed struggle, as Fidel Castro does, and to attribute, in the presentation of Guevara's Diary, the failure of the Santa Cruz guerrilla to the lack of support from parties in Bolivia and Latin America. There is no contradiction between the guerrilla and the Party.

This contradiction exists when it comes to an opportunist organization. But truly vanguard parties are indispensable instruments for the revolution. Denying the Party is, in essence, a way of opposing the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolution for the benefit of the petty bourgeoisie.

Revolutionary war requires a just political orientation and military line, a firm, audacious leadership capable of guiding itself correctly in all situations, with a broad political vision and mastery of military art.

It requires intense ideological work among the masses and especially among the combatants. In this war, the people and their armed forces must have high political understanding, high morale and a deep-rooted patriotic con-

science, which are absolutely necessary to face the difficulties of such a difficult and cruel struggle. Only an organization that identifies with the exploited and oppressed and expresses national and democratic aspirations, such as the Communist Party, is in a position to carry out these tasks.

In order to forge the unity of the people, a basic element of the revolutionary war, and to carry out the permanent mobilization of the masses in the countryside and the cities, we cannot do without a political organization that, by its conception and objectives, is at the service of the unity of the proletariat and the worker-peasant alliance, an alliance around which all the other progressive forces will coalesce. This organization is the Communist Party.

It is clear, therefore, that the Brazilian people will not achieve their liberation through the false roads of barracks uprisings, wandering columns, support for military government apparatuses or the so-called "*foco*" theory. They will have to resort to other methods to defeat their enemies. The method that corresponds to the reality and demands of the Brazilian revolution is that of the people's war.

IV

Emergence and Development of People's War

Like all phenomena in society and nature, the people's war has its beginning, its development and its end. Each aspect of this unique process differs from the other and has its own particularities.

The start of the people's war cannot be the voluntary act of one or other political current. In reality, it arises in a certain situation in which it becomes necessary to move from the phase of unarmed mass struggle to the phase of armed mass struggle.

In such a situation, the conscious work of the vanguard plays a very important role, both in terms of indicating the right course and in terms of practical action aimed at moving from one phase to the other. Any spontaneist posi-

tion on this issue is extremely flawed.

“Theorists” from the Superior War School and infatuated generals from the National Security Council claim that the revolutionary war is an artificial creation, the result of the conjuring up of radical groups or the diabolical maneuvers of “extremists.”

And they go further. They declare that it is a conspiracy hatched abroad. In their stupidity and ignorance, they are incapable of realizing that the outbreak of revolutionary war is the result of internal processes and obeys objective laws.

The revolution is a product of the worsening class contradictions in society. And it advances, as Marx said, because it creates a strong and united counter-revolution, that is, it forces the enemy to resort to ever more violent means of defense, which forces the revolution to devise ever more powerful means of attack.

The start of the armed struggle is a process that requires fair solutions and adequate political and military preparation. It is directly related to the fact that the first groups of fighters are weak, while the enemy is strong.

The forces of reaction intensify their efforts

to prevent the emergence of armed struggle or crush it in its infancy. For revolutionaries, therefore, it is not just a question of starting armed actions. The survival and development of the fighting groups is a vital issue.

Even if the situation is ripe, the combatants must have forged solid links with the masses in the region and be able to formulate their demands. They must also be perfectly familiar with the terrain in which they are going to act and ensure that its geographical conditions are favorable to the revolutionary forces and unfavorable to those of the enemy. They must also be physically and morally prepared for the struggle.

The start of the people's war is not something that presents insurmountable obstacles. There are different motivations for unleashing armed struggle in the countryside.

It can be the result of the popular struggle against injustices and arbitrariness; the consequence of the mass movement in the countryside for their specific demands; the fruit of the political struggle that involves the whole country; the result of the action of groups of armed propagandists.

In the countryside, violence against simple people is common. Any police soldier commits the most outrageous acts. *Jagunços* in service of land grabbers set fire to houses, mistreat their inhabitants, and kill squatters. Peasants are often beaten and murdered by landlords and their henchmen.

Police authorities brazenly steal objects, weapons, and money from workers. Many of these events cause great indignation among the masses. However, when resistance to such abuses arises, it is limited to certain individual actions or those of disorganized groups. Those who do so are almost always imprisoned or forced to flee the region. But this resistance can be organized.

This is shown by the recent example of Guairacá, in the state of Paraná. By raising the level of consciousness of the masses, it is possible to mobilize them to resist all the violence perpetrated against them. This is why it is necessary to form clandestine groups that are the armed arm of the people and take appropriate action against the bullies, oppressors, and executioners. In clashes with the repressive forces, these groups can be transformed into guerrilla

detachments.

The populations of the countryside live in complete helplessness; they have no medical care, not enough schools and very precarious means of transportation. Their rights are being taken away and their interests hurt. The arbitrary dismissal of certain people-friendly mayors or the hateful persecution of priests, doctors and teachers held in high esteem by the masses is very much felt.

Peasants are cheated out of the price of their products. Landlords and their agents often don't pay the workers in the fields. Serious struggles can break out around issues like these.

The stronger these struggles are, the more the reaction will be emboldened. These mass movements, if well led, can evolve into armed clashes, which in turn requires the formation of combat groups.

Armed struggle can also arise in the countryside in connection with problems that affect the whole country. Hatred of the dictatorship and U.S. imperialism extends to the most distant regions. The masses in the countryside have repeatedly condemned the government's anti-grassroots policies, in particular the heavy

taxes imposed on agricultural producers. They reject the persecution of well-known politicians of national prominence or elements of local prestige. The military are repudiated by the rural masses, who see in them the image of oppression and arbitrariness.

The hoarding of vast areas of land by the Americans is a cause for concern among the countrymen, who see this as a serious threat to the integrity of the country and the expansion of the latifundia in the hands of foreigners.

In this way, the flag of the struggle against the dictatorship and U.S. imperialism can attract the masses to the armed struggle in the countryside. This will become even more feasible as the clashes between the masses and the dictatorial government intensify in the cities.

The armed struggle can also begin with the action of groups of armed propagandists. Revolutionary propaganda plays an important role in mobilizing the masses in the countryside and raising their political consciousness. But this propaganda cannot be carried out easily. In the conditions of dictatorship in which the country lives, the slightest agitation among the masses leads the enemy to investigate and arrest those

who carry it out.

That's why revolutionary propaganda in the countryside will have to be carried out in large part by elements capable of defending themselves from the persecution of the reactionaries. The propagandists must know the region and its inhabitants well and be in a position not to be trapped or annihilated.

Their main objective is to awaken the masses to the defense of their interests, help them organize, win them over to the idea of the people's war and, in one way or another, incorporate them into the revolutionary struggle. This activity will inevitably attract the fury of the enemy, who will seek to destroy them. In defending themselves, the propagandists will end up in armed clashes with the repressive forces.

In this way, the armed struggle can arise from different motives and in various parts of the countryside of Brazil. At the beginning, armed actions aim to give the masses greater confidence in their strength, increase their fighting capacity and help them understand the need to take up arms as the only way to achieve a better life.

Little by little, with the successes and experi-

ences gained, the armed struggle will spread to different areas. The time will come when, due to the strengthening of the revolutionary forces and the dispersal and weakening of the enemy, the people's war will be waged not only in the most distant regions, but also in areas close to the major centers.

Without the material and human resources to occupy the vastness of Brazilian territory, the forces of reaction will not be able to be everywhere. They will find themselves besieged and beaten on all sides. Then, the people's armed struggle will take on a new level and bigger battles will be fought.

Although the countryside will be the scene of the armed struggle, the possibility of armed clashes in the cities is not ruled out. The dictatorship is becoming more and more brutal and the indignation of the masses in the urban centers at the violence of the military is growing unceasingly. In such circumstances, popular explosions will be inevitable.

Last year, with the murder of student Edson Souto,⁸ large masses in Guanabara, Brasilia, Salvador, Fortaleza, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte and

⁸RedLibrary: Edson Souto (1950-1968) was a Brazil-

Curitiba held powerful street demonstrations that panicked the forces of reaction. Now, with the new onslaughts of the dictatorship, these explosions tend to take on a much more radical character.

In one city or another, the momentum of the mass movement could turn into a generalized revolt. As there are few possibilities for the revolutionary forces to remain in the cities, they will engage in organized resistance and must be prepared to withdraw into the countryside when their positions become untenable.

Nor should it be ruled out that there will be armed clashes in the cities between bands of the ruling classes in the dispute for control of the government. In this case, the revolutionary forces must seize the opportunity to arm and organize themselves as an independent military force, carry out intense revolutionary propaganda and, when the situation demands, move to the regions most conducive to the development of armed struggle.

Whatever the motivation for unleashing the armed struggle in the interior, it will initially

ian student protester who was murdered by the Brazilian police.

take the form of guerrilla warfare. This war will need to be organized. It will always have to rely on firm political and military leadership and permanent political-ideological work.

The guerrillas need firm men with great loyalty to the people, with revolutionary consciousness and self-confidence, who are persevering, have a certain knowledge of organization, the ability to connect with the masses and vigilance against the enemy's disintegrating activity.

Spontaneity and indiscipline are incompatible with guerrilla groups, which must be homogeneous and have great combative power. "Undisciplined guerrilla detachments absolutely cannot aim for victory."⁹

Discipline in guerrilla warfare, although it differs radically from that imposed in the Army of Reaction, because it is voluntary and conscious, must be inflexible. The orders issued by the command must be complied with unconditionally.

At every opportunity, the guerrilla will help the people and will never cause any damage to the property of the masses. They will treat the

⁹Mao Zedong.

wounded with care and establish proper relations with prisoners.

Fraternity must govern relations between guerrilla members, who must always be ready to help their comrades, not only during the fighting but also when they are not directly confronting the enemy.

The guerrilla will try to improve his weapons handling, shooting, military engineering, obstacle avoidance, camp organization, knowledge of the terrain, orientation during marches, elimination of traces, and will take care of his political and ideological education. Their physical fitness must be given particular attention.

Guerrilla warfare is a form of mass struggle. It is the armed force of the masses in the struggle to defend their specific demands and the interests of the majority of the nation. In their activity, guerrilla groups must reflect the will of the inhabitants of the region in which they operate. They fight injustice, arbitrariness and violence against the people.

Guerrilla warfare will have mass content and clear political objectives. Even if it has such objectives and they don't correspond to the interests and sentiments of the population, it

won't have their support and will end up being destroyed. This is why guerrilla warfare is a form of struggle that can only be successfully employed by revolutionary forces.

The guerrilla groups will make incursions against the adversary, disrupt its formation, hammer its flanks and weak points and carry out sabotage in the rear—all with the aim of confusing, containing, and disorganizing the enemy, in order to slow it down, wear it down, demoralize it and finally defeat it.

The initial phase will be the most difficult for the guerrillas. The enemy is in a position to concentrate large military forces in an attempt to crush the first guerrilla groups. They will try to put out the fire before it spreads.

The guerrillas will survive if they have the support of the masses and great mobility to prevent encirclement. It must know how to hide, cut off contact with the enemy, and break the siege when it happens. It will have to rely on hideouts.

In the beginning, the guerrillas' concern will be less about fighting repeated battles with the enemy and more about carrying out revolutionary propaganda among the masses, raising

their awareness of their rights and their desire to fight against their oppressors.

When carrying out swift attacks, sabotage, and ambushes, they will do so as quickly and effectively as possible. Acts of this nature can be carried out in just a few minutes and the retreat must be immediate. In attacks on the enemy, it is always necessary to have absolute superiority in men in order to surround and annihilate them.

In any armed action, it is essential to draw up a plan in advance that includes how to deal with eventualities, in particular how to withdraw and where the guerrillas will meet up again.

The enemy's attempts at a counter-ambush, which will also try to use guerrilla forms of struggle, must be given close attention. For this reason, the guerrillas must be prepared, avoid the routes and places that favor this type of military action and be well informed about their opponent's movements.

At any stage of the guerrilla war, as in the people's war as a whole, the existence of an information service is extremely valuable.

Especially in the initial stages, when there

is a profound inequality of forces between the belligerents, information is of decisive importance for the weaker party, in this case the people's fighters.

The success and survival of the revolutionary armed forces will depend to a large extent on a good intelligence service, capable of providing data on the enemy's movements and plans. The main source of information for the people's war is the people.

V

The People's War Will Have to Defeat the Enemies of the People

The main enemies of the Brazilian people, which they will have to defeat in the people's war, are the U.S. imperialists and the internal reactionary forces, which stand in the way of the nation's development.

In order to maintain their domination of the country, these enemies rely fundamentally on the Armed Forces.

Without completely destroying them, the people will not be able to free themselves from the imperialist yoke and the backwards regime in Brazil. From the military point of view, the people's war will have to confront the current Armed Forces and, later, U.S. troops who will inevitably come to their aid.

The Armed Forces, advised and equipped

by the United States, are no longer geared towards defending the country in the face of external aggression. Their military doctrine, their training system, their repeated maneuvers are aimed at repressing the struggles of the people and preparing troops to fight the people's war.

The basic theses of the military theory taught at the War College and the General Staff Schools consider that "the era in which conventional armies focused on the frontier prevailed, for the defense of the country from a classic, academic war" is over. Under the direct guidance of the Pentagon, the Armed Forces devised the so-called National Security policy, to which they subordinate all government activity.

Particularly after the April 1st coup, the three arms intensified their preparations to repress popular movements.

The construction of airports in the most remote regions, the opening of communications between distant areas, are not intended to benefit the people. They are part of a plan to crush the struggles of the masses.

The army has dedicated itself to training elite troops specialized in fighting the guerrilla warfare, surviving in the jungle, crossing rivers

by improvised means and increasing the fire-power of isolated elements.

He organized a course in Manaus to train military specialists in the fight against guerrillas. A large number of officers and sergeants studied and trained at U.S. anti-guerrilla military training centers.

The Air Force reorganized its flight units and adapted much of its equipment to the needs of actions against guerrilla warfare. It created PARASAR, an anti-guerrilla shock troop with the mission of reducing terrorist acts in urban centers.

It bought planes and helicopters for this type of action. It trains numerous officers and non-commissioned officers to fight popular movements, both in the cities and in the countryside.

The Navy is also trying to adapt to fighting guerrillas. The so-called Operation Unitas, carried out jointly by the squadrons of several Latin American countries and U.S. warships, is a naval maneuver that serves to train sailors for conventional warfare and the anti-guerrilla struggle. The Marines mainly prepare to carry out war operations against popular uprisings.

In the barracks, various techniques for dispersing street demonstrations and even physically liquidating demonstrators are currently being taught. The Military Police, under the command of army officers, specialize in fighting mass demonstrations in the cities and repressing peasant movements.

General Meira Matos, who made a name for himself as a servant of the Yankee military when he commanded Brazilian troops in Santo Domingo, said that the Military Police must be “ready for so-called repressive missions when they are tasked with breaking up and controlling riots and disturbances, as well as defending sensitive points in urban or rural areas.”

The Armed Forces are thus at war with the people. At the moment, their main function is to repress the popular masses. They act as if they were engaged in major military actions.

What the commanders of the armed forces fear most is the outbreak of a people's war. To prevent it, they have created a vast information and espionage apparatus. Under the supervision of the SNI¹⁰ and the Secret Services of the

¹⁰RedLibrary: SNI stands for National Information Service [*Serviço Nacional de Informações*], a now-defunct

Army, Navy and Air Force, a whole network of agents operates in the Recruitment Boards, Revenue Boards, Collectorates, City Halls, the Malaria Eradication Campaign, and other public offices.

In addition, the Armed Forces carried out infiltration and espionage among students, professors, intellectuals, and also in opposition circles. They tried to place informers in the workers' and peasants' movements and in the organizations of revolutionary parties.

Lately, the secret services of the Armed Forces, in collaboration with the CIA, have promoted some acts of terrorism and bank robberies. In several of these actions, ordinary people have been killed. These services try to attribute their crimes to the revolutionary forces, with the aim of making them incompatible with public opinion.

Alongside these activities by the armed forces, the U.S. imperialists are also taking measures in Brazil to combat the people's war.

The CIA has set up an extensive intelligence system throughout the country and cooperates closely with the secret services of the armed

intelligence agency of the Brazilian state.

forces in repressing the patriotic and democratic movement.

Under the label of Peace Volunteers, Yankee agents carry out military uprisings in vast areas of the country. In distant regions, groups of Americans have "farms" with airstrips, radio stations, weapons depots and even medical services.

The Armed Forces of Reaction, however, are not as strong as they try to appear. On the contrary, they are quite vulnerable.

The cause they defend is repudiated by the overwhelming majority of the nation. Their morale is based on anti-democratic and anti-national principles. It will not withstand the clashes of a people's war.

The soldiers come from the people and don't think in the same way as the fascist generals. Many of them are not willing to give their lives to maintain the infamous dictatorship that humiliates Brazil and serves the Yankee monopolists.

Sergeants and some officers are also sensitive to the patriotic struggle. This means that, in the course of the people's war, isolated elements and even units of the Armed Forces will be neu-

tralized or won over to the camp of the revolution.

In a fierce struggle, the Armed Forces tend to disintegrate and will not be very combative. Their military tradition is almost non-existent. Very few times have they engaged in fierce combat. In recent years, they have devoted themselves especially to arresting, beating and torturing prisoners, a clear display of extreme cowardice.

The people's war will defeat the armed forces. Even if the generals know the methods of the people's war and train numerous troops to crush it, they will not be able to defeat it. They will march inexorably along the same road as all reactionaries: oppressing the people, attacking them and being defeated by them.

The enemy will end up drowned in the ocean of the people's war. The flame of the revolutionary struggle, even if lit in distant places, will give new hope to millions of Brazilians, who will be eager to join, body and soul, a struggle that is theirs and for which they will be willing to shed their blood.

Wider and wider sections of the masses will join the fighters of the people's war. Every pa-

triot will have a role to play. While some fight with arms in hand, others will be engaged in different tasks.

As the army moves its troops to distant regions, its communications and supply lines will be attacked along their entire route by the actions of the patriots.

In the silence of the night, there will always be those who erect obstacles on the road, who fire a mine on the way, who destroy a bridge, who set fire to the enemy's fuel and food depots, who give misinformation that bewilders them, who carry out surprise attacks.

All the small country towns, villages, estates, and farms will create their own action groups, organized with people capable of carrying out the most diverse missions. Operating underground, they will be a real nightmare for the reactionary forces and their allies in the United States.

They will eliminate Peace Volunteers, U.S. military personnel in disguise and CIA agents who find themselves there. They will destroy radio stations, arms depots, and other facilities belonging to the Yankees. But those persecuted by the reaction, the wounded and the fighters in

the service of the people will find help and support in those villages.

The mountains and the forests, the ravines and the thickets, the caves and the densest plantations, will shelter the heroic guerrillas, protected by the sympathy and vigilance of the masses.

The cities will also create their own self-defense groups to protect the mass demonstrations, which, in the process of the people's war, will hit the enemy's nerve points and organize harassment actions as well as diversionary work.

But their actions will be nothing like the terrorist acts currently carried out in the big cities. They will be directed against the enemy's military force and everything that supports it.

Simultaneously with the armed actions, mass struggles will develop in the cities and in the countryside. Thousands and thousands of workers, students, agricultural workers, peasants, housewives and intellectuals will raise their voices demanding their rights and protesting against the dictatorship.

Powerful strikes, factory occupations and street demonstrations will strike blows at the enemies of the people. The struggles of the

urban masses will contribute to holding back huge contingents of reactionary forces in the big centers, thereby helping those fighting in the countryside.

And in the great struggle of the people's war, the Brazilian people will unite more and more, forging the union of all patriots for independence, progress and freedom.

The workers and peasants, the most suffering part of the population, in an indestructible alliance, will form the basis of this union. It will include the broadest popular sectors, all Brazilians who do not agree with the dictatorship and do not want to be lackeys of the Yankee imperialists.

By taking up arms, the Brazilian people will end up defeating the armed forces of reaction. "Experience in the class struggle in the era of imperialism"—says Mao Zedong, the greatest Marxist-Leninist of our time—"teaches us that it is only by the power of the gun that the working class and the laboring masses can defeat the armed bourgeoisie and landlords; in this sense we may say that only with guns can the whole world be transformed."¹¹

¹¹RedLibrary: Mao Zedong, *Problems of War and*

VI

The Task of the Whole Party

It wasn't suddenly that the Party arrived at its current understanding of the road of armed struggle. When it reorganized in February 1962, its main concern was the irreconcilable fight against the pacifist line defended by the revisionists.

Its propaganda in favor of the violent solution was intense. In August 1964, while analyzing the causes of the defeat on April 1st, the Party took a big step forward in developing the road of armed struggle. It pointed out that the peasant question is the key problem of the revolution; that U.S. imperialism is the main enemy of the people; that the national and democratic united front has acquired a very broad character; that the leadership of the democratic anti-imperialist movement must be in the hands of

the proletariat.

And it highlighted the role of the Armed Forces as the main instrument of repression of the ruling classes. At the Sixth National Conference in 1966, the Party defined the road of armed struggle as that of the people's war and established its most general principles.

It outlined the political tactics whose essence is the preparation and waging of the people's war. In the Central Committee Resolutions of November 1967 and May of last year, the Party refuted the "*foco*" theory, highlighted the mission of the cities in the revolutionary struggle and explained the fair relationship between the armed movement in the countryside and the struggle in the big urban centers.

Now, the Party is formulating, in a more complete way, its conception of the road of armed struggle in Brazil. The study of Mao Zedong's works on revolutionary war has served as a guide in developing this road.

Aware of its mission, the Communist Party of Brazil must work more and more towards a people's war. Since this is a task for all the people, it is, in particular, a task for the entire Party. It is not the exclusive work of a few party sectors

or, as the enemy thinks, of a few specialists. All Party members need to act for the sake of the people's war.

The essence of the Party's strategy, defined in its Manifesto-Program, is the achievement of a revolutionary people's government through armed struggle, through the people's war.

The Party's tactics are subordinate to this objective, expressed in the policy of uniting the patriots, concentrating the attacks on Yankee imperialism and the military dictatorship, increasing mass actions in the cities and countryside, giving primacy to work inside and using all forms of struggle, preparing and unleashing the armed struggle, which is the essence of this tactic.

All party activity is governed by this orientation. Everything the military does must be linked, directly or indirectly, to this goal.

The Party works in the cities and in the countryside, among workers and peasants, students and intellectuals, openly or clandestinely, carries out propaganda in limited circles and mass agitation, recruits new members and organizes its ranks.

Whatever type of work the Party does or

wherever it takes place, its fundamental content will always be the preparation and unleashing of the people's war.

Thus, in the cities, communists take an active part in the mass movement and do so with a view to broadening and radicalizing the struggles, unmasking the dictatorship and helping the people advance to new revolutionary positions.

Every struggle they engage in serves to raise the political consciousness of the masses, strengthen their organization and spread the idea of people's war. That's why they fight against conciliatory tendencies and the softening of the struggle.

They are also opposed to the adventurism that wears down the revolutionary forces and isolates them from the broad masses. Communists must pay special attention to their work among the working class.

The increasing movement of the proletariat for its demands and against the dictatorship, at the same time as the struggle in the countryside is developing, helps to build the worker-peasant alliance and contributes to creating favorable conditions for the people's war. The workers'

strikes, as well as the student demonstrations, are a major factor in speeding up the disintegration of the current regime.

Since its Sixth National Conference, the Party has indicated that it is necessary to transfer the center of gravity of its work to the countryside.

This is a decisive issue, considering that the people's war will fundamentally take place in the countryside and will have the peasants as the main mass of combatants. Stepping up the deployment of militants in rural areas is imperative for the party, which has the preparation and waging of the people's war in mind.

The greatest number of militants must go there, who are combative, selfless, and able to connect with the masses, people who are prepared to actually live in the countryside, integrate with the rural population, and ardently defend the interests of the people of the countryside are above and beyond when they are aware that it is necessary to make revolution and serve the people.

Communists still have little experience of working in the countryside. That's why they must modestly learn from the masses in the

countryside and try to understand their customs, habits, morals, way of thinking and acting.

They cannot proceed in the manner of the big cities, much less want to impose their customs and rules of behavior on the big urban centers. Despite the backwardness in which they live, the masses in the countryside know what they want and come up with solutions that are appropriate to the local reality. In this sense, they can teach city dwellers many things.

Careful attention must be paid to building the Party in the countryside. The creation of party bodies in the countryside is a guarantee for the fulfillment of its basic task of preparing and unleashing the people's war. Everywhere—in the farms, concentrations of agricultural workers, squatter areas, villages, hamlets and towns linked to the countryside—Party cells must be organized.

Increasing the communist ranks in the cities is also indispensable. The stronger the Party in the cities, the greater its capacity to mobilize the masses and the greater the number of cadres it will have at its disposal to carry out revolutionary work in urban and rural areas.

The Party's influence among the broad masses must be ever more widespread. The large-scale dissemination of its materials and documents is one way of extending this influence.

They transmit revolutionary ideas, they indicate the just solution to the people's problems. It is up to the Party to explain the road of people's war to the masses. To help them assimilate the method of the people's war, so that they can take the initiative and apply it in the struggle against their oppressors.

The increasingly pressing need to wage people's war places new and greater responsibilities on communists, who need to master and apply the political line and study military art.

Brazil is going through a situation in which every true democrat and patriot cannot escape the duty to do everything in their power to overthrow the dictatorship and liquidate Yankee domination in the country. Every communist is a soldier of the revolution and can be called up for any task, including armed struggle. The communist militant organizes his life according to the interests of the people, getting rid of everything that could create insurmountable

difficulties for his revolutionary work.

The armed struggle in which the Brazilian people will engage will be extremely tough, but it will represent the most glorious period in Brazil's history. The victory of this struggle will open up radiant horizons for the nation and will bring days of happiness and well-being for the great masses. The people will resort to the people's war because they are not resigned to living as slaves and aspire to defeat the dictatorship.

“The sacrifice of a small number of people in revolutionary wars,” wrote Lin Biao, “is repaid by security for whole nations, whole countries and even the whole of mankind; temporary suffering is repaid by lasting of even perpetual peace and happiness. War can temper the people and push history forward. In this sense, war is a great school.”¹²

¹²RedLibrary: Lin Biao, *Long Live the Victory of People's War!*, 1965.

The liberation struggle in Brazil is part of the common struggle of all peoples against the holy alliance of the U.S. imperialists, the Soviet revisionists and the reactionaries of all countries.

The revolutionary actions taking place in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are a support and a stimulus for the Brazilian people. Every blow struck by the popular masses against those enemies, anywhere on the five continents, helps those in Brazil who are raising high the flag of national emancipation.

The firm position of People's China, the main target of the criminal Soviet-U.S. collusion, is the most valuable contribution to all those fighting Yankee imperialism.

The consistent attitude of the People's Republic of Albania towards the imperialists and revisionists is also an important help to revolutionaries. In carrying out the people's war, the Brazilian people will have countless powerful allies in the international arena.

In the current world conditions, the people's war is the proven road available to the oppressed peoples to achieve their liberation. It has already proved its effectiveness in China,

Vietnam, and other countries. By following this road, Brazilians will have the most promising prospects of victory.

The people will go through difficult trials, they will have to make enormous sacrifices, they will lose many of their best children. But they will learn from life how to handle weapons, they will learn the art of combat, and they will end up mastering the method of the people's war.

Let the fascist military and the Yankee imperialists foam with hatred! The people's war will be a reality. The people will win!