

Some Ideological Problems of Revolution in Latin America*

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In Latin America's stormy scenario, where populations that are oppressed and plundered by the old oligarchies and voracious foreign monopolies are becoming aware of their destiny, a clash of ideas of major proportions is taking place simultaneously with patriotic demonstrations, strikes, and guerrillas. The wave of rebellion that spreads from the Rio Grande to the Strait of Magellan gives rise to the most diverse theories, the most varied solutions and the most divergent roads. It is a phenomenon that expresses the opinion of the different classes and social strata and reveals the combative spirit of the masses, or their capitulation to the enemy, their desire for revolutionary change, or their attempts to halt the march of history.

Large sectors of the population and broad cultural circles are showing enormous interest in new ideas. Not abstract theses, lacking in objectivity and without any practical sense, but conceptions that involve crucial problems of the moment. A social reality of astonishing injustices, growing misery, cruel exploitation, abhorrent imperialist domination, unspeakable arbitrariness and militaristic truculence is reflected in the minds of millions and millions of people. The more capitalism sinks into a crisis with no way out and struggles in the depths of an agony that forebodes its end, the more difficult the situation of the peoples and workers of Latin America becomes, the greater their yearning for liberation. This is why the popular masses are turning with unusual attention to new ideas, to debate and to the search for new horizons, for a road that will lead them to a free, dignified and happy life.

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Most of the political ideas circulating in Latin America present themselves as left-wing. Even those of a retrograde nature try to masquerade as revolutionary. Today, due to the radicalization of the masses and the experience they have acquired, there is no receptivity for openly right-wing ideas. And many defenders of so-called left-wing ideas call themselves Marxist-Leninists. This is because the doctrine of scientific socialism has gained extraordinary and well-deserved international prestige. Its principles are affirmed as irrefutable truths.

There exists, however, both authentic and false Marxism. There is the revolutionary Marxism of Marx and Engels, of Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong, which has achieved so many significant victories in the class struggle and under whose inspiration hundreds of millions of human beings have rid themselves of the evils of capitalism. And then there is the pseudo-socialism of Kautsky and Bernstein, the “Marxism” of Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Kosygin, of Tito and Togliatti, which has caused so much serious damage to the workers’ movement and, where it prevails, has led to bitter defeats. The ideas of true Marxism are oriented towards revolution and the complete liberation of man. The false Marxism of the revisionists sows confusion, creates difficulties for the struggle of the people and objectively serves reaction and imperialism. Also harmful are the supposedly Marxist “theories” of neo-Trotskyism, which is ultra-leftist in words and rightist in practice. For its part, the Fidelism so much in fashion in Latin America, although it proclaims itself to be Marxist-Leninist, offers solutions that are not in line with the reality of the countries of the hemisphere and tries to revise basic principles of the doctrine founded by Marx and Engels.

At a time when the clash of ideas in Latin America is intensifying, it is opportune to discuss a series of issues related to the revolution in this part of the continent, which have given rise to numerous controversies. It is not the aim of this article to set the direction for other countries. It merely seeks to give an opinion on problems of vital interest to the revolutionary movement. The points of view put forward undoubtedly have gaps and shortcomings. This is only natural. The situation in Latin America is evolving rapidly and is very complex. The process of historical formation in each country has its peculiarities and there are very different national characteristics. This work is an attempt to present, in a systematized way, a set of issues that concern Brazilian revolutionaries. It is intended as a contribution to the debate on theses that concern the enormous task of liberating the nations of this hemisphere.

Growing Dominance of U.S. Imperialism

In the first quarter of the last century, most of the peoples of Latin America won their state independence through memorable struggles. They broke the shackles that chained them to the decadent Spanish and Portuguese metropolises. Latin American nations were formed, but they were not consolidated. The wars of independence, due to a historical contingency, were led by the most prominent representatives of the commercial bourgeoisie, the big landlords and the liberal intellectuals, inspired by the ideas of the French Revolution and the principles that guided the independence of the United States. Freed from the colonial yoke, these nations created the premises for their independent development. At one time, they enjoyed political sovereignty. However, the rulers of the time, due to their class status, were unable to adopt radical measures that would pave the way for progress. They maintained the agrarian structure based on large landholdings, feudal and even slave-owning remnants, and denied freedom to the great masses of the population.

With the rise of imperialism at the end of the 19th century, a new phase began in the history of the nations of this continent. The big international trusts divided the colonies among themselves and tried to subjugate nations that were formally independent but weak and undeveloped. Supported by the native oligarchies, made up of landlords and capitalists linked to foreign trade, they gradually penetrated Latin America. For a time, particularly in South America, this penetration was carried out by the British imperialists, followed by the French and Germans. At the end of the last century, the U.S. monopolies were already waging their first imperialist war, with a view to seizing Cuba. In the 1920s, they intensified their activities in Latin America in order to displace their European rivals. After the Second World War, they became the continent's main imperialist exploiter.

Today, there is no country in this part of the hemisphere, with the exception of Cuba, that is not subject to the rapacious action of the Yankee trusts, there is no country that has not contracted, under unfair conditions, huge debts with the United States, which uses them as an instrument of subjugation. An unequal exchange of goods has developed between North America and Latin America. The prices of the exportable products of Latin American nations are continually falling on the U.S. market, while the prices of items imported from the United States are constantly rising. The Yankee monopolies have seized Venezuela's oil, Chile's saltpeter and copper, Bolivia's tin, Brazil's iron and manganese. They obstruct the industrialization of Latin

America as much as they can. They control the economy and finances of the various countries south of the Rio Grande. Yankee imperialism seizes immense wealth produced with the sweat and blood of the workers. It owns basic industries, large plantations and huge estates. It holds in its hands the levers that control the economic life of each country. Ultimately, Latin America is under the control of Standard Oil, General Motors, United States Steel, Ford, General Electric, Bethlehem Steel, United Fruit, Dupont and other large Wall Street consortiums.

Economic dependence inevitably leads to a loss of political independence. In fact, the countries of Latin America have long since become semi-colonies of the United States. Their sovereignty is only nominal, as they are wrapped up in a network of financial, economic, diplomatic and military dependence that makes them slaves to U.S. imperialism. Under current conditions, the yoke of the Yankee monopolies is even more brutal. It is oriented towards the recolonization of the hemisphere. As the old colonialism is discredited and completely bankrupt, the U.S. imperialists are using new forms of domination. This is neo-colonialism in action.

This neo-colonialism is expressed, in particular, in the direct participation of Yankee agents in the administrative affairs of the state. Latin American governments continue to have national forms and are even elected by sectors of the population. But in reality, they are closely linked to Washington. When bourgeois rulers emerge who, despite their surrenderism, try in one way or another, however timidly, to resist the total overthrow of their countries by the Americans, they are summarily overthrown by military pronouncements. And when the people rebel to remove imperialism's lackeys from power, as in the Dominican Republic, the United States intervenes with armed force. Political institutions are increasingly adapting to the needs of U.S. domination. In almost all Latin American countries, authoritarian constitutions have been imposed in different ways, or existing ones have undergone profound changes in a reactionary direction. The so-called representative bodies of the people, such as the National Congresses, have lost their prerogatives and are mere facades that do not decide anything fundamental.

In the countries of this hemisphere, governments are guided by U.S. embassies. From the offices of these embassies come general guidelines for the administration of each country and they also control all national political life. The Yankee imperialists are not satisfied with just controlling government departments. Alongside the administrative machine, they set up their own machine. In this regard, USAID (United States Agency for International

Development) is one of the most used instruments. Its offices, staffed by numerous American employees, are scattered throughout the large and small cities, towns and villages of Latin America. Under the guise of aid, they carry out functions that are the preserve of the state. Covered by the Alliance for Progress, they are introduced into public services, universities, professional associations, the planning and execution of works, and rural areas. The International Monetary Fund is also an instrument of U.S. neo-colonialism. This entity, at the service of the United States, dictates economic and financial guidelines that are contrary to the national interests of Latin American countries and exercises strict control over them.

Notably, the presence of Yankee agents is felt in the Latin American armed forces. These forces are in fact subject to the Pentagon. This is done through a whole series of adjustments, by way of technical improvement, ranging from the training of troops and the standardization of weapons to the adoption of U.S. military doctrine. The U.S. military missions, which are generally numerous, supervise the army, air force and navy, where they have a decisive influence. Generals and senior officers must attend U.S. military schools and follow the aggressive conceptions and theories of world domination of Washington's warmongers. They become the spokespeople and executors of the predatory policy of the United States in Latin America. Today, the military camarillas are one of the main political supports for the White House in its neo-colonialist activities on the continent.

The Social and Political Basis of Yankee Domination

The U.S. monopolists couldn't plunder and dominate Latin American countries if they didn't have a social and political base in them. It is the rotten oligarchies of big landlords and capitalists linked to Yankee interests, true bastions of backwardness and obscurantism, who open the doors of their countries to recolonization. In defense of their unjust privileges and fearful of popular action, they join Latin America's worst enemy. Seeking to perpetuate an outdated economic structure, they resort to foreign loans, make the most shameful concessions to monopoly capital and make the national economy even more dependent on the United States. Their fate is inextricably linked to that of imperialism. That is why they are prepared to drag

their countries into the warlike adventures of the Yankee warmongers and to play the role of repressive police against the peoples, as happened with the Brazilian military clique on the occasion of the events in Santo Domingo. In the past, these oligarchies enjoyed greater freedom of movement in their choice of rulers. Now, however, in many countries, it is imperialism itself that imposes the names of its choice for the top jobs.

The panorama of Latin America, under the domination of the U.S. imperialists and the reactionary oligarchies, shows a picture of violent contrasts. Alongside lavish palaces, luxury hotels and sumptuous casinos, where a handful of rich people squander their fortunes, there is a proliferation of shanty towns, rooming houses and brothels, where poor people get down on themselves. Majestic metropolises like Buenos Aires, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Mexico, Santiago and Lima, and a sea of villages, hamlets and small towns devoid of any of the comforts of modern civilization. Masses of tuberculosis, malaria, leishmaniasis, leprosy and syphilitic patients, abandoned to their fate, and a few hospitals and sanatoriums of the highest technical standard to serve big capitalists and wealthy farmers. High illiteracy rates and a youth eager for knowledge and culture. Endless large estates, most of them unproductive, and tens of millions of landless peasants, vegetating without any hope.

This picture becomes bleaker when you realize that Latin America suffers from a lack of democratic freedoms. In most of its countries, there is a climate of terror and persecution of patriots. Social conquests are being annulled. Militarism and reactionary dictatorships prevail. Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia live under the thumb of truculent generals. In Venezuela, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, laws of exception are in force. Ecuador, which emerged from a military junta regime, has a despotic government. Chile and Peru are constantly under threat of a coup by the armed forces. And even Uruguay is moving towards a more open reaction. This is not an accidental phenomenon. It is a characteristic of the present era, which is becoming more and more accentuated. Imperialism and the oligarchies cannot maintain their yoke in Latin America by any means other than the most brazen brutality and the complete denial of democracy.

As Yankee plundering increases and the chronic structural crisis in this part of the continent deepens, the basic contradictions of society worsen, which can only be overcome by radical solutions; the discontent and revolt of the masses increases, whose outbursts are difficult to contain by ever more intense violence; the clash between national sentiment and foreign oppression

increases, which can only end with the liberation of Latin American countries from the clutches of U.S. finance capital. Yankee imperialism and its internal supporters in each country try to stifle the yearnings for progress and the struggle of the broad masses through terror and dictatorial regimes. And the peoples of Latin America are courageously turning to the revolutionary struggle.

The Masses Rise up Against Imperialism and the Oligarchies

The domination of Latin America by the Yankee imperialists and the current process of recolonization have not taken place without popular resistance. Since the dawn of this century, a deep-rooted anti-American sentiment has been forming in the fight against the plunderous actions of the U.S. vultures, which is now spreading throughout the hemisphere. Sandino immortalized himself as a symbol of the anti-imperialist struggle, fearlessly confronting the marines who arrogantly landed in Nicaragua. The liberation struggle grew on the continent. In 1935, the Brazilian people took up arms to win a national revolutionary government. In Colombia, the Bogotá uprising against the interference of the United States in the life of that nation became famous and from then on the guerrilla movement flourished, which today includes the conquest of real independence among its objectives. In the 1950s, one of the most beautiful pages of heroism was written by the Bolivian miners when they destroyed the army and overthrew the government that served foreign interests and the tin magnates. The Cuban Revolution, which swept imperialist oppression from Marti's land, awakened Latin America to armed struggle against its staunchest enemies. And, more recently, the people of Santo Domingo have shed their generous blood, fighting the nation's traitors, the Yankee interventionist soldiers and the puppet troops of Brazil.

In Latin America, the great revolutionary storm is approaching with increasing speed. Today, much more than in the past, the masses of the people hate Yankee imperialism and the rotten and corrupt oligarchies that support it. A wave of protest against the United States is rising from the most diverse sectors of the population. The flames of guerrilla warfare are spreading in Colombia, Venezuela and Guatemala. The desire to launch an armed struggle is manifesting itself in Brazil, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina,

the Dominican Republic and almost every country in the hemisphere. The people of Panama, in huge patriotic demonstrations, are demanding the withdrawal of the Americans from the Canal Zone. Powerful strikes are taking place in Chile and Uruguay. This process of radicalization of the masses foreshadows the march of the Latin American countries towards higher-level revolutionary actions and decisive battles.

The military dictatorships and reactionary governments set up under the umbrella of the United States will not be able to stop the momentum of the popular and democratic liberation movement that is spreading everywhere.

National and Democratic Character of the Revolution

Latin American nations are hampered in their progress by the same obstacles: foreign imperialist domination and the landlord system; they have the same enemies: the U.S. monopolies, the big landlords and the part of the bourgeoisie linked to Yankee interests. The current objectives of the struggles of the Latin American peoples are therefore aimed at solving national and democratic tasks.

The revolution in the various Latin American countries, given the tasks it now has to face, has a bourgeois-democratic character. In all of them, the problems to be solved are similar in their economic and social content, even though each country has a different level of development and its own characteristics and particularities. But this bourgeois-democratic revolution is a revolution of a new kind. It is a part of the world proletarian revolution. Its perspective is the transition to socialism. Precisely for this reason, it is indispensable that the proletariat, whose interests are directly linked to the conquest of socialism, be the leading force.

The claim by certain left-wing currents that the revolution in Latin American countries is socialist is unfounded and totally erroneous. Nor are those right who, unable to deny the national and democratic aspects of the revolution, try to mix it up with socialist objectives, claiming that the revolution is a socialist one of national liberation—as certain left-wing Catholic groups do—or defining its character as “one of struggle for national independence, emancipation from the oligarchies and the socialist road to full economic and social development”—as the First Latin American Solidarity Conference

(OLAS) declares.

To postulate socialism as the task of the current stage of the revolution is to hinder the advance of the revolutionary process because it greatly restricts the field of revolutionary forces and facilitates the action of the enemies of the people. It means denying the role of the peasants. In the current circumstances in Latin America, the peasant movement, the main mass base of the revolution, is essentially democratic. It fundamentally aims to liquidate the latifundia and solve the problem of handing over the land to the peasants. It therefore has no socialist character. For their part, the great urban masses, even the working class, although they express sympathy for socialism, are imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices and do not feel the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. All of them, however, aspire to eliminate the current obstacles to progress in their countries. Moreover, in the struggle against imperialism, many other sectors of the population are directly interested and can take part. To raise socialism as an immediate watchword is to alienate these sectors from the revolution.

It is undeniable that Latin America can only achieve a bright future under socialism. Only this social regime will radically transform Latin American nations, fully expanding their productive forces, ensuring the well-being of the masses, the broad development of culture and true democracy for the people. But the road to achieving this necessarily passes through the national and democratic stage. In carrying out the tasks of this stage, the objective and subjective conditions favorable to the transition to socialism are created.

It should also be noted that, in every struggle, there is always one main enemy to fight, whose defeat makes it possible to liquidate the other opponents. This has a direct bearing on the character of the revolution. Concentrating efforts against the main enemy, mobilizing the maximum number of allies against it and neutralizing forces that could be mobilized by it—this is a fundamental strategic principle. Victory cannot be achieved without taking this principle into account. Today, imperialism and the latifundia are the main enemies of the Latin American peoples. Why add national capitalism as a whole to these enemies, raising socialist measures as immediate demands? By presenting democratic and anti-imperialist demands, which, once met, strike those enemies dead, the proletariat can temporarily ally itself with one part of the bourgeoisie, even if it is wavering, neutralize another and strike only the bourgeois sectors linked to imperialism.

A masterful and creative application of this basic principle of concentrating efforts was made during World War II, in the fight against fascism. The

unity of the broadest sectors of the population against the common enemy led to its defeat and paved the way for the victory of the revolution in several countries in Europe and Asia. This principle was skillfully employed in China. In that country, until the final victory of the revolution, only the demands inherent in the bourgeois-democratic stage were put forward and, for a long period of the revolutionary struggle, the direction of the main attack was directed against Japanese imperialism, an attempt was made to throw the bourgeoisie into the anti-Japanese struggle and even the struggle against the landlords was toned down. The example of the Cuban Revolution is also very illustrative. Its leaders concentrated their attacks on the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and directed the main blow of the revolutionary forces against him. To this end, they raised only the banner of democracy, which made it possible to isolate the enemy and strengthen the revolution. Ernesto Che Guevara, in his article *Cuba: Historical Exception or Vanguard in the Anti-Colonial Struggle?* of April 9, 1961, stated: "It could not be considered exceptional that the bourgeoisie, or at least a part of it, favored the revolutionary war over the dictatorship" He added: "Considering the conditions in which the revolutionary war took place and the complexity of the political tendencies that opposed the dictatorship, it was not at all exceptional that some elements adopted a neutral, or at least a nonbelligerent, attitude toward the insurrectionary forces." This proves that the Cuban Revolution had a very marked bourgeois-democratic stage. It is regrettable that this experience was abandoned by Cuban leaders, even by the author of the article, a brave and proven revolutionary, who shortly before his death considered the character of the revolution in Latin American countries to be socialist. Now, the revolutionary forces in Vietnam are uniting all patriots in the fight against the Yankee imperialists and their lackeys, and are turning their attacks on them. The recently published program of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam includes only demands from the national and democratic stage. And this while the northern part of the country is already socialist.

These experiences show how important it is to correctly define the character of the revolution and how harmful it is to now set objectives that correspond to another stage of the revolutionary process. For the peoples of the continent, this is a vital question. In all the countries of Latin America, the national and democratic nature, the agrarian and anti-imperialist character and the popular aspect of the revolution are very evident.

The Revolutionary Road and the Reformist Road

Bourgeois-democratic transformations in Latin American countries have long been on the agenda. The conquest of state independence did not pave the way for a rapid development of the productive forces. Industry only began to gain a certain momentum, albeit a rather weak one, at the beginning of the 20th century. However, the nascent industrial bourgeoisie encountered serious resistance from imperialism, which was already penetrating Latin America, and was faced with the lack of a domestic market due to the predominance of latifundia. After World War I, despite the difficulties, capitalism managed to advance, albeit slowly.

The need to carry out bourgeois-democratic transformations, i.e. to change the agrarian structure, oppose the plundering action of imperialism and make profound progressive changes to the political superstructure, then became even more urgent. Over the years, this need has become even more imperative.

The beginning of the struggles for bourgeois-democratic changes dates back to the first decades of the 20th century. Mexico was one of the first to confront, albeit without consequences, problems of the democratic revolution, such as the land question. After the Great October Revolution of 1917 in Russia, with the emergence of the Communist Parties, the proletariat in various countries of this continent presented a program of struggles against imperialism and for agrarian reform. But as it was still a fairly weak political force, it did not have a decisive influence on the course of events. The national bourgeoisie, especially from the 1930s onwards, tried to raise the need for bourgeois changes in its own way. At the same time, it sought to strengthen its positions in power. In this activity, it momentarily counted on the support of the U.S. imperialists, who were then developing an economic and political offensive to displace their British competitors from the hemisphere.

Although the working class has organized and led democratic and anti-imperialist movements on a certain scale, the national bourgeoisie in most Latin American countries has been the hegemonic force in bourgeois-democratic transformations. Vargas in Brazil, Perón in Argentina, Paz Estensoro—in his first government—in Bolivia, Arbenz in Guatemala, Gaitán in Colombia and, more recently, Goulart in Brazil and Frei in Chile are expressions, among others, of the action of the national bourgeoisie, aimed at carrying out some

changes in the economic structure and political superstructure of Latin American nations.

However, the national bourgeoisie entered the political arena at a time when the socialist revolution had already triumphed in a large country and when the working class was becoming aware of its strength and was fighting for power. For this very reason, and because of its links with imperialism and latifundism, the solutions it presents are timid and rather limited. The national bourgeoisie postulated measures in the interest of the nation and even put some of them into practice. In Brazil, through the Mining Code, it nationalized the subsoil, set up the large steel industry under the aegis of the state, and made oil exploration a state monopoly. In Bolivia, it nationalized the mines. In Argentina, it put oil exploration in the hands of the state. In Guatemala, he initiated agrarian reform. On the political front, he promoted the establishment of certain democratic rights, such as the secret ballot, women's suffrage, workers' unions and free student organization. Under pressure from the proletariat, he developed labor legislation, always trying to keep the working class under his control.

But the solutions of the national bourgeoisie are essentially reformist. At no time in Latin America, apart from the Mexican Revolution of 1910, has the national bourgeoisie been revolutionary. It is trying to gradually achieve transformations of a bourgeois nature, without going too far into the latifundia system and without completely breaking ties with imperialism. At the same time, it is trying to increase its hold on power, using electoral processes and military force without resorting to armed actions that can involve the masses. One of the main methods it uses is labor demagoguery, with the aim of turning the proletariat into a cowed force. It strives to introduce its reformist ideas into the workers' movement and to make the workers adopt bourgeois politics as if it were the politics of the working class itself. In this sense, it has created a workers' elite in many countries, of which the majority of union leaders are the most prominent expression. This elite is one of the spokespeople for the national bourgeoisie in the proletarian movement.

The national bourgeoisie has shown countless times that it cannot carry out its democratic and anti-imperialist tasks successfully. For its part, whenever the most reactionary forces attacked the governments in which it had a preponderance, it shamefully capitulated, fearing the radicalization of the masses. This was the case with Vargas and Goulart, Perón and Abres, who preferred to surrender to the coup plotters rather than resist with the people.

In addition, at the present time, when major class battles are being fought on the international stage and the very existence of the imperialist system is at stake, the national bourgeoisie is unable to carry out even a policy of minor reforms. U.S. imperialism aims to dominate the entire world. In Latin America, it wants to recolonize its countries. Neo-colonialism means precisely the total submission of the economy of Latin American countries to the economy of the United States. In recent years, some measures adopted by reformist governments that protected national interests to a certain extent have been annulled in favor of the Americans. Argentina has gone back on its protectionist oil legislation. Bolivia is gradually liquidating the nationalization of its mines. Brazil has made surrenderist concessions with regard to natural wealth and ended the restrictions contained in the Law on Remittances of Profits Abroad. All of this shows the bankruptcy of the bourgeois leadership in the national and democratic movement and the bankruptcy of its reformist solutions.

The great and profound transformations of a bourgeois-democratic nature, which are becoming ever more urgent, can only be carried out by the people's revolution, under the leadership of the proletariat. There is no other way to end the ever-increasing domination of the Yankee imperialists, the archaic system of latifundism or to achieve an effectively democratic government that guarantees freedom for the people, culture and well-being for the masses and national independence.

The forces that have a real interest in this popular revolution are the workers, the peasants and the urban petty bourgeoisie. The peasants, the semi-proletarians in the countryside and the agricultural workers, who make up the majority of the population in Latin America, show great willingness to fight. Because of the very conditions in which they live, they aspire to sweep away oppression and misery. They are the real spring of revolutionary action. The urban petty bourgeoisie is also one of the main forces in the national and democratic movement. This social stratum has great traditions of struggle. Students and the progressive intelligentsia in particular show combativeness and deep-rooted anti-imperialist sentiments. But neither the peasantry nor the urban petty bourgeoisie have the necessary conditions to take over the leadership of the struggle.

As for the national bourgeoisie, it can participate in anti-imperialist actions and in favor of agrarian reforms. It can defend the existence of certain democratic freedoms. Some of its sectors will even support the revolutionary struggle or join it. This is because it objectively has contradictions with

imperialism and latifundism, suffers competition and pressure from foreign monopolies and needs to expand the domestic market. However, the national bourgeoisie, as a vacillating and inconsequential force, can also, in certain circumstances, ally itself with the most reactionary forces and fight the revolution.

It is up to the proletariat, which is interested not only in fulfilling national and democratic tasks, but in the conquest of socialism, to play the leading role in the revolution at this stage. This leadership is indispensable for the success of the liberation movement. But the working class will only secure its leading role if it is able to ally itself with the great peasant masses and, on the basis of this alliance, forge a broad single front of all democratic and anti-imperialist forces.

In Latin America, therefore, there are two roads to the democratic transformations required by the development of society: the revolutionary and the reformist. The first is indicated by the revolutionary proletariat and the second by the national bourgeoisie. These social classes vie for the leadership of the masses in order to lead them along the roads they advocate.

Unlike the national bourgeoisie, which advocates reforms, the proletariat, through its vanguard, does not want to introduce mere partial changes to the current regimes in Latin America, but rather to establish a revolutionary popular power that represents all the democratic and anti-imperialist forces capable of eliminating the obstacles to progress in each country and opening up new horizons for the working masses.

Winning over the Masses to Revolutionary Positions

Winning the masses to the revolutionary road is a major battle in the political and ideological spheres. The reformist ideas spread by the national bourgeoisie managed to penetrate deeply into the working class, the intelligentsia and even some sectors of the countryside. As the national bourgeoisie gained strength and won important positions in governments, it increased its work of corruption, providing political positions and good jobs and elements that could serve its aims. It intensified the propaganda of its conceptions, seeking to influence broader sections of the population. It created a whole body of doctrine in order to present its solutions to the problems of each

country. Laborism, justicialism and developmentalism are expressions of this doctrine. In parliaments, the press and universities, as well as in trade unions and the democratic and anti-imperialist movement, the spokespeople for reformist solutions made themselves felt with increasing intensity. The ideologues of national capitalism emerged.

The ideas of the national bourgeoisie have always been reflected in the parties of the Latin American working class. But, in general, they tried to combat them. However, with the advent of contemporary revisionism from 1956 onwards, these ideas came to predominate in these parties. This was a great help to the national bourgeoisie in its efforts to drag the masses down the road of reforms. Over the last twelve years, revisionism has done nothing but preach opportunist solutions and seek to submit the workers to the policies of the national bourgeoisie. The experience of Latin America shows how harmful the actions of the revisionist parties have been. They ultimately serve the reactionary forces, since they actively contribute to diverting the masses from the revolutionary struggle. Examples include Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Venezuela.

Despite the influence of reformism, the great masses of Latin America are beginning to turn to the idea of revolution. This is due to the bankruptcy of the national bourgeoisie's policy, which has not and will not solve any of the people's problems and has shown itself incapable of resisting pro-imperialist military coups; the preaching of revolutionary parties and currents, which advocate armed struggle and radical solutions; the successes of peoples who have achieved victory through arms, as happened in China, Albania, Cuba and is currently happening in Vietnam; and, finally, the worsening of internal and external contradictions in the countries of this hemisphere. China's revolutionary stance and the spread of Mao Zedong's thought have attracted large masses to the road of struggle, of the people's war. The unmasking of contemporary revisionism, at world level and in each country, has also served to awaken the people to the need for revolution.

All of these factors helped large sections of the people to make their own experience, to see for themselves the falsity of the reformist path and to focus their hopes on the solution indicated by the proletariat.

However, we must not give in to reformism and revisionism. This is a struggle that needs to be waged on all fronts. Without defeating reformist ideas, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to win victory. This fundamental task is closely linked to the development of actions against reaction and U.S. imperialism. Revolutionary practice will lead the masses to find

the right path.

Precisely because it is essential to win the masses to the revolutionary path, it is not possible for true fighters in the cause of the emancipation of the Latin American peoples to remain indifferent in the face of the great and historic clash that is currently taking place internationally between Marxism-Leninism and contemporary revisionism. The latter represents the ideas of the bourgeoisie, of the social-democratic type, on the world stage. It seeks to undermine the combativeness of the peoples and save the imperialist system from defeat. Contemporary revisionism is all the more dangerous because it cloaks itself in the banner of the October Revolution in order to deceive the workers and oppressed peoples. Spread and supported by the leaders of a great power like the Soviet Union and by the workers' parties which, in other times, carried out great struggles and today betray the cause of the peoples, revisionism carries the ideas of capitulation to imperialism. That is why it is essential to constantly unmask the revisionist positions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its followers and, at the same time, to support the forces that are in the camp of Marxism-Leninism, such as the Chinese and Albanian communists. Marxism-Leninism expresses the interests of the international proletariat and the revolutionary peoples. Thus, for the Latin American peoples, the fight against revisionism is part of their liberating struggle. And for the proletariat, this fight is inseparable from the permanent effort to seize its hegemony, a primordial condition for the victory of the revolution.

Favorable Situation for Revolutionary Struggle

The economic, social and political conditions for the struggle of the Latin American peoples are extremely favorable. The revolution is maturing simultaneously in all the countries of this continent. This, however, does not mean that the revolution in Latin America will take place outside the national frameworks and become a continental revolution, with a common revolutionary army and a single command. Although there are common goals for all Latin American countries, each people will make its own revolution. This is the result of internal objective processes related to the sharpening of the main contradictions in society, the degree of development of the class strug-

gle, historical traditions and the peculiarities of the nation. Each nation relies fundamentally on its own efforts.

But it is undeniable that mutual support between peoples is a very important factor. Any country in this hemisphere that takes up arms to rid itself of its oppressors and exploiters has the other countries of Latin America as its closest ally. Strengthening the bonds of friendship and solidarity between the national emancipation movements on the continent is therefore particularly important. When Yankee imperialism and the Latin American oligarchies coordinate proxy measures and plan joint actions against the peoples, it is even more important to intensify the exchange of experiences and mutual aid between revolutionaries. At the same time as the Chilean, Argentinian, Brazilian, Peruvian and other people are developing their own struggles, they are firmly supporting the Colombian, Guatemalan, Venezuelan and other people who are responding with revolutionary violence to the violence of reaction and imperialism.

The revolution in Latin America also has powerful allies in Asia and Africa. The struggles taking place on these continents are helping Latin American patriots. The glorious resistance of the Vietnamese people in their just war against the invaders of their homeland is of great significance. Showing unparalleled bravery, the Vietnamese fighters have dealt devastating blows to the Yankee imperialists. With their victories, they inspire the revolutionaries of this hemisphere. They demonstrate in practice that it is possible to confront and defeat the arrogant US armies. The expansion and strengthening of guerrilla actions in Laos, Thailand, Burma and other Asian countries, fundamentally directed against the Yankee warmongers, are merging with the liberation movement in the Americas. The guerrillas in Congo, Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea have the same meaning. The Latin American peoples, for their part, consider it their duty to give their full support to these struggles, especially that of the Vietnamese, who are on the front lines of the fight against the hated soldiers of the dollar.

Joining the cause of the Latin American peoples are the workers of the imperialist countries who are rising up against the monopoly bourgeoisie. The great mass demonstrations in Japan against the Yankee occupation and against the use of Japanese bases for the attack on Vietnam; the vigorous protests in the United States against the continuation of the war in Southwest Asia; the powerful and combative movement of Black Americans for their liberation—all this is a favorable factor for the revolutionary struggle on this continent.

People's China is the main support base of the revolutionary movement, on which the peoples of Latin America can always count. A huge country of 700 million inhabitants, where the proletariat has triumphed and is successfully carrying out the Great Cultural Revolution, it maintains an irreconcilable attitude towards Yankee imperialism and the contemporary revisionists who have joined it. Guided by proletarian internationalism, Mao Zedong's China is the champion of the struggle for national emancipation and spares no sacrifice to help oppressed peoples liberate themselves. The fact that China is the center of the aggressive strategy of the White House and the Pentagon forces the US imperialists to concentrate their forces in Asia, favoring the emancipatory struggle in Latin America. The People's Republic of Albania is also a support base for the revolution. Although it is a small country, it is valiantly defending the revolutionary positions in Europe.

In the current circumstances, the struggle of the peoples is tending to merge into a broad global front against the US imperialists. After the Second World War, the United States set out to dominate all countries and became the gendarmes of world reaction. In recent decades, the ruling circles in Washington, from Truman to Johnson, have fomented military coups in Latin America and intervened wherever the masses have rebelled. The United States has thus become the common enemy of humanity. Defeating them is a major task for the peoples. In this task, Latin Americans are called to occupy a position of honor.