

**Nahuel Moreno**  
**Party Cadres'**  
**School:**  
**Venezuela 1982**



# Nahuel Moreno

## Party Cadres' School: Venezuela 1982

**First Spanish Edition:** Internal document of the IWL-FI, 1983

**First Spanish Book Edition:** Ediciones Crux, Buenos Aires, 1991

**First English (Internet) Edition:** Ediciones El Socialista, Buenos Aires, 2015

**English Translation:** Daniel Iglesias

**Cover & Interior Design:** Daniel Iglesias

[www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org)

[www.uit-ci.org](http://www.uit-ci.org)

[www.izquierdasocialista.org.ar](http://www.izquierdasocialista.org.ar)

## Contents

Introduction:	
Revisionism: principles and policies .....	1
The popular front .....	13
On the political revolution in the Workers' States .....	28
Bibliography .....	53

Ediciones  *El Socialista*

## Introduction:

# Revisionism: principles and policies

First of all, I want to clarify that we have different customs from country to country, and different traditions. The Southern Cone, especially Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Peru is characterised, since the years 1940-45, by the sharpness of Marxist polemics. France as well, already since 1930. This causes certain habits and different customs. For example, where the controversies have been strong, very strong terms are used, as among the Russian exiles. The Russians were worse, because they were out of Russia. This bitters even more the political quarrels.

With Mandel for 30 years I have done nothing but argue and tell him that he betrayed, that he's one of the five great traitors who have come out of the workers' movement in this century because he betrayed the Bolivian revolution— and I don't correct myself. Then I would like to make clear regarding Mandel, as well as Lambert, you should know we're criticising two figures, two monuments of Trotskyism. And one judgment has nothing to do with the other. Regarding Mandel I have made it clear several times. I made it clear about Santucho at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the United Secretariat in 1972. This isn't the case of Pablo, whom I do believe is a man already gone definitively to the other side.

When Bukharin died, Trotsky said he was an extraordinary personality, a huge figure. But from 1924 to 1936, he told him he didn't know any right-winger, agent of the bourgeoisie, etc., like him.

There are comrades who, for lack of experience, don't get this dialectic. For example, Trotsky loved, appreciated, admired, and considered Nin to be an endearing part of him; however he called him traitor every day. But it was a political epithet.

Trotsky's two closest friends were not Trotskyists, or if they were Trotskyists, they were so in quotation marks. He had a horrible opinion of them and, if there was controversy, they would call each other all sorts of things. The same happened in the polemics between Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, which had a high concept of each other.

[I have been told that Felipe<sup>1</sup> said it was a victory for them, the Lambertists, that the Moral Tribunal of Peru has pointed out the expressions they used, such as that Napuri<sup>2</sup> has gone to the camp of the bourgeoisie, should not be judged. But that was our line, of the IWL.<sup>3</sup> I was one of those who spoke by telephone from Bogota saying the IWL would break with the Tribunal if this sentence of Lambertism was judged. It's exactly the opposite of what Felipe says. It was our victory. We demanded the Tribunal should be limited only to judge the moral charges of Lambertism to Napuri, not their political denunciations.]

1 The author refers to **Felipe Wermus** (b. 1949), known as Luis Favre, an Argentinian who was active in the student movement in *Política Obrera* [Workers' Word], the organisation led by his brother Jorge Altamira. After the military coup in 1976 he went into exile in France and became a leader of the OCRFI and the French OCI. Together with Lambert he headed relations with Nahuel Moreno's Bolshevik Faction, which gave birth to the short lived unification of both currents in December 1980. Years later he broke with Lambert, moved to Brazil and became an advisor to the International Relations Secretariat of Lula's PT.

2 **Ricardo Napuri** (b. 1914), is Peruvian leader who joined Trotskyism in the current of Lambert and was one of their main leaders in Latin America. After the crisis of 1981 he leaned towards Moreno's positions and Lambert attacked him with a campaign of moral slander. A Moral Tribunal was formed, which proved these slanders. Napuri joined the IWL since its foundation.

3 Following on Moreno's death in 1987, the International Workers League – Fourth International (IWL-FI) went into crisis and in 1990 it began to split. Currently, Moreno's followers in that organisation, and the keepers of the web page [www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org), are grouped in the International Workers Unity – Fourth International (IWU-FI).

You can read in the last issue of *International Courier*<sup>4</sup> what Hugo Blanco has said about whether to hold the Tribunal, that the method of Lambert [to make moral attacks] is horrible, and so on; and how we have always acted differently. With Hugo Blanco we have said it all, but we have never made such moral, personal attacks.

Martov and Lenin said it all. But in the year 1917, when Lenin was put in prison, the champion of Lenin's defence in the Soviet is Martov, who said, No sir, he never was an agent of German; I guarantee it myself; he's more decent than I am; he's more honest than I am.

I want to clarify this, because I know there are comrades who are concerned about the political epithets. I say, then, to place the controversy well: I have admiration for Mandel.

And in the case of Mandel, Lambert, Stephane Just and myself, I add one more thing: you should pity us all. We're the lost generation of revolutionary Marxism. We're very few. Those who were older than us were astronomical quantities; for each one of us there were 10 or 20 oldies. And for each one of us there were 10, 20 or 50 younger. Ours is what is called the lost generation, the generation of the economic boom. Adding to it the crisis of leadership, which is a tragedy for all, Trotskyism was disintegrating. Mandel would have been a beast if Trotskyism had remained united, with a correct leadership. Then, let's place the context well. I say this because you will hear many strong adjectives, which I vindicate because I think they're scientific, but have nothing to do with personal evaluation.

Mandel is very petit bourgeois. I remember when I first came to Trotskyism, and years later I was a very important leader of Trotskyism. However, now looking back— and I have told this many times— what a petit bourgeois was I! Because I came from the student movement. I wanted to be honest, a Marxist honest to a fault, and seek the truth. But I remember, whenever we discussed a position and they won, it made me blush, I was suffering inside because they had defeated my position. I confess this.

Later I realised this is a feature of the petit bourgeoisie, which confuses personality with facts and opinions. It isn't like this. Personality is a phenomenon that goes beyond opinions, or closer. There may be an awkward personality who suddenly gives an extraordinary, correct opinion. It may be the opposite: having a completely wrong opinion and, as a personality, taking life as a whole, being a positive life.

Fortunately, "Bandy" Britos,<sup>5</sup> my close lifelong friend, a great leader of the meat workers, with whom we fought much together, gave me a great lesson; he made me give the qualitative leap to become a Bolshevik. We were strongly discussing a problem for the factory. We had been discussing for half an hour. He had a tactic and I had another. And suddenly Bandy Britos smiled, a large, delighted smile, and he said— I'm going to say it in Argentinian—: What a dickhead I am!, you're right. And he was thrilled.

I was amazed: How does he tell me I'm right? After half an hour of discussion he tells me he's a dickhead, and in addition with a smile that big. I thought about it and I realised. Sure, Bandy Britos, what he wanted most was to defeat the bosses, the meatpacking plant. He had realised that what I was saying was a tool much more useful to defeat the bosses than what he said. He realised that he was going to put his foot. And he was happy; more joy impossible.

Then I said, this man is the famous self-criticism of Lenin, but alive. Hence his joy of having realised that he was wrong, that he was going to screw up; the joy of having found a better tool to defeat the bosses in his sector.

So, comrades, we judge acts. As Trotsky, that of Nin, the man he worshipped, of whom he had an extraordinary concept, perhaps the greatest concept among contemporaries of his time, he told him: Traitor, you sank the Spanish revolution, I have never seen a biggest traitor.

Having made this preliminary explanation, we'll work as we said, as a good team, without compromise, without trying to win an argument. The goal is essentially to learn. It isn't a meeting to resolve. It's to see whether we define well the concepts of study, of development. Afterwards, if you wish, we'll draw conclusions; else, we won't. Would you like to start by asking me some questions?

**TRAINEE:** Is it possible, in only a fortnight, to characterise as revisionist an organisation with 40 years of Trotskyist tradition, as is Lambert's?

---

4 *International Courier* was published by the IWL-FI, founded in January 1982. This article was also reproduced in *Panorama International* [International Outlook] #20, clandestine magazine of the Argentine PST, in May 1982.

5 **Ramon "Bandy" Britos**, was a workers' leader of the great meat workers strike in January 1945 of meatpacking plant Anglo-Ciabasa, in Dock Sud, Great Buenos Aires, which employed 15.000 workers. After the strike he became a member of the Marxist Workers' Group (GOM), the group of Nahuel Moreno.

**MORENO:** For me this first question is fundamental, although it seems the more anecdotal. Whether we can define it or not depends on the events of the class struggle. For example, Lenin was of the opinion Kautsky wasn't revisionist or of the right; that he was the greatest revolutionary Marxist. He believed it so much that, when told the German Social Democrats had voted for war credits, he didn't believe it. But as soon as it was confirmed that he did vote them, he resolved within 24 hours, not a fortnight.

To some extent, this question allows me to answer several or most of the questions that follow; because it touches the issue of principles, strategy and tactics. This is fundamental; it's the key to all of Marxism.

We Marxists have principles. What are the principles? The same as in any science. For example, arithmetic has certain principles, which are the laws of addition, the laws of subtraction; a number of laws which are fundamental. Everything done afterwards is combinations of these laws, but already **circumstantial**, although they're very important.

Marxism has **three** bodies, let's call them so. One is the principles, another strategy and other tactics.

In this we must be strict. Therefore, when faced with great events of class the struggle [we characterise] not just in a fortnight: in 24 hours, in five minutes, no sooner we learn of the facts.

[Sometimes we aren't geniuses like Lenin, Trotsky or Marx. Then we take years. In the Argentine PST it has been my personal characteristic to be the last to notice when there were revisionist tendencies. In this case, in relation to Lambertism, I was also the last. There were comrades who from the beginning of last year, during the election campaign in France, were already saying the policy of the OCI [*Organisation Communiste Internationaliste* – Internationalist Communist Organisation] was the ultimate scum. I was the last. In the Argentine party, Bengochea,<sup>6</sup> for example, was much more sensitive than me. Just as I pointed out a very negative aspect of mine, I think that, after reaching a characterisation, I'm more consistent, harder. But I'm slow.]

[In the Argentine PST, where there's enormous freedom, and everything is discussed, there's a group of comrades who are doing a thorough investigation to bust me, to show that, in Chile, we advised to support measures of the Allende government. And we're helping them, sending them archive material to which they have no access, so they can make a history of party positions and demonstrate that we had positions similar to those of Lambert. We help them to see whether they give us a first class funeral, because truly thus a revolutionary party is built. As part of the degeneration of the Fourth, truly we lost the reflexes of knowing what the principles are. So the leadership is helping in full these comrades to demonstrate that the Argentine PST has had a furiously and repugnant revisionist stage. As soon as they send us proof, only the proof that we supported this or that measure of Allende, at that very minute Nahuel Moreno will say I have rarely seen a bigger political crap than Nahuel Moreno. I'm waiting with curiosity. I'm committed because I won't use one method for Lambert and different one for me. Was I a repugnant rotten revisionist who supported Allende's measures, or not? I want to know it. I'm not a genius; I have lived all my life making mistakes. And if the comrades are right, in my political memoirs I will say: Look what an idiot I was who for 30 years supported measures of front populist governments, and only due to the discussion on France I realised by studying Lenin and Trotsky, that to support measures is the top political crime against principles. Because this, very deeply, we discovered only now.]

There's a set of principles we can't fail to express or defend even for a single minute. They're principles: therefore they're the most important. Because always, when we hold any discussion, we discuss tactics, the specific situation. But if there's a Trotskyist who says a bourgeois government is good and can take positive action for the working class, for us it's a matter of principle. That's the first thing we need to discuss, everything else is secondary.

**TRAINEE:** You wrote: "The first task of the party before the emergence of a popular front government is to denounce it, and the parties that make it up, as enemies of the masses, agents of the bourgeoisie and imperialism". **If we, the day after the election, said Mitterrand's was a counter-revolutionary government, agent of the bourgeoisie and imperialism, wouldn't it emerge from there an ultra-leftist**

<sup>6</sup> **Angel "Vasco" Bengochea** was in the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s one of the top leaders, along with Moreno, of the Argentine party. When in 1963 he travelled to Cuba looking for help to Hugo Blanco, who was heading the peasant struggles in Peru, he was won to Castroism, and broke away in 1964 to launch a guerrilla group. He was killed in July 1964 after the explosion in an apartment in Posadas St, Buenos Aires.

**policy? Wasn't it better to say: Our main enemy is the bourgeoisie and Mitterrand, with all his policies, is its accomplice?**

**MORENO:** The comrade raised, and maybe she's right, that we have ultra-leftist deviations. It's secondary. She may well be right, that we haven't really mastered French reality well.

Trotsky was unaware of Spanish reality. He pounded for about a year we had to raise soviets, and then he realised it was a tactical error: soviets sounded wrong in the ears of the Spanish masses. He argued that it was necessary to adapt the terminology to Spain. Trotsky changed tactics. He may be criticised as ultra-leftist, but no one will come to tell Trotsky that he's a traitor to Trotskyism because he raised soviets.

Pity we can't do a course on method. We Marxists, when we discuss, we're for formal logic. Formal logic requires staying on the topic being discussed. The denial of formal logic is very common, it happens every day. We have, for example, a cell meeting at which two comrades arrive late. Suppose they were unjustifiably late and Alberto puts to them: you arrived late, I ask we discuss it. And they say: Wait a minute; let's also discuss why you, Alberto, a month ago, were late to another meeting. Formal logic demands we argue the late arrival of the two comrades, and the other, Alberto's late arrival, we'll see when we discuss it.

This [of discussing tactics without first discussing the principles] is done every day by petty bourgeois and revisionist currents. That we have an ultra-leftist deviation, that we understand little of the French situation, are all discussions we can hold. But let's not depart from what we want to discuss: the principles.

The principles are few, not many. We can enumerate them all, and a revisionist is anyone who goes in general lines against all principles. Because we aren't a religion, we can change the principles. Trotsky and Lenin, as of 1905, because of imperialism changed fundamental principles of Marxism. They changed some, but maintained almost the entire edifice. The principles are the footings, the support base of Marxism. That doesn't mean that occasionally we don't remove a footing. But to remove a footing there has to be a very serious discussion.

Just as in science. There's Newton. To go to Einstein's relativity, which surpasses Newton and installs new principles, you have to discuss for decades; tests of all kinds have to be done, because if we remove the principles the building collapses.

This doesn't mean we can't modify them. For example, if Lambert does the discussion [honestly, as Mandel does, who argues Lenin and Trotsky were wrong— and in Colombia he has said so before all the leadership. One day I invited Mandel to my home and he said: I'm revisionist, Lenin and Trotsky were wrong, they're a disaster. Let Lambert do the same and say, I believe Trotsky was sectarian and Lenin as well].

In the discussion about workers' united front, for example, you have to be honest. If the workers' united front is a principle, and is as fundamental as the OCI says, Lambert has to say that the Third and Fourth were founded by two morons, because the Russian revolution was carried out against the tactics of the united front. We have provided plenty of quotes; I have a draft of a book I haven't published because of how boring it is, with quotes and quotes against the united front throughout 1917.

The comrade's question [about whether you can characterise an organisation as revisionist in only a fortnight] is crucial because it allows me to respond to all the rest; if we can clarify it immediately, if we master well the principles. The degeneration of the Fourth, the crisis of the Fourth has caused that we haven't mastered the principles well. I have already stated my case. It's likely that young comrades who are studying our past in Argentina write a formidable article showing I was revisionist. And I'll say yes. Because the principle is clear; now it's quite clear for me. And there are all the other principles.

For example, for me a Trotskyist who one day stops attacking the opportunist parties violates a principle. How we do it is tactical. But the principle is that a Trotskyist doesn't cease for half a minute to attack those he considers counter-revolutionary apparatuses. It's a principle that a Trotskyist never stops attacking the bourgeois power.

The problem is whether or not these are the principles. Let's not discuss tactics, or whether our policy is ultra-leftist; it's secondary.

When Nicaragua, we in Bogota said: Let's unite with all the sectarians and all the ultra-leftists; we're going to call all to join us. Why? Because with the ultra-leftists and sectarians we're united by principles and, in Nicaragua, Mandel is violating the principles. A worker prisoner is defended, and if

he's Trotskyist we not only defend him, we give our life for him. And those in the USec are telling us that it's all very well to put us prisoners! That's already of principle. It's a principle of the workers' movement.

Someone can come and tell me [the Simon Bolivar Brigade] are ultra-leftists. Let's suppose so. So what? Because we're ultra-leftists they have the right to torture us? The fight against torture is a matter of principles. Later we can discuss whether we were ultra-leftists, whether what we did was useful or not.

Thornett<sup>7</sup> thinks we were right-wing, and Mandel we were ultra-leftists. That's another discussion; they're different levels according to formal logic. Everything that has to do with revisionism fits the first part: the principles. It doesn't fit with the second, or the third. And that's what allows the most lucid comrades, those who have better reflexes, more experience, to define, sometimes in one day, whether someone is revisionist or not.

Proof to hand. There were comrades who early last year, a year ago already, had to be restrained because they felt already that the policy of the OCI was revisionist, and we had to break **on the run** with Lambert, because it was a shameful election campaign without a single attack to the Socialist Party, just because of that. And they told me: Hugo, you're wrong, you'll see when Mitterrand takes office. And I told them the opposite: No, no. And I self-criticise; the comrades were right. By this principle they drew the conclusion that he was revisionist.

I'm of the opinion that Lambertism fails to the all principles, just as Mandel. We respect these principles as if they were the commandments of the Bible: the bourgeois governments are always attacked and we never collaborate with them, the counter-revolutionary workers' parties are attacked every day... Whether it's the main target of attack [or] not, how we do the attack, which words we use, this is what we do need to discuss. But that comes in strategy, tactics, slogans, in another problem.

The great problems fall within the principles. For example, a sacred principle was that we never vote with any bourgeois government. Why did the Second International split? Lenin said: It's the limit; because they voted for a budget. It was against the principles. That was the whole mess, but look at what a mess: the founding of the Third [International], the Russian Revolution of 1917, annihilation of the social democratic parties; just because how they voted. [Having voted it] was considered a grave error by Liebknecht, who seems that complied with the discipline [of his party, the Social Democratic]. Afterwards, Liebknecht himself realised it was a beginning, that it was revisionism, later he broke discipline and all and called to destroy the Socialist Party.

**TRAINEE:** The slogan of Workers' and Peasants' Government is now expressed in France as the slogan of government of the Socialist Party and the Communist Party without capitalist ministers. But it can't be reduced to just that: we must eliminate the all structures of the Fifth Republic; through which slogan of power can we realise this?

**MORENO:** Here we can also discuss much. What matters is whether the [slogan of] workers' and peasants' government has to be accompanied with a program and a call for the mobilisation of the working class. We can't only tell the SP or CP: Break with the bourgeoisie. That's not workers and peasants' government; it's good propaganda. We have to call them to break and to take measures that truly burst the bourgeoisie; both. And if they actually burst the bourgeoisie, they begin to break up with them.

To burst the bourgeoisie is to expropriate it without payment, to impose workers control, to pull down, as the comrade says and I consider quite correct, the structure of the Fifth Republic. But to place, in its stead, not a government of the SP as apparatus, but workers bodies. This is a matter of principle. We pose that managers in factories, in all businesses, be appointed and revoked by the workers, and that the economic plan of production be done by the workers, because this is the principle. We're imposing our power and our institutions. That the state bureaucrats be removed by the working class whenever it wants, is a principle. Everything else is tactical.

**TRAINEE:** What causes the degeneration of the USSR: Stalin's policies or the material problem? Is there a material basis for Lambert's revisionism?

<sup>7</sup> **Alan Thornett** (b. 1937) was part of the British CP and joined the Trotskyist party of Gerry Healy in 1966. He was an important trade unionist who led the great Leyland car factory in Cowley, Oxford. In 1974 he was expelled by Healy along with dozens of militants. In his exile in Colombia Moreno held discussions and exchanges with Thornett's group, which were eventually cut. Finally he joined Mandelism.

**MORENO:** [If we're doing a political history, noting the dynamics of political ideas, I don't know whether the comrade is right or not when she insists on the social aspect of the degeneration.] She's absolutely right that the true basis of the degeneration is social, but we can generalise this reason to all. Any revisionist current responds to social forces, because someone who isn't revisionist may disagree with one, two or three principles, but not with nearly all. If it's nearly all, if it's a whole phenomenon, then it's a current that tends to leave Trotskyism. There are always social forces: the intellectuals, the labour aristocracy, and so on.

In that sense, with regard to Lambertism, we have met this Marxist method. We believe that Lambertism has lost contact with the workers' movement. When they had a 100 militants in 1951, they were roughly 50 to 100 times stronger than now in the industrial proletariat. We didn't know well the history of Lambertism. Since December, after the breaking of the OCI, a worker in Renault came with us. And it turns out we discovered that in Renault, after 40 years of militancy, they had three workers and one came with us. We realised that it's an essentially professional organisation—which we were denouncing— and linked to the social democracy— we think there are links. I'm giving a wholistic interpretation, that maybe is wrong but it's wholistic. Therefore, not only Stalin but every revisionist current always has material foundations.

**TRAINEE:** Can you clarify what you mean by Trotskyist-like parties?

**MORENO:** We believe that there won't be large mass Trotskyist parties quickly, because we believe that there's no possibility to achieve parties by addition, without combinations and without ruptures. We're against that parties are only made with splits. We're against that parties are made in a linear fashion: we're 100 or 150 in Venezuela; within a year we'll be 300; afterwards, patiently, 500; then we have a factional division and go down to 400; later with patience 600; etc. And our great-grandparents will then make a family genealogical history and will demonstrate how their children were raised here and Trotskyism grew a lot. We don't believe in this. We believe in dialectical processes, in sudden leaps. From the own workers' movement, from the great mass organisations centrist currents will emerge. What is a centrist current? One that gives the two fundamental points of the national revolutionary process.

In Poland, for example, we believe that Lambertism and the USec had a criminal revisionist policy, and much more Trotskyist were those sectors that were fighting against Walesa and that argued that Solidarity should take power and make an insurrection, and prepare for an armed struggle against the military coup. You could say "I'm with the political revolution". But the problem is that Mandel was saying that the problem of the Soviets "we're going to study it in due course" and raised his codetermination. And Lambert, in his polemic with me— we have an exchange of letters [argued that power should not be taken by] Solidarity, but by the Soviets, which didn't exist. We believe this is revisionism. Instead, the actual union current that had 15 or 20 percent of Solidarity— that is between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000 workers— they were saying: Solidarity has to take power; beware we must be armed because the coup is coming... That was pure Trotskyism, unconscious. They were for the political revolution.

Mandel and Lambert weren't. They "were for political revolution" but were saying: Let the Soviets take power. And the Soviets didn't exist. And then, logically, they're not for political revolution. In contrast, the others are: Solidarity exists; it has 10 million; that Solidarity take arms; let's build Solidarity in the army because the big shellacking of the army against us is coming if we don't arm ourselves. These are totally, unconscious Trotskyists. As in the famous literary metaphor of the man speaking in prose and not knowing he spoke in prose, they speak Trotskyism without knowing it.

We call this Trotskyist-like. They hit a chord, the essence, the nodal point of the Trotskyist policy in a highly revolutionary situation. As the Friends of Durruti<sup>8</sup> in Barcelona, who were against the dictatorship of the proletariat, and yet Trotsky said: We must unite, we need to do a front with them. Nin was for the dictatorship of the proletariat and the POUM had 30,000 members, but Trotsky, because of principles, told the 10 Spanish Trotskyists: Break with the POUM; get out because they don't criticise the popular front hard (when Nin had already become a minister), and join the anarchists. But how, if the anarchists are against the dictatorship of the proletariat and Nin is in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat? Lies. Nin was in favour in words, but hated the dictatorship of the proletariat; and yet,

<sup>8</sup> The **Friends of Durruti** was a Spanish anarchist group, created on 15 March, 1937 by Jaime Balius, Felix Martinez and Pablo Ruiz, in reaction to the decree of militarization of militias dictated by the government of the Republic. It grew to about 5,000 militants. They had positions similar to those of the small group associated with Trotsky, the Bolshevik Leninists.

his disciples, his friends were Trotskyists. The anarchists, what did they say?: Down with the dictatorship of the proletariat; Revolution; Much powder against the bourgeois government; Kill all the bourgeois; Impose the government of the workers' communes and unions. Trotsky said: they're with us, although they don't want the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotsky insisted. There were posters signed by Anarchist Youth—the Friends of Durruti—and the Trotskyists. This is Trotskyist-like.

**TRAINEE:** Is Lambert a conscious revisionist or not?

**MORENO:** It's a vicious discussion because it's hypothetical; we may spend a lifetime arguing. Any political analysis, any scientific analysis is hypothetical. It has hypothetical elements and others which are real.

I think that Lambert is conscious. I have reason to believe it. He, Felipe—and I don't know about Stephane Just—are perfectly conscious they're revisionists. But it's a hypothesis; others may have the hypothesis they aren't.

As they say now in bourgeois science and also on television, everyone has their own experiences. Lambert and Felipe always considered me a terrible opportunist. When I started doing early criticism, they called me and told me: Hugo, don't do these criticisms because they help Stephane Just, who is a sectarian; we're your disciples, we're opportunists and revisionists; disciples of the Argentine PST, which is opportunistic and revisionist. That stuck with me. So I have the right to give my hypothesis that they're conscious; and you have the right to say they aren't. They felt we were their masters in revisionism and opportunism; and they always felt we were revisionists and opportunists. Quite frankly they told me: Don't put this phrase because it goes against your path; all your life you were traitor; now we have come to your side, we're traitors like you, and you forsake us; where does that leave us?

They were a little more elliptical than Mandel. Mandel, this time in front of the entire leadership of the Colombian party, helped me a lot, because there were several Mandelists saying: How good is Mandel! Mandel, with a tremendous honesty—as always—said: I'm revisionist.

I think then I'm entitled to hold this hypothesis. It's an experience. I don't even tell the story, because they can tell me: it isn't true. But we're entitled to say: We believe they went over [to revisionism]. I think that Lambert believes that a current of the Socialist Party is going to make the socialist revolution, that they're honest. It's also a hypothesis that I throw. I have no proof, but I'm almost certain; and I will write it as hypothesis.

It isn't an insult, it's a scientific hypothesis. We Marxists have to be calm. For example, for a lifetime the OCI has said I was revisionist, until very recently Thornett also said it—we don't know whether he still says we're revisionists, and me the biggest opportunist—and I don't get angry at all. Time will put things in its place. I believe in the practice. I believe in [Marx's] second thesis [on Feuerbach]<sup>9</sup>. It's very simple: we'll see where Lambert goes, and if we're wrong.

But I see this process as becoming increasingly complicated. The Lambertists have criticised us in their Brazilian newspaper because we aren't part of the Multiparty in Argentina. The Multiparty is a little beyond the popular front and they criticise us for not being part of it. In France, the Lambertists have said theoretically: We're in the field of Mitterrand. And in Argentina they say, you don't have to be [in their field], but you have to enter the Multiparty with all. There's a whole article in the newspaper of the Brazilian OCI. While the Workers Party is attacking us for revisionists and opportunists, for having been to ask the Multiparty to fight against the assassinations and kidnappings, they attack us as ultra-leftists because we aren't part of something **much worse** than a popular front. Imagine yourselves in Venezuela, a front of the following parties: Democratic Action, URD, etc.<sup>10</sup>, and that today the Lambertists write we're ultra-leftists because we're not part of that.

Something even more serious. The Revolutionary Communist League [French section of the USec] has the same policy as Lambert—I have a folder full of quotations to prove it. But Mandel is smarter,

<sup>9</sup> Karl Marx's second thesis on Feuerbach states: "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking isn't a question of theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth—i.e. the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question." [www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/theses.htm](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/theses.htm).

<sup>10</sup> When Moreno held this party cadre's school, Venezuela was ruled by President Herrera Campins, of the Christian Democrats (COPEI). The bourgeois opposition was formed by Democratic Action (AD), an affiliate of the Social Democracy led by Carlos Andres Perez—who had been president and has been again since—and the Democratic Republican Union (URD), a party of bourgeois nationalist origin and devoted to imperialism.

and once in a while he does some things to deceive their rank and file. He's the same as Lambert: support for Mitterrand's measures, all the same; but he's smarter, more educated politically. He knows he has to keep the customers. Then, from time to time, he puts forward a product for his customers. And brought the following product: French troops out of Africa. Do you know that, in the UNEF [the French student union], the OCI was opposed and voted with the socialists against the withdrawal of troops? That's treason, not even revisionism. For you to know how we move politically **if the IWL had been strong there, we fight; we get the clubs and kill that swine**. How can you be against the withdrawal of French troops?! That's enough to get into a shootout. They're two barricades. There can be no Trotskyist who votes against the imperialist troops' withdrawal from the black colonies. And this is also of principle.

The Lambertists, unlike Mandel, wanted to sell other merchandise. And what merchandise! They began shouting for the right to self-determination of black peoples. But the right to self-determination of black peoples begins with the removal of the imperialist troops. This is proven. It has been denounced by the LCR. With pain in their soul, because the LCR thinks we're ultra-leftists, that Lambertism is extraordinary although a little further to the right than them, and that Lambertism and they have to come together to destroy us, the ultra-leftists. It's what they keep writing: How great Lambert is, he's coming this way.

**TRAINEE:** The OCI, by focusing its policy on the illusions of the masses and that we must accompany them to make the experience, ¿doesn't it ignore the leading role of the revolutionary party?

**MORENO:** The problem of the illusions raised by the comrade is a fundamental issue. It's also a matter of principle. Do we base our principles and our policy only on the illusions? Or is the principle first and then we take those illusions to see how we pose it?

Let's get down to earth: these theoretical discussions are always reflected in the practice. For example, the masses believe that Mitterrand will solve all problems. A thousand workers in such a factory are fired. What does the OCI do? Or what did it do? The OCI will go to the factory and vote with the Socialists and Communists that the government must be given time, and for the appointment of a delegation to go and see the Minister, later the Prime Minister and then Mitterrand. That is the policy of the OCI; we have given extensive quotations.

We have made tremendous contributions. We say, fantastic, this is fine, you need to take the illusions. People think we should not go on strike and we have to negotiate with Mitterrand. We have to take into account, but taking it to develop the principle that Mitterrand [is against the workers]. It's the famous combination of the Trotskyist method of combined and uneven development. First of all is how we demonstrate the principle that Mitterrand is with the bourgeoisie. Workers have the illusion that Mitterrand is with them. We have the certainty, by principle: Mitterrand is with the bourgeois and not with the workers. How do we combine the two issues, but without abandoning the principle, to see how we apply the principle?

Suppose a person has an infectious disease and you have to inoculate an antibiotic. What is the principle? This infectious disease is cured with an antibiotic. Next comes how the antibiotic is given. Maybe this person is allergic, doesn't tolerate this type of antibiotic, or a person who has the illusion there must a cure without injections. There are many people like that. I had a Spanish aunt who thought the injection was an evil sent by God, a horrible thing. She never had injections. It was her illusion, an ideology: I don't want injections. The art of the physician is how he puts the antibiotic, taking into account the illusions, saying: Turn around I'm going to rub a cotton swab, until she turns back and he puts the injection.

This is the whole art of the Marxist. How do we put into the workers the principle that Mitterrand serves the bourgeoisie? Like the one who has to give the injection to a person who says: I don't want injections, they're wrong. They're illusions. I don't want to fight Mitterrand because Mitterrand's good, say the workers. Our art is how we say to them: Mitterrand is bad, he's a disaster. This is the principle. If we don't say it, we begin already to be traitors, we serve Mitterrand. Mitterrand says: Wait for me because I'm good. If we say to the workers: Wait for him because those are you illusions, it's the same policy.

True Marxist politics is to always call to mobilisation. Then what do we do? The workers say: We believe in Mitterrand. We don't believe, but we're respectful. We love them much; we're workmates in the factory. Let's agree with them: We'll make the negotiations you say. For us, it's an illusion of yours, but we respect it. Besides, you're majority; we minority. We support you to death. We aren't

ultra-leftists. Hopefully you're right. We'll negotiate. What we don't say is: Let's give him time. Because there the betrayal begins, it's what Mitterrand wants. We tell the workers simple things that any worker understands: You know, as Trotskyists, we believe that the SP is filth, a counter-revolutionary apparatus; that Mitterrand serves the bourgeoisie. But we not even discuss that. As you're going to starve while negotiating with Mitterrand, let's occupy the factory to demand from Mitterrand, if he doesn't accept the negotiations, by force. Let's appeal to the workers of the neighbourhood, of the city. Let's ask them to show solidarity and to threaten Mitterrand that, if he refuses to negotiate with us to reintegrate the dismissed, all workers will stop. It's simple. And I think there may be many sectors could say: Yes, let's occupy the factory as we negotiate. We started to carry out the Trotskyist line. We did a combined program.

But they don't. Lambert goes there and he even boasts and publishes in his newspaper: Great win; we, the Communists and the Socialists have taken a joint resolution that says... I want you comrades to tell me if that's right. Is that ok? It's as if here, where the workers are with Democratic Action and some with COPEI, 300 workers are fired and you vote with AD, with the union bureaucracy: Let's see the Labour Minister— I don't know whether there's one—, later the Prime Minister— I don't know whether there's one—, and then President Herrera Campins (for us it's the same as if Carlos Andres Perez were President). And nothing else? We believe that, if nothing else, it's treason. It isn't Trotskyism. The principle isn't there.

We believe that, if there are dismissals, a Trotskyist goes and starts the transition program:

"Do you want to negotiate?"

"Yes."

"Let's combine negotiations with occupation. Is there something wrong with it?"

We accept the illusions, but the linchpin of our policy isn't the illusions. Lenin said that our great adversary, against whom we give our great battle, is the mentality of the working class. Knowing to remain alone, not to capitulate to that mentality. This pretext of illusions is the revisionist argument. When it was World War, all the masses went to the streets, went to war, there were illusions. Instead, Marxists were all alone by themselves. Tell me, comrades, what is the policy as soon as 200 or 300 are retrenched:

"Do you believe in the bourgeois government?"

"Yes."

"Then don't occupy or do anything; give it time, five or six months to see what it says as we negotiate; meanwhile, starve."

This is what the OCI says. Mandel is smarter, because he has the same policy as the OCI, but says: Occupy, let's do co-management, let's review the books. Always something that can't be done, but at least he's ultra-leftist.

The injection is the principle. The antibiotic kills microbes: that's the principle. How to put it's the tactical problem that takes into account the illusions.

**TRAINEE:** Why are so poor the Theses of the FI-IC in relation to the problem of the popular front?

**MORENO:** We weren't aware. We never thought we'd have differences with Lambert on this. Many are attacking us for that. There was a book by Stephane Just [attacking popular frontism]. They fought for their whole life the "popular front of combat". It never crossed our minds and hence we didn't write about it.

In the Conference itself, where they were approved, we noticed their reluctance to the addition on the Socialist Party. Comrade Brunello had more additions on the Social Democratic Party (not on the popular front), and we accepted them. They had caught Brunello eye, he indeed was already very worried. But he was the only one. Nor had it entered our heads they were capitulating on this issue. We never believed in gossip. On these issues, if not proven, you have to be slow, calm.

But I don't justify myself at all. It was a grave error, mainly mine. I insist, without false modesty, that I was lead author of the thesis. And it didn't enter my head. §

## The popular front

We're going to do a course on popular front. We're touching, according to Trotsky, a fundamental problem.

You should raise doubts, suspicions, whether we're sectarian or factional. Mandel has always attacked me as factional, so let's take it into account. It might be so. I made myself almost alone, forsaken by God and through multiple errors. It may be that I'm already so used to walk alone that it bothers me walking with other people. And that I may have invented an ideology of better alone than in bad company. I may think they're bad company and, perhaps, they happen to be good company.

The problem of the popular front is crucial. However, there have been relatively few popular front governments before 1940. There has been two classics: France and Spain. Why is it so important? Because I believe there's going to be more and more popular front governments. Already in the postwar of 1944 there were many, characteristically. The problem is decisive. In this, let's get used to be serious, even if we lose one or two months. First, I will clarify the principles and then the problem of the popular front. Full of doubts. Doubt is a great Marxist method. Full of doubts towards me, full of doubts about the whole world, until we can rest on bedrock: these are the principles and are applied in such a way; and this is the popular front.

**TRAINEE:** The OCI also thought that the coming stage is popular frontist.

**MORENO:** Of course. I don't think [that] directly, because I believe a lot in Bonapartist and fascist governments.

I believe that popular frontism will be one of the typical governments, along with hard Bonapartists. What I think makes short circuit, it has already made short circuit, as Trotsky used to say, is bourgeois democracy. Nowadays all bourgeois democracies are almost Bonapartist; they're bourgeois democratic forms. My discussion with Forgue<sup>1</sup> is apparently erudite, even boring, if you wish. It isn't well understood what is being discussed because, being public, we throw little kicks pretending we throw kisses. I think it's a very important discussion.

**TRAINEE:** Forgue replied to you how you can compare such different governments like Peron, Roosevelt and the German social democracy. I'm confused that in an article you talk about governments of sui generis Bonapartist type, but in *International Correspondence* #13 you say that the popular front is a type of government and Bonapartism is a system, but also you speak of the popular front in the form of party, as in the cases of Cardenas or Peron.

**MORENO:** I don't see a contradiction there, but I do between this and my previous article. The one I vindicate the most is the one in *International Correspondence* #13.<sup>2</sup> I do believe there's a contradiction between this article and what I wrote later. But it's not what you see, but that between Kerenskyism and popular front. I'll tell you how I see the problem today. I think we have made progress in the analysis, but we don't contradict ourselves.

---

1 **Francois Forge** is the pseudonym of **Francois de Massot**, leader of the OCI and its successors. Editor of *La Verite*, the OCI's theoretical journal. See Bibliography at the end of this work.

2 *International Correspondence* was the magazine of the FI-IC. In issue #13 two articles were published. One by Nahuel Moreno, who signed as Miguel Capa: "The Mitterrand government. Its perspectives and our policy". Another by François Forgue: "First answer to Comrade Capa". Both were reproduced clandestinely by the PST in a special edition of *International Correspondence* on November 1981.

First, Trotsky's quote that I give where he says the government of Cardenas is popular frontism. Let's not include Peron and Nasser because Trotsky was no longer living, although I think they do look alike. Let's rely on Trotsky. Trotsky said Cardenas was a popular frontist party and the government of Chiang Kai-shek was a popular front government. For me there's no contradiction in this sense: the government can be Bonapartist and popular frontist. This has to do with what we discussed with Forgue, which is very interesting, to be well defined. Later you make yourself heard and there are changes, even on my part. Let's look at the definitions by Forgue against most of Trotsky, and of my part against Lenin and Trotsky. Let's clarify things, rather than hide them. Let's see whether we define very schematically so it can be really a course, what is discussed in this seemingly secondary problem, or very important but erudite.

How is a government defined?

The Third International made at its time three definitions of governments in which the workers' parties were involved.

**One:** Kerenskyism.

(Later there's what we'll call bourgeois workers' governments, which the Third International divided into two types :)

**Two:** governments like the Labourite which is liberal workers', because its program isn't Marxist; it's in favour of liberalism, of free enterprise. Let's call it liberal workers' government, although it isn't exactly the name given it by the Third.

**Three:** the bourgeois social democratic government.

As always, Lenin, Trotsky and all of them defined real phenomena. Number **two** were the Labour governments in Australia and England. And **three** was the Social Democratic government in Germany.

The Third didn't specify well the difference between Kerenskyism and the other two types of government. Hence I in the article about Portugal<sup>1</sup> got confused. And also by Hansen's<sup>2</sup> influence. I was a close friend of Hansen and Hansen said many things under the influence of Trotsky. And he was right when he reflected Trotsky's influence. He also erred a little a bit.

The Third didn't define well what a Kerenskyst government was. They defined as Kerenskyst many parliamentary governments, where nothing happened [in the class struggle]. They defined **one** almost equal to **two** and **three**, as if they were synonyms. [But the latter governments] didn't look like the Russian Kerenskyst governments: there was no dual power.

On the type of Kerenskyst governments they were confusing: they defined it because there was dual power; dual power, or a normal government, parliamentary, if the workers' parties were part of it, with or without bourgeois. On the one hand, dual power fell within [the definition of Kerenskyism], and on the other hand "relatively normal" Governments, through elections, did as well. If [workers parties were involved] they called it Kerenskyst, even if it was normal.

They called Kerenskyst, for example, the French centre-left government. They called Kerenskyst the Labour government, the [government type] two. Trotsky also has plenty to do with this: Kerenskyism is coming, governments like these are coming. And in the famous resolution of the Third on governments (because there are two resolutions or comments of the Executive Committee), four or five definitions are made, without naming Kerenskyism. I mention this so you can see that the Third wasn't the Bible. While what it did is extraordinary, there were confusing things. On the national problem there's a terrible mess between the Second and the Fourth Congress, with very serious contradictions about what a revolutionary nationalist movement is. At the Fourth Congress things change. It's an issue on which we haven't yet agreed.

But the 1930s arrive and popular frontist governments come. Hansen told me that Trotsky, since the popular front governments, didn't use the term Kerenskyism anymore. I accepted it because it's true. From the year 1934-1935— it seems to me that even before— Trotsky doesn't speak anymore of Kerenskyism. Hansen told me it was because Trotsky believed that the popular front was modern Kerenskyism, which is what I write in the article on Portugal.

1 The article Nahuel Moreno refers to is *Revolution and counter-revolution in Portugal*, soon to be available in [www.nahuelmoreno.org/textos.php?i=en](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org/textos.php?i=en).

2 **Joseph Hansen** (1910–1979) was an American Trotskyist and leading figure in the Socialist Workers Party.

What does Forgue say and what do we say on this issue, apparently formal, which is the definition? Forgue says: The popular front government firstly is a government of class collaboration, but it has a special feature. There are many governments of class collaboration that aren't popular front: at least the workers-capitalist governments, which are of class collaboration and aren't popular frontist. Because he believes that the popular front government is a government of class collaboration, but that doesn't characterise it, it isn't its fundamental characteristic. In Aristotelian terms, it's not the specific difference, it's the next genre. What characterises them is that they're governments [that occur] when there's an unresolvable crisis of the bourgeois regime. Unresolvable means that in the short term there has to be an explosion, a civil war, something. They're governments of revolutionary crisis; unresolvable and revolutionary crisis, or at the edge [of it]. They can't be stable, they can't last. They have to be for a short time, where there's dual power or dual power is inexorably coming.

**TRAINEE:** Unresolvable crisis means the popular front is the last resort of the bourgeoisie?

**MORENO:** Yes, along with fascism. Or the penultimate. Felipe only quotes the one saying "last" and doesn't quote the one saying it may be the penultimate. I wonder if you know that there are two [quotes]: last and penultimate.

In other words, it's a government that can't be tolerated by the bourgeoisie, just as the dual power, and so on. However, there's another government of class collaboration, as the Labour Party in England, as the Social Democratic Party in Germany— which rules with the Liberal Party—, which aren't popular front, aren't part of a crisis but of a stability, which don't have dual power or aren't going into dual power, they last, they aren't incompatible with the bourgeois regime. That's what Forgue says.

And Forgue says more: there can be governments of unresolvable crisis which aren't popular frontist. They may also be governments of only a labour party. To Forgue, there may be governments of unresolvable crisis and revolutionary [of revolutionary crisis] which aren't popular frontist. For example, dual power comes as in Bolivia and there may be a bourgeois government such as the MNR that has all the government (let's assume, for a moment, the MNR didn't have the collaboration of the workers or could not have had it). It may be only workers' government: for example, in Germany in 1919 it's the Social Democratic Party that takes power alone, without collaboration with the bourgeoisie. That is, **not always** a revolutionary crisis causes a popular front government, it isn't compulsory; there may be other governments of revolutionary crisis.

If you want I can go back a little. The form of every popular front government is a government where there are bourgeois parties or leaders and workers' parties. That's the form. On this we agree Forgue, Mandel, Hansen, Trotsky and me. It's the most spectacular front without principles that has been seen: we fully agree this is the form.

The differences come thereon. Now you will see what the importance of this discussion is.

Forgue says that, even if it's a government of workers and bourgeois, of workers' and bourgeois parties, it's not popular front if it's of a normal period, if there's no revolutionary crisis. It's only popular front if, besides having the form of a government where the bourgeoisie and the workers are, it's a government that comes because there's a revolutionary crisis.

This discussion isn't a scholastic, gratuitous discussion. They, the Lambertists, say the government of Mitterrand is of popular front. And we accept it: yes, it's popular front. And Forgue says, if you're true Trotskyists, this means we're going to dual power, that Mitterrand is going to have a war against the bourgeoisie, and that an uprising of the bourgeoisie against Mitterrand is inevitable because it's a government in the midst of a revolutionary crisis or at the verge of a revolutionary crisis. [Instead], if it's normal, if it's a government that will support the Fifth Republic, it isn't a popular front government even if it's between bourgeois and workers' parties. Forgue gives a theory, an ultra-theoretical definition of what is a popular front government, useful to the policy of the OCI. Hence all they're going to say: that the war is being prepared by the bourgeoisie against Mitterrand, that civil war is coming.

That's what Forgue says. It isn't too bad. It's a line of reasoning theoretically interesting that, perhaps, it's in some ways more correct than mine. The downside of him is he says it's the Trotskyist [line]. It isn't the Trotskyist [line]. This isn't serious, because now I'll tell you how I disagree with the definition of Kerenskyism by Lenin and Trotsky.

Our [definition], i.e. of the IWL-FI— let's make it impersonal—, is different. For us what Forgue raised is very interesting, but it has to be solved another way. We must distinguish between content and

form. Different forms also hold different contents. There's no mechanical unity between content and form. Forgue, very cleverly as he indeed is, scores a goal when trying to divide governments into two types:

- a) Governments of revolutionary or pre-revolutionary crisis, and
- b) Governments without revolutionary crisis.

That is a success of him. The error comes later, when he says which ones are those of revolutionary crisis.

For us, governments are divided by their content, by the relationship between classes: bourgeois of revolutionary crisis and bourgeois without revolutionary crisis, stable. Before you look whether they're bourgeois [or whatever they are, it's necessary to specify the previous]. Because if there's dual power, they're incompatible with the rule of the bourgeoisie, they can only last a short time. These are the characteristics because, due to its content, the bourgeois regime can't live with dual power, in the middle of a semi-civil war, it must be defined quickly. And without revolutionary crisis they're the opposite, stable, compatible and can last a long time. There's no reason for them not to last. It depends on the political ups and downs or accidents. Structurally, this is the definition.

We began by attacking Forgue for not doing so. Because the first thing to be defined is the content: the relations between classes and the general characteristics acquired by the government when there's trouble between the classes and when there's no trouble between the classes. When there's no trouble between the classes, governments are stable. And when there's trouble between classes governments are unstable.

The government of crisis we call Kerenskyism, against Lenin and Trotsky, who called Kerenskyism all [those involving workers' parties]. We only call Kerenskyism those of crisis because Kerensky's government was the government of the greatest revolutionary crisis in the world. We say: this is the typical government [of revolutionary crises], of dual power, etcetera.

Made this definition, it's necessary to go on to define the governments by their form. We found that, removing the fascist governments or governments product of counter-revolutionary coups, any type of government— even of regime— can exist in either of two ways.

[By not pointing this], Forgue's thinking is mechanical, opposed to Trotskyism. Forgue says: If there's crisis, it's popular front. That is to say, for him the content always equals the form. It goes against Marxist dialectic. We believe that reality is a combination of unequal formations.

Either in crisis or stable, there may be governments:

- **Of popular front**, where there are workers' parties, plus bourgeois parties.
- **Liberal workers**, as the Australian Labor Party and today, to some extent, the German Social Democratic Party— because it has changed the Erfurt program and gave in to the liberal program.
- Social democrat-bourgeois (or capitalists).
- Directly **bourgeois**, where no workers' parties are involved.

Where does the Swedish government fit in? I don't know. If they don't collaborate with the bourgeoisie they're social democrat-bourgeois in principle. But I don't know its program.

Nobody can say how these four types of governments, which are defined by the form, as superstructural phenomenon, are combined. These four governments may be present with the crisis and they may be present with a stable situation, because this is superstructural, this defines governmental combinations.

Please note that all I want is to be clear what I mean, not that you agree. I'm not rebutting. I want you to at least have it clear, to think about it.

**TRAINEE:** Would Kerenskyism be a kind of popular front?

**MORENO:** Of course, the one of crisis. It's a Kerenskyst popular front. But there may be workers-liberal Kerenskyism, social democrat-bourgeois Kerenskyism, Kerenskyism as bourgeois government. But if it's of crisis, it's Kerenskyism. [Instead], Trotsky and Lenin called Kerenskyst all governments where workers' parties were involved. I think not. We need to return to the days of Lenin. But to his empirical time. Because he never defined it [as] Kerenskyst government. Sometimes he said Bonapartist or semi-Bonapartist, other times democratic or semi-democratic.

**TRAINEE:** In the first classification, between governments of revolutionary crisis or stable, the issue comes up that the former are incompatible with the bourgeois regime. Is it because they can't control the masses?

**MORENO:** Above all for the dual power. Dual power is incompatible with the bourgeois regime. Any government that sits, that arises as consequence of dual power is Kerenskyst. We must break the mechanical approach to start thinking dialectically. Each country will see what happens. For example, here in Venezuela, it's not ruled out in four or five years a general strike. A revolutionary period opens, and let's suppose that Herrera Campins continues. We don't have to say that Herrera Campins can't continue. There may be all sorts of combinations.

This discussion also has to do with the regimes. These types of governments can happen in Bonapartist regimes, semi-parliamentary Bonapartism, parliamentary regimes, regimes without parliament and so on. As long as there are democratic guarantees for the workers' parties.

Here, as I said, fascist regimes don't fit in, because this is maximum stability, it's bedrock, it's Bonapartism under pure hammer. Neither fascism or Bonapartist coups fit in.

**TRAINEE:** The Lambertists say that Mitterrand is a product of the electoral victory and that problems are created by Giscardian<sup>1</sup> officials representing the bourgeoisie advocate of the Fifth Republic. For them, as the SP is inconsistent with the Fifth Republic, the bourgeoisie will attempt to remove it from power. For this reason, there will be elements of civil war. The masses will fight to defend the Mitterrand government and leftist sectors within the Socialist Party will radicalize. In Portugal, social democrat Soares ruled for four years with a lot of instability. It was a temporary solution for imperialism, which then kicked him out. Is the Socialist Party incompatible with the bourgeois regime?

**MORENO:** No. On the contrary, I think it is [compatible]. In the same way that there's no problem in having popular front governments, either in crisis or stable.

I think it is [compatible], first for the degree of corruption of the Socialist Party. In our work we put that quote showing how the SP, according to Trotsky, was prepared by the whole bourgeoisie. From 1918, the Third [International] argues that the European socialist parties are direct agents of Yankee imperialism, that they live off Yankee capital. This already in 1918, 1920, 1924, at the time of Lenin and Trotsky. Later, they have been the most reactionary sectors of the international workers' movement. Stalwarts of imperialism and made by imperialism.

And in this post-war period, the socialist parties are the direct product of the mass managers of the high bourgeoisie. It's a conscious thing. So much so that, as always in politics aphorisms come up, the fantastic, amazing formula of Alfonso Guerra, the second of Felipe González.

We did entryism in the Spanish PSOE. And suddenly we realised that it was entryism in a vacuum. The PSOE in Madrid may have 200 or 300 militants, nothing more. They're empty headquarters, which fill a little at election time and then are completely empty. Guerra was questioned why he threw people out of the PSOE, why he didn't try to have many militants. And he gave the definition of all the social democratic parties of the world: "*I prefer 10 minutes in television to 10,000 militants*". It's brilliant.

I think that what Trotsky says is true: that the police, the army, the bourgeoisie, all give **all** the means to the Socialists. Socialist parties don't exist five minutes if they're cut off television and don't have the protection of bourgeois governments. That has already reached the limit. There has been quite a degenerative process.

Already in the 1930s, even in the 1920s, they were perfectly compatible with all types of government. Not only that, but there was a government, a Socialist Party which became a semi-fascist party. They were the Germans, who killed Rosa Luxemburg, who appealed to the General Staff of the army [against the workers]. One of them was that famous Social Democratic leader, boss of the police. Trotsky quotes him when he proposed to join with the Devil [against the Nazis]. And Stalinism says: How can we unite with this murderer, repressor of the workers' movement?

There's no incompatibility. But the problem is more serious. Lambert, like Mandel, is unfortunately Eurocentric. Unfortunately they live in imperialist countries. You don't realise what that means. They are imperialists to the marrow of the bone, because to discuss whether the socialist parties are compatible or not...!

---

<sup>1</sup> **Giscardian:** it refers to supporters of **Valéry Giscard d'Estaing** (b. 1926), also known as Giscard or VGE, a French politician and a member of the Constitutional Council of France. He served as President of France from 1974 until 1981.

The socialist parties of Latin America and the backward countries in general **have done everything**. They have collaborated with occupation governments, as the socialists of Morocco. They have collaborated with imperialism.

In Argentina they were extreme right-wing. They were an aristocratic current of the workers' movement. The Argentine Socialist Party has lived killing workers. It was an agent of Aramburu's dictatorship. Now they were the extreme right of Videla's government. They, the great Social Democratic leaders, the great friends of Kautsky, who had known Trotsky (I've seen pictures of them). For instance, Americo Ghioldi who was ambassador of Videla's dictatorship in Portugal.

When the *coup d'état* in June 1955 against Peron in Argentina took place, the editorial of the SP newspaper said: "The milk of mercy is over"<sup>1</sup>. For them it was necessary to kill 2000 or 3000 workers, and they attacked the military government for having shot so few. This is the Social Democratic Party that I know.

In France, Trotsky had already defined that the regime of the Third Republic was a Bonapartist regime, which had been emptied of its parliamentary content. And yet it's to this regime that later on Blum, along with the Radicals, comes and makes the first thorough popular front government.

Social democracy isn't incompatible with anything. It's only incompatible with lack of elections, because in the entire world is an electoral party. In Argentina, for example, social democracy nowadays keeps asking for elections, along with saying: How great is the military government! Only with that it's incompatible.

In this regard, Lambert and also we have indicated that the communist parties can indeed be partners of non-parliamentary governments, which have no formal democracy. Because Moscow tells them: Support Hitler, and they support Hitler. They had a legal newspaper; *L'Humanité* was legal when Nazi troops entered France. They sought to do the same under Petain and the Gestapo and in Paris too. Stalinism has already reached the limit in that direction.

We can say that the Social Democrats [cannot live] if there isn't some little election, even under a Bonapartist regime.

Moreover, there isn't [today] any other kind of regime that isn't Bonapartist in general terms. Let's be done with this discussion. Bonapartism is the typical regimen. It has more or less democracy, it's more or less totalitarian, but the general trend is towards Bonapartist regimes, on the one hand by the influence of imperialism, and on the other by the influence of the states, which today are huge, with a bureaucracy that controls everything.

The degree of degeneration of social democratic parties is the apex. The best example is Mitterrand, who creates this Socialist Party as an operation of the bourgeoisie, like Felipe Gonzalez as well. Everything is designed by world capitalism. Felipe González was made by them, between Stalinism and world imperialism. [To the historical current of the PSOE], just in case it had any small element of class, so that there's absolute security Felipe has responded in a great way. He's a statesman to the hilt. French social democracy is much worse, because Mitterrand is an old bourgeois leader, like Betancourt<sup>2</sup>, very similar to him. He was bourgeois; he was the great figure of the bourgeoisie. Have you read what Stephane Just wrote in the year 1974-1975 about the PS being a fundamental part, a guarantee of the Fifth Republic? We have the quote from the old stage, hitting Mitterrand with everything.

**TRAINEE:** The SP is therefore compatible with all these types of governments?

**MORENO:** I want to say more. The socialist parties are now direct product of the bourgeoisie. In Portugal, Soares, if he didn't have the support of imperialism and of the whole bourgeoisie, he wouldn't have come to anything. If they were only, I think, 50 or 100 militants. It's said that Lambertism was stronger, and if not stronger, it was even.

**TRAINEE:** Do you mean the law that, when the rise begins, the masses go first to their traditional organisations is no longer fulfilled?

1 Moreno quotes here a well-known episode, although he confuses the circumstances of it. In June 1956, under the military regime that displaced Peron, a group of Peronist military was up in arms. The attempt was suppressed and the military regime shot several of the soldiers involved, as well as numerous civilian Peronist militants. It was then that the SP weekly, *La Vanguardia* [The Vanguard] published the editorial whose title Moreno quotes.

2 **Romulo Betancourt** (1908–1981), leader of the social democratic party *Acción Democrática* [Democratic Action] and twice President of Venezuela from 1945 to 1948 and again from 1959 to 1964.

**MORENO:** [The law is fulfilled]. But in Portugal, the Socialist Party wasn't the traditional organisation. The large traditional organisation, the one leading, was the CP. Then it was Maoism and then the Trotskyists.

**TRAINEE:** That the French, the Spanish Socialist Parties, etc., draw their strength from TV is okay. But it gives them very good results.

**MORENO:** This law [that social democracy is an electoral machine created by the bourgeoisie] doesn't negate the other law, that the masses go to the traditional workers' parties. This law, the bourgeoisie also knows it, and through television and all other media tries to make them go there.

The communist parties have a characteristic that is their great advantage over the socialist parties, although fortunately they're losing it. The communist parties have a qualitative characteristic inherited from Bolshevism, which is fatal, terrible for us: the issue of the daily struggle. While socialism has always been electoral, the communist parties have inherited [the structure] of the cell by company, of the trade union cell for the daily fight and reply. That makes them a very dangerous phenomenon, because the worker says: They're those who are with us in every fight. Fortunately, they're also going through the electoral process and are losing this. This is a field that it's opening to us for the first time: that of union activists. Already the communist parties are so traitors, they have gentrified so much that they have lost that reflex. It's seen in Argentina, where it's already colossal: 30 or 35 years ago, the Communist Party already worshipped those who gathered a lot of money: it's an apparatus with money.

Now I would like to ask some questions to you. Always in every discussion there are many points, and everyone hits on the weakest point of the other. It's like a boxing match: if you believe that the enemy has weak chin, you try to hit on the chin; if the other believes it's the liver, he tries to strike with all the liver. Any polemic is like this. Trotsky said that each debater hits what he considers the weakest point. And any polemic has its own dynamic, sometimes unthinkable. Various issues emerge which were not raised at first and other issues start losing importance. This is why I would like that, from the study or the impressions you have, you specify to me the following question: What, according to you, are the main points under discussion and that led to the split of the FI-IC from the political point of view?

Without discussing whether I'm the great culprit for the breakdown of the FI-IC or not. Or whether there are evil people, like Aldo and I, who divide the revolutionary Marxist organisations or something like that. Or if we hurried, we made an adventure, aborted a process— which is fair to hold, it may be so, although without malice. Leaving aside this— which doesn't mean we're absolved from blame, but whether the split was hasty or not is tactical—, let's be precise. For now, let's not discuss why the FI-IC actually broke, but what differences there were over the popular front. Don't tell me about the anti-imperialist front, or the organisational problems— which existed—; tell me only what has to do with the popular front. Within the popular front, what do you believe are the major issues under discussion between the OCI and us?

**TRAINEE:** Firstly, the support of the OCI to the government of Mitterrand.

**TRAINEE:** First, the multiclass fields.

**MORENO:** We'll write in the order you tell me, but I'm going to put in the order that I think. For me, **the first thing is the fields.**

We'll be as far as possible, honest in the discussion to see if we have differences. You say that the OCI gave support to Mitterrand. I have to correct you. The OCI has insisted and insists it neither supports nor does it give critical support. What you say, that it supports, is an abuse. It may be support, but support to measures or steps of Mitterrand. What are concrete are the phrases. They say: We don't support the government, but we do support the steps— not even the measures. This is a big issue, but it's **the second: Support to the measures.** For me the first is the one raised by the comrade: "To be politically with multiclass fields". What else?

**TRAINEE:** The adaptation to the Socialist and Communist parties.

**TRAINEE:** The role of the party.

**TRAINEE:** The program.

**MORENO:** Well, you already got it right. For me the **third is: The policy of break with the bourgeoisie.** Here the difference is total. What they call break with the bourgeoisie is totally opposite of what we say.

**TRAINEE:** The fourth is: The program.

**TRAINEE:** The fifth is: No denunciation of the government and the traitor workers' parties, or no denunciation of the counter-revolutionary parties and their government.

**TRAINEE:** There also is the issue of illusions.

**MORENO:** We already touched on that before. It's the key problem, the methodological problem that goes through all this, but we have already studied it.

**TRAINEE:** The definition of the stage.

**MORENO:** That is tactical. You say that they make an interpretation of the stage in the service of revisionism, which may be so. But if one says it's a counter-revolutionary stage and another says it's revolutionary, that isn't revisionism.

I congratulate you because no one erred and you have studied much. These five points are the ones we'll work on.

**One:** We have differences about the multiclass fields. What policy must we take in regard to the popular front or another alternative?

**Two:** We have differences regarding support for the measures.

**Three:** We have differences with regard to the traditional Trotskyist policy of break with the bourgeoisie and how to apply it. We believe that they apply it in an anti-Trotskyist way and they say they're applying the Trotskyist line of break with the bourgeoisie.

**Four:** We have differences with respect to nothing less than the program.

**Five:** The problem of the denunciation to the counter-revolutionary parties, the government, and so on.

We'll develop all these points as chapters. I keep asking: What differences do we have on the point about the definition and the policy regarding the multiclass the fields or the popular front?

**TRAINEE:** They're relying on the forecast that Mitterrand will resist the bourgeoisie and we should support him, and they place themselves in the political field of the government and in a possible military field.

**TRAINEE:** They overemphasise the divisions among the bourgeoisie.

**MORENO:** Ok, they're complementary.

**TRAINEE:** They say there's a progressive sector of the bourgeoisie and another that isn't.

**MORENO:** That's a little bit of an abuse. It's ok when you say they attach importance to the division of the bourgeoisie. But it's an abuse when you say they say there's a progressive sector of the bourgeoisie. It's different a [progressive] multiclass field and a [progressive] sector of the bourgeoisie.

**TRAINEE:** The field isn't multiclass, it's of class, and it's bourgeois. It's the field in which they are. They can't be in two fields at once.

**MORENO:** It's a multiclass unity of workers and bourgeois parties. They put themselves besides a bourgeois sector. If the government and politics are bourgeois, without a doubt it's bourgeois. What I don't want you to say is that there isn't a front, that they're voting for a bourgeois sector against another bourgeois sector, because we would take it too far. Although it's right at the end, it's an abuse. They're supporting a front where the workers' and bourgeois parties of the bourgeois government are.

I will incorporate what Alberto said that there was an electoral triumph, but [the Mitterrand government isn't a triumph]. There's an incredible unity. I think Alberto took hold of it because he's consistent with his analysis that the OCI as a whole has been developing an entire revisionist system in all grounds. In my work I try to show it, and Alberto has advanced up to their analysis of what the electoral triumph and the defeat of Giscard meant. Whether they have transformed it into a coherent theory or not, they believe that the success [of the workers] is the government of Mitterrand, and not that Mitterrand is a manoeuvre with which the bourgeoisie snatched victory [from the workers].

**TRAINEE:** To support from outside is worse, because it creates the illusion that it's an independent policy.

**MORENO:** That's right. From the outside it helps more; as betrayal it's worse.

For me there are three key aspects to this issue of fronts:

**First:** They consider it a relatively progressive front in relation to the other bourgeois front; they believe it able to take action against the bourgeoisie, while the other front, instead, everything it does is for the bourgeoisie. This as characterisation.

**Second:** As a logical consequence of this characterisation as a progressive front, they consider they have to be part of it politically, not only for the illusions of the masses. Beware, they don't say: it's crap, it's useless, Mitterrand is a disaster, he goes against the workers' movement, but as the masses believe in him... This isn't the case. Just as Alberto pointed out, they systematically seek progressive elements in Mitterrand himself. There are two sides to the issue. One is the illusions. And the other, more serious, is that they portray Mitterrand and the front as relatively progressive. They consider it's necessary to be part of it politically. When they say "we must be a part of it", they don't say "because the masses believe in them", but "because they take measures against the bourgeoisie". They don't speak of a subjective phenomenon, but of an objective phenomenon, of actions. Beware of this, which is the first point: they characterise it as objectively progressive. That is the contradiction. On the one hand they take the subjective, which are the illusions, and on the other hand the objective. Everything leads to capitulation. We're now specifically touching on the second point: we must be politically part of the front.

**Third:** It's an indirect, subliminal propaganda; it's very serious, the most heinous of all: that we need to do the same thing as in Spain [against Franco], in China [against the Japanese] and in Russia against Kornilov. What does this mean? We have to fight at the forefront, to be vanguard of the forefront. It's extremely serious. Because they, to be careful with words, say you have to be at the forefront. It's much less serious to speak clearly. We have already learned how Mandel, especially with revisionism, speaks in circles. If only they would clearly say what this comparison means... They say: the same policy as for Spain, the same policy as for China, the same policy as for Russia. What does this mean? It's much more than being in the front; we have to be the vanguard and those who fight in the front row for the popular frontist government of Mitterrand. This comparison is even more serious than the second point.

These are, for me, the three key points.

**TRAINEE:** It's not clear to me. It seems to me you make a pedagogical exaggeration on this third point.

**MORENO:** What was the Bolshevik policy against Kornilov? The Bolsheviks are those who struggle and fight the most against Kornilov. The Lambertists not only say we have to be, which is already a betrayal because not even in the civil war are we politically in the field of the popular front; we're mortal enemies and we launch ourselves to break it. They say more: we need to be the vanguard of this field. They're telling us we should be the champions in the friction and the political campaigns existing between the bourgeoisie and the popular front. But they don't dare to say it openly.

**TRAINEE:** But perchance weren't we in the field of Kerensky?

**MORENO:** Politically, no; militarily, yes.

**TRAINEE:** How did the Bolshevik Party formulate its policy?

**MORENO:** It didn't support Kerensky at all and continued a deadly fight against him, but fought next to the masses who believed in Kerensky against Kornilov's coup. For example, Trotsky has said that in the Spanish civil war, the first obligation of a Trotskyist is to be the best soldier [on the side of the Republic].

**TRAINEE:** But they say: "The Bolsheviks spoke out against Kerensky's government, but were at the forefront of the field of Kerensky against Kornilov".

**MORENO:** To use the same expression, "the field", has its purpose. For this reason, it's subliminal. They put "field" to say the field of Mitterrand.

Our points of view are directly opposed. First as analysis: for us the Mitterrand government and [in general] popular fronts in government aren't a relatively progressive phenomenon. That's the fundamental issue. They're a manoeuvre by the bourgeoisie and the counter-revolutionary parties to stop the revolution, to crush it. It's always a manoeuvre, given how the class struggle is taking place, but it responds to that. That is the essence of the definition. The essence of their definition is that it's relatively progressive, objectively progressive. Our definition is the opposite. As Trotsky says, the proletariat suffered a defeat in France and Spain, because it was terrible confused: it believed that those who were their main enemies were its friends. Because, when the workers' movement rises, a government takes office to see how it annihilates the revolution, how it curbs it, deflects it. It's a counter-revolutionary government which has absolutely nothing progressive, if we consider that the proletariat is the one rising up, and this government comes to deflect it and see if then defeats it.

**TRAINEE:** For me, there's no Kerensky field and no Kornilov field. According to Lenin the own Kerensky is the organiser of the counter-revolutionary coup. Kornilov is a hairy paw stuck in the Kerensky field.

**MORENO:** Excuse me, but I think you're little dialectical, because there's a break from the moment the coup takes place. That Kerensky is the preparation for Kornilov is a fact, we don't even discuss it. Kerensky supports Kornilov, makes him come. Allende as well. The one saying "how great Pinochet is" is Allende, because he doesn't want dual power in Chile. But he believes that Pinochet is going to respond to him; and Pinochet ended up giving the coup. I think you don't accept there's a qualitative change when the coup occurs. And they know that the coup will hang them all. Trotsky says that's why [in these circumstances] the workers' united front is posed. There's a moment in which unity occurs: the socialist revolutionaries and the Menshevik party fight against Kornilov. You can't deny that fact.

**TRAINEE:** So, are there three fields?

**MORENO:** It's a discussion to bite your tail. For a whole period, the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks are with Kornilov. And at a certain moment, the situation gets beyond them and the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries are forced to fight against Kornilov.

Right now we have this discussion with the Argentine leadership. The Multiparty and the Peronist union leadership have worked all these years closely linked to the military government. Now there's a change: they see it weak and try to see if they can manage better conditions for themselves; which doesn't mean they're in any other field, it's the field of the counter-revolution. You're right: there are also three fields here. They're political adversaries of the government, faint but adversaries. It's dangerous if we see everything the same, without differences.

Neither did we support Kerensky **at that moment**, nor **were we then** actually in his field. But we may say that there's a field of united front at a certain time, a certain coincidence within the substantive differences.

As always, the simplest examples were given by Lenin and Trotsky, who were geniuses, unlike us who don't have that ability to lead the working class. To explain these phenomena, Lenin took something that actually happened to him when he was president of the USSR and was mugged, by armed men, in the street, and he handed over his wallet. "It was a deal", he said, "I gave them everything and they spared my life". A Bolshevik makes agreements with anyone if the circumstances so require. Lenin fought the ultra-leftists who said: Never to make any agreement.

In this case, it's similar. Kornilov appears, threatening to kill them and us. Franco killed anarchists, socialists, Stalinists and Trotskyists; he made a united front that it was the grave for all. Then we have to make a united front, for example, to help us to save the prisoners, with the slogan "Stop Franco's executions". It was a slogan taken by the entire world left, because there was no left party that didn't have people killed.

But without losing the line of principles: we never, ever get politically mixed with Kerensky nor do we deposit any trust in him. That is why we're **actually** three fields. But there are times when two such fields are joined against the other. Sometimes two fields unite against the workers' movement. This always happens, it's permanent. The bourgeois and petty bourgeois fields unite against the feudal field. The feudal against the bourgeois. Imperialism with the national bourgeoisie against the proletariat, and so on. But sometimes, in **very special** circumstances of the class struggle, the reverse process is originated very briefly.

For me, the popular front government is completely and utterly reactionary. We have **to destroy** this front, that nothing be left of it. It's a permanent policy that the popular front and the popular front government explode—beware with this, because it must be intimately linked to the struggle against the bourgeoisie. We want to make it explode from the outside, to fight it.

I will anticipate something about the workers' parties. In this connection, as always, Trotsky is a genius. Trotsky says, he who criticises the popular front and opportunist parties is a traitor. The opportunist parties and popular front governments have to be fought. We call to the workers' movement to destroy them. It isn't a question of criticising, that we do this or that manoeuvre to see whether such sector is positive or not.

**TRAINEE:** It confuses me that Trotsky posed to do entryism to this semi-Trotskyist-like wing of the Socialist Party.

**MORENO:** No entryism to that wing is made.

**TRAINEE:** Entryism is to the Socialist Party.

**MORENO:** Yes, to take that wing to Trotskyism.

**TRAINEE:** How do we call to make entryism into a party which is in the government making pacts with the bourgeoisie and is popular frontist?

**MORENO:** But we entry to destroy it. We don't enter to manoeuvre with Blum or this or that wing. But let's stop, because this is a whole chapter.

The OCI supports the measures it considers positive, progressive. It's the essence of its political practice. They say: Support for the steps. And they say this doesn't mean supporting the government politically. But it's their fundamental policy. We say that you should not give any support to any measure of any imperialist bourgeois government, whether it be popular front, fascist, or whatever, whether useful to the workers' movement or not. Because, and this is very important, any measure, **ultimately**, not in its appearance, is counter-revolutionary. Any comrade having questions, just ask me. I know some are sympathetic to Lambertism.

If we wanted to play with Hegel, we could say: the Marxist has a policy essentially revolutionary, because he takes the essence of the phenomena and not their appearance. What does this mean? Any measure taken by a popular front government is to bust or to screw the working class, even a concession to the workers' movement. So we have to denounce this content which is underneath the form. Otherwise, we aren't Marxists: we let ourselves be guided by the form.

Therefore, we have given the example of the factory. The boss comes in and says: I'm going to give you a very cheap mess. We're not going to tell the workers: How good, what a progressive measure! It's a first step by the boss or the boss' manager. How fantastic, the boss takes progressive steps! Because neither the bourgeoisie nor the counter-revolutionary parties, ever take steps that go towards the revolution. Always their steps go against the revolution, even if they seem otherwise. If they make a concession it's because the workers can get much more. They know they're weak and give us that before we take more from them. If we say "How good!", we're responding to the objectives of the government that took this measure.

Suppose Alberto is an MP and has to vote for or against the pay raise by decree by Carlos Andres Perez. Here we must not vote either against, or for. Later we'll see whether the tactic is to raise sliding scale. Carlos Andres Perez proposed the raise: what does Alberto have to say as an MP? "I find extremely positive the increase, but this hides a manoeuvre: to avoid mobilisation and allow unemployment; because Carlos Andres Perez is an agent of the bourgeoisie. If he gives us something we have to be wary". If it were Argentina, he would use the famous gaucho expression "when the alms is big, even the holy mistrust".

I don't base, then, my policy on the issue of illusions, in whether everyone believes in Carlos Andres Perez. We have to say: "Carlos Andres Perez is the one who massacred the guerrillas, a reactionary, throughout his life; if he gives this is because it serves the bourgeoisie". But how do we get that the workers who believe in Perez don't think we're reactionaries who are against the increase? "To show that Perez is a complete reactionary, we propose that in every city, in every place, the increase be controlled, discussed in workers' mass meetings, and that every fortnight they give automatically by law the increases the workers voted because of the increase in prices. And besides this, the control of production in factories, that the managers be elected by the workers, and if a single worker is dismissed, the factory is expropriated immediately. What does the caucus of Democratic Action say? Are you in favour or not of my addition to the increase? It's just a little addition to the law."

Then they will jump shouting: "No! Demagogue!"

**TRAINEE:** What happens if a government of popular front, as the French, wants to give an increase and the bourgeoisie is opposed? Do we support that law?

**MORENO:** I have doubts about what I would do if they opposed there, right then. But it's also tactical. The important thing is that we're against, even though the bourgeoisie is opposed. We can do what Trotsky advised. He was **totally** against the 40-hour week law, the decree by Blum, everything. Trotsky was totally against the greatest conquest of the French proletariat. But he launched an extraordinary line because the bosses also refused: occupation of factories to compel compliance with the law, without supporting it.

**TRAINEE:** Why does [*International*] *Courier* say that nevertheless we defend the progressive measures?

**MORENO:** That's if it takes place a little later, not at the time. Because if the law is enacted today, on the same day the bosses say "We aren't going to comply", and you say "Let's defend the law", you're supporting. If 10 or 15 days after the approval of the law—or two years, or 20 years later—the bourgeoisie comes and tells you that it's against this, there's a fuss and we say: Just a moment, we'll defend it. That's why I pointed out the importance of the moment; to see if we learn dialectic, how everything changes.

Trotsky severely criticised the laws of 40-hours and of the holidays, just like the French Trotskyists. We have multitude of quotations regarding that. Precisely for this reason we say Lambert's policy is a crime. Because a greatest achievement of the proletariat than the 40-hours and a month of holidays, it's difficult to find in any country. Trotsky was against, opposed to that. He criticised it as a manoeuvre and a betrayal. He claimed that this was given because the French proletariat could get everything: power, a socialist republic. And precisely they were thrown a bone to calm them. This was Trotsky's analysis. But as he was a great politician and dialectical he said "Occupation of factories, mobilisation to ensure compliance with the 40-hours and a month of holidays", without saying "I approve of the government's action". Because if he said "I approve of the action by the government, the bourgeoisie and the workers' parties" he was playing into the hands of the government.

Lenin was revolutionary by reflex, even for minor things. His anecdote with bread is famous. In Russia there was no bread, they were starving to death, had a terrible queues. Suddenly, a month before taking power, extraordinary, superb bread shows up. And many workers began to say: "What good bread! Things are improving". Lenin, who was living in hiding in the home of a worker, said: they give us bread so we don't make the workers' revolution. If we know that the bourgeoisie begins to give us a very good bread so we can eat very well and there are no more queues at the bakery—which was the great quarrel of the proletariat—and we know that they give it to see if they give us a counter-revolutionary coup, we won't come out and say: "What a great government! See, they already gave us bread! Now bread is free!"

It's the class struggle: we're neither gentlemen nor a court above the classes. The petty bourgeois say one doesn't have to be ultra-leftist; that Mitterrand isn't in any field; that this field is very honest... For us it's the class struggle: We're mortal enemies of this government.

Similarly with the issue of hate. We— look at what it means to think as Marxists— suddenly discovered the word hate and said: It's very psychological. And we had doubts and decided not to put it. It turns out we continued studying Trotsky and discovered he says the same thing; he even uses the same word: hate. We, who resolved to take it out because we began to be too modern—everyone has discovered psychoanalysis—, we discovered, reading Trotsky, that he's right. Although it seems it isn't, it's the background of revolutionary politics. How are we to prepare people for civil war if we don't get in them tons of hate? They must hate on every aspect the bourgeoisie, the oligarchy, imperialism; see things they hate the most and become maniacal. In this, as well, Lenin was brutal. Did you know that Lenin didn't look at the bourgeois? Lenin, amongst Bolsheviks, spoke front on. But when he was president of the USSR, and representatives of the great American bourgeoisie came, he covered his eyes with his hands: he could not look at them. Trotsky related this when describing Lenin; he said he was like a Mujik. If he was listening to the radio of the USSR, Lenin was happy. But when radios of France or England were heard, he was transformed, he became furious; it was a tremendous hatred: What are these bastards saying?!

Trotsky tells that, when he met him and both were young, they were walking across the bridges of London and Lenin showed hatred of everything. Trotsky said: "What nice bridges the English have". "That's the imperialism of the London bourgeoisie" Lenin would say. He was a hero of hatred, superior to the hatred of Trotsky; it was a reflex. That's why he led this great revolution.

When talking with the workers it was the opposite, he was very friendly; he was more worker than anyone else. And his wife was also wonderful; she was extraordinary when talking to the working class.

**TRAINEE:** We're neither for nor against, but we make proposals?

**MORENO:** No. We're always against. The issue is the tactics, if the masses have a tremendous illusion in that increase. Fighting Peron was a nightmare for us, because the guy would give anything as long as he could destroy the unions and the workers' vanguard. If there's a demonstration saying: Support Peron, what would you do?

**TRAINEE:** We don't support the measure, but to not [politically] disarm the workers, we present an alternative plan for the workers' movement.

**MORENO:** Yes, but that is tactical, not principle. Although it's a formidable tactic, it's tactics, it depends on the situation.

**TRAINEE:** Trotsky defended the line of voting against the military budget proposed by government of popular front during the Spanish Civil War.

**MORENO:** Trotsky didn't say to vote against. Trotsky says: We're against. And then he says: But how would we pose it? They ask for a million; then I would ask for two million. And then he would add: let it be controlled by the workers' movement, not by the government, because it's a government we don't trust. Then they, as they're a bourgeois government, are going to oppose it. They will oppose the two million because it breaks the budget; and they will oppose that the workers' movement control it so the weapons don't go to the workers' movement. Then we tell the masses: Do you see that the government doesn't want weapons going to you, or want to buy more weapons for you?

**TRAINEE:** If there's a government that is in parliamentary minority and a measure is presented in Congress which is desired by the workers' movement, whose approval depends on the Trotskyist parliamentary representation, can we vote in favour?

**MORENO:** Yes. But not if it's a measure proposed by the government. You talk to of groups voting against the measure. If that occurs every thousand years it's very good, because if the parties that are in government are against the government— that happens once in a while— we exploit this difference, because it goes against the government. If the CP now breaks with the popular frontist government of Mitterrand and raises the 35-hour week, we offer a united front and go at the forefront.

Let's move on to the third point: the political break with the bourgeoisie. The OCI says that in France their policy is the break with the bourgeoisie. However, here is where we're in most disagreement, because it has to do with the issue of the workers' and peasants' government. This is where the betrayal of the OIC culminates everything else; it's the hinge, the centre of their policy. Because for them to break with the bourgeoisie is to put pressure on a front populist government— a government where the bourgeoisie is already in, where class collaboration is already practiced—, for this front populist government to break with the bourgeoisie. The OCI says Mitterrand's government, a government where there's a radical and a Gaullist, has two paths; one of them is the path of fighting the bourgeoisie; and we want it to take this path and attack the bourgeoisie. That's a true betrayal, totally.

It's the same betrayal as Mandel in Nicaragua, but much larger. If the OCI is right, then Mandel is also right when he says that a government that already has bourgeois tends towards the workers' and peasants' government. Mandel told the Nicaraguan government, a government of five Sandinistas and two bourgeois, to take the path to the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was a political crime. This is the treason: if the bourgeois are capable of doing antibourgeois politics, if a bourgeois government like the one in Nicaragua can take the path of a workers' and peasants' government and can take the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Marxism is finished. That is: there are bourgeois parties that can make the revolution against the bourgeoisie. Then the **entire** reformism was right. It's a basic issue; it's the struggle of Trotskyism. We consider it a political crime to pose to a government composed of bourgeois to break with the bourgeoisie. Because what we have to pose is to break this government and that the workers' parties which are part of this government break with the bourgeoisie at government level. This is the first task. This is our difference with them: we won't propose to any bourgeois government composed of bourgeois parties to break with the bourgeoisie, but we propose to the workers' parties to break with the bourgeoisie.

Alberto points out how the OCI makes a ritual of our policy. What Alberto says is correct [as apparently] we agree with the formulation. I want to complement this, because it's different to what Alberto correctly says. I say it's much more serious, because they say breaking with the bourgeoisie is breaking with the government as a whole, including the bourgeois ministers, with the bosses, without posing as a precondition the breaking [of the workers' parties with the bourgeoisie]. Therefore, what Alberto says is very important, but goes second. The first is the betrayal of them, which is something incredible, never seen in Trotskyism—outside of Mandelism and Pabloism—: that a government integrated by bourgeois be asked that those bourgeois ministers along with the socialist ministers headed by Mitterrand take the path of anti-capitalism, breaking with the bourgeoisie. Thus they liquidate all Marxism, because it means that a segment of the bourgeoisie can break and go towards socialism. Here is the crux of the problem.

We call the government bourgeois and **integrated** by bourgeois parties, because it's a bourgeois government squared. It's twice as bourgeois. It's bourgeois because it's a bourgeois government and it's bourgeois because it's composed of bourgeois parties.

To summarise, the policy of a break with the bourgeoisie is a demand that we make to the workers' parties, not to bourgeois governments integrated by the bourgeoisie. Because nobody can ask an imperialist government, composed by imperialists, to stop being imperialist and to transform itself. To put it in a kindly way, it's a scientific betrayal to the principles. Nobody can go and tell an arms manufacturer to stop producing armaments and please start doing charities and hospitals for tuberculosis. It can be done, but it's a counter-revolutionary policy because an arms manufacturer will continue to make weapons. Same thing goes for a government. Someone can go and tell a bourgeois government: Be anticapitalistic. But when he does that he's a traitor, because he's deceiving the masses.

The OCI doesn't pose: Out of the government, let's mobilise for the masses to take government. The OCI itself says it doesn't have to take part in the process of rupture of the masses with the bourgeois governments. But only if there has been a vanguard that has known how to stay alone, as the Bolsheviks did, will the masses be able to go there. The OCI ignores the role of vanguard [of the revolutionary party]: that's the key. This has to do with the policy of fighting the illusions in the domain of illusions. This is an excuse of all opportunist and centrist currents who say: Let's not hit them strongly, nor define ourselves with full clarity because we have to be patient, we have to be next to the class and not to be adventurers and be one kilometre ahead of the class; only when the class makes the experience we'll pose the problems.

Let's get to the fourth point: the issue of the program. The OCI's program isn't the transitional program. It never calls to mobilise. In fact it calls to support those steps. It's a practical, reformist program.

Program is what we call to do. It's of action or transitional. The OCI never called to mobilise, to demand, to take to the streets, to hold mass meetings, to threaten with strikes against the government, against what the government and the bourgeoisie are doing. It's never a policy of engagement and mobilisation, and their slogans don't have this goal. In other words, it's a minimum, reformist program.

The Lambertists argue that socialism can't be declared by decree, it's not for now. But there's a categorical quote from Trotsky, which states that what differentiates us from Stalinism is that this says: Our great task at present is to defend the living standards of workers, achieve gains, not getting them fired, and so on and so forth, in order to get to the dictatorship of the proletariat. And Trotsky said: This is Stalinism, Menshevism. The Trotskyists, we have an opposite program. While every day we tell the workers there's no solution if they don't take the power, and don't impose the dictatorship of the proletariat, and do a socialist republic, we tell them we should not stop talking because we managed some gains, which are of little use because they will take them back again from us if we don't take power. These two formulations are the difference between Bolshevism on the one hand and Menshevism and Stalinism on the other.

With the OCI these differences are quite clear. The OCI itself says: socialism isn't for now; you can't declare it by decree. We believe what's in the agenda in France is to transform it as quickly as possible in a country like the USSR when Lenin expropriated capitalism. That is the crux of politics, the crux of the transitional program, of the Trotskyist program. Every day we have to say: if workers don't take power, if workers don't expropriate the bourgeoisie, if we don't start building socialism, there's no solution to any problem. We'll remain with two million unemployed. We have to say that unemployment can be solved in one day if we expropriate the whole bourgeoisie.

And the OCI says: No, let's not make socialism for now; it's not declared by decree, we have time, let's not strike. We're for the opposite. We argue systematically: Now, as soon as possible, when you the workers understand it. The only obstacle is that the workers don't understand it. But for them to understand this, we have to tell them every day: You, the working class must take power; it's the only solution; everything else is palliative helping for six months or a year because if we don't take power the bourgeoisie will steal it away from us again. Mobilise and organise yourselves to achieve this goal. That is the crux of our entire policy, the central point of principle. Everything else is tactical.

The fifth point is the denunciation of the government and the workers' parties in it. The OCI doesn't systematically attack Mitterrand or the Socialist Party. It never attacks the Socialist Party. Now it begins to make an attack on what it calls the "right wing" and not the entire Socialist Party and especially

Mitterrand, who is a rotten agent of the bourgeoisie. It's outrageous that it doesn't systematically attack them. There's no way to build Trotskyism if we don't say that all the workers' parties are filth. If we say there are chances they may have an anti-capitalist point, that the Socialist Party can take the path of anti-capitalism, not one will be leaving these parties. Who is going to leave? Between the OCI and a party that has a 100,000 or 200,000 members, everyone stays in the party with 200,000 members. They may only leave if, by means of an intense political campaign, we convince them they're in a counter-revolutionary party. Then they run away, as soon as we convince them.

And to convince them we must tell them. Otherwise, it's a policy similar to the game of charade where players communicate only by signs. In politics the game of charade can't be done. The signs are good for nothing. We must speak clearly, and loud, have a categorical revolutionary language which delimits perfectly well, minute by minute, the field of the counter-revolutionary parties from ours. We can do, indeed, united fronts, agreements with the workers' parties; but without any confusion, not even then. We always have to keep saying these parties at the service of the counter-revolutionaries and the only revolutionaries are us. Why? Because we're the only ones who propose the working class to take power, to have workers' democracy, and, through it and their organisations, it's the working class who has to lead. That is the nodal point of Trotskyism. We're the only ones who propose that. We're the only ones telling the working class: You have to rule; we only intend to convince you, and to lead you. Today the OCI does exactly the opposite. It develops all the illusions of the masses that their counter-revolutionary party can get to have a revolutionary policy. §

## On the political revolution in the Workers' States

[By Moreno's request, the participants take part with opinions and questions. For reasons of presentation, we introduce each question separately, placing it at the time Moreno refers to it.]

**MORENO:** Well, comrades, you're involved at a high level, discussing the most modern, most tremendous categories of revolutionary Marxism. You're discussing, fully taking part making contributions, surprising me with nuances, with issues I had not even seen or had only suspected. I'm surprised. I didn't think it could be like this in the IWL-FI in general and much less in Venezuela— don't be offended, this high cultural level isn't characteristic of the Venezuelan people. You leave me dumbfounded. You confirm to me you're already cadres, even though you're very young and only have six, eight or ten years of militancy. And it also confirms to me that this discussion has been very positive. Your interventions, questions, concerns... If we manage to do the same throughout the IWL it's qualitative: we begin to have an incredible party. We'll think carefully about what to do with the recording, whether we publish it.

First of all, comrades, Marxism is open. The IWL is even more open than Marxism because both Alberto as me— as Napuri, as Enrique, as Ernesto— we know of our great limitations. So, not only is Marxism open, but the IWL is three times more open because we know we get things wrong often. And 10 times more open because this is a new problem, completely new.

We're completing Trotsky by kilometres. Trotsky didn't even dream of a Solidarity. He dreamed of the Soviets, with what he knew. Then we're posing very complicated, but fundamental issues. Solving this will make of the IWL a tremendous revolutionary party. Not solving it will finish the issue.

Sometimes it seems that the theoretical issues have little to do with us. Here we have talked with Alberto and also with Napuri on why Hugo Blanco became a great leader in Peru. It was for a very big theoretical question which was discussed in some Southern Cone countries: should one defend the right of the Quechuas and Aymara to use their tongue? We were the only ones to propose many years— later we were supported by Pablo— that every people has the right to speak as it wants. Lora and the entire South American Trotskyism, with a repugnant racism of the worst kind, argued that the Quechua and Aymara languages were backward, while Spanish was an advanced language. And therefore we were retrogrades who were against the development of the productive forces.

This led me to know some rudiments of Quechua. Because what they said was false: According to linguistics, there are no backward or advanced languages; all languages have the same structure. And it happens that Quechuan has four declines— like German— and certain tendencies towards Latin. To sweep away Quechuan was no less than to sweep away with the German language, which was the language of Marx, because it was a fairly similar structure, almost unchanged from German. It was a hellish, horrible controversy; it seemed it was impossible to have a more abstract controversy.

The discussion on Poland is ultra-current, but also at very high theoretical level. All we're discussing, everything that has been raised here and all the speeches of the comrades are theoretical, although carried by deep political issues. Over there it was also theoretical, but it was 20 times more theoretical. In Argentina, where no one speaks Quechua because it's a country of immigrants, where there are only a few indigenous Quechuan speakers up north, we discussed this theoretical problem! Something similar

happened to us in 1958 in Leeds: we discussed the black problem in the United States with the Yankees comrades (this controversy is written); and then the facts proved us right.

Hugo Blanco, who was recruited by us, knew this discussion. And he was a [fanatical], rabid fan of our theory. He was passionate about the subject. He strongly agreed, among other things because he spoke very good Quechuan. But he never thought, never wanted to go and be active in Peru. We had to send him. And he went to Lima, where Quechuan isn't spoken.

Circumstances of life forced him to go to Cusco. I clarify this because later legend says he went to Cusco by chance.

He was part of the construction union of Lima, and when Nixon came they were the vanguard, those who organised the tomato throwing. Here in Venezuela and Peru were the only two countries where they threw all to him. Peruvian Trotskyism would have 10 or 15 militants and launched itself against Yankee imperialism, the state and all. Hugo Blanco had nowhere to hide. The rest of the Trotskyists either. And after three days sleeping in the streets he said: it may be at least my family will give me cover. And he went to Cusco. Because of this, the whole process was opened.

When going to Cusco, not knowing what to do, he started going to the peasant unions. The peasant union was ran by lawyers, all of them Stalinists who were Indians but who, to hide it and show they were university professors, spoke in Spanish and didn't reply to those speaking Quechuan. Stalinism dominated Cusco entirely. It was traditional. APRA<sup>1</sup> could never enter. The only one who broke Stalinism was Hugo Blanco.

Hugo remembered that discussion. And then, no sooner the peasants came, he was the only one who answered them and said his speeches in Quechuan. And after six months one Trotskyist in Cusco had displaced Stalinism. There were mass meetings of 15,000 in the valleys listening to Hugo Blanco, says this liberal journalist<sup>2</sup> who wrote the fantastic book "Cusco: land and death".

We're now in the same, but of universal magnitude. What you're discussing are colossal processes spanning one third of humanity.

Why this entire introduction? So you take me and us with a grain of salt. What is important here is that together we become aware we're in an organisation and we'll keep elaborating. Beware of codifying! Perhaps in the next revolution we'll need to add new questions and modify others. Be aware of the enormous merit of you and of this course, but know of its relativity.

**TRAINEE:** About the slogan "All power to Solidarity" and the possibility of a peaceful transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

**MORENO:** The issue of "All power to Solidarity" and the peaceful transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat is a big issue. It isn't peaceful. We say that there's a historical variation which hasn't happened but could have happened in the Russian Revolution. There's a violent revolution that destroys the army of the bourgeoisie or the bureaucracy, it **destroys it**. In other words, there's a violent revolution in February. Precisely because that violent revolution took place, because it was so violent, the possibility of not having to make another revolution opens.

Until now, the absence of revolutionary parties makes every revolution to be done in two violent revolutions. Not in one, in two: one of February and another of October.

As in the case of Nicaragua. In Nicaragua it's very violent the one which destroyed Somoza's army, destroyed Somoza's police, destroyed every organ of Somoza's domination. There was nothing left. What is it that stops the dictatorship of the proletariat emerging by peaceful means? The Sandinista National Liberation Front doesn't want to do it.

Trotsky opened the possibility that counter-revolutionary parties had to expropriate the bourgeoisie although they didn't want to. We open the possibility that, although they don't want to take power, these organisms and the counter-revolutionary parties take it. But not as it was taken in Cuba, not as it was taken in Eastern Europe, not as it was taken in China, but those which actually take power are democratic workers' organisms, though they (the counter-revolutionary parties) lead them.

---

1 **APRA** (Spanish: *Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana*) American Popular Revolutionary Alliance is the Social Democratic party of Peru.

2 Nahuel Moreno makes reference to **Hugo Neira Samanez** (b. 1936), professor, writer, journalist, author of numerous books on the Peruvian reality.

The peaceful variation of the dictatorship of the proletariat has already taken place. But it was a peaceful bureaucratic variation, **everywhere**. It happened in the Chinese revolution. The civil war of Mao Zedong, which destroys Chiang Kai-shek's army between 1947 and 1949, lasted 20 years. And between 1949 and 1951-1952, peacefully, without any further civil war, without any other revolution, the bourgeoisie is expropriated. It was peaceful. There was no October. It's a new Marxist category of the FI-IC theses: February revolution leading to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. This transition is peaceful from the political point of view, but bureaucratic. We now consider another variation. We believe it's an abuse, an extrapolation by Trotsky when in the Transitional Program he says what the Bolsheviks raised in Russia in 1917 can be repeated. To say that what happened in China or Yugoslavia is exactly what Trotsky says is either an error of Trotsky, or else our error.

Did it happen in this postwar period what Lenin raised for 1917? Of course it didn't. What we're giving is a historical hypothesis, grounded in a very important fact: the fact the Bolsheviks in 1917 considered this possibility. Lenin in 1917 said: That the Soviets take power with the majority workers' parties; it's a peaceful way to make a workers' and peasants' government that leads us to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin repeatedly said: All power to the soviets.

**TRAINEE:** But on the path of supposing that through the democracy existing in the soviets, the Bolsheviks were to win a majority.

**MORENO:** Of course. Lenin says: we're committed to a peaceful struggle for power.

Trotsky says: "The demand of the Bolsheviks, addressed to the Mensheviks and the SRs: 'Break with the bourgeoisie, take the power into your own hands!' had for the masses tremendous educational significance". And then he says: "The slogan, 'workers' and peasants' government', is thus acceptable to us only in the sense that it had in 1917 with the Bolsheviks. (...) Is the creation of such a government by the traditional workers' organisations possible? Past experience shows, as has already been stated, that this is to say the least highly improbable. However, one can't categorically deny in advance the theoretical possibility that (...) the petty-bourgeois parties including the Stalinists may go further than they themselves wish along the road to a break with the bourgeoisie" (*The Transitional Program for Socialist Revolution*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1973, p. 94-95)

Trotsky says that hypothetically it's not ruled out the alternative of Lenin— which didn't occur in 1917— and that the workers' parties, forced by circumstances, go further than they wish. We believe that this phrase of Trotsky isn't exactly [Lenin's position] of 1917, that there's an error of Trotsky by saying that what he's proposing is the same as in 1917. I say that this is a unilateral exaggeration by Trotsky, that it isn't exactly the same and that we have taken it to a mistake. All Trotsky says is true, but it's a semi-truth. Why?

**TRAINEE:** Because for a variation similar to this to take place, the Soviets would have to exist, and in those revolutions you mentioned (China, Yugoslavia, Cuba, Eastern Europe) they didn't exist.

**MORENO:** That's it! Good! There Trotsky omits the soviets of Lenin's policy. Beware, I think it's fantastic, what Trotsky says is very correct. But the definition isn't accurate until the end, because the essence of Lenin's position isn't: you take power, the parties. The essence of Lenin's position is: that the Soviets take power and we accept the government of the parties that are in the majority in the soviets. There's a difference.

Then we have three variations, which is what we have developed in the document. There are three variations of government, [of dictatorship of the proletariat]: the governments of the parties without soviets; [the government of the soviets led by counter-revolutionary parties; and the government of the Soviets led by the revolutionary party].

The government of the parties without soviets, without democratic organisations, is the quintessential bureaucratic government since its birth. We, when we tell the parties to take power without workers' organisations where we're together, are already saying it will be a bureaucratic government to the utmost because there are no mass organisations.

In the first theses of the FI-IC we had touched thoroughly this issue. And Lambert took it out, but not for any odd reason but because he saw it as a very hot theoretical problem and what's best for him is not to think, because later one has to be rectified if one is wrong. We have a different policy; which is why we love you interventions.

We pointed out that there are two major lines in Trotsky that Trotsky himself didn't handle well, or, rather, he handled them well but he didn't rationalise them. One is the tactic of the workers' and peasants' government, which is to call the workers' parties to break with the bourgeoisie; it's the tactic towards the workers' parties that lead the working class. But there's another principled political line of Trotskyism, which is the dictatorship of the proletariat: the permanent appeal that the workers' organisms, whatever leadership they may have, replace the state organisms of the bourgeoisie.

**TRAINEE:** This isn't the policy of the OCI, which raises government of the CP-SP without soviets, without mass organisations, without anything.

**MORENO:** Without soviets and without revolutionary program, this is what is serious. Because it's okay to put to both of them, to the CP and the SP, to take the government, but they have to break with the bourgeoisie. That quote you gave me yesterday, which speaks of a stable government and I didn't know, is anthological. We haven't yet taken its full value. Because he's calling for a workers-bourgeois government saying it's stable. He's saying that there will be no workers' revolution because he doesn't place any conditions. He says: If you rule there will be stability. What does this mean? If the CP-SP rules it will be a bourgeois government to the core. [They can go towards a workers' and peasants' government] only if the masses force them, because they won't want to. But they're forced with a kick on their behind, they're locked and forced by kick after kick. I like to always say, back in Bogota, I have a Trotskyist donkey that gives tremendous kicks to anyone who errs, because the Trotskyist donkey is a genius. Many Trotskyist donkeys, kick after kick against them, and they might break with the bourgeoisie. I say: the policy [of government] of the CP-SP to expropriate the bourgeoisie, with the program that demands it, is good. That's workers' and peasants' government.

But they're two different policies.

We have a policy that's just a tactic. The workers' and peasants' government is like the united front: it's tactical, for certain times. This tactic, the workers' and peasants' government, is directed towards the superstructural organisations, towards the traditional parties of the working class.

Instead, dictatorship of the proletariat isn't tactical. It's a permanent strategy of education of the working class. This is why Trotsky sometimes has said that "dictatorship of the proletariat" is a great slogan. In 1934 Trotsky put "dictatorship of the proletariat" as a fundamental slogan of Trotskyism. And in the Emergency Program of 1940 he says: our program is found in four words: "Dictatorship of the proletariat".

What does dictatorship of the proletariat mean? Sometimes we get confused. It means to say to the working class: you have to rule with your own organisms and destroy the organisms of the bourgeoisie.

It's another thing [different from workers' and peasants' government]. No longer do we say: that the parties rule; but we say: that the working-class organisms destroy the organisms of the bourgeoisie. That is: Down with the police, down with the army, down with bourgeois justice, down with everything, and all of that has to be replaced by organisms of the working class, or soviets. And there, within there, we combine it with the other tactic and say: that the parties which have a majority in these bodies take power, like Trotsky says. Without supporting them at all; saying: Within these organisations, as in any union, we continue fighting to see who wins. The difference is that there, when we win the leadership of a union it's only of a union; if these soviets or these unions take power, as soon as we win an election we're left with the power, we're the government.

**TRAINEE:** Why do you pose as a tactic "All Power to the Soviets"?

**MORENO:** It isn't a tactic. It's almost a principle. It's strategy. We have to say this every day. Didn't I perhaps say that in the Emergency Program he says: The program of the Fourth International can be summarised in four words: "Dictatorship of the Proletariat"?

**TRAINEE:** Isn't it just propaganda in certain circumstances?

**MORENO:** Yes, up to the hilt. Imagine it here in Venezuela. But in Poland **it took place**.

**TRAINEE:** What is the difference between the OCI's policy about Mitterrand and Lenin's?

**MORENO:** In Lenin [the program of the workers' and peasants' government] was a demand; theirs is advice, an aspiration. But we must add another issue that the OCI never does: They never oppose workers' organisms to the organisms of the Fifth Republic.

**TRAINEE:** But it opposes the National Assembly.

**MORENO:** That's bourgeois democracy. It's **worse**.

**TRAINEE:** The entire line of the OCI starts from democracy...

**MORENO:** ... bourgeois. It's a rotten thing. And it's not the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is why it says that socialism can't be declared by decree, and so on and so forth. Now we're going to add in our work about socialism by decree. Lambert is totally confused: socialism is done by decree. We take power and what do we do? We're not going to do it by signs! As Lenin did: decree one, peace; decree two, land. Yes, by decree! What can't be done by decree is to take power. But once power is taken and you're in government, there isn't another known way than by decree, by bylaw—the name may change.

**TRAINEE:** What would be the slogans of the proletarian dictatorship for France?

**MORENO:** For now, unfortunately there's nothing else than the unions. For this reason Trotskyism always had a very good line in France, when the CGT was united, it was: Government CP-SP-CGT.

**TRAINEE:** Can you repeat the three variations?

**MORENO:** The three variants are:

**One:** the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat: the Soviets with a Bolshevik party.

**Two:** the Soviets with a [counter-revolutionary] party: the working class rules but believes in the opportunist party— this is another problem.

**Three:** the parties, where there's no intervention in fact by the rank and file and the democratic grassroots organisations: it's bureaucratic from the outset.

**TRAINEE:** Can you further clarify the second?

**MORENO:** The second is what hasn't occurred in real life. It was what Lenin raised. The first is soviets with a Bolshevik, revolutionary party. The second is soviets with Menshevik or Socialist Revolutionary parties, which are counter-revolutionaries. What Lenin raised, and we say there in the text, is: a transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat, or a dictatorship of the proletariat but not revolutionary—we can give it a name later.

**TRAINEE:** The latter isn't bureaucratic because there are Soviets?

**MORENO:** Yes. Very good. But in reality transitional phenomena do exist. Among the plant kingdom and the animal kingdom, animals have been discovered that are a transition from one to the other.

And we have the bureaucratic one, i.e., a party not based on the democratic institutions of the class. The party dominates, like the communist parties, like Fidel Castro. In Cuba everything is dominated by Fidel Castro's party and not the democratic organisms of the unions. There's no democratic life.

The second [variation] hasn't taken place. [It would have] if in Russia the Mensheviks and SRs had taken power when Lenin told them: Take power; let the Soviets take power and you, who are the majority, are government.

**TRAINEE:** That would be dictatorship of the proletariat?

**MORENO:** Yes. [Dictatorship of the proletariat] for itself or in transition. We can discuss. It's dictatorship, yes, because all the power of the bourgeoisie is annihilated and who rules politically in the country are the workers organisations.

**TRAINEE:** Hungary in 1948 is dictatorship of the proletariat although there were no soviets?

**MORENO:** Do you believe it isn't dictatorship of the proletariat what was done in 1948, where the bourgeoisie is no more? The dictatorship has an economic base. Any dictatorship is of class. If it isn't bourgeois, it's proletarian. Let's reverse the reasoning: what is a workers' dictatorship [or a bourgeois dictatorship]? There's no intermediate dictatorship, hermaphrodite. It's either bourgeois or proletarian.

After, each dictatorship has its form of government, its form, its regime. Same as the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie has fascism, Nazism, bourgeois democracy, cantonal democracy in Switzerland, has sui generis Bonapartism, federalism, unitarianism, semi-Bonapartism, Bonapartism with parliamentary forms, it has everything. But they're all dictatorships of the bourgeoisie. Why? Because the country's production regime is **bourgeois**. And with the proletariat it's the same. This is the great discovery of Trotsky. If there's no bourgeoisie, by negative definition it's not bourgeois dictatorship. And if it isn't bourgeois dictatorship it's proletarian dictatorship. There's no other. Because, otherwise, it's accepting that there are petty bourgeois dictatorships. It would be accepting that there are petty bourgeois economies in the era of large-scale industry and monopolies.

**TRAINEE:** Only A Trotskyist leadership of the mass organisations introduces a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat?

**MORENO:** That's right. Perfect. That is why we're against *International Courier #2*, when it says that with Walesa there may be a revolutionary dictatorship.

There are then three types and three possibilities of dictatorship of the proletariat:

**One:** with organisms and a revolutionary party, a Trotskyist party;

**Another:** with organisms and an opportunist party;

**And third:** counter-revolutionary opportunist parties, without support of democratic workers' organisms.

The latter is bureaucratic. The second is transitional. It goes to one side or the other. It either ends as bureaucratic bursting the organism, or we win the majority of the organism and it becomes revolutionary.

Now suppose this second variation had taken place in Poland. Because it's no coincidence we're discussing this. I think we're overcoming, as problem area, Trotsky himself, to what he said in the Transitional Program. All this is richer, it's more accurate. The proof is that I dared to say that what Trotsky said in the Transitional Program wasn't strictly what Lenin said. It isn't this classification into three. Trotsky in the Transitional Program doesn't even take into account the Soviets when he talks of workers' and peasants' government.

**TRAINEE:** Isn't this also revisionism, but of positive type?

**MORENO:** Yes. Anything that is revisionism, saying it and defining it, and if it's correct, it's okay. "Imperialism, [The Highest Stage of Capitalism]", by Lenin] is total revisionism of "Capital" in one respect, that of free trade.

What if Walesa takes government? We never support Walesa politically. We defend him if he's attacked by the reaction, but we keep an uncompromising battle against him.

But I hasten to answer a question: whether or not we can be part of a government [of Solidarity] not being [the majority]. Yes, there's no problem. It's a tactical problem. Not with Walesa; but indeed with non-Trotskyist currents. It's a resolution of the Third International, a categorical resolution, which seems to me brilliant. With Walesa no, but maybe there's a Catholic sector... But [it may be] also [with] Walesa [if Walesa changes, which] I reckon it's a bit unlikely. We're already making a psychological analysis [of Walesa]: we can make a government with Walesa, but with a Walesa who isn't Walesa.

This discussion is very important. For me it's theoretically crucial because it will happen. Either the Holocaust comes or this is what we'll see in the world. And if you aren't prepared for this variation there's no great mass Trotskyist party. It's very important. That's not to say you have to accept it. Disagree with me; tell me we're revisionists as the comrade said. For me that's Marxism and Trotskyism. It's to take advantage of the opportunities. Because if a Catholic to the hilt who prays every day shows up, and the guy says: I'm in favour of expropriation; or a wing begins to take shape [with this position], and we aren't going to enter?

**TRAINEE:** Do we enter a government of Walesa if he accepts our program?

**MORENO:** We can also enter it to see whether we expel him. And as long as we make it clear [we want to expel him].

**TRAINEE:** What if we put as a condition that he break with the bureaucracy and be for the government of Solidarity? We should not define now and forever whether we enter or not.

**MORENO:** That is an outrage. Today there's no government with Walesa. Let's stop, comrade, because else we go [to opportunism]. Let's go to what Marxism has said and discussed. The Third International has said: the communist parties can enter. Even the possibility of entering government in a province of Germany was considered. And Trotsky wrote it was legit, but not at that time.

**TRAINEE:** What the Third International raised is workers' and peasants' government?

**MORENO:** No, it isn't called workers' and peasants' government. They're different variations of workers' governments. There are two: one is almost communist.

For a Marxist it's always important the definition of the specific situation. Today we don't make government with Walesa, not even if we have a gun on the head, because for me Walesa is representative of the Church, a political transmission belt of the Church. If others have another definition, the problem already changes. If there were a social democratic party I'd be also against, in principle, to make a government with them.

But I'm of the opinion that different types of parties may arise due to the revolutionary process, as the Left Social Revolutionaries arose. If I believed that parties are immovable, that Walesa is immovable,

that things don't change, I would go home because there's nothing to be done. If we're revolutionaries, we must prepare to see **dramatic** changes, like the left which was emerging in Solidarity. Perhaps the left isn't Trotskyist. It may even be a party adopting a Labourite program, and we define it's a process that goes to the left. Or what the Trainee raised: Walesa takes office, but the struggle in government will cause a left and a right wing. Nothing prevents us from entering; it depends on the analysis.

As always, we must answer the question: if we enter, does the revolution develop or does it go backwards? Because we may enter making clear: We're going to enter because there's a left and a right; thus we guarantee the left has a majority in the cabinet; we propose to the left the plan to expropriate everything, of full democracy, and so on; they have told us yes; and we enter. For me this discussion is abstract. What isn't abstract is to handle hypotheses. I fight that it be said: We don't enter any government if it's not our government. We can go into any government that has **actually** broken with the bourgeoisie. Because if the trade union Solidarity destroys all the bourgeois apparatus in Poland...

**TRAINEE:** Aren't they apparatuses of the bureaucracy?

**MORENO:** For me they're bourgeois, they're agents of the bourgeoisie. This was the other theoretical issue I wanted to raise with you. Why does [the political revolution] is a revolution equal to that of the capitalist countries? Because it's identical. Because it's for destroying a police apparatus and an armed apparatus which are the same. There's no difference. They're the same type of army and the same type of police. They're bourgeois organisms embedded in the dictatorship of the proletariat, in the workers' state. Without the law of uneven and combined development it can't be understood.

It's precisely thanks to the fact those who take power are the counter-revolutionary workers' parties, this prevents the bourgeois apparatus being destroyed. Notice what the FSLN does in Nicaragua. Did they tell all the workers: arm yourselves, form workers' militias, let the unions run the weapons? No. They began to organise an army equal to that of the bourgeoisie and a police equal to that of the bourgeoisie. What technicians did they bring? Panamanian technicians to organise the police. I didn't know until you told me that Venezuelan technicians were also there.

They're bourgeois organisms. For this reason, it's a bureaucratic proletarian dictatorship from the outset, a bureaucratic workers' state. The strength of these governments is given by the bureaucratic police and army, which are equal to the bourgeois ones. This is why the CP, before taking power, takes the police and the army, as it did in the glaxis, in Eastern Europe: from 1944-1945 it dominated the Ministries of Interior— of which the police depends— and Ministry of War or Defence— of which the army depends. They transformed the whole army and police into Stalinists and then took power.

**TRAINEE:** By its structure they're repressive, bourgeois apparatuses?

**MORENO:** Almost fascist.

**TRAINEE:** But didn't the Hungarian police, for example, go entirely to the defence of the workers' councils in the revolution of 1956?

**MORENO:** That's common in all revolutions. The police and armed forces always [divide]. The Air Force is the most fascist. Within the army, the cavalry is the most fascist, the most reactionary. Oftentimes the Navy is the most reactionary. And the police are the left. For example, all the greatest guerrilla and revolutionary leaders of the Spanish civil war were big chiefs of police. The song says: "With Leal and *El Campesino* [The Peasant]..." *El Campesino* comes from the police and Leal was the great police chief. And the civil war was made because the entire Madrid police kept killing bourgeois. Gil Robles was killed by the police together with the Socialist Youth. The police went out, picketing with the workers, to kill [reactionaries]. And who gave the famous *coup d'état* which destroyed the army in Bolivia in 1952 was the police linked to the working class. The entire police. They distributed weapons. It's the sector closest to the people.

For example, when I was imprisoned in Bolivia I was with a high police chief, the head of Oruro. He was imprisoned because he had written anonymous articles saying the army had to be destroyed in favour of the working class. There was a secret investigation for one year and it discovered it was Oruro's police chief. All policemen came to visit him with great respect. And the guy kept saying it was an army that never was good for anything; which only served to repress the people; that any war in which they took part, they lost; that they had lost half of the Bolivian territory; that's why it was a murderous, bloodthirsty army.

**TRAINEE:** Not so everywhere. Not so in Poland.

**MORENO:** Yes. I didn't say at all this is an absolute law. The same among the NCOs. The young officers and it seems NCOs in Guatemala and partly in El Salvador are the extreme right. But not so in Portugal.

This is why the comrade said of Walesa, for the most dramatic changes that may occur: Do you know how the Portuguese revolution was made? You know that the Portuguese revolution against Caetano-Zalazar was already dead, and it was made by all the officers, that they began meeting for aristocratic and caste reasons? That is history; I have written and documented it; everyone has documented it. It turns out that due to the war in Angola, students and men of the people entered the military, and they were officers. The war was developing and developing, and more and more students came in. Then the high officers (career officers, the Prussian— young and old) resolved to hold a meeting on the outskirts of Lisbon. The senior officers and the minister, knowing it was a meeting of 250 officers, allowed it, because it was a meeting to see how to bust and throw out of the army all leftists who came from the University and kept protesting because there was a war in Angola. The 250 meet; the meeting begins: "How do we throw them out?" And a guy comes up saying: "The best way to get rid of all of them is to end the war in Angola, because then we don't need them anymore". So you can see what a revolutionary process is.

Then they start to say: "But we can't do this unless we overturn Caetano. First, let's propose it to him peacefully". Because they're for Caetano, they were the military hierarchy, the best military, the brightest, those of extreme right, the protected by Salazar. Among them was the greatest figure of the army, Spínola, who later on gave the coup. Spínola was the military idol, the most reactionary, he had headed the police. He was behind all that. He's the one who calls the meeting. He's the one who actually makes the revolution in Portugal.

When this package is upon them, the guys discussed as politicians. They're discussing for a day and begin to become politicised along the way, in those 24 hours in a very oligarchic famous palace on the outskirts of Lisbon who had been lent to them to meet. They resolve: "We will appoint a commission to put forth to War Minister that the matter is easily fixed". There's even political naiveté: We stop the war in Angola and the problem ends. Spínola also wrote: The Angolan war must be stopped. Then they come back and take their package to Spínola. And Spínola goes and Caetano tells him, "No". It begins there: "How not, if we're heading it?" And the great revolution opens.

Things **change** and will change more in the future. This is why Marxism is so difficult: to grasp reality and its changes, and to adapt and change ourselves.

The problem whether to enter or not a government is thus a specific problem as long as it's a government of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of the workers' organisations. That's what Trotsky said. Look how great Trotsky was! He's proposed to go to a government of an important worker state of Germany, and Trotsky says: If we can make the workers' revolution in the next six months, we enter the government; otherwise, we don't enter the government because this government is part of a socialist government but has within a capitalist minister, it's a state government part of a national government that practices class collaboration within the government— as we would say today, a popular front government. If we go, we play into their hands, we justify the central government, we allow them to say, did you see how fantastic we are?, nationally we join with the bourgeoisie, at state level we join with the Communists. We don't go under any circumstances. But if within six months we'll give a coup, we do enter. Why? Because then if we enter government in this worker state, we have a terrific strength and in one or two months we take power. From the government we make the Soviets take power in that state and transform it into a stronghold of the insurgency to overturn the national government.

**TRAINEE:** In Bolivia, could we have entered as ministers controlled by the Bolivian Workers' Centre (COB) in the Torres government, something like what Lora raised?

**MORENO:** We propose to Torres: Do you accept that, from now on, the COB controls the entire army and you as well? Do you accept that when the COB dismisses you, you leave? If you agree that the COB rule the country, then yes, we give you five ministers. Else, it's a manoeuvre by the hierarchy of the army.

**TRAINEE:** But didn't Lora ask Torres something he could not grant?

**MORENO:** He asked a very little thing. Why couldn't he grant it? It would be a manoeuvre by Torres. Torres is in a bad situation, harassed by the mass movement, he wants to save the government and tells

the COB: you rule. And the COB says: Yes. In Argentina under Peron always was ruled thus: A third of the government, of the deputies, of everything, were appointed by the CGT. And Peron always accepted.

**TRAINEE:** What are the conditions for us to participate in a government?

**MORENO:** First, that it be the dictatorship of the proletariat or be already underway. There, in the case of Torres, it's a bourgeois government. To participate in a bourgeois government goes over the line. That is the first condition, that it be a government of the workers' organisations. There tactics begin. Because one thing is that the leaders of the COB go to a bourgeois government and another thing is that in Bolivia the militias dominate, factories are expropriated or about to be expropriated, there's workers' control and the police and the whole economy is in the hands of the workers' movement. Here it has already changed. Whether or not we go to the government depends on the circumstances, it's tactical. But already this gain, that the workers' movement rule, that it rule the economy, the military forces, civil forces, is amazing. For me it's qualitative. This means there has been already a workers' revolution: everything is in the hands of the working class and the political power is in the hands of the working class. Only after this time, or on the way [towards this, we can enter a government].

**TRAINEE:** Isn't it different in the workers' states? I'm in favour of entering a Solidarity government.

**MORENO:** Sure, it's the opposite, it's qualitative.

**TRAINEE:** If in 1969 the government of Dubcek in Czechoslovakia calls the Trotskyists to enter the government, do we?

**MORENO:** I'm totally against it. The government of Dubcek was of the bureaucracy.

**TRAINEE:** If in Hungary in 1956 the Nagy's government, which is resisting the Russian invasion, calls the Trotskyists to be part of the government, do we?

**MORENO:** No, because it's bureaucratic. There's no guarantee.

**TRAINEE:** But didn't Nagy have the trust of everyone?

**MORENO:** What about the trust? But then we continue [basing our policy on trust]. In Hungary there were very powerful Soviets. (A boy of 19— I don't recall his name— was the great leader of the workers' movement. Afterwards he was shot. The Army chief and this boy were the first two who were shot). What we do tell Nagy is: If you accept to be the government of the Soviet, we begin to discuss. Do you accept that the workers' organisations rule, or not? This, believe it or not, is the qualitative point because he ruled on behalf of his party.

What indeed we don't have to be is sectarian: Name a military committee for your defence, and there yes, [we enter]; for the struggle, whatever you want. This is unity of action.

**TRAINEE:** If Nagy agrees to be the government of the Soviet of Budapest, do we get in the government?

**MORENO:** Or we don't enter. It's tactical. What I want is to open the mind. To show how, within the principles, tactics are very open.

**TRAINEE:** You compare Jaruzelski with Kornilov. But Kornilov and Pinochet are the bourgeois counter-revolution. Is Jaruzelski the bourgeois counter-revolution? Is such a comparison valid?

**MORENO:** They're counter-revolutionaries: that's the point they have in common. And the difference they have is, one is a bureaucratic counter-revolution and the other is a bourgeois counter-revolution.

Let's see if I understand the problem you put forth. You say: because of a question of class we can't compare the two, because one is a bourgeois counter-revolution and the other is a bureaucratic counter-revolution. Is that what you're telling me?

Any comparison is in a sense, because for Marxism there are no two identical phenomena. In history the principle of identity doesn't exist. **Never** are two phenomena repeated in the same manner. This is precisely the great discovery of dialectics and, especially in modern times, of Piaget, the linguists and all of them. The historical process is irreversible. By being irreversible, it can never give two equal phenomena. Two identical phenomena can be given by an intellectual method, mathematical or something like it, when it's a timeless method. [In history] everything is different. Therefore each one [of the revolutions] will be richer [than the previous ones]. It will force us to think, to do this we're doing.

Then, in what sense do we say that the Jaruzelski's coup equals Kornilov's? In the sense of the revolutionary process.

We use Trotsky. Trotsky said that the USSR had Thermidor and Bonapartism. But Thermidor and Bonapartism are governments of bourgeois type. And there was this same discussion. Radek and

others were saying: You can't use it; how can we use Thermidor and Bonapartism if they're bourgeois governments? Does it mean the government of Stalin is already bourgeois?

No. He compared them by the form; he compared them by the revolutionary sequence; because Thermidor and Bonaparte came after the great heyday of the revolution. They came after the land was handed out to the peasants, after the whole revolution in the relations of production was made. They were based in the same relations of production, but they meant the political reaction— not economic reaction—, counter-revolutionary.

Trotsky transferred this, of the bourgeois revolution— which was the expropriation of the feudal lords—, to the proletarian revolution— which was the expropriation of the capitalists. But he said, except for the class character, politically it's the same. First, the revolutionary process came to a high point: the bourgeoisie was expropriated, there were Soviets, and there was a great democracy. (Alberto was saying the Jacobins were an extraordinary plebeian democracy.) And then the counter-revolution came, the privileged.

We say the same of Kornilov and Jaruzelski.

There was a comrade who was saying— I don't know why he didn't raise it today— that if Jaruzelski was Kornilov, to what extent the government [before the coup] was a Kerenskyst government. I think so, that the Gierek and Jaruzelski governments previous [to the coup] were very weak governments. It's a very good opinion of the comrade, which I fully share. Precisely because they're Kerenskyst or semi-Kerenskyst, Jaruzelski's *coup d'état* is Kornilovian. Previous governments [to the Kornilovian] are very weak, of crisis. The one of the bureaucracy as well.

So as not to complicate things much and not make it long, I didn't touch the problem in my document. But I've already touched upon it on others. That's why I skipped it. Instead, the one of Kornilov was new for me.

**TRAINEE:** If Solidarity took power led by Walesa, would it be a February revolution?

**MORENO:** I think I already answered this issue. I want to clarify it would be a real February. Because what we have said about February revolutions that expropriate the bourgeoisie is based on the Transitional Program, but not exactly on an analogy with February because there were no soviets.

**TRAINEE:** Can you develop the issue of constituent assembly?

**MORENO:** Constituent Assembly is full of problems. Constituent is, for me, a great success of Lambert. Although, as he has a mania for constituent I don't know whether it's a great success or it happened to him the same thing that happened to the German ultra-leftists. These repeated since 1918: workers' control, workers' control, workers' control ... and Trotsky always replied: they're petty bourgeois, they pose abstractions... In 1929 there was tremendous unemployment and Trotsky said: Let's control the factories and expropriate those firing. And they said: have you noticed we were right since 1918? I don't know whether it's the same, because Lambert repeats: constituent assembly, constituent assembly, constituent assembly... But I think it's a wise move.

I think it's a mistake the position that constituent assembly has to be tied to who calls it: if Solidarity calls it, constituent assembly; if Solidarity doesn't call it, no. I also believe it's to close yourself up in the analysis.

**TRAINEE:** Couldn't Jaruzelski, for his weakness, call for constituent assembly?

**MORENO:** Yes, he could be forced to do so. Trotsky wrote something so nice saying the same in relation to Chiang Kai-shek. This discussion about who calls the constituent assembly is a problem of method. It's very dangerous to condition the mobilisation by a slogan or by two, three or more slogans. **Very dangerous**, because it becomes ultimatum. "We go to the constituent if Solidarity calls it" is an ultimatum. Each slogan has its weight, which doesn't mean they're not linked. But link isn't identity: if Solidarity doesn't call it, there's no constituent. It's linked: we have to get Solidarity to hit, to go to the end and overturn the government to call to constituent. But, as the comrade says, it's not ruled out the constituent convened by Jaruzelski. Moreover, it could have been one step away. He gave the coup; and if there had been a general strike and the workers' movement defeated the coup? All hell breaks loose! Maybe he calls to constituent chickening out— as we say— because all the shelves were coming down, out of desperation. So it's tactical whether we go or we don't; it depends on the strength.

After Chiang Kai-shek triumphs, a wing of the Chinese Trotskyists began to argue that the constituent isn't in the agenda, or that it's in the agenda but it's a task to be solved by the dictatorship of

the proletariat. And Trotsky said: No, it's not ruled out that Chiang Kai-shek's call it and we go as a way to lift the mass movement.

But I want to make the following clarification, also methodological, against Lambert: Constituent is a fundamental and decisive slogan in times of retreat; and it becomes a slogan of fifth order, important but of fifth-order, in times of upsurge. Trotsky says this, not me. I gave this quote by Trotsky against the SWP.

**TRAINEE:** Wasn't Stephane Just opposed to the constituent?

**MORENO:** Just opposed it for two reasons. First, because he said it was a bourgeois slogan. He said it was a question of principles not to accept it because Constituent Assembly is a bourgeois democratic slogan and not a slogan of the political revolution. Later he self-criticised, he rectified himself. And later [he made a questioning], but only tactical: he said it wasn't current. Afterwards he accepted it.

**TRAINEE:** Just doesn't see anything, any new process, however Lambert did.

**MORENO:** Indeed, Just sees nothing. And also he repeats: Soviets, Soviets, Soviets and no constituent. This is why I say this is a great success of Lambert. Lambert takes constituent as a great democratic slogan.

Like he took Solidarity. Within Marxism Lambert has a success which is like a monument in the main square of Caracas: the problem of the independent union. There was no Trotskyist, no revolutionary Marxist who saw it at all. Only he saw it. It's something incredible, a success that shows the power of theory and thought, maybe it's a coincidence because he also has a mania for raising the same everywhere. But either way, because seeing this was unbelievable, we accepted at once because it fell within our theory of the February revolution, of the democratic tasks. But we had not seen it.

**TRAINEE:** It's in the Transitional Program, but it's Lambert who promotes it...

**MORENO:** He promotes it in concrete ways: independent unions. It's a great slogan.

**TRAINEE:** Were we already behind when the International Executive Committee (IEC) of the FI-IC voted for the resolution on Solidarity and the constituent?

**MORENO:** That's historical. I always make an effort, as you're young and although you may be bored a little, to take other issues, try to pass on the experiences, the lessons we have.

Always, to build an organism there has to be a human team.

Trotsky is criticised, for example, several pretty awkward phrases from the stage of his agreement with Zinoviev, of the Left Opposition, when he said that in China a similar policy to that of Lenin was raised, that Lenin had been right and he hadn't. Trotsky himself said later that he self-criticised. I think it was an excess of him. I wouldn't have self-criticised, but maybe he's right.

I believe in teams. For example, when the Venezuelan *Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores* [Socialist Workers Party] (PST) joined with OCRFI comrades here in Venezuela, I think a leadership is formed. It's a team. I see you now fully integrated.

Any team is *sine qua non* of the party's progress. A party can have a great program, a strategy and a common tactic, [but if there's no team...]. Or a unification may be made: if you haven't tested before whether a team works, don't make the unification, because eventually big troubles will come because the human factor comes into play.

Lenin was a champion of this. He gave a tremendous importance to the teams.

Every leadership is a human team and there has to be concessions, even more so at the stage when it's being formed. I say this because we thought we were building a team for an International and for many years, and significant concessions were made. Alberto knows well that at the meeting of the IWL I had the line that the leadership of the FI-IC be taken over by people of the OCRFI, with myself going into a background role, even though I wrote the theses. This was a policy deliberated and discussed in the General Council of the FI-IC. I put forth: "Look I'm not stupid. It's my policy. I'm encouraging Napurí and Jorge Villarreal to take the leadership in Peru; I encourage Alberto to take indeed the leadership in Venezuela, I'm preparing everything so that in Brazil comrades coming from OCRFI take the leadership; and here I'm leaving the field free— or, giving free rein as we say in the Pampas— to comrade Lambert. Beware! Don't believe I'm being manoeuvred, because it's a conscious policy. They're older, have stronger personality, more strength than us. And, in addition, Comrade Lambert is where the leadership is. Never in my life have I had political ambitions; I'll step into the background".

If we made concessions in this regard, of course we also had to make concessions of formal type or of detail to safeguard the team. For example, the thesis on the anti-imperialist united front started saying that there was no anti-imperialist united front, but only anti-imperialist actions. Pierre [Lambert] said, if you don't put anti-imperialist united front I'm left very bad in front of Lora, because all my controversy with Lora was around this problem. So, by them not accepting it [only] was anti-imperialist unity of action, we made the concession of the name. And Lambert left all that we said and we had to add more—the original thesis was shorter—, saying that anti-imperialist united fronts are to be broken.

The document on Poland has to do with that. At that time we were already for Solidarity to take power, and Pierre was against. So I had doubts about whether to vote for Pierre's document. I saw it as a terrible, dreadful document. There was a great character in Argentine radio called Jesus Memory because he would start to say something and then he forgets. It looks like a document written by Jesus Memory because it starts, goes back, restarts, forgets, and takes away on a sideline. I think this isn't conscious; it's Pierre's style. He went backwards and forwards so much I didn't know how to define it: is it good or bad? But I had great doubts because a number of very serious issues were not raised: about dual power, about the power to Solidarity, about the military problem.

So instead of voting against, I sent the document (everything I say now was already there, in that document, but now, after what happened in Poland it's clearer). I said I'm going to act on the positive. Instead of saying: Your document is rubbish, we have to define it as a document that says nothing, or that it says generalities or that it says and doesn't say, reject it and vote for mine. I made that addendum stating I wouldn't vote for the other document unless mine was approved. Saying: My document is to be the actual document. Trying to clarify it carefully, trying to get Pierre to accept this. And Pierre accepted it in a flash.

He came very happy, with a team spirit as large as or larger than mine, and said it was essential that we voted together, and so on. And this is what came out.

Everyone has their style. I tend to work in teams. Neither to rise above, or to touch the vanity or self-worth of anyone or anything like that. I want the parties to move forward in the national and international level.

So I did that document. I discussed much about power to Solidarity. He said no. Then I said: Well, if he accepts dual power he's falling into the trap because there's a theoretical fatal dynamics, there's a theoretical structure.

The same thing happened with the anti-imperialist front. Later he wanted to say otherwise in Peru and had to self-criticise for six days. He had to come to Bogotá to write that everything the Peruvians said (which was exactly what he said) was a disaster. Precisely because he conceded.

I thought the same thing: He accepts these premises and next thing he accepts is that Solidarity has to take power.

So, yes, those documents are much more incomplete than this. Also regarding the constituent. Constituent is, I say again, a tactical slogan, of fifth order, which needs to be considered; sometimes used, and sometimes not. Instead, what is strategic is to raise the power to the workers' organisations where the mass movement is. What is strategic is to destroy the armed forces of the regime. Otherwise, there's no [revolutionary] politics. More than strategic, it's of principles.

We also use a friendly tone, because the OCI has a number of very strange features. For example, I have the resolution on international policy of the previous OCI Congress, which doesn't say a word about France being imperialist. It's common in the LCR and the OCI. What will we do at the international level in relation to France? It talks of arms race, of this and that, and not a single word that they dominate colonies and semi-colonies. The LCR does the same. They're deeply imperialists. They reflect the workers aristocracy, which is imperialist and racist. We're going to fight.

Also in this area, which for us was of rupture, we have moved with care. We tried to introduce the problem slowly. Sometimes we're manipulators. We let the Congress resolution run. Comrade Cristobal, when the Parity Committee between the IWL and OCRFI was still non-existent, came running saying: Hugo, Hugo, look at this resolution; they're complete revisionists. And because I didn't know yet where the process was going to, I said: We don't yet know where they're going, don't say anything. And the resolution was adopted at the OCI Congress without naming French imperialism. Now we have that as a letter.

That is the truth of what happened. That document of mine on Poland is abstract in a number of ways. But for me, it's clear to those who want to see under the water. We argued that the dual power is Solidarity, that there's no other, that it's institutionalized, it's national. We argued that the arms issue is decisive to go against the army. Look what a roughly correct Marxist analysis is: when we put this forth we knew nothing about a brutal pro-Solidarity current in the army. The United Secretariat (USec), which has many more intellectual than we have, had sent to live in Warsaw a great linguist specialist in Polish who made summaries of all newspapers and magazines published in Poland. These were university-type works worthy of the Yankees. And suddenly *Inprecor* published a whole analysis of the Polish army newspaper where the authority is furious, calling all names under the sun against the officers who were sympathisers of Solidarity, and who were trying to organise Solidarity within the army and were considering and discussing with NCOs this problem in all army units. So it's a tenfold crime of Lambert not having taken that policy. Because he accepted it from us formally, as he accepted the anti-imperialist front. If you follow *Informations Ouvrieres*, you never see a line proposing to organise Solidarity in the army, or that this was the fundamental problem, or that the revolutionary process went through there.

**TRAINEE:** Lambert proposes to build a social democratic party in Poland. What is the difference of this with your approach to make a party with Trotskyist-like sectors?

**MORENO:** The party that Baluka<sup>1</sup> proposed is a Labour or Social Democratic Party. In fact Lambert doesn't put forth the building of a revolutionary party as an immediate task in Poland, but of a reformist party. [If it were made with Trotskyist-like sectors] it would be a revolutionary party.

**TRAINEE:** Lambertism said we had to keep secret the slogan of constituent. Why?

**MORENO:** It must be because Solidarity would be against.

**TRAINEE:** Lambert had the tactic that Baluka kept quiet in Solidarity, hoping to remove Walesa when a radicalisation took place. Today he only has 10 militants left. If he had faced Walesa he would have 500.

**MORENO:** I make it clear that the ORCFI, Lambert and Felipe have a mania for exaggeration. Some are amazing, as now, when they're running the rumour in Brazil that they have 10,000 militants in Poland, and I doubt they have 15. Reports in the General Council were what the Comrade says: at the last meeting in November, the report was that they had less than 10. And they were furious with Baluka, but as always in terms of tactics. But for me the problem **is political**: you have to know how to stay alone.

Theoretical discussions have to be brought down to earth. You also need to have a sense about where to work. Now you're going to the Guayana [Region]. Do you know what Baluka is in Cszcecin? This is why we have to vindicate Thornett a lot, perhaps not his politics, but what he is. In a sense he's a mirror of us all. It's extremely justified that the comrade who just visited him has been so impressed. What Thornett has accomplished regarding penetration in the workers movement—I'm not talking about policy—in England, we can accomplish increasingly everywhere. And that's what we need to achieve.

Thornett is a comrade who until recently had 150 militants. Now he has 300 because he joined with another group. At heart, it's a small group. But it has its centre in the largest factory in England, the Leyland, which I don't know whether it has 40,000 or 45,000 workers. He's a great union leader, has taken roots there and there's a cell of about 50 workers. When elections were held in the Leyland union, he presented his candidacy for president of the union and took many votes. There was a time in which he seemed to be winning.

Because strength, comrades, is also dialectic. At that time *The Times* ran an article titled "Either Thornett or us" where it said that if Comrade Thornett won the union election it would be necessary to rethink the entire political and institutional situation throughout England. **And I believe in that.** Because in the class struggle it's not the same Felipe as our comrade leader of the Venezuelan factory Celanese, and with Celanese developing, not in decline. They weigh differently.

It's the same argument of ours with respect to bourgeois democracy: it isn't the same the vote of a priest as the vote of a worker or a worker of vanguard. This [in reality] takes place completely. We've seen it.

Another time I come, if one day we have an hour or two, I will inform you, I will tell the history of our party, the Argentine PST, a small but enormously influential party. It was very similar to Thornett's group. That is why I share Alberto's admiration. Instead, there are dear comrades of us, and even workers

<sup>1</sup> **Edmund Baluka** (1934-2015), chairman of the strike committee in the Szczecin shipyards during the workers' riots of 1970.

like Carlos, who have a tremendous anger towards him for his positions. And Alberto and I like him— we love him as they say in French. It's exciting and extraordinary to see a group, with their sectarianism and everything else, where they're all workers, and discuss with a leader who has just left the factory, who tries reading Marxist theory and handles it quite well.

It is, then, a matter of concrete policies and concrete theories to advance in a revolutionary sense. Have you read that Walesa had a terrible mess with that great woman leader, Anna Walentinowicz? Here was our work. It wasn't an abstract thing. It wasn't a matter of waiting.

For me it's very interesting this of the constituent. I didn't know it. I believe, I'm almost certain, he didn't raise constituent so as not to be marginalised from Solidarity. And the same with regard to making a party. They thought they were going to make a party of tens of thousands parallel to Solidarity, not built as a tendency within Solidarity. What was needed to be done?

[The same thing we did in the PST and Thornett did]. We Trotskyists can do it; the Trotskyist program ignites, fructifies. And more at this time. We could have done the same in Gdansk. Do you know what Gdansk and Cszsecin are with 500 Trotskyist militants? Let's start saying things as they're: they could change the entire history of Poland. They could have now achieved a general strike against the coup. There's a dialectic. It would be like the Putilov factory in Russia. It's not nothing. After all, the Bolsheviks cell in Putilov was, I think, 300.

And that could have been achieved with this line, with this theory the comrade said, which is Alberto's, which is of all of us: to be a good opposition. We're a leadership opposed to Walesa and we'll dispute the leadership with Walesa. If now we're just one, we aren't interested. We were going to start finding activists and delegates who said the same as us, to whom we gave the theoretical and programmatic rationalisation of what they felt and where they were going.

Please note that the Social Democratic Party can be a tactic. But when documents are written, especially if they relate to another country, what has to be written are general issues. We could have said: social democratic party. But what we have to write is how we achieve a **revolutionary** current, not social democratic, within the workers' movement. And then we say: by doing the social democratic party we're already doing this current because there are many social democrats that are revolutionary, and so we organise them. I'm neither for nor against, but I'm against in principle.

**TRAINEE:** Do you call social democratic party to a party with the program that the PSPP raised and that posed as a party of the unionised masses in Solidarity?

**MORENO:** Yes, certainly. It was a democratic program— let's call it liberal— for a party parallel to Solidarity. They didn't raise it was urgent [to make a revolutionary party] nor did they raise the Social Democratic Party as a tactic to do so. They raised it as organism of masses. That's an escape, a complete toccata and fugue.<sup>1</sup>

**TRAINEE:** Can we say that Solidarity is revolutionary?

**MORENO:** No. We never say it, and if we said it somewhere it's an abuse by us. We say it's of the revolutionary masses, same as a soviet, which is different from saying that it's revolutionary. The same mistake can be made that, if Solidarity is convinced [to take power], to say this dictatorship of the proletariat is revolutionary because it's of the revolutionary masses. Here we must make a distinction. One thing is that the revolutionary masses make this union— as, for us, the Sandinista masses made unions in Nicaragua—, and another thing is that these unions are revolutionary for its leadership or its program. We call them revolutionaries when they at least have a [revolutionary] leadership. If they have a [revolutionary] leadership and program, they're revolutionary unions.

**TRAINEE:** So, the COB was of the revolutionary masses but not revolutionary?

**MORENO:** That's right. It was the opposite: bureaucratic. Always think that in phenomena antagonistic poles meet. We have to think as dialecticians and with the great law of Trotsky: they're combined. Counter-revolutionary leaderships combine with revolutionary masses and make an organism, which has been made by the revolutionary masses but whose leadership has been usurped by a counter-revolutionary leadership.

---

<sup>1</sup> This is a play on words by Nahuel Moreno. The Spanish word "fuga" means both escape and fugue, hence the reference to Johan Sebastian Bach's "toccata and fugue". [Translator's Note]

**TRAINEE:** Should we raise in Poland legality for all parties, including, for example, the Christian Democrats? Isn't this going against the line you raise in "Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat" that only the Soviet parties be legal?

**MORENO:** That is tactical. In general, the line is what you said: we had to raise the legality of all parties that Solidarity considered legal. But this doesn't prevent, it doesn't go against the principles, that we raise general political legality, not within the soviets. The Soviets can make a law similar to any bourgeois law that says: We recognise any party.

It doesn't contradict "Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat". Because Mandel says all parties must have legality, and that's mandatory. We say that's a monstrosity. But we also say to Mandel, there's no reason not to, but also there's no compelling reason to make it so. It's a tactical problem, like universal suffrage. In Russia the universal suffrage wasn't imposed: by law, a worker's vote was worth five peasant's votes. In Bolivia, Lora turned this into a monstrosity, because he raised it before taking power.

**TRAINEE:** Aren't we for giving legality only to the Soviets parties?

**MORENO:** No. That's also restrictive. Marxism is always specific. This is the line of principles, abstract. But there may be a certain time, a situation where we raise: Legality for all parties, even for the Christian Democrats. If there's a large armed demonstration calling for the legality to the Christian Democrats and the bureaucracy says "No", what do we do? Are we going to go against the demonstration? Maybe we join it. The problem is tactical, entirely tactical.

**TRAINEE:** But the article in *[International] Courier* says that it's a big problem and that we oppose it.

**MORENO:** It's a big problem, but tactical. But we always return to the article in *[International] Courier* #2. I repeat I'm against it: it's a little ultra-leftist in one a sense and it capitulates to Solidarity in another sense.

**TRAINEE:** But didn't you write it?

**MORENO:** Not at all. I'm totally against it. Our line is what you say. But this line isn't negative. You take it as a negative, exclusionary. I can tell you: it isn't exclusionary. From that line there's a no man's land, where we go if we want and don't go if we don't want. We propose: Legality to all Soviet parties. Which in Poland today means: Legality to all parties recognised by Solidarity. Not of the Soviets, because it's an abstraction: there are no Soviets. Let Solidarity say which the legal parties are. And if the largest party is the Christian Democratic...

That is the discussion with Mandel. We're then agreeing with Mandel, because the Kadet Party, a bourgeois party, was legal in the soviets. The Bolsheviks admitted it as a current of the Soviets because there was a time when there were unions and a little current of the workers' movement which were Kadets, bourgeois. Then nothing prevents us to put forth to Solidarity itself: We're for the legality of the Christian Democratic Party. (Maybe the Christian Democratic Party says, like Walesa: We aren't in favour of a return to capitalism, we're in favour of socialism; but we know it's of the Church.) It's an abstract problem. What is of principles is that who decides which parties are legal is Solidarity. That is the principle. But this principle doesn't prevent tactical manoeuvres.

**TRAINEE:** Would we be in favour of the legality of a party of Walesa?

**MORENO:** How do I know? Suppose Walesa's party is formed and has 80 percent of the Soviets, and we go and say: Against the legality of Walesa's Party! I think that if we had 20 percent, we lose 15 and we're left with five percent. The tactic isn't to be stupid. They have 80 percent, I have 20 and stand up and say: Scoundrels! We're against your legality! You no longer vote and we dismiss you from here!

We'd look like the old Argentine Trotskyists. In the leadership of the Argentina section they were five, including Abelardo Ramos<sup>1</sup> and a famous intellectual. They had the entire rank and file against and the guys expelled the rank and file, they expelled everyone. And two organisations emerged: one was *Frente Obrero* [Workers Front] which was large, it was the rank and file, they were everybody, they had money; and the others were five and published a small newspaper, this small, that was the leadership. It's crazy.

What are we going to do? It's tactical. It depends on the relationship of forces. Now, as far as possible, as a line, let's see whether we convince the working class, and as soon as we can, we dismiss him.

<sup>1</sup> **Jorge Abelardo Ramos** (1921-1994) was an Argentinian politician, historian and writer, founder of the political and ideological current called *Izquierda Nacional* (National Left), which vindicated some things of Trotsky and fervently endorsed the Peronist government.

**TRAINEE:** Do we fight even for the legality of a bourgeois party if they mobilise?

**MORENO:** That's right. Otherwise, we don't understand the tactic. But the principle is that Solidarity or the Soviets [define who is legal].

**TRAINEE:** The bureaucracy denies the legality to KPN (Confederation of Independent Poland) — a right-wing nationalist party— in order to deny legality to the-left and the Trotskyists.

**MORENO:** To everyone, also the Trotskyist-like. The slogan that you gave is very good: Legality to all political parties. Precisely the Christian Democrats perhaps tells the working class: These rogue Trotskyists aren't democratic. Here enters constituent assembly.

**TRAINEE:** To propose legality without saying they're parties enemies of the working class, as does the OCI, is criminal.

**MORENO:** Very good. For example, in the soviet where they're 80 percent, we have to ask for their legality saying: Comrades, because you're not getting legality, we Trotskyists ask for the merit of going at the forefront of the demonstration calling for your legality. Are you convinced we're fighting for your legality? What else do you ask? Well, now you're convinced that we ask for your legality, we say: the maximum scum existing in Poland is Walesa and this party; you're a party of manipulators who are deceiving the rank and file; you aren't for developing [the revolution].

**TRAINEE:** Does the bureaucracy have class consciousness?

**MORENO:** Can't have class consciousness because it isn't a class. It has a **counter-revolutionary** political consciousness. The bureaucracy can even split and a small sector at some stage can go towards certain progressive positions—I already spoke of the police. Which isn't to say that we'll admit them, but we're going to manoeuvre with this sector.

Instead, it's impossible to have a sector of the bourgeoisie going towards the socialist revolution or to progressive steps in that direction. It's a class phenomenon. This gives it unity, a huge consciousness of class. This is very important. The British, French, German, Italian bourgeoisie, have a consciousness developed through centuries, embodied even in individuals who make true works of art. For example, what they have done in Spain. In Spain the great politician is the father of the king, who learned from the year 1930, from the civil war, from all that. This issue of consciousness isn't something abstract. Consciousness is individuals educated in the University, educated in political life and in everything, who think for a class, for the bourgeoisie.

The bureaucracy doesn't have any of that. How will they have if they live doing purges? Who do they have who thinks permanently and whom they leave alone? Hence the extreme weakness of the bureaucracy. This façade of tremendous strength is true because it sits in the defeat, in the retreat of the workers' movement. But as soon as the rise begins, everything starts shaking for them. It's weak.

Stalin himself was weak. Stalin, like Mao, is the product of very favourable circumstances. And so it is. Deutscher, who is a great admirer of Mao, is very honest when he says Mao came to power as a result of highly favourable circumstances that occurred repeatedly.

The office of a bureaucrat, for example, depends on his superior. The position of a bourgeois depends on their position in the productive apparatus. Rockefeller is Rockefeller and no one is superior to him. And the Standard Oil is the Standard Oil and nobody can move him from there. He can move others, but in Standard Oil nobody moves to him by right of ownership. In the bureaucracy, however, everyone knows they can be overturned, they can be removed. Hence their paranoid psychological traits, that are now being studied hard by specialists in the USSR and the workers' states. They study them with a psychologist deviation, but honestly I'm in favour of them. I believe that for caste reasons the bureaucratic characteristic from the psychological point of view is paranoia.

Nowadays Stalin is much studied. I believe Stalin was an honest man. I think Stalin really believed that everyone was trying to kill him. I.e., he was a hellish, frightening madman, because he was a bureaucrat.

The bureaucrat is, therefore, unstable, while a big bourgeois, a Rockefeller, must be peaceful, even good with his family. As it was [inaudible], who exploited and gave great headaches to the workers' movement, but at home he was an ideal father of family. This is impossible in a bureaucrat for social reasons, because he depends on another, he has no stability. A landowner owns his land; no bureaucrat owns his office. He depends on the position and thence he lives nervously. Do I have the liking of the one above or doesn't he like me?

Khrushchev has related how Stalin was psychologically. It's typical of all the bureaucrats: so was Mao; they're all the same psychologically. Stalin was a great guy, super nice, he agreed with everyone. Khrushchev tells in his famous report to the XX Congress how he had differences and always fought about tactics with the general who defeated the Germans at Stalingrad (they didn't kill each other or purges took place because they got along well). Then they used to say: Let's settle the problem quickly, let's talk to Stalin and he tells us what to do.

Khrushchev would call and say: "Comrade Stalin, the general believes we have to attack on that side and I think on this one". And Stalin told him: "Are you sure of your position?" "Yes". "Well, then apply that line".

Later Khrushchev called the general and this would say: "This is a disaster; you know nothing of strategic issues; I'm right; Stalin can't have agreed with you".

The general called Stalin and Stalin told him: "Are you sure general?" "Yes". "Apply your line".

And they were two opposing lines. Luckily Khrushchev and the general get along well, they talked together and saw how to fix things!

Stalin always acted this way with all guys coming to his office: he agreed with everyone. Later he saw which one prevailed. If someone failed, he leaned on the other and busted him. He never was to blame. It was a twisted mechanism, a terrifying thing, which is general in all of them.

This psychological trait has to do, for me, with the social characteristics of the bureaucracy. It has no stability, no security of class; it lives up in the air. It's very weak in this regard, although it's terribly counter-revolutionary for the same reason. It doesn't want the working class to move one iota; it doesn't allow any room for manoeuvre.

**TRAINEE:** In your article you say, "It will be repeated, corrected and increased, the situation of Poland in the USSR". Does that mean that the trend is to have governments like Jaruzelski's in other workers' states?

**MORENO:** No. In this interpretation there's an abuse of yours. What I mean is that inevitably there will be great political revolutions. It's an implicit way of saying that, because I say: the coups are products of the revolutionary upsurge. I **don't say** the characteristic of bureaucracy is to keep doing coups. I say that when a political revolution takes place, the bureaucracy has no choice but to attempt a Kornilovian coup. Note that I don't say that there will be Kornilovian governments, I say, there will be attempted putschs, because I open the theoretical perspective that these putsch attempts be defeated and the political revolution advance. All I mean here is that there will be many putsch attempts and we have to have a policy for those putsch attempts. That's what I mean: the rise is coming and we have to be ready, because whenever there's a rise these scoundrels will prepare a coup.

**TRAINEE:** Is it about to have reflexes against the coups like we have in Latin America?

**MORENO:** Exactly. I believe that. And I believe it didn't occur in the workers' states because there has been no rise like in Latin America. We have the great fortune to live in the only continent that lives in a process of permanent revolution, which is Latin America, and that's why there are so many coups. (You, Venezuelans, haven't lived so much this process even though you live on the continent.) Because it's the only one in this post-war period where the struggle hasn't stopped since 1943. And that's not chauvinism.

**TRAINEE:** Can there be several parties of the bureaucracy, as in Poland? Are they mere appendages of the Communist Party? As seen in China, Czechoslovakia, etc., in the crises there may be actually several parties; but if there's no crisis they can't exist or have a functioning similar to bourgeois democracy.

**MORENO:** The Polish parties are direct appendages of the CP. What Alberto said about the existence of several parties in the crises in China and Czechoslovakia is correct. Trotsky has said the same about the Bolshevik party, already totalitarian and Stalinist, in the period of struggle between him and Stalin: there were in fact two parties. But in fact. They can only be factional struggles, and the factions are in fact two parties. It's impossible the legal existence of an opposition party. It's totally impossible because it goes against the totalitarian regime. Hence it acquires factional and secret characteristics. It's a hellish life in every party and will be increasingly hellish.

**TRAINEE:** They always have to have a Bonaparte.

**MORENO:** Yes, because it's a country where everyone struggles against the entire world. When everyone is fighting hammer and tong, there must be someone to adjudicate.

The bureaucracy, precisely because it isn't a class can become divided, and a small sector, seeing the retreat, may go towards the side of the workers' movement by patriotism to the nationalisation of industry and the state monopoly of foreign trade. It's a contradiction: that in a small minority the needs of the nationalisation of the economy prevail over their counter-revolutionary political interests. There's no guarantee of total unity as in the bourgeoisie, which is a class.

Something similar happened, precisely for being a caste, with the Russian military, even when they were soldiers of the Tsar, when they saw that Russia was fighting against Germany and against 21 nations. In an important sector what prevailed was: It's my country, I'm a soldier of this country, I don't care who rules; and they fought with great honesty for the Bolsheviks.

**TRAINEE:** The Solidarity union will inevitably be democratic?

**MORENO:** In principle, yes, I think it has to be this way. But it will be a fight. Walesa tried to start bureaucratising it by all means. It wasn't that because he had majority he gave increasing democracy, but the opposite: he was trying to use it [to liquidate democracy]. It is a bit schematic to say only that Solidarity will be democratic. It should be noted that the process towards violence is inevitable. Because it's a revolutionary organism, it can't fail to occur. The revolutionary masses are there, they have made it. I claim that Solidarity wasn't made by Walesa; it was made by the masses.

**TRAINEE:** Please clarify the issue of semi-colonisation of the workers states.

**MORENO:** The bureaucracy, by being a bureaucracy, completely loses its stability if there's revolution or counter-revolution. Like any caste or any petty bourgeois current it has to go to one side or the other. Why will it have to go, as a large majority, to the side of the bourgeoisie? Due to its privileged life, its economic and material interests. Faced with the revolution, the only thing that can guarantee their privileged life is to go into the service of imperialism even if it loses status. If there's no revolution, it doesn't on any account wish to switch to the service of imperialism, because imperialism uses the state to extract profits, and then the benefits of the bureaucrats have to decrease partly because imperialism will start to remove those benefits and transform the bureaucrats into bureaucratic— non bourgeois— agents of a semi colony.

Why do we talk about semi colony? I believe that one of Trotsky's mistakes is to have considered the possibility of capitalist restoration **from within**. He always spoke of **this danger**, and I believe he's wrong. He also spoke of the danger of imperialism— he's a genius and worth 1000 times more than us. But the little scale inclined him this way [of internal factors]: the problem of the kulak; because of the bureaucracy bourgeois emerge through the cracks of society; these bourgeois will be increasingly bourgeois and are going to give a coup. I think we have to wipe this out.

The national bourgeoisies are nothing in this world where the multinationals and imperialism dominate. As soon as the bourgeoisie is expropriated this is over, completely. Let's leave aside that today the kulak is kulak and tomorrow is already great bourgeois and greater bourgeois the following day. It's an evolutionary approach, without strength— which doesn't mean it doesn't have [any importance]. The greatest enemy, the true counter-revolutionary factor, which is decisive, extremely strong, next to which the kulak is nothing, is imperialism: with its loans, with its dominance of the world market, with its technology, with its greater development of the productive forces.

**TRAINEE:** You said that the bureaucracy in normal times doesn't advance towards capitalism.

**MORENO:** To some extent it does, but slowly, in spite of itself.

**TRAINEE:** They don't seek capitalism as a program, as objective.

**MORENO:** Sometimes there are sectors of the bureaucracy who do, as Liberman<sup>1</sup> in the USSR. When they begin to raise automation, i.e. the isolated exploitation, begin to emerge programs that always come from technocratic sectors: for democracy; that individual factories move by the criterion of profit, closing it if doesn't make profits... That's capitalism. But the whole of the bureaucracy always wins.

**TRAINEE:** The bureaucracy doesn't advance towards capitalism in normal times because it would have to use methods of civil war against the masses.

<sup>1</sup> **Evsei Grigorievich Liberman** (1897–1981) was a Soviet economist who lived in Ukraine. He proposed new methods of economic planning. His dissertation took form in "Plan, benefit and prisms" published in *Pravda* (1962). This became a basis for the Soviet economic reforms of opening towards capitalism began in 1965.

**MORENO:** Contrary to what the comrade says that the bureaucracy could not have previously turned to capitalism, I think that Stalin could have returned because he had really crushed the working class. But his specific interests were antagonistic, because he had no danger of political revolution.

Trotsky has insisted that the bureaucracy is who is going to lead to capitalism; that the privileges of the bureaucracy have to lead them to capitalism. There's always a small sector [which doesn't go to capitalism] because it's a cast, not a bourgeoisie. But in the transformation process the leap is qualitative: the majority goes there, it's inevitable.

Trotsky predicted this and hasn't been happened. This is why Mandel writes to say that the existence of the counter-revolution is an exaggeration of us. Mandel says: That's over; the facts, the revolutionary upsurge has shown that Trotsky was wrong; that the bureaucracy tends to capitalism is false.

What I think is that the bureaucracy wasn't in such a hurry before. It didn't face the danger of political revolution, which is, dialectically, what will most force imperialism and the bureaucracy to join. That they approach each other doesn't mean that imperialism can become a supporter of the degenerated workers' state, but the opposite: that the bureaucracy will hasten more than ever to be safe in the arms of the imperialist counter-revolution.

**TRAINEE:** Jaruzelski owes its stability to the USSR and also to imperialism, which intervenes directly through the Church propping up the bureaucratic regime. Doesn't the government of Jaruzelski depend as much on both imperialism and on the own Polish bureaucracy?

**MORENO:** And it can become semi-colonial country. It's almost one step way. The only thing missing is to defeat the workers' movement.

We have quotes from the most famous Yankee reactionary organ, the *Wall Street Journal*: Let's stop mucking about, we must help Jaruzelski; Jaruzelski isn't so bad, he's nationalist, he won't yield to the USSR; **let's help**.

But I believe the process of the counter-revolution is essentially political. To enforce these plans they have to hit the workers' movement as hard as Jaruzelski has hit, or harder. To ensure that a country like Argentina, quite independent, which always opposed US imperialism, become a privileged colony, they had to deliver the coup of 1955, the coups of Frondizi, Onganía and this last one. If it took them four coups to dismantle Argentina, this being a semi-colonial country— though it was the hardest for Yankee imperialism to master—, imagine with a workers' state!

The process won't take place by giving each factory to a capitalist. Forget that. The process goes towards semi-colonisation, even with the semi-nationalised industry, liquidating the state monopoly of foreign trade. The important thing will be the counter-revolutionary defeat [of the workers] and the standards of complete exploitation across the country that imperialism will impose. Today [such exploitation] is very important but marginal. Instead, there imperialism will regulate everything, like in Argentina.

There have been other countries like this. Nasser and Sadat had a **highly nationalised** economy. For this reason Livio Maitan<sup>1</sup> came to the view that Indonesia, Egypt, Guinea, a number of bourgeois countries with virtually everything nationalised, were going towards workers' states.

I believe that the process is as I said before and that today is faster than ever. Why? Because of the political revolution. The process of political revolution or bourgeois counter-revolution didn't take place with the speed with which Trotsky believed would happen because a pole was missing: a thorough political revolution. Instead, I think that now all workers' states have entered a process of chronic crisis. The USSR is more screwed up than ever. It's terrible. Each year it produces less. People work at a snail's pace. They try not to go to the factories and have parallel jobs, in the black market. **Everything** is falling apart. The bureaucratic management of the economy is transforming the bureaucracy, from a relative obstacle on the development of the economy, to an absolute obstacle. This is why the crisis is of the whole.

My great argument against Lambert and Felipe was about this, where I argued that there wouldn't be an invasion of the Red Army and that repression would be through the Polish army. Among other things, because the USSR is terrified. It doesn't feel safe as years ago because the context is totally different.

**TRAINEE:** Can the USSR be transformed into a semi-colony of imperialism?

<sup>1</sup> **Livio Maitan** (1923–2004) was an Italian Trotskyist, a leader of *Associazione Bandiera Rossa* and of the United Secretariat.

**MORENO:** [Yes], but if that political counter-revolution takes place. It can't be a cold economic [process].

**TRAINEE:** Will the role of the Church be general, in all countries?

**MORENO:** There are different national traditions. There are places where the Church has no influence. In the USSR and China, for example, the Catholic Church will never get to have influence. Or they might have it in 40 or 50 years. But today, as in 5, 10, 15 or 20 years in the USSR, in China, in India, the Catholic Church is a negative entity, it doesn't exist. In Poland, a Catholic country, the national tradition weighs in that regard. El Salvador is also a Catholic country.

**TRAINEE:** Does the working class in the workers states produce surplus value?

**Moreno:** Whether there's surplus value or not is a big discussion among Marxists. Take what I say with a grain of salt. I think that [in the economy of the workers' states] the law of value applies and also the law of planning, that the two laws are combined. It's a combined process. The law of value applies in the market completely. And the law of value applies to wages. There's a production regime of wages, i.e. wages are paid; there are wage earners. Where wages are paid there's surplus value.

But I don't want you to just accept this. I give you the scoop for those wanting to know right away, but in any case we develop this issue in another talk.

**TRAINEE:** The bureaucracy doesn't extract surplus value but swallows a portion of unpaid work.

**MORENO:** That's right: of the over work.

**TRAINEE:** And imperialism receives surplus value through foreign debt and trade.

**Moreno:** That's right.

**TRAINEE:** Is it nonsense to say that surplus value is realised on the world market and not in the national?

**MORENO:** No, it's interesting. The base of the surplus value is the world market, yes, that's okay. And the part about imperialism grabbing that surplus value is also fine. But I think that on a national scale there's indeed surplus value. Where there are wages, there's surplus value. But I will raise the issue because it's very serious what a very smart Trotskyist current (which today are gone, they're no longer Trotskyists) holds. The one of [inaudible], they say that if there are wages not only there's surplus value but **there's capitalism**. I disagree completely.

To me, the bureaucracy is an agent of imperialism essentially because it's counter-revolutionary and because of the apparatuses. We must be very dialectical. In any whole there are contradictions. The whole USSR, **for its base**, because there's no bourgeoisie, is a workers' state. Then we'll see why it's a workers' state despite the existence of wage earners; why this clever theorist who says the key is whether or not there are wage earners is wrong. But for now let's leave it.

In the workers' states there are bourgeois standards of distribution and, equally or even more importantly, the bourgeois state apparatuses, which are products of bourgeois distribution standards. These apparatuses exist as prevalent, are those dominant, to ensure the standards of bourgeois distribution. The two factors are intimately linked.

Relations of production aren't bourgeois in my opinion, and I'll tell you why. Relations of production aren't only the way how the worker is paid, but rather the objective of production is decisive. (We have quotations from Marx about it.) That is, relations of production which aren't made for profit **aren't capitalists**. There aren't, therefore, capitalist relations of production if there's no capitalist who want to increase profits and cause accumulation. This is to say, **there can be no capitalist production without a capitalist class**. Else, it isn't a capitalist relation.

What exists in the workers' states is a bourgeois distribution and apparatuses completely bourgeois and totalitarian, to such an extent that Trotsky has said they were parallel to fascism. If you don't look at the relations of production, it's not just a bourgeois country, but a perfectly ordinary bourgeois fascist country. There are police, there's a totalitarian regime, there's a totalitarian party, there's censorship, the guy who criticises the government goes to jail, and no one can publish a newspaper. It's the worst expression of the bourgeois apparatus. It's therefore a highly contradictory phenomenon, because it has to ensure an increasingly antagonistic bourgeois distribution with the interests of the workers. It's a minority, a caste. It's a sharp contradiction.

But if the distribution is bourgeois, it's because there's surplus value. And a surplus value doesn't mean the existence of bourgeois relations of production, just as the exchange of goods doesn't mean bourgeois production.

It's okay what you were saying about world trade, with the difference that you do it very mechanically: only what goes [to world trade]. It's the pressure of the world market which, by putting a price, by linking it with the value of wages, causes a higher share of surplus value. Ultimately it's the result of how the global market works internally, not only for the mechanical phenomenon that goes there and gains. Even if it doesn't gain, imperialism acts on the entire process: production, production of surplus value and distribution. The capitalist world market dominates everything, and there's no way out.

The bureaucrats are then agents of imperialism for a political reason and for an economic reason, which are closely linked: because there's bourgeois distribution they have a predominant bourgeois apparatus.

**TRAINEE:** Under the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat there would be also bourgeois distribution and the economy would suffer the same limitation by the world market. Wouldn't those bourgeois apparatuses also exist?

**MORENO:** But **not predominant** and with a tendency to disappear because there would be a democratic plan to counteract the bourgeois distribution. It's **the struggle**— not the combination against the working class— of two laws: the law of democratic planning and the law of value with surplus value. A good Marxist, a good revolutionary party appeals to workers' democracy. They make it clear to the workers the law of value is still playing but, at the same time, points out how far planning scientifically allows the law of working hard, we'll work ten hours, we'll take shifts and go and produce the steel, we'll produce refrigerators because we all want refrigerators. This has nothing to do with bourgeois distribution, has nothing to do with the law of value, and has nothing to do with surplus value. But they vote it and they do it. And the trend will be for this planning to increasingly dominate.

Instead, bourgeois distribution is totally dominant in the bureaucratic regime. The plan democratically made by the workers to benefit the economy and benefit the workers isn't dominant. There are statistics showing, for example, that at the time of Lenin and Trotsky, with an economy much worse than that of the Stalin era, the standard of living of the working class increased every year.

**TRAINEE:** The fundamental difference is in the objective.

**MORENO:** First in the objective and then in the planning. The economy becomes rational.

**TRAINEE:** Did the standard of living increase despite the destruction of the USSR by the war?

**MORENO:** No. But that's the NEP. After the NEP and until 1928 under Stalin himself, the living standards of the working class continues to grow consistently.

**TRAINEE:** The democratic plan is going towards the abolition of salary by way of abundance.

**MORENO:** That's right. And of the world revolution, which is the most important; because the problem is political, not economic. Hence, it's very interesting what Trotsky says about the economic thinking of Preobrazhensky. Trotsky never approved it even though it was so interesting. I suspect because it was only economic. There's no way out if the world revolution doesn't develop politically. There's no Trotsky or Lenin able to hold back five or 10 years in a process that doesn't develop. Or on economic [grounds] and because closing in originates increasingly large expenditures. You have to strengthen the bourgeois apparatus, to control. It's the phenomenon of Trotsky and Lenin. At first they didn't think of having an army, but essentially with the militia. The army helped. But civil war and the aggression by 21 countries could not be left in the hands of the militia. They had to make the army, the officers, and so on. It's proven that it was Trotsky who started the whole process, which was justified: he had no choice but to oppose to the bourgeois armies another structure very similar to the bourgeois army.

**TRAINEE:** The bureaucratically planned and national economy will be transformed into a ruinous phenomenon.

**MORENO:** It already is. Imperialism drives them crazy. For example they have to produce armaments in incredible numbers.

**TRAINEE:** And there's the inefficient apparatus...

**MORENO:** ... of the bureaucracy itself, which is very costly and they increasingly have to do this. It's about developing a plan to have more and more privileges and not a plan done democratically.

They are, then, **two** political elements of decisive influence [in] economics, which for us come first: plan democratically prepared and democratically adjusted by the mass movement— which will also go wrong some years, but they will learn—; and the development of the world revolution. There's no economic solution. With only one [of these elements] it isn't [enough]. If there's development of the world revolution but without revolutionary dictatorships [we go towards national states mindful of their privileges. Because each bureaucracy resembles in this regard the national bourgeoisies: they want their national borders because they have their national privileges. If it happens to become directly dependant on the USSR or on another nation, the larger swallows the smaller. There must be, then, these two conditions. If there's this democracy, it will want to start making federations.

Do you know what the unity of China and the USSR would mean? It would be amazing. Not having made it is one of the greatest infamies committed against humanity by the two bureaucracies. Because Siberia is the most terrible problem, or one of the most terrible, that the USSR has in the development of the productive forces. It's an amazing continent. It offers many more economic prospects than the European part of the USSR. It has oil, gas, minerals of all kinds, gold. It's an infinite world. This is where they're taking big cities, they try.

And the poor Chinese, who are next door, are treading each other.

There was a great friend of ours; he was the theoretician of the first guerrilla in Argentina, the Uturuncos,<sup>1</sup> named Guillen. He was a Spanish journalist, anarchist, who became a guerrilla and was a close friend of Che Guevara. He gave us a few courses on guerrilla and explained to us that we could do an extraordinary guerrilla in Tucuman, a province of ours that has mountains full of ice and the other side nothing, emptiness. And he used to say:

“We have to apply the line of China: we attack the enemy and retreat, and we attack the enemy and retreat, and we make them mad and defeat them.”

“And retreat to where?”

“The mountains; and when they attack us a lot we go to the other side, where there's nothing of nothing, it's all empty.”

We told him, “But in China to retreat was: We go where there's a million and retreat another bit to where there are two million, we retreat another little to where there are three million, and we continue retreating and at the end we find 25 million. And in Tucuman what do we do? Do we study Penguin?”

And he said to us, “I had not thought of that detail.”

In China it's like this. China has a billion people down from Siberia. Siberia is unoccupied. And the Chinese are interested in going to colonise. There's a big border problem that has to do with this. By not being united and by not democratically planning, this great victory isn't achieved. I think that, both of them united, in 10, 20 or 30 years would be a power as large as or larger than the United States. If they did that, this single measure to federate, to allow the Chinese to colonise, without such rivalry... And today they're very careful of each other, because the USSR knows that if the Chinese bureaucracy occupies Siberia, it has a terrible danger, because perhaps, one of these days, they exchange bullets between themselves, they go to a war.

Then the problem is two-pronged political, not economic. Politics dominates economics in the transitional stage. It is: democracy in planning, in the conduct of the state; and the development of the world revolution. Only the development of world revolution causes that we don't have to use as much armament or anything of the sort.

**TRAINEE:** Is the revolutionary party needed for Solidarity to take power and for later, for the transition?

**MORENO:** It's necessary historically. But it isn't ruled out that in reality a revolution of February occur even without the revolutionary party. And a revolutionary party has to be made, even if it's a small group of propaganda, putting forth this policy, saying it's necessary to do this. If you formulate like this: if we have no revolutionary party we don't call Solidarity to take power, we're making them a counter-revolutionary organisation. But in general the revolutionary party is necessary.

<sup>1</sup> **Uturuncos** were the first Argentine guerrilla group, influenced by Castro-Guevarism. Around the end of 1959 a small group tried to take over the police station in a town in Santiago del Estero Province, and they were quickly smashed. They had their inspiration from John William Cook and were aiming to achieve the return of Peron, exiled in Madrid since being overcast in 1955.

TRAINEE: What happens if Solidarity takes power and there's no revolutionary party?

MORENO: Sooner or later it degenerates. That's inevitable. Historically, if there's no revolutionary party everything sinks.

TRAINEE: Did the comrades who wrote the article on Poland in *[International] Courier #2* capitulate to Lambert in relation to Solidarity? Why did that happen?

MORENO: Ultimately, because they didn't understand us well. That is a demonstration we didn't work in faction; because that article caused a terrible mess. The Chilean, the Central American comrades called saying: It's an outrage. They say that Lambert rushed them. It's difficult to work in a team with very skilled people and notice whether opportunism is done or not done. And besides I hadn't written theoretical articles. The penalty was they didn't even consult us.

TRAINEE: In the Spanish revolution, doesn't Trotsky play into the hands of "democratic imperialism"?

MORENO: Always, in every revolution, when raising all or nothing it weakens. That is inevitable, it's a general law. It causes dangers in relation to the previous more stable situation.

For example, when the working class becomes more independent, more difficult becomes the bourgeoisie. That is a law. If the working class becomes increasingly independent, increasingly fights; all bourgeois sectors become increasingly counter-revolutionary.

TRAINEE: In your formulation it's not said this way.

MORENO: That may be. But the idea it meant is this. For example, the Bolsheviks attacked Kerensky so hard that this somewhat weakened Kerensky, or forced Kerensky to go to Kornilov. If they had not made such a fuss, maybe Kerensky wouldn't have supported that Kornilov give a coup. That is, it causes this weakness within quotation marks. If the Argentine working class had not made such a tremendous strike to Isabel Peron, it's very possible that there wouldn't have been a triumphant *coup d'état*.

TRAINEE: The article in *[International] Courier #2* states that the anti-bureaucratic revolution can endanger the socialist achievements.

MORENO: Back with *[International] Courier #2*! In my article I say just the opposite, directly opposite. I say that there's absolutely no danger that a revolutionary anti-bureaucratic process originate a return to the bourgeoisie, although there may be a bourgeois leadership.

TRAINEE: Is Baluka Trotskyist despite his position on the problem of power to Solidarity and the party?

MORENO: Yes, he is Trotskyist. Baluka doesn't discuss at that level. I don't think he knows the discussion. It may be so, but I don't believe it would worry him much. Baluka is a union leader. He's an extraordinary personality. Just as the comrade said, he's a historic leader of the Polish proletariat. He's a colossal gain of us. But let's not deceive ourselves by believing he has Alberto's concerns or yours or of any of the comrades who are here. **He's very intelligent**, but it's not his passion this problem or how the party is built. Essentially he remains a trade unionist, a great fighter. When he left Poland behind, the OCI and Lambert, through great work, politicised him. He managed a fairly good level. He's a person of great personality. He thinks for himself. But I don't think this is his rope. I never saw him absolutely discuss any of this, but it may be so.

With this I want to tell you he isn't essentially a political leader. He's a great comrade but he's no guarantee we can make a solid, strong group, capable of rising to make a transitional program for Poland, and so on. He could be our great figure if there were such a group. [Baluka is under pressure from the OCI but his evolution also] depends on the Polish phenomenon. I believe he's very sensitive to his class.

TRAINEE: Doesn't the international dimension determine the outcome of the national revolutions? Wouldn't the Spanish revolution have failed anyway, although we had taken power, given the global situation of triumph of the counter-revolution?

MORENO: This line of reasoning on whether the Spanish revolution inevitably failed, had we taken power or not is dangerous. It's very dangerous because it has been systematically used by opportunism. They used it in a big way with respect to the Russian revolution.

We're part of the class struggle. We're scientists in the service of the class struggle. There's a scientific level we can't cross because then, instead of class fighters, we become counter-revolutionaries.

Suppose I'm the manager of a Paraguayan and white boxer who's going to fight for the world championship. And, on the way to the fight, I tell him: Look, never has a Paraguayan won the world championship and, according to mathematical statistics, you can't win today, although there's a chance

in a million. But also the greatest athletes and boxers in the world are black; and in Paraguay there are blacks but you're white. Conclusion: no Paraguayan wins, and very few whites win. In addition you're left-handed, and left-handers... When the guy gets there he has already lost before climbing into the ring.

So I'm not a scientific manager. I'm a scientific cretin and the only thing I do is to demoralise. I demoralise with science, with correct things: no Paraguayan, to my knowledge, has won a world championship. All I say is true, but it's in the service of the other boxer shredding my guy. And a situation like this produces the joke that I like to tell so much: in the fifth round, the poor Paraguayan boxer is swollen, wholly destroyed, with a black eye, split-mouth, two broken ribs, and then he also rises to science, he becomes scientific as the manager and tells him: Now I know my opponent's tactics. And the scientific manager asks: Yes? What is it? And our Paraguayan boxer replies: he wants to kill me! Two scientists: the manager and boxer.

The Marxist law is: the result of the fight is given by the fight. What we have to say is whether or not there's a fight. Because it can change. It's the new and nobody can foresee how the new will be because it's a **combination** of circumstances not given and that's why it's new. Perhaps we won the Spanish revolution and the world war was faster, broke right away, or vice versa. Because if the Spanish revolution triumphed in 1937 it was a new phenomenon. It was the second victorious workers' revolution in the hands of the working class. What would happen? Maybe all joined, England with Germany and Italy and even the USSR, because they could not afford that, and invaded Spain directly, and it was a disaster that even accelerated the defeat. What do I know! But we don't stop fighting on account of that, because that's the argument for not giving the fight.

Now let's look at the international dimension. I believe there's a change. In Poland we can't use that either. There were international conditions for the triumph. Today, historically, we can do the analysis.

Hegel said that wisdom comes at night, like the owl of Minerva.<sup>1</sup> This famous metaphor of Hegel is very nice. When things have happened, when the day and the tasks have ended, it's time where we see what happened during the day, and there we do science.

For us it's the same. One issue is when we go to fight, and we go to fight with everything. And another thing is when the fight has already developed and we grab the microphone and discuss the fight. They're two different attitudes. Here it's the cold time of science, without any artistic element, of fighting, and of what is what we have to do. The time of analysis has come.

To me Alberto's analysis that East Germany, Hungary and Czechoslovakia took place in a bad international context is correct. He's right about Poland [in 1956], but in the period of Khrushchev's readjustment the international context was favourable. Politically and socially it was a very favourable moment because Poland and Hungary were closely linked and it was a similar process and at the same time. Imperialism trembled and so didn't know where to attack. But the unfavourable international context was that the economies of all workers' countries also had a boom; there was still room for the economy to develop, as it developed.

**TRAINEE:** That's how Gomulka<sup>2</sup> was possible.

**MORENO:** Exactly. At first he made concessions, unlike the monstrosity he was before. Because Poland also had another side: it was the nation most screwed directly by the Russians. Stalin sent them to concentration camps and burst Rokossovsky,<sup>3</sup> the great Polish general, everywhere. And this great villain is an incomprehensible psychological case: although Stalin pursued him to a fault, he remained an incredible Stalinist. As he was a great military, Stalin was forced to take him out of Siberia and around 1940 or 1941 took him to fight. And then it was Rokossovsky who dominated. He made there a ghetto, a neighbourhood of Russians who burst the whole of Poland and the workers and peasantry.

1 Hegel wrote: "The owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of the dusk". Minerva is the Roman name of the Greek Athena, goddess of wisdom and philosophy, and associated with the owl. Because of such association, the owl — often referred to as the "owl of Minerva" — has been used as a symbol of knowledge, wisdom, perspicacity and erudition throughout the Western world.

2 **Władysław Gomułka** (1905–1982) was a Polish communist activist and politician. He was the de facto leader of post-war Poland until 1948, and again from 1956 to 1970.

3 **Konstantin Konstantinovich Rokossovsky** (1896–1968) was a Soviet officer of Polish and Belarusian origin who became a Marshal of the Soviet Union, a Marshal of Poland and served as Poland's Defence Minister. He was among the most prominent Red Army commanders of World War II, especially renowned for his planning and executing of the offensive against the Nazis which ended with the occupation of Berlin in May 1945 and Hitler's defeat.

And the whole of Poland came out to fight: that was Gomulka's movement. It was as big as Solidarity, but spontaneous, unorganised. Gomulka becomes a train. It's a beautiful documentary to watch the bureaucracy, because the guy was a good bureaucrat, an incredible bureaucrat, who had been persecuted by Stalin.

Rokossowski was Defence Minister. And he lived in a especial neighbourhood, which seems to be a feature of the Russian bureaucracy, because I read that in Nicaragua they do the same and also in Havana: they fence a neighbourhood and becomes the Russians' neighbourhood.

But the whole of Poland rose against the neighbourhood and against the Defence Ministry that he headed. And he was cast away. Stalinism had to take him out.

But there was this economic outlook. The economic outlook of Hungary itself was later favourable.

I believe that now in the international dimension there are elements that are more unfavourable. But the overall historical context is terrible for the bureaucracy, because I think the entire bureaucracy is in crisis. Unfortunately the strongest still remains that of the USSR. I see the others undone. I think China is a permanent Poland. It's a tooth and nail war between these two factions, and the only methodical thing is that every five years one wins busting the other, and later the others win. It's a permanent crisis. It lives in a boiling state. The bureaucracy hasn't been able to **consolidate** in China. It's a hellish process.

I think everywhere there's a similar process. We're seeing some incredible facts. I saw in Paris, the official newspaper of the CP, I think of Gdansk, whose big headline was: Baluka arrived. Can you imagine what that's like?

What happened in Czechoslovakia with two OCI comrades indicates the weakness of the bureaucracy. Two Trotskyists come by car. Under the seat they find of everything: brochures and books against the bureaucracy. And they say:

"I don't know, someone gave it to me along the way, there are bad people who deceive you and ask you to take packages to Czechoslovakia, and I'm silly and I usually bring every package they ask me to."

"And why do you put it under the seat if it's silly and you take anything?"

"Well, sometimes one happens to bring things under the seat."

"And why do you bring a mimeograph if you're coming as a tourist for a fortnight?"

"Because I like to develop culture."

That was just about the defence they made. Yet the bureaucracy didn't hit them and was forced to give freedom to guys who they knew were of the OCI.

It's a crisis situation. Baluka enters a Stalinist workers' state and they have to let him in and have to report on it with big headlines! And they have had to release in 15 days two common militant comrades in Czechoslovakia, which is one of the most screwed regimes there's!

For me the economic crisis, the political crisis of the bureaucracy, the global context, it's amazing.

**TRAINEE:** And after Jaruzelski's coup they could not execute.

**MORENO:** Undoubtedly. They had to take prisoners, but to give explanations and the amount. They had to make those bureaucratic plays of words. The Polish ambassador in Colombia horribly treated a journalist who asked him whether it was true there were 5000 prisoners and he said: "That is false, we have no political prisoners". "But the government has said they have 5000," insisted the journalist. And the ambassador says, "You see how you misrepresent, there are 5000 detainees".

As in the famous case of Yankee imperialism when it bombed Cambodia during the Vietnam War and the journalists were saying: You bombed again. "How bomb! Who bombed? It's logistical support". They're things of the politics of this era in which even words are alienated. They say the same but in other words that say the opposite.

I think that's the international dimension that exists here: chronic crisis of the regimes. Before, however, Alberto is right. But this reason doesn't justify why the battle wasn't given. Because every fight, when the time comes to give it, it must be given. It's like childbirth: the child may go well or badly, but when it comes to nine months it's delivery. There's no alternative. There's no half delivery, there's whole delivery. When the moment of the fight comes, it's full fight, for everything. He's right, but as long as we adjust ourselves to this law.

**TRAINEE:** So you have to choose between the FI-IC and the IWL?

**MORENO:** It's also childbirth, to somewhere. §

# Bibliography

## Texts under discussion in the cadres school

### About Poland:

- Draft resolution of the International Executive Committee of the FI-IC on Poland.
- Complement to the draft resolution (Nahuel Moreno).

Published in: *International Correspondence* No. 7, year I, April 1981

*International Panorama* No. 17, Year V, August 1981.

- “Thus the FI-IC capitulated” (IEC resolution, 8 August 1981).
- “Dividing lines on the Polish revolution and counter-revolution.”

Published in: *International Courier* (Colombia) No. 2, Year I, January 1982.

- “Some thoughts on the Polish political revolution” (Nahuel Moreno).

Published in: *International Courier* (Colombia) No. 4, Year I, in March 1982.

Republished in: *International Courier* No. 39, year VI, in January 1989.

### On the Popular Front in France:

- “The Mitterrand government, its prospects and our policy” (Miguel Capa).
- “First response to Comrade Capa” (Francois Forge).

Published in *International Correspondence* No. 13, year II, October 1981.

- Letter of Nahuel Moreno to the Central Committee of the Spanish Internationalist Socialist Workers Party, 13 October 1981.

Published in: *International Panorama* No. 18, Year V, December 1981.

- “The Betrayal of the OCI (U)”.

Published in: *International Panorama* No. 19, year VI, January 1982.

- “The centre of revisionism is the USec” (Nahuel Moreno).
- Thesis on opportunism and Trotskyism vs. the popular front governments.
- “Workers front: the origin of a tactic” (Nahuel Moreno).
- “Bonapartism sui generis and popular frontism” (Nahuel Moreno).

Published in: *International Courier* (Colombia) No. 3, Year I, February 1982.

*International Panorama* No. 20, year VI, in May 1982.

### Articles on the Tribunal established to judge Ricardo Napurí

*International Courier* (Colombia) No. 3, Year I, February 1982.

*International Courier* (Colombia) No. 4, year I, in March 1982.

*International Panorama* No. 20, year VI, in May 1982.

*International Courier* (Colombia) No. 7, year I, in June 1982.