



**Nahuel Moreno**

**The struggle has  
just begun**

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## The struggle has just begun

Taken from La Verdad Editions, PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party), September 1966

**English translation:** Patricia Parola & Daniel Iglesias

**Editor Notes:** Daniel Iglesias

**Cover and interior design:** Daniel Iglesias

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Buenos Aires, 2020

[cehus2014@gmail.com](mailto:cehus2014@gmail.com)



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# Foreword

## Mercedes Petit<sup>1</sup>

In June 1966, a military coup led by General Juan Carlos Onganía, the head of the “Blue” or “legalistic” sector of the Army, prematurely ended the Radical government of “the turtle”, as the president Umberto Illia was popularly called. He had won the elections and assumed the presidency in 1963, with 25 per cent of the votes. Peronism — still banned — had raised a ticket of Conservatives and Intransigents (Solano Lima–Silvestre Begnis), which was emerging as the winner. It was vetoed shortly before the elections. Peronism and its allies called for a blank vote. (See *Argentina, a country in crisis* at [www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org).)

The greatest concern of the most important sectors of the bourgeoisie and the armed forces continued to be that the workers would not resume a new period of widespread rise. Illia had played with fire; he encouraged the division of Peronism, to advance toward its institutionalisation without unbalancing the bourgeois regime and betting that the Radicals would win the elections again in 1967. Too dangerous lucubration, which cost him his presidency.

The Radicals lamented the dismissal in considerable solitude. From Madrid, Peron called the coup a “sympathetic movement” and asked that “God enlighten Onganía and his boys,” as published in the magazine *Primera Plana* on 30 June 1966. The leaders of the CGT spoke of the “great responsibility” of the military, and of “hope”. Nationalist or “leftist” sectors of Peronism stirred up expectations that Onganía would be a “second Peron”. At the other extreme, the CP spoke of a “fascist coup”.

The PRT rejected the Peronists’ capitulation to the coup, as well as the definition of fascism, although the new dictatorship inaugurated its cycle with a ban on political activities and a state of siege. On 29 July, the famous “Night of the long truncheons” took place, when the Federal Police broke into the Peru St and Alsina St building of the Faculty of Natural Sciences, beat up teaching staff and students and made them prisoner.

Nahuel Moreno wrote a work shortly afterwards, reflecting the discussions on the new situation within the leadership of the PRT, which was approved and published as a pamphlet in September 1966. It was entitled *The Struggle Has Only Just Begun*. Editorial *El Socialista* published for the first

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1 Mercedes Petit is a Trotskyist militant, a journalist, and a researcher. In the 1960s, she joined the current headed by Nahuel Moreno ([www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org)), with whom she collaborated in theoretical elaboration and propaganda tasks. After the 1976 military coup, they shared exile in Colombia. Petit wrote *Elementary Political Concepts* and *Our Experience with Lambertism* in 1986 together with Nahuel Moreno (both available in [www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org)); *Notes for a History of Trotskyism* (2005) and *Working Women and Marxism* (2009, with Carmen Carrasco). She writes in *El Socialista* ([www.izquierdasocialista.org.ar](http://www.izquierdasocialista.org.ar)) and in *International Correspondence* ([www.uit-ci.org.ar](http://www.uit-ci.org.ar)).

time in Spanish in 2012 in *From Illia to Ongania* together with two other works by Nahuel Moreno —aforementioned *Argentina, a country in crisis* and *Nahuel Moreno's report and a debate with Roberto Santucho*, both available at [www.nahuelmoreno.org](http://www.nahuelmoreno.org). This is the first time it has been available to English language readers.

November 2020

# The struggle has just begun

How we need to prepare to resist and fight the military government

September 1966

## Introduction

The workers of Mataderos, who just a few weeks into the new government and with well-aimed irony, defined it as “an armoured turtle”, were making more than a good joke. With that phrase they were able to specify better than with many pages, the character of Onganía<sup>1</sup> new regime: for the workers, it is even worse than Illia’s<sup>2</sup> government since to its condition of anti-worker and pro-capitalist, it adds the armoured divisions.

The students did not have time to weave such a happy phrase since they faced their fierce offensive in the lecture rooms and the streets.

As a revolutionary party, we are forced to deepen the analysis and perspectives, so the workers’ and students’ vanguard know what to expect since their struggle has just begun.

For this, we must start by answering the following questions: Does the new government initiate a new stage of national history? Or is it a mere continuation of the previous one? And if so, is it a new political regime?

Before answering them, we must clarify the meaning of the words stage and regime. A stage is any historical change in the relations between imperialism and the nation, or between classes within the country itself. A regime is the relations of the classes regarding the government. With every new stage, a new regime emerges but the opposite is not true. One example: the Radical governments from 1916 to 1930 changed the regime but not the stage of a British dependency.

Our country, for example, has lived through four stages and six different regimes since the end of the 19th century.

## The stages

- 1880–1930, economic dependence on British imperialism.
- 1930–1943, British semi-colony (the famous “infamous decade”).
- 1943–1955, relative independence from imperialism.

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1 **Juan Carlos Onganía** (1914 –1995) was de facto President of Argentina from 29 June 1966 to 8 June 1970. He rose to power as military dictator after toppling the president Arturo Illia in a *coup d’état* self-named “Argentine Revolution”. [Editor]

2 **Arturo Umberto Illia** (1900–1983) was an Argentine physician and politician, who was President of Argentina for the Radical Civic Union (UCR) from October 1963 to June 1966. He was deposed by a *coup d’état* of the self-named Argentine Revolution and replaced by General Juan Carlos Onganía. [Editor]

- 1955 to date (September 1966), unchanged with the new government, political-economic semi-colony of US imperialism

## The regimes

Between 1880 and 1916, we had an oligarchic regime because power was controlled by the most powerful sectors of the bourgeoisie allied to British imperialism and they did not allow the vote.

From 1916 to 1930, a regime of the middle bourgeoisie supported by the middle class and allied to British imperialism, in which there was freedom of speech, of parties, of organisation, and elections.

From 1930 to 1943, the semi-colonial stage is confused with the oligarchic regime of fraudulent democratic rights, of brutal repression to the workers and the popular movement.

From 1943 to 1955 the same thing happened: the stage of relative independence was confused with the Peronist regime, in which the workers' movement achieved the greatest social, economic and organisational conquests (powerful industrial unions, a single trade union centre and, fundamentally, the internal commissions and delegates committees in the factories).

From 1955 until the fall of Illia in June 1966, we have the regime of the "Libertadura",<sup>3</sup> with curtailed democratic rights to achieve the support of the middle class and better to divide and defeat the workers' movement and the country in the face of American colonisation, combined with massive repression when the workers opposed it.

Finally, we have the new regime, which does not change at all the character of the US semi-colony stage but changes the relations with the middle and working classes. Its profound difference with the previous one lies precisely there, in its political character as a dictatorial regime, supported directly by the armed forces, the Church and the large monopolies. It does not need, therefore, a political mechanism of popular support in the middle and working classes. The lack of this need is what distinguishes it from previous governments; there will be no bourgeois democratic game of support in the two great popular classes. This type of government has been called Bonapartist by Marxism.

## Why did Illia fall?

The Liberating Revolution opened up in the country a stage, of US semi-colonisation and a political regime, the one of "Libertadura", which was characterised by the following:

1. Bourgeoisie governments, with the support of the petty bourgeoisie, to crush and displace the workers' movement from the preponderant role it had under Peronism.
2. The desire of the middle class to inaugurate a democratic regime in opposition to Peronist totalitarianism.
3. Incarnate struggle of the different bourgeois sectors, mainly of the rural bourgeoisie and the new bourgeoisie (industrial, middle or high, and "quota"<sup>4</sup>) in the government dispute to make the other sector and the workers' movement bear the weight of the crisis.

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3 A play on words by the author, mixing a reference to the so-called "Liberating Revolution", that is, the coup that overthrew Peron in September 1955, and the Spanish word "dictadura" (dictatorship). [Editor]

4 The "quota bourgeoisie" is the sector that was enriched by the allocation of import quotas for inputs and raw materials (such as steel) granted by the government at subsidised prices, and their subsequent resale in the market at much higher prices. [Editor]



These three elements, of which the first is the decisive one, combine differently in each of the periods.<sup>5</sup> However, they all have something in common, which makes it possible to say they are part of the same regime: a curtailed bourgeois representative democracy, without possibilities for Peronism and the organised workers' movement, combined with repression against the workers as soon as they insinuated a resistance.

## 18 March 1962 elections: the influence of the Cuban Revolution

The working class offered fierce resistance to the oligarchy and the bourgeoisie. Since 1955, it forced the different regimes to alternate between concessions and repression. Because when they made concessions, for example at the beginning of the Frondizi<sup>6</sup> government, they counted on the bureaucratic domination of the workers' movement, as a result of the failure of the 1956 strike, would have their backs. This plan collapsed because of the rise in 1957 which forced Frondizi himself to repress violently.

From 1959 the retreat began. Yet a new fact makes this situation to take on contradictory characteristics: the Cuban revolution victory initiates the true Latin American revolution. In fact, the retreat is combined with the swing to the left of important sectors of the petty bourgeoisie that influence the vanguard and the working class. The first symptoms of a new uprising begin to appear.

It is in this framework that we must see the electoral victory of Andres Framini<sup>7</sup> in March 1962: it means the victory of the Peronist workers' movement, organised in unions, joined to Castroism.

The army was forced into a coup to prevent the rise to power, in the province of Buenos Aires, of the representative of the Peronist trade union movement. The crisis of the Argentinian bourgeois regime was never so acute, except in the years 1955 and 1959. Although they had a profound difference. The latter was at the level of the class struggle; that of 1962 was essentially electoral, superstructural.

## Blues and Reds

The military coup in 1962 that brought down Frondizi created a latent civil war situation among the different sectors of the bourgeoisie and the army. It was the famous battle between Blues and Reds.

The Reds wanted a fascist type solution: repression of the workers' movement and the left with civil war methods, wiping out the bourgeois-democratic experience.

The Blues insisted on the need to continue with representative democracy which would allow a united front of the bourgeoisie to stifle and divert the workers' movement on the one hand, and, on the other, to structure the armed forces solidly, as the only true support to a bourgeois regime. The Reds had the opposition of the middle class, of most of the new bourgeoisie and even of sectors of the old bourgeoisie united for fear the fascist methods would cause an even stronger resistance in the workers' movement.

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5 Under Lonardi the government of all bourgeois sectors is attempted; under Aramburu the oligarchic sectors and the rural bourgeoisie gain pre-eminence; under Frondizi the industrial and crony bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie; under Frigerio and Alsogaray the big industrial or national imperialist companies; under Illia the rural bourgeoisie and sectors of the petty bourgeoisie. **NM**

6 **Arturo Frondizi** (1908–1995) was an Argentinian lawyer and politician elected President of Argentina between 1 May 1958, and 29 March 1962, for the Intransigent Radical Civic Union (a splinter group from the Radical Civic Union). He was overthrown by a military coup d'état. Under his program of "Developmentalism", he encouraged increased foreign investment.

7 **Andres Framini** (1914–2001), was an Argentine union leader and politician. In 1962 he was elected governor of the province of Buenos Aires but the result was not recognised by the Government of President Arturo Frondizi, who in turn was overthrown by a military coup a few days later. He was secretary-general of the Textile Workers Association (AOT) between 1951-1955 and 1959-1968. On two occasions, 1955 and 1961-1963, he joined the executive leadership of the General Confederation of Labour (CGT). [Editor]

Fear caused, on the one hand, the 1962 military coup; on the other, preventing it from becoming a semi-fascist regime. This is why the Blues, those who revealed themselves as the most lucid sector of the Argentinian bourgeoisie, won. After this, the 1963 elections, held in July, are won by the UCRP (Popular Radical Civic Union).

## The Blues empower their enemies, the Radicals

The Blues, who represented the new bourgeois structure of the country, by leaving power to the rural bourgeoisie, were in immediate contradiction to their narrower interests. In other words, the intelligent defence of the historical interests of the national bourgeoisie, at that time, is in contradiction with the strict and immediate defence of the very sectors they represent.

This is the meaning of the Blues veto to Vicente Solano Lima's candidacy, supported by Peron and the workers' movement, even though the candidate was a Blue.

For this reason, we believed that with the new Illia government a period of bourgeois legality of two or three years was opening. The Blue army planned to develop bourgeois legality and democracy as a means to crush or definitely divert any possibility of a political uprising of the workers' movement, even if this uprising was sheltered under a bourgeois formula and leadership. Parallel to this, to use this same legality to unify and discipline the armed forces as the true mainstay of the bourgeois order.

We will insist so we are understood: the democratic rights inaugurated with Illia are not a gift from the Blue bourgeoisie but an anti-worker tactic of the Blue armed forces, a diversionary manoeuvre to better achieve two bourgeois objectives: to cut off all possibility of a new political union rise in the workers' movement and to achieve the unity of the armed forces as a true guarantee of the bourgeois order. Ultimately, this concession and diversionary manoeuvre were brought about by fear of the workers' movement.

## Illia's government

The People's Radicals took office in July 1963 together with the new rise in the workers' movement, due to the victory of 18 March, with the armed forces in total anarchy, which had ended in the start of the civil war and the Blue victory.

During Illia's government, two phenomena would change radically this situation: the workers' movement retreats until it divides into several sectors and the CGT is indeed destroyed; the armed forces are disciplined, unified and strengthened as a guarantee of the bourgeois order. These two changes will explain Illia's fall.

The government of the People's Radicals, in its quest to stay in power as the government of the rural bourgeoisie and incapable of understanding the two processes that were taking place inside the workers' movement and the armed forces, delineated a suicidal policy. On the one hand, they promoted the workers' movement division and let the Blue unity and discipline of the armed forces to consolidate. On the other, they denied representation in the government to the new national bourgeoisie sectors: the industrial sectors and the large monopolies of semi-heavy industry, adopting an electoral tactic, the option which decreased any possibility of these sectors entering the government.

This tactic was the following: to allow legality to Peronism so the industrial and monopolist bourgeoisie would have to choose between the national party of the livestock bourgeoisie or Peronism with the possibility it would cause a new rise of the unionised workers' movement.

The Radical government did not understand either that indeed its government was two-headed, political-military, representative of the whole Argentinian bourgeoisie. The political-economic leadership was in hands of the cattle-raising bourgeoisie, with Illia; the military leadership was in hands of the new bourgeois sectors, with Onganía.

## The fall

Faced with the option, the Blue military had no choice but to throw out Old Illia, a representative of the old Argentinian bourgeoisie, with tear gas. The People's Radical government fell for the same substantive reasons it rose. The democratic regime was a concession and a manoeuvre against the workers' movement; the electoral option of the Illia government could transform it into the possibility of victory for the latter. Given the retreat of the union movement and the betrayal of the leaderships, unable to use the democratic possibility opened up by the Illia government and to defend it as a first political step to initiate a new rise, unifying the CGT and creating an independent political movement of the working class, the victory of the coup was inevitable. This policy of the workers' leadership is the real cause of this historic defeat.

## The Illia government falls for the following reasons:

First and foremost, because with the retreat of the workers' movement, the bourgeoisie and its most lucid sector — the Blue wing of the army — no longer believes representative democracy is convenient or necessary to stifle and divert the workers' struggles.

Second, because the government of the rural bourgeoisie wanted to force the whole bourgeoisie, through the electoral option, to follow the rules of the bourgeois-democratic game, supporting Radicalism in the elections, if it wanted to close the way to Peronism and the possible new rise of the workers' movement in the elections.

Third, because the Illia government, being a representative of the rural bourgeoisie, refused to reflect within it the new sectors of the Argentinian bourgeoisie, the big consortium of the semi-heavy industry. It was stubbornly determined to remain a living contradiction between the current structure of the Argentinian bourgeoisie and its government superstructure.

Apparently, the Blue team has been inconsistent with its 1962 programme of implementing representative democracy. If we observe the substantive reasons, we will see that this is not the case. The Blues wanted representative democracy to prevent the predominance and possible rise of the workers' movement. If the representative democratic regime, instead of eradicating this perspective, reopened it, they have been consistent in their role as defenders of the bourgeoisie, by eliminating it.

Thus, a classical Bonapartist government arises, directly supported by the armed forces and the Church to: first, prevent any future rise of the workers' movement based on the extermination of representative democracy and the elections; second, solve the contradiction between the current bourgeois structure of the country, with the preponderance of the semi-heavy and industrial bourgeoisie, and the government, making it reflect the general interests of the strongest sectors of the bourgeoisie.

## Ongania: Franco, Nasser or de Gaulle?

A well-known political magazine, a few days after the 29 June *coup d'état*, had a big headline on its cover: "Ongania: Nasser"; the Communist Party believed at the time that the new government was fascist, something similar to Franco. We believe he resembles De Gaulle much more than the other models.

By the way we set out the facts, it would seem we are satisfied with the mere assertion of something. We don't seem to have founded our prognoses. We will do it by a path that, although it seems long, it is necessary. The classical form of the bourgeoisie government has been the representative democracy. By this means, the different sectors of the bourgeoisie alternate or contend the dominion of the government following certain democratic ground rules that guaranteed the united front of the whole bourgeoisie against the exploited and with the electoral support of the

latter. This democratic regime always needs the support of the popular classes to the politics of the different bourgeois sectors. This is the Achilles' heel of bourgeois democracy in certain historical moments when the working class uses those rights to undermine the bourgeois system.

But representative democracy is not the only political regime the bourgeoisie has to enforce its domination. Serious class contradictions between the exploited and the exploiters, and also between different sectors of the latter, have led to the emergence of government systems other than representative democracy: for example, one that relies directly on the armed forces, in a regime of power that plays the role of arbiter between antagonistic sectors. We, revolutionary socialists, have called these governments Bonapartism.

These are the product, in each case, of different contradictions that will condition their various forms.

“Classical” Bonapartism, is the one that originates as a consequence of the retreat or weakness of the class struggle and acts as an arbiter between the different exploiting sectors.

In this century of great social contradictions, various types of Bonapartism have originated, which have been characterised by acting as arbiters between the capitalist and working classes.

In developing countries, “*sui generis*” Bonapartism emerges as the arbiter between the working masses and imperialism. In these countries, the bourgeoisie does not play an important role, in opposition to the proletariat, on which the government has to rely to confront the dominant imperialism.

Let's take a closer look at each one separately.

“Classical” Bonapartism was studied and defined by Marx and Engels. Engels, in a letter to Marx, told him on 13 April 1866, a hundred years ago:

“So, Bismarck has executed his *suffrage universel coup*, even though without his Lassalle. It would appear that, after some show of reluctance, the German bourgeois will go along with it, for Bonapartism really is the true religion of the modern bourgeoisie. It is becoming increasingly clear to me that the bourgeoisie does not possess the qualities required to rule directly itself, and that therefore, unless there is an oligarchy as here in England capable of taking over, for good pay, the management of state and society in the interest of the bourgeoisie, a Bonapartist semi-dictatorship is the normal form; it promotes the great material interests of the bourgeoisie even against the bourgeoisie, but allows it no share in the government itself. Conversely, this dictatorship itself is, in turn, compelled unwillingly to adopt these material interests of the bourgeoisie.”<sup>8</sup>

## Other forms

We have the Bonapartist or Semi-Bonapartist regimes in the Kerensky style, which originated in the pre-revolutionary situation: the government is suspended between the classes at the moment when they conflict with each other. There is a *de facto* dual power. The only support for the government is the armed forces or some similar variant. The case of the first Paz Estenssoro government in Bolivia is clear on this point: it is not directly the government of one class; it is suspended between them. It is ultimately the government of the bourgeoisie, although the latter does not see it this way because of the role of arbiter it plays with the workers and the working class, who are indeed the owners of power.

A much more curious Bonapartism is that of the workers' states and especially the Stalinist one, which relies on the country's armed forces to play the role of arbiter between the counter-revolutionary capitalist and workers' revolutionary forces. It is the denial of the democracy of a workers' state.

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<sup>8</sup> “Letter of Engels to Marx”, 13 April 1866, *Marx & Engels Collected Works, Vol 42, Letters 1864–68*, p. 266, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 2010.

Stalinism accustomed the left movement to move by labels and slogans instead of analysis and that is how it managed to impose, mainly in the third period (1928–1932), the false definition of fascist to any totalitarian government (because it controls the life of the country in all spheres as there are no democratic rights) or agent of the big capitals. Nothing is falser. Fascism is the result of determined relations between classes. Its characteristic is the struggle against the workers' movement with civil war methods based on the lumpenproletariat and the desperate petty bourgeoisie. This does not mean it is not an agent of the big capitals, but this is its essential characteristic. Fascism, once it triumphs and succeeds in crushing the workers' movement, is transformed into a Bonapartist regime, of power, which acts as an arbiter between the different sectors of the bourgeoisie and even breaks with the middle class on many occasions or oscillates between it and the workers' movement, which is tightly controlled by the state. There is then a fascist Bonapartism based on the liquidation of the independent workers' movement by methods of civil war.

Sui generis "Bonapartism" was studied by Leon Trotsky. Among his papers, when he was killed, the following analysis was found:

"Inasmuch as the chief role in backward countries is not played by national but by foreign capitalism, the national bourgeoisie occupies, in the sense of its social position, a much more minor position than corresponds with the development of industry. Inasmuch as foreign capital does not import workers but proletarianises the native population, the national proletariat soon begins playing the most important role in the life of the country.

"In these conditions the national government, to the extent that it tries to show resistance to foreign capital, is compelled to a greater or lesser degree to lean on the proletariat. On the other hand, the governments of those backward countries which consider inescapable or more profitable for themselves to march shoulder to shoulder with foreign capital, destroy the labour organisations and institute a more or less totalitarian regime. Thus, the feebleness of the national bourgeoisie, the absence of traditions of municipal self-government, the pressure of foreign capitalism and the relatively rapid growth of the proletariat, cut the ground from under any kind of stable democratic regime.

"The governments of backward, i.e., colonial and semi-colonial countries, by and large assume a Bonapartist or semi-Bonapartist character; and differ from one another in this, that some try to orient in a democratic direction, seeking support among workers and peasants, while others install a form close to military-police dictatorship. This likewise determines the fate of the trade unions. They either stand under the special patronage of the state or they are subjected to cruel persecution. Patronage on the part of the state is dictated by two tasks which confront it. First, to draw the working class closer thus gaining a support for resistance against excessive pretensions on the part of imperialism; and, at the same time, to discipline the workers themselves by placing them under the control of a bureaucracy."<sup>9</sup>

## Examples

Today we have, with its specific characteristics, three regimes as examples of Bonapartism as defined by Marxism: De Gaulle, classical Bonapartism; Franco, Fascism; and Nasser, "sui generis" Bonapartism. De Gaulle is a government supported by the armed forces that play the role of mediator among the different bourgeois sectors. Franco appears as the government that crashed the Spanish workers' movement immersed in a social revolution through a civil war. Nasser emerged as the mediator between imperialism, British first, then, American, and the Egyptian masses.

Without going too far, in our own country, we have two examples of classical and sui generis Bonapartism. The military government of 4 June 1943 and the Peronist government. On 4 June, the army took to the streets and set up its government to impose the unity of the bourgeoisie that had been divided in the face of the US offensive. It was a government of the armed forces, which from

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<sup>9</sup> Leon Trotsky, "Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay", 1940, *Fourth International*, Vol.2 No.2, February 1941, pp.41-42. Reproduced in: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1940/xx/tu.htm>.



above put pressure on the various bourgeois sectors. US imperialism at that time continued to exert pressure with its offensive on the country and the government, forcing even the Peron-led wing of the government to rely on the workers' movement to resist the colonising offensive of imperialism. He could carry out this policy because of the fabulous profits made by the Argentinian bourgeoisie during the war and in the immediate post-war period.

## Ongania: "classic" Bonapartism

In our country, there are no possibilities of a structure or situation that would make possible a new Bonapartist "sui generis" government like Nasser or Peron. Every union activist should be clear about this. No sector of the bourgeoisie, nor the current bourgeois structure of the country, conflicts with its semi-colonial character. In other words, today there is no brutal offensive by US imperialism against capitalist Argentina. On the contrary, both the bourgeoisie and the Yankees are in agreement with the present situation. Here there are no feudal, slave-owning leftovers, as Nasser had or other Latin American governments had or have in their countries, to leave room for a timidly bourgeois policy of a popular character or one that can have support from popular sectors. The weight of the bourgeois structure in the country is decisive; our country is among those with the greatest capitalist development in the world if we exclude the most advanced ones. This situation makes the weight of the proletariat fundamental and any attempt to resist imperialism must immediately appeal to this giant that is the workers' movement. The bourgeoisie and its politicians are aware that such a measure poses socialist tasks. This situation, given the current semi-colonial structure of the country—accepted by the whole bourgeoisie—leaves no possible channel for deviation of the workers' and people's movement. In 1943, there was a conjunctural situation (colossal profits of the Argentinian bourgeoisie in the world market) that will not be repeated. There are neither margins nor bourgeois need for a Bonapartist "sui generis" regime.

Neither does the present regime emerge to crush the workers' movement with direct civil war methods since it did not endanger the exploiters, but to unite the whole bourgeoisie and achieve a great bourgeois development, which it has no chance to achieve because of the overall situation of the market and world capitalism and the crisis of the national economic structure. Hence, let us say that it is not Fascism. That is why for us, the current regime is much more like De Gaulle's. The coup ideologues themselves, even the blue-and-white fascists, recognise this character of the government by refusing to compare it to Franco.

It resembles De Gaulle even in its impotence since the latter's attempt to transform France into a great imperialist power is doomed to failure, as are Ongania's plans for our country.

## The new government

This government and the new regime being inaugurated do not act in a vacuum and our definition of classical Bonapartism does not exhaust its characteristics, since it is classical, but here and now, in 1966 Argentina, which means it has very precise characteristics that determine it.

First of all, it is the Bonapartism of a country with a relatively advanced capitalist development, a semi-colony of the American imperialism, which is enduring a chronic crisis of its economy since 1930 and which has to deal with the strongest and most solidly organised working class in Latin America. From the combination of these factors emerge the probable perspectives and characteristics of the current government:

- 1) Advanced capitalist development and the overcoming of the chronic crisis of stagnation, which they advocate, cannot be achieved, although they may take some steps in that direction since there is no margin within the world, regional or even domestic market to achieve this development. Imperialist domination will prevent it and all the progress they achieve will be at the cost of greater exploitation of the working class by the bourgeoisie associated with foreign capital. There cannot be

another line. This limited process of capitalist development and modernisation will be suffered not only by the proletariat but also by the petty bourgeoisie and the lower sectors of the bourgeoisie, which are not in a position to withstand the competition of the big monopoly capitals.

2) Regarding imperialism, Yankee in particular, this government will accept, reflecting the interests of the monopolist big bourgeoisie and oligarchy, the character of a junior partner and agent of the semi-colonisation but will demand a realignment that respects the needs and aspirations of this big bourgeoisie and allows for capitalist development.

Given the character of the large semi-heavy imperialist monopolies that control a fundamental sector of the current national economy (Kaiser, Fiat, etc.), which are marginal in relation to the large monopolies that control the world economy, and the traditional link of the oligarchic landowning sectors with the European imperialisms, friction may arise from these powerful groups against the plan of US imperialism and its large monopolies to create a single Latin American market, with a division of labour that eliminates the national semi-heavy industry. If this were to happen, there would be contradictions within the government and it could point to a wing that outlines “sui generis” Bonapartist positions. This struggle could lead to certain frictions but nothing more since imperialism will also admit to negotiating as long as the semi-colonial condition is accepted. The most this government can reach in its relations with the Yankees will be to fight for a re-accommodation within the status of a colony, which will allow these sectors to continue their game of relations with the Europeans.

3) As far as the bourgeoisie as a whole is concerned, the defence the new regime makes of the monopolist and oligarchic sectors, combined with the continuation of the chronic crisis, will cause a deep division between the different bourgeois sectors, mainly the agricultural-livestock and farming bourgeoisie and the lower sectors of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie against the oligarchy and the big monopolies. This opposition will first manifest itself in the pressure of these sectors to get the government to call early elections and, ultimately, in the preparation of a putsch that will allow them to relocate themselves. If they do not find satisfaction, they will outline a more active opposition to the regime, tending to use the student movement as the vanguard of the opposition. Finally, these bourgeois sectors may organise or be part of a front of opposition to the regime, in possible agreement with Stalinism and sectors of the bureaucracy and the workers’ movement. Even if this were the case, they would aim to use these students or frontists as a trigger to achieve a putsch or a negotiation with the current government to achieve an electoral solution.

The oligarchic front that directly supports the government is divided into several clearly differentiated sectors, which can break away from each other at any time. Moreover, there are already clear signs this struggle exists. These sectors are:

- The landed oligarchy linked to the European empires with slight frictions with the Yankees.
- Powerful national bourgeois sectors and large modern industrial monopolies not directly linked to the big Yankee trusts (Salimei).<sup>10</sup>
- The large traditional industrial and financial monopolies, fundamentally linked to the Yankees (Alsogaray, Pinedo).<sup>11</sup>
- The “quota bourgeoisie”, agents of imperialist investments, subdivided into the representatives of Yankee capital (Frondizi-Friggerio) and the Europeans (Intransigent UCR and Alende<sup>12</sup>).

10 **Jorge Salimei** (1926-1975) was an Argentine businessman, member of the Christian Democratic Party, who held the positions of Minister of Economy and Minister of Labour during the de facto presidency of Onganía. [Editor]

11 **Alvaro Alsogaray** (1913–2005) was an Argentine politician and businessman. Minister of Economy during 1959-1962, he was one of the principal proponents of economic liberalism in modern Argentina.

**Federico Pinedo** (1875-1971), was a lawyer, statesman, and historian. He was born into an aristocratic family. He was Minister of Finance to President Agustin P. Justo in 1933-1935, Minister of Finance to President Ramon Castillo in 1940-1941, and Minister of Economy to President Jose Maria Guido for 19 days in April 1962. [Editor]

12 **Oscar Alende** (1909–1996), was an Argentine doctor and politician, belonging to the Radical Civic Union, Intransigent Radical Civic Union and Intransigent Party, of which he was the founder. [Editor]

Of these four sectors, the first two have monopolised control of most key government positions. Hence the momentary character of the government, a combination of sectors of the old oligarchy (Martinez Paz)<sup>13</sup> with sectors of the big industrial bourgeoisie (Salimei) that have the support and, at the same time, the opposition of the big monopolies (Alsogaray) and the “quota bourgeoisie” (Frondizi-Frigerio). This means the government, at present, is the direct agent of the big oligarchy and industrial sectors and has a slight pro-European anti-American tendency.

The current internal struggle for the displacement of the Martinez Paz-Salimei team finds its explanation in this way. Salimei’s possible agreement with Jorge Antonio-Alonso<sup>14</sup>-Peron, too, since the former reflects the anti-Yankee “quota” sectors of the Peronist era.

4) The characteristic of the new regime will be to load the burden of the crisis on the working class and the working people as a whole. This has not yet been reflected because it is only now that the regime has begun to shift its win from the political to the social-economic. It will inaugurate a crusade of the whole bourgeoisie against the workers, not by civil war methods but by dictatorial and paternalistic ones: it will alternate violent repression with negotiations. The offensive against the students is a symbol. For this, it counts on getting the complicity of the union bureaucracy. This means there are few prospects, at first, for the workers’ movement as a whole to resist the offensive being launched against it. The new regime will bring greater social tranquillity for some time; the workers’ struggles will quiet down, they will apparently lose strength and combativeness; the bureaucracy’s negotiations with the bosses and the government will be accepted despite the general discontent. But this generalised discontent of the workers will originate an accumulation of hatred and resistance which at any moment will be transformed into partial or generalised struggles, such as the student struggle.

5) It will try to get the union bureaucracy to guarantee social peace so it can mercilessly apply its bourgeois development plan on the backs of the workers’ movement itself. This shows the fear it inspires in them. And, according to the profit margin that the bourgeoisie has (which will always be meagre because of the situation of the world market), it will tend to combine this plan with allowing the workers’ movement to continue with some of the advantages gained in the previous stages so the bureaucracy does not totally discredit itself. Nor can we dream on the prospect of getting other advantages. As a result of all this, the bureaucracy has very little room for manoeuvre: either submit to the dictates of the government and join in the government-bosses offensive or be eliminated by them. Only in those places where the government offensive is brutal, is it possible for bureaucratic sectors, directly threatened in their privileges or their support base, to resist or feint a resistance.

6) If there is a serious economic recession next year or the year after, the current regime, in the face of the intensified bourgeois opposition and the fear of being overtaken by the workers’ movement, can speculate on a new bourgeois-democratic way out, relying on the Church, which will use the government and the concessions it can make to the middle and working classes, to organise a Social Christian party and movement that will allow them to transition from one regime to another with the least possible friction.

An entire wing of the government, the one most directly linked to the Church, works with this perspective as the only certain guarantee of channelling and diverting the struggles of the workers’ movement. The Church, an essential factor of the current Bonapartist government, works for the future in this sense, within its general strategy for our continent of creating political movements of the middle class with influence on the workers’ movement to guarantee the stability of the pro-Yankee regimes within the bourgeois representative democracy.

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13 **Fernando Martinez Paz** (1927–2008) was an Argentine lawyer, writer and jurist, recognised as an eminence of Argentine law. After the coup that overthrew Illia and the federal takeover in the Province of Cordoba, he was appointed Minister of Education of the Province by the comptroller. [Editor]

14 **Jorge Antonio** (1917-2007) was an Argentine businessman and political adviser linked to President Peron.

**Jose Alonso** (1917–1970) was an Argentine trade unionist. He was leader of the Garment Union and Secretary-General of the General Confederation of Labour (CGT). He was assassinated by a Montoneros guerrilla commando. [Editor]



Just in case the regime's discredit and popular confrontation were to occur immediately, the Church also speculates with a whole liberal wing, which would place itself in opposition to the regime (Christian Democracy).

The other variant will be to harden the regime further by giving it an even more dictatorial, semi-fascist character of civil war methods against the workers' movement.

7) The lack of immediate perspectives of a generalised resistance of the workers' movement because of the betrayal of the union leaders and the agreement in principle with Yankee imperialism, explain the current solidity of the government, the lack of serious opposition against it if we exclude the student movement. If the sugar and railway workers, the first unions to be hit by the government offensive, cannot stop it, only a strong economic crisis with important friction between bourgeois sectors, or the beginning of the rise of the workers' movement in the country, or revolutionary movement in the continent, including North America, may change the situation. We insist on the word "may", which means that it may also last just one or two years if some of the elements we pointed out are present.

If these are the immediate prospects, the new government is opening up two others in the longer term, which will make it possible for the next Argentinian regime to be pre-revolutionary.

First, the overcoming of 25 years of confrontation between the two popular classes (middle and working classes). Peronism, with its bourgeois politics, provoked the middle class's hatred of the working class. The "Libertadura", in a sense the revenge of the middle class, led to the crisis and the rapprochement of sectors of the middle class to the proletariat. Onganía will unify the two classes with repression and poverty and will achieve, contradictorily, as already happened with Castello Branco<sup>15</sup> in Brazil, a de facto unity against the government. It is the first symptom of this, that the new government has met with the frontal opposition of the student movement and that the workers' movement looks sympathetically at the students. This opposition, which has our full support, we do not believe it can by itself stop or defeat the government. Only united with the struggles of the working class it will achieve its goals. However, it is pregnant with possibilities as long as it understands this historical perspective. On the contrary, it opens up possibilities of fronts led by the petty bourgeoisie and the liberal bourgeoisie, which would lead the working class to a dead end.

Secondly, regarding the bastard bourgeois Peronist trade union and political leadership of the workers' movement, the new regime means its total, historical crisis. This definition is not directly personal. Vandor,<sup>16</sup> March,<sup>17</sup> Alonso, do not have to disappear from the scene in the first place. On the contrary, they can readjust and engage in a struggle among themselves or against the government. The important thing is that the bureaucratic structure cracks and falls into total disrepute before the workers' movement and the activists.

Indeed, this crisis, which has been growing up to now, each day bigger, is becoming open, public and general with the new regime. As a result, the union and political vanguard take a step forward in what we call ideological revolution: from molecular and cumulative to comprehending the role of the union and political leaderships of Peronism. This process takes place together with the retreat of the working class, which originates a serious contradiction: if there is not a new rise in the struggles of the workers' movement in the short term, the advance of the vanguard will stop or go backwards accompanying the workers' movement. However, the structural crisis of the Argentinian bourgeois regime, the dead-end crisis of Yankee imperialism in Vietnam, the world and within its borders, the general pre-revolutionary course of our continent, whose vanguard is

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15 **Humberto de Alencar Castello Branco** (1897–1967) was a Brazilian military leader and politician. He served as the first President of the Brazilian military government after the 1964 military *coup d'état*. [Editor]

16 **Augusto Timoteo Vandor** (1923-1969) was a bureaucrat Secretary General of the Metalworkers Union (UOM). After the military coup that defeated Peron, he promoted within the Peronism a participatory faction willing to agree with the de facto government and proposed a "Peronism without Peron". A month after the Cordobazo, in June 1969, he was executed by a small Peronist armed group, which years later would join Montoneros. [Editor]

17 **Armando March** was Secretary General of the General Confederation of Commerce Employees. He was a socialist who later approached Radicalism. In 1969, he was convicted of embezzling up to USD\$ 30 million from his union's accounts over the course of the decade. [Editor]

the Guatemalan and Colombian guerrillas, will prevent the stability of the Argentinian regime and therefore make the present retreat not last long. There is an important possibility that the current contradiction between the retreat of the workers' movement and the colossal and new advance of the vanguard can be overcome in favour of the advance of the workers' movement towards the positions of the vanguard and not from the latter to the former. We have, then, an alternative, the one the combination of the chronic crisis of the national bourgeois economy, with the pre-revolutionary world and Latin American situation, produce in the short term an overcoming of the leadership crisis of the Argentinian workers' movement. The existence of our party strengthens this perspective.

## The government against the working class and the people

A famous French writer defined Napoleon as "Robespierre on horseback". Her artistic intuition allowed her to grasp that Napoleon, in many respects, was following the same bourgeois policy as Robespierre, but with other methods: arrogant, bureaucratic, military, instead of appealing to popular mobilisation as the head of the Jacobin. We can similarly define the government of Onganía: "Frondizi-Alsogaray with tanks". It will essentially follow the same policy as under the Frondizi government, especially in the Alsogaray period but, instead of appealing to the elections and the possible support or conquest of popular sectors, everything will be done in a bureaucratic, direct, high-handed way. We will live through the middle of Alsogaray's winter<sup>18</sup> until the workers get rid of this government.

This will be the best agent that the big industrial companies and the big imperialist and monopolist consortiums have had so far. The *coup d'état* has meant a colossal victory of those bourgeois sectors against the working class and the working people. Its true character has not yet been clearly reflected, because this victory has been political and it is only now the government, as an agent of the large monopolies, is starting to capitalise on it in the economic arena. Thus, in another historic moment, a new transitional stage very similar to the one opened up when the Liberating Revolution triumphed. As soon as Lonardi<sup>19</sup> came to power, the oligarchy and the middle class began to bring their political triumph to the union and factory level. This stage lasted three months until the great strike of November 1955, which meant the victory of the reaction in the sphere of trade union organisation: the workers' movement had to accept defeat, i.e., the takeovers in the union movement.

Today something similar is happening: the government and the big bourgeoisie are preparing to transfer their political victory against the working class to all social and economic spheres. This offensive against all workers, starting with the working class, will be carried out on different levels.

First, companies will get *carte blanche* to rationalise and increase the pace of work. The Onganía report to the national press clearly states that productivity increases in companies will be authorised.

Second, this plan for productivity increases will be accompanied by a similar policy at the level of state enterprises. Production will be rationalised and increased, firing all the personnel this overexploitation plan will leave behind. Parallel to this, all increases in utilities needed to make state-owned enterprises profitable will be authorised.

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18 When Alvaro Alsogaray was the Minister of Economy in the Frondizi government, he had an expression "we have to go through winter" according to which the economic situation of the workers and popular sectors would be better after having "gone through winter". [Editor]

19 Eduardo Ernesto Lonardi (1896–1956) was an Argentine Lieutenant General who headed the coup d'état that overthrew Peron on 16 September 1955 imposing the self-titled Liberating Revolution. He and served as de facto president from 23 September to 13 November 1955. The armed forces deposed him and replaced him with hard-liner Pedro Aramburu. [Editor]

Third, to impose the productivity plan at the level of the companies, a full-line offensive will be carried out against the delegates committees and internal commissions, trying to prevent them from participating in production problems, so that they can increase the pace as they please.

Fourth, at the union level, a multi-pronged policy will be pursued. First and foremost, it is a matter of winning over the union bureaucracy itself, respecting its privileges, so they will help implement the super-exploitation plan. As a concession, so as not to discredit them completely, the various unions will be granted increases of more than 30 per cent on the condition they do not go on strike for a year or more. These increases will quickly be offset by price increases. At the same time, it will try to transform the bureaucracy into the administrator of some social services, mainly housing construction; while the government, to calm the workers' movement, will try to directly provide others: unemployment insurance, public health. In those places where some bureaucratic sector is threatened by the brutal offensive, a sector of the bureaucracy itself may turn to the left. Any resistance from the bureaucracy or the unions will be crushed by the mandatory ministerial binding decision and union takeover. In this case, the resistance of the latter will increase.

Fifth, together with the bureaucracy, the government plans to carry out a total offensive to drive the best activists, mainly leftists, out of the factories and the unions. They will attempt a witch-hunt in the union camp with the collaboration of the bureaucracy. As in many unions, there are factory leaders marked by the bosses who belong to the bureaucratic apparatus itself, this can lead to certain frictions.

Sixth, the process of offensive, rationalisation and overexploitation of the working class will be carried out much more easily by the large monopolies and corporations. As a result, these same big companies will be able to turn to the market to carry out an offensive against the lower sectors of the bourgeoisie itself and the middle class. Indirectly, the offensive against the workers will also mean an offensive against the middle class by the big companies. For the first time in the last 20 years, the two popular classes will be facing the national government which they will consider their enemy and agent of the big monopolies. The current sympathy of the workers' movement for students is a symptom of this process. This government has overcome the historical alienation and enmity between the citizen middle class and the working class, to actually unite them in a single front against the government itself.

Seventh, to impose its policy the government will use, if necessary, the most violent police repression, as it demonstrated in front of the student movement.

In short, a stage is opening in which the working class will suffer immediately: overexploitation in the factories, lay-offs and unemployment, brutal cost of living. The union activists and the leftists will suffer a real "witch-hunt" by the bosses, the government and the union bureaucracy or a sector of it. The middle class will suffer a brutal offensive by the big companies, which will cause unemployment and increasing misery. The workers will suffer police repression when they resist the reactionary plans. But the last word has not been spoken since the government and the bosses have not yet defeated the working class in this new transitional stage. The great task is to avoid this defeat and, if it happens, to be on the front line in the defensive battles to prepare the new rise of the workers' movement.

## **The experience of the students' struggle: we fight back in a combative way**

The students' movement has been the first in facing the government's offensive. Their experiences should be carefully studied by all the activists, not only the students but also the workers because the government revealed, in these actions, its true character very clearly. On the one hand, it did not repress at first but was content to leave the situation as it was. Soon after, it took over the

universities using a decree that apparently did not introduce any change. But in reality, university chancellors were transformed into government agents.

Faced with this situation, two lines were drawn within the student movement in the Federal Capital: the Stalinist line and ours. The Stalinist was to “put everything on the line (with the university, in fact, closed) against the fascist government by occupying the universities and the lecturers resigning. Ours, on the contrary, pointed out that “we need to prepare a long-term resistance and not an all-or-nothing immediate struggle and the government’s plan (Bonapartist, not fascist) could not be defeated by the single, university-based struggle”. From this premise we took the strategy that “no lecturer should resign, that the universities and faculties continue to teach, not accepting and resisting the government decree.” The students were to support this policy of resistance by organizing on pickets, conducting a large public campaign and preparing the student body for the struggle within the university. If the student body was supportive, the conditions for a mass occupation of the faculties were then in place. Stalinism, which leads in the Capital and fundamentally in Medicine, imposed its line and achieved or tried to occupy some faculties: Exact Sciences, Medicine. The police repression was truly brutal and the student movement in the Capital was pushed into the background, defeated, confirming what we were holding.

In the interior, where the apparatus of Stalinism is much weaker, the student body was left to its own devices and acted without haste. Student activists initially limited themselves to propagating the line of opposition to government measures, with demonstrations, flyers, agitation. The government favoured this policy of the student vanguard with its measures since with each one of them it confirmed more and more its true reactionary character.

The result was that the student struggle moved to the interior. In Cordoba, it acquired massive characteristics that it did not come to have anywhere else. Several factors combined to achieve this, the first of which has been the struggle of a sector of the Catholic student movement against the provincial government in combination with a sector of the national government. Encouraged by this perspective, the Catholic student leadership adopted a putschist and adventurous position: to continue the strike until the government was driven back when without the support of the workers’ movement there was no chance of achieving this. The Catholics left the task of mobilising and organizing to confront the police to the students of the left and our party. Thus, against the opinion of the left, the student assembly votes to continue the strike for an indefinite period and it is the same students of the left, fundamentally those of our party, who launch themselves to organise the student quarter that becomes an impregnable bastion for the forces of repression. The student initiative is brilliant: streetlights are broken so the police cannot act with impunity at night; even cats are used — students throw them to the police dogs, turning one of the most brutal methods of repression into a ridiculous “cats and dogs fight”. Student Guest Houses are organised with delegates. The Catholics take refuge in a church to carry out a hunger strike. This struggle provokes violent government repression, resulting in one death.

In Buenos Aires, the student movement continues to retreat, but in Economics, Pharmacy and Engineering, the resistance is organised with great results. In Pharmacy (where positions very similar to ours were adopted) an almost total 24-hour strike is achieved thanks to the strong organisation of the activists. In Engineering (where Vanguardia Comunista is leading) an assembly can be held and a 40 per cent strike of the students is guaranteed. In the rest of the faculties, the policy applied by the Communist Party determines the total inertia of the students.

In the interior, the general strike declared by the FUA (Argentinian University Federation) is strictly observed. There are large rallies and permanent demonstrations, like encounters with the police. Students rally in the centre of the various cities, at peak hours, and the police are forced to charge against the entire population. There are detainees.

The students from the interior are, without a doubt, the vanguard of the student struggle, as a consequence of their concentration in neighbourhoods, their poverty, and the greater free time they have — since most of them do not work — to assimilate experiences and develop their initiative. This

is not the case with the students of Buenos Aires, who to a large extent work or are children of the bourgeoisie, and are not concentrated in neighbourhoods.

Leaving aside these general characteristics, the student struggles have left a series of teachings for the whole stage that is opening.

First, the measures of the reactionary government are accumulating such that this resistance transforms itself from passive into active at any moment. This means that those student and worker activists, who see no prospect of struggle, ignore the future action of the government itself; they do not see such possibilities because the reactionary offensive has not yet reached their place of study or work. When it arrives, there can be a chain reaction, like in Cordoba. In each place of study, in each province, in each factory or section, there is — from now on — a potential Cordoba. We must be ready when the time comes.

Second, we must prepare to face ruthless police repression. The government will not hesitate to use the police with the same or worse methods, whenever it needs to implement the plans of the oligarchy and the reaction.

Third, with great initiative and courage, and with the strong and courageous organisation of the vanguard, it is possible to confront police repression and defeat it (although this was not the final result in Cordoba, it was very close to achieving it).

Fourth, we must organise for long and hard struggles: we must not act with desperation but organise a combative resistance, with momentary struggles, appealing to the mobilisation of the whole population and the people. Assemblies, demonstrations, rallies, progressive stoppages, strikes, activist and grassroots organisations are the conditions for victory.

Fifth, there are bourgeois and petty-bourgeois sectors that, outraged by the government's reactionary policy, are joining the struggle. They are circumstantial and very dangerous allies but useful insofar as they are treated as such. This will be repeated at all levels: in the political arena with all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois liberal tendencies; in the trade union arena with bureaucratic, trade unionist, opportunist currents. Knowing how to ally with these sectors is very useful and progressive: this was done in Cordoba with the integralists and helped the resistance movement. What is dangerous is to transform this circumstantial alliance into a front or something like that which subordinates the revolutionary current to the straitjacket of a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois leadership that leads the movement of struggle to a dead end, as in Cordoba.

Sixth, the government is relatively weak if we know how to deal with it decisively. But there is no chance of success if it is not the working class that heads or leads the actions against it. What the student movement lacked was precisely to systematically appeal to the working-class population of Cordoba to support it with a general strike. That's the only way it could have succeeded.

These six fundamental conclusions are not only useful for Cordoba or the student movement but all workers and especially for the workers' movement. Only by understanding the meaning of this experience will it be possible to confront and defeat the reactionary government.

## **Let's stand up for the students' movement against the government attack**

The government has violently attacked the student movement. It has shown in this action its true reactionary character. What the oligarchy and the government, its representative, fear most is the emergence of a revolutionary student vanguard that will unite and serve as a leaven for the workers' movement. Defending the student movement is the first duty of this moment.

In this sense, the most audacious propaganda must be the most important activity: leaflets and assemblies to prepare and launch 24-hour strikes must be the main aim. This means we must strive to prevent the student vanguard to be the only one facing the government's reactionary offensive



and try that this vanguard gets important sections of the student body mobilised. Given the openly reactionary nature of the government, which is plunging not only the working class but also large sections of the middle-class and lower bourgeoisie into misery, it is very easy for this campaign towards the students as a whole to succeed. Hence the importance of carrying out bold propaganda prior to any action.

However, let us not deceive ourselves. There is no chance the resistance of the student movement will succeed at first without the support of the workers' movement. The government will impose its organisation of the university, which means we must prepare unwaveringly for clandestine work within it. Clandestine work whose central axis cannot be other than the organisation and permanence in clandestinity of the FUA centres, which have to continue subsisting, penetrating, although now in a clandestine way. We must be the champions of these centres and their clandestine activity. In this sense, we call to all left groups for a front with the present Stalinist leadership of the FUA, whether they belong to it or not, to defend the student movement with class struggle methods. At the same time, we accept to discuss, without mixing the banners or organisations, the possibility of limited agreements with bourgeois, professorial, petty-bourgeois tendencies, to confront the government.

It is very possible the government will authorise the existence of some student centres or that it will impose the existence of a single centre that will revolve around the eminently union problems of the student movement. If this is the case, it will be our obligation to combine our clandestine work for the existence and development of the FUA centres with our participation in the legal centres. Each stage will indicate where the essential axis of the activity passes through, and it is impossible right now when this process has just begun, to specify this combination in detail. We must be satisfied with very general indications to combine the two activities, legal and clandestine. We must be the champions, we repeat, both in the clandestine and in the legal work, of the denunciation through the propaganda of the inevitable ultra-bourgeois and pro-imperialist scientificist plan the government will implement, explaining the true class character of these programmes, whose objective is to prepare the University so only the children of the oligarchy and the bourgeoisie can study, who will have the necessary time to submit to the conditions of study and programme that the government will impose. In parallel with this, we must systematically denounce the character of the army and the Church within this programme, as the ideological body of the oligarchy and the bourgeoisie.

With this type of propaganda, we must try by all means to reach the workers' movement, trying to popularise our actions there. The left front, the FUA centres and the revolutionary tendencies must make a systematic campaign in the workers' movement and on the working people. This has not been done yet and its implementation is urgently needed. We must publish flyers that the students must send to the factories, and make concrete calls to the union leaderships.

## **Not one step backwards: strikes, meetings, demonstrations and old-time industrial actions**

The offensive by the government and big business will be on three levels: increased exploitation within the factories, lay-offs of personnel, and attacks on internal commissions, delegates committees and activists. These measures may go together or separately but inevitably the bosses will press on all three fronts. We must prepare to confront these plans, which are the essence of the Onganía government. To this end, we must explain now the nature of the government and bosses' offensive and the means of confronting it. We can and must stop it.

Faced with this attack by the government, which has not yet manifested itself in full force, the activists are disarmed by the surrender of the union leaderships. They see no way out: they note, as

we do, that there is no possibility that a political movement of a few days, like a factory occupation with hostages, can win and they find no other means to confront the bosses. The working class, even more acutely, feels this apparently hopeless situation. This is not the case. The workers do not see a way out yet for two reasons: first and foremost, because the government's offensive in their workplace has not yet been manifested in all its sharpness, their indignation and spirit of resistance have not been awakened: second, they do not have a leadership ready to fight that guarantees them the possibility of victory.

Our organisation, which created and imposed the method of strike with the occupation of factories and later with hostages, with the same audacity with which it raised this slogan at the time, now discards it as extremely dangerous. The change of character of the government forces us to tell the truth face to face to the union activists, as always: a partial strike of occupation of factories with hostages will be crushed without mercy by the government of the armed forces. Such a defeat would further weaken the workers' movement.

## New methods

But this does not mean that we should sit idly by in the face of our enemies. All we have to do is change the methods of confrontation. Instead of the quick, intensive, violent, of a few-day-methods we have used up to now, longer-term, extensive forms of struggle, as peaceful as possible but willing to respond an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth to the police repression the regime will unleash.

These "new" methods we have to use are those that before the arrival of the Peronist government were used every day by our workers; they are the old methods that we must enrich with all the experience of the world and continental workers' and revolutionary movement.

## How to prepare a strike

This new way of facing conflicts has two stages, the previous one and the conflict itself. One comrade has rightly called this previous stage "overheating". The objective is to prepare the conditions that will make it possible for the strike to win. This requires action and preparation on several fronts.

## Propaganda

At this stage, propaganda must be directed essentially to the comrades threatened by the bosses' offensive. It aims to denounce the offensive and to advise on the measures necessary to stop it. The most useful means is the flyer. But, as soon as the conditions are right, in a factory or a trade union, a regular bulletin must be published, in the name of the CGT or a group of activists, to denounce the plans of the bosses, to keep the comrades informed and to prepare them for the struggle.

That the essence of the campaign is about the threatened workers, should not be an obstacle for us to also do it before the union, the population, the other factories of the same company, if they have them, and the whole of the working class.

Part of this propaganda should be the public demonstrations to request hearings or solutions to the petitions from the authorities. These demonstrations should be made with large posters and a large number of flyers. As far as possible, they should be authorised. Rallies will play a similar role.

## Meetings

Systematic and permanent assemblies in the union or a club near the factory should be our obsession. As soon as we suspect the bosses' plan, we must ask the delegate, the factory internal commission or the union leadership to call an assembly of all the threatened personnel. To achieve

this, we must exert pressure, with visits from the staff and activists to the union. Only if this pressure fails, we will hold meetings of the best activists to prepare and organise them. Once the assembly has been held, we must prevent the bosses from discovering the best activists and firing them and we must try to get the union leadership of the guild or the factory to commit to the measures to be taken. When there is no other choice and they have to speak, we must divide the tasks and if an activist speaks and puts himself at risk, the rest covers the rear, not committing or revealing themselves.

## Organise commissions and picket lines

These flyers and assemblies have one goal: to organise the future and inevitable strike. To do this, we need to start by organising the picket lines with the best activists. Given the lack of familiarity with this name, we must use the better known “commissions” (commissions of aid, of support to the delegate or the internal commission). We must tend to organise these pickets or commissions by sections. Since the inevitable police repression will prevent us from approaching the striking factory or factories when the conflict breaks out, it will be a fundamental task of these commissions to record the leadership of all the comrades in the section to visit them, keep them informed and control them when the conflict breaks out. At the same time, they should make strict control of the scabs and probable agents of the bosses to prevent them from scabbing.

Besides these preventive measures, the pickets should help in the distribution of propaganda, the preparation of assemblies and the organisation of personnel.

## How to negotiate

For us, negotiations are an essential part of the preparation for the in-depth fight against the bosses’ offensive. We negotiate to gain time in the preparation of the long-term strike, which we consider inevitable. The negotiating policy of the bureaucracy can unintentionally play a progressive role by allowing the factory and union vanguard to gain time in the preparation of the strike. Let them negotiate, with our support, while we and the activists prepare the strike. The basis for those negotiations, when the workers’ movement is still weak, must be the following:

- If the bosses want to fire, we can accept severance pay only for those workers who want to leave the factory, never, ever, for those who want to stay.

- If they want to increase productivity, we accept to talk about any new organisation of the work or the addition of new machinery, based on not allowing the least increase in the workers’ exploitation.

- If they want to fire delegates, internal commissions and activists, we do not accept that on principle, as it represents the beginning of the end of the complete bosses’ victory on all fronts. On the contrary, as soon as they threaten to fire a union leader or an activist, we must declare a strike in the factory to force negotiations.

## Strikes and strike funds

When the bosses adopt a measure, we must go on strike inside the factory to force negotiations between the bosses and the union before the government to whether we can roll back the situation. Before entering the conflict, we need to ensure a strike fund as large as possible by demanding that the union make it and give its administration to a commission of activists.

## The strike

Once the conflict starts, only the initiative and propaganda, the permanent mobilisation of the strike workers and the workers, in general, will assure victory. The tone of activity changes on different fronts.



## Propaganda

We must ensure that workers are informed daily of the progress of the conflict. To this end, a daily strike bulletin must be published. As important as this are the flyers to the workers of the neighbourhood or union, also to the entire population to inform them of the causes of the conflict and the solidarity we need. Demonstrations and rallies must be organised systematically and carefully to impact on the working population.

## Meetings

We must achieve permanent, as far as possible legal, weekly assemblies of the conflicting personnel. This allows us to take the pulse of the situation and, at the same time, educate and develop the initiative and consciousness of the working class.

## Organisation

The best activists, organised in commissions or picket lines, must be made to live for the strike, meeting daily to discuss the experiences and plan the action. The tasks of the commissions are:

- To guarantee by any means that no one works;
- To distribute strike bulletins to the staff;
- Visit the strikers daily to encourage, inform and help them if needed.

Together with the picket lines, committees should be organised to help popularise the strike and get their sympathy. These committees should visit the newspapers, the small shopkeepers, the workers of the neighbourhood and the union to explain the strike to them and to ask for support.

This support must be intense and increasing for the strike to be won.

We must ask and demand that all the workers' organisations, from the factories to the unions, from the union slates, whatever their colour, to the parties claiming to be from the working class, speak out for and support the strike. We need to get more and more help. To maintain the strike, we must first ask the trade unions and the surrounding factories to donate the income of any casual work or a day's wage in support of the strike. Later, if the conflict continues, we must start to consider the possibility of joint actions by the workers' movement and the population in support of the strike.

## Strike fund

Increasing the strike fund with donations, collections, is indispensable to win it. These funds should be used to help fellow strikers in need, to keep activists organised on picket lines, and for propaganda.

If the strike extends, we must organise, as the students did in Cordoba, free canteens for the strikers and their families. These canteens will be the great collective organisers of the strike since they will be transformed into a permanent staff assembly.

# Let's organise the fight for the laid-offs! Solidarity with the railway workers!

If rationalisation of the bosses'-government takes hold, it will lead to a massive wave of lay-offs. The union on whose head an immediate threat hangs is the railway. In a few weeks, the government plan will be launched, which will mean lay-offs and more work for the guild. Let's demand the government do not implement any plan without first consulting the union! Let's demand

the leadership of the Railway Union and La Fraternidad (Train Drivers Union) get the union on the struggle path!

Our party launches an urgent appeal to the railway union: Demand from your leadership and impose now, without delay, the organisation of the pickets Prepare for a long-term conflict! Try to launch the strike the moment the harvest is picked! Ask for and seek the solidarity of the rest of the organised workers' movement, mainly truck drivers, truck-loading labourers and dockers! Demand and commit to giving back the solidarity of SUPA (United Port Workers Union)! Demand the support of the CGT!

This last position must be general for every branch, factory or section condemned to lay-offs. Let us demand no one be dismissed, nor any source of work be closed if, previously, between the workers' movement and the government, they have not agreed to open a new source of work!

The workers' movement cannot have any objection to the development of the national economy. It is precisely the problem of lay-offs that puts the finger on the sore spot: How to organise some branches of the national economy so there are no unemployed? This forces the workers to ask themselves the problem of the problems: How to organise the national economy? First of all, the main productive force is man, the working class. Thus, we have to take care of it, defend it. No worker should lose his wages and his job if he is not guaranteed at least equal wages and work by his union organisation.

If the dismissal takes place anyway, we need to go on strike with all the characteristics of the previous ones with an addition: more than any other strike, its victory will depend on the solidarity of the people and the workers' movement. We need to organise the economic support first (a monthly wage for the strikers) until culminating in direct support: the general strike.

The marches, rallies and demonstrations of the workers threatened by dismissal, of the unemployed and the strikers, are a formidable tool of struggle.

If the lay-offs are massive and if the base or the leadership of their unions do not fight for them, we must tend to organise them, to prevent them from being disbanded. A very subtle way to keep them united with the rest of the union is to raise the slogan that the work should be divided among all the workers, the permanent ones and those condemned to be fired, but that no one should be fired. At most, anyone who wants to leave.

By this means of extensive mobilisation, unemployment can be defeated.

## The struggle in the Tucuman sugar mills

Let the FOTIA (Sugar Industry Workers' Federation) control and direct the working regime of the fired sugar workers! Let's organise the temporary and the fired workers! For the provincialisation of the sugar mills of Tucuman!

The government has already made a statement on its plan to solve the sugar problem and of the province of Tucuman. We do not have any abstract opposition to the proposal to carry out diversification and development of Tucuman's economy. Our opposition is one of principle: we do have no trust in the plans of the government and the employers. They will be carried out for the benefit of the bourgeoisie, not the workers. Hence, we believe it is fundamental that FOTIA itself, and through it the workers of Tucumán, control, elaborate and apply all development plans.

### How to do it

We must start from two premises: no worker, permanent or temporary, should be left without work and without keeping his level of wages and trade. Let us demand, in this sense, strict compliance with the government's promises.

## **Front of the temps and laid-offs**

To achieve this, it is indispensable that we organise, as of now, the temporary workers and those who have been fired or threatened with dismissal, in a special front and organisation within FOTIA. This has completely neglected these sectors. We must try by all means to start this organisation at a union level and without breaking up the already existing organisation. Rather, it is a question of expanding and changing the organisational tone: from permanent workers and technical factories to temporary workers and those condemned to dismissal.

## **FOTIA meeting**

Once this front and organisation are set up, we must demand that FOTIA authorise assemblies of the personnel and congresses of delegates, to develop it. Immediately, we must demand the leadership of this front establish an intimate link with the permanent workers of the sugar industry, preventing the division of the sugar workers into separate compartments. The same must be done with all the sugar workers in the north and with all the workers in Tucuman. For this there is nothing better than strong direct or indirect propaganda by the delegates of the fired or temporary workers, explaining to the permanent sugar workers or the Tucuman workers that their struggle, at heart, is a struggle for the benefit of all the workers.

## **Workers and popular demonstrations and rallies**

We must organise and mobilise permanently not only the workers but also the whole Tucuman population. We must get the students to support and reach the villages and mills threatened by unemployment. We must hold rallies and popular demonstrations to demand a solution to the problem.

## **Public negotiations**

Along with this, we must demand that the leadership of FOTIA begin public negotiations, known to all, with the national and provincial government itself about the application of the government's plan for the province of Tucuman, demanding it be applied and elaborated by this leadership and by the committed workers.

## **Let's improve Tucuman workers' standard of living with a public works scheme**

Within these plans, it is especially important to carry out a public works plan that benefits the working population of Tucuman: running water, hospitals, street paving, electricity where there is none, etc. The taxes to carry out these works must come from the Tucuman sugar oligarchy itself and the entire country. This plan should not stop the other plan, of diversification and development of the Tucuman economy. To achieve this, true agrarian reform is urgently needed to change land tenure in Tucuman province and throughout the north.

## **Let's organise picket lines to stop armed repression and impose our programme**

All these proposals are useless if in parallel with this organisational and propaganda campaign we do not organise ourselves for a hard battle to impose the programme. Sending 500 federal police armed to the teeth to repress the heroic proletariat of Tucumán is an example of what awaits the workers of the whole country when they resolve to confront the bosses and the government. We must prepare ourselves for the worst. To do this, we must begin right now to organise the best activists into picket lines. Only the organisation of these pickets will guarantee the victory of any movement of force, as those that will inevitably take place in Tucuman if the government stops paying the

fortnightly wages. The greatest audacity must be combined with the greatest responsibility: we and the vanguard will only act where the class supports in full the forcible actions.

### **For an agreement of all the tendencies that oppose the national government plan**

Without tying our hands, we are for the formation of a great provincial movement of repudiation of the government measures. We call on all tendencies to this agreement. We propose as a basic programme the demand for an urgent call for a Constituent Assembly, so it is the people of Tucuman themselves who organise their economy, their political and social regime.

### **For the provincialisation, without payment of all the sugar mills in Tucuman while all the sugar mills in the country are nationalised**

The solution to the crisis of the workers and the economy of Tucuman must be paid by the sugar barons of the province and the whole country. To this end, we must impose the provincialisation of the sugar industry without payment, as the only way to rationalise production and avoid the misery of the workers. In this way, we will achieve that the great profits of the profitable sugar mills be placed into the development of the provincial economy. We make this immediate proposal at the same time that we call for the nationalisation without payment of all the sugar mills in the country, as the only way to overcome the crisis in the sugar industry.

## **Let's fight for emergency measures**

Emergency increases in the different unions to compensate for the brutal increase in the cost of living! Front of all the unions that vote for emergency increases to undertake a joint struggle!

The union leaderships, to save their incomes, have completely capitulated to the plans of the bosses and the government, signing collective agreements that will last at least a year, with an increase of around 30 per cent on wages. This percentage, which was not enough to compensate for the increase in the cost of living in the last year, has been transformed into a tragic mockery in the face of the constant increases in all the necessities, authorised by the government. The 30 per cent just signed is no longer enough to compensate for the new increase in the cost of living and will be even less with each passing day.

We were against the signing of these collective agreements, believing at the time they should be rejected to face a joint struggle of all the unions, whatever grouping they were part of, that were discussing the agreements. Although there are still some unions that have not signed theirs, we have no doubt they will end up capitulating to the government's 30 per cent plan. Because of this situation, we cannot stand by idly or limit ourselves to a historical discussion of whether or not it was right to sign the agreements. It is a question of preventing those signed or to be signed from becoming a death trap for the standard of living of working families, exploited at work and outside it, with the cost of living.

The solution of having the government of the moment to undertake the control of prices has been shown to be useless countless times. There is no alternative but to pose at all levels of the workers' movement that, because of the brutal price increases, the struggle for an urgent emergency increase be prepared. The unions that manage to take up this position must incorporate as the first point of this preparation and this programme, the unification of all the unions that are considering achieving the emergency increase to go out and fight as a whole.

We believe that in the trade union arena this slogan will make its way since it is the only one that contemplates the most urgent need of the workers in the face of the constant increase in the cost of living. Besides, we must insist that the law on the minimum, living and mobile wage be applied,

on the one hand, and that the state nationalise all the wholesale trade in necessities as the only guarantee of stabilising prices, on the other.

## Against state control of the union movement

For a CGT grassroots congress! For an anti-imperialist and revolutionary leadership, for the unification of the workers' movement into one central!

Diplomatically, by sending overseers, the government has taken over the CGT, speculating on its division.

This poses two major problems: the urgent need to unify the trade union movement in a single central and to free it from state control.

In the face of these two situations, there is no other slogan than the one we have been systematically applying: Grassroots Congress of the CGT to reunify the Argentinian workers' movement and provide it with a revolutionary and anti-imperialist leadership and programme to overcome the current crisis and, at this time, confront the reactionary military government.

These slogans are fundamental for the whole current stage of the workers' movement. If the needs of the bureaucracy and the government itself lead to the reunification of the CGT,<sup>20</sup> we, while continuing to demand these two great general slogans, will accept the reunification, even if it comes through bureaucratic means, and will try to give it a democratic content.

Then, it will acquire more importance than ever, our slogan of the Grassroots Congress of the CGT to fight against the state control of the workers' movement, to give us a revolutionary and anti-imperialist leadership and programme.

If, on the other hand, the government does not achieve its objectives and takes over the CGT and later the various unions, this will create a redoubled resistance from the union bureaucracy. In such case, a united front of all trade union currents will be imposed to defend the trade union organisation and fight against the nationalisation of the workers' movement. This fight to the bitter end against nationalisation will have to be accompanied by a bold use of every legal loophole left by the regime in the trade union arena. We say this because the displaced bureaucracy, which now, to save itself, gives up collective agreements and offers itself as a doormat for the government, will launch an adventurous policy of all or nothing as it did at the end of 1955 or the beginning of 1956, to prevent the emergence of new leadership.

## Let's fight for winning back the democratic rights

We revolutionaries, at this stage, will become the great champions of the struggle for the most essential bourgeois rights: of speech, of the press, of assembly, of forming political parties and of defence of Argentine federalism.

The bourgeoisie and its political parties have no principled opposition to the government, which guarantees them their essential rights for the time being and responds better than anyone else to their political and economic needs.

Our programme is to fight for the defence of the essential liberties granted by the different national constitutions and to defend that great conquest that is the federal rights: that each province chooses their governors.

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<sup>20</sup> The bureaucracy can attempt to have room for manoeuvre in front of the government by fortifying itself and uniting. The government, for its part, to have a bureaucracy that will serve its plans for rationalisation and intensification of work. NM

We can reach agreements with personalities to demand the most essential democratic rights or to fight for the freedom of political and social prisoners, but we must be clear that these agreements, while very useful, mean nothing more than an agreement, since the bourgeoisie and its various parties are not willing, as we said above, to fight for these rights.

This means, then, that the defence of democratic rights is in the hands of the working class and only of it. We say this so as not to develop any variant of the possibility of a popular front, because it would be utopian to believe in the union with any of the liberal bourgeois parties to guarantee a real fight for the reconquest of the lost formal democratic rights.

Only the struggle of the working class, which begins in the defence of its standard of living and work in each of the factories, guilds or working regions of the country, can reconquer democratic and federal rights. Even if this reconquest is achieved through an indirect route, it will be achieved through fear of the independent mobilisation of the workers' movement, in an attempt to divert it. This will be the indirect way of reconquering democratic rights, to avoid the open struggle of the working class.

This reconquest will possibly open a pre-revolutionary stage in the country since it will sharply raise the possibility of power for the working class.

## Against the reactionary government

For a workers' and popular government to convene an absolutely free and sovereign constituent assembly to reorganise the country!

The stage now opening is one of frontal struggle against the reactionary government, not only by the workers' movement but also by important sectors of the middle class. In this struggle that is beginning, we must raise as an essential political slogan, of a democratic character, that the country be organised in its new forms of government and economic, political and social structures, through an absolutely free and sovereign Constituent Assembly.

This means the right of Peron, the Peronist movement and every organisation that claims to belong to the working class, to stand for election without having any of their rights curtailed. This slogan implies the demand for the right to control the oral and written press by these organisations. There can be no absolutely free and sovereign Constituent Assembly if the media are controlled by the large monopolies or by bourgeois or reactionary organisations. The first condition for achieving the call for this Constituent Assembly is to defeat the present reactionary government.

This raises the problem of the character of the government that will replace the current one to guarantee the Constituent Assembly. This cannot be other than a workers' and people's government, that is, one made up of the workers' and middle-class organisations that have broken with the bourgeoisie and are willing to guarantee absolute freedom of expression prior to the constitution of the Constituent Assembly.

This government must essentially be formed by the CGT (if it is not totally controlled by the government) accompanied by all the parties that claim to be from the working class. This means we place no trust in the possibility of a popular front government, as Stalinism wants, calling this assembly. We repeat, only the workers' and popular movement, through revolutionary methods, will be able to achieve it. For this, the Argentine working class will have to rise definitively from its present trade union organisation to independent political action, through the CGT or any other form of mass organisation.



## Let's support the Latin American and world struggles

Unconditional support to the guerrillas of South Vietnam and North Vietnam! Unconditional support for Socialist Cuba and the Venezuelan, Guatemalan and Colombian guerrillas!

The fate of the Argentine workers' movement and the stability of the current reactionary regime depend to a great extent on the prospects of victory of the Vietnamese, Guatemalan and Colombian guerrillas, mainly the first, whose victory will mean a historic defeat for US imperialism.

It also involves the unconditional defence of the greatest revolutionary victory of the Latin American masses: Socialist Cuba.

We must be aware that a defeat of imperialism would mean the crisis and weakness of the current Argentinian regime and that its victory, on the contrary, would be its consolidation.

Thus, it becomes a fundamental part of a revolutionary policy to support and make propaganda of these great struggles and, as far as possible, to link up with them. The national campaign for the left front must be part of an international united front campaign of the workers' states to help the Vietnamese revolution with everything: volunteers and all kinds of weapons. The denunciation of Russian opportunism and Chinese sectarianism for refusing to make a united front of the workers' states and revolutionary movements that support North Vietnam and the guerrillas with everything is part of the construction and development of the Argentine revolutionary party.

We must do the same with the Guatemalan, Colombian and Venezuelan guerrillas. They are the current vanguard of the Latin American revolution and as such we must support them. Their victory would be the prelude to the possible defeat of the current regime.

Regarding Socialist Cuba, we must not tire of demanding unity and support for the first socialist country in America. It goes without saying these battles are part of the historical struggle our party is engaged in of repudiation to the OAS and Rio de Janeiro pacts. It is only a matter of specifying the most urgent tasks.

## Let's get ready to face police repression

By killing student Santiago Pampillon and wounding another, the Cordoba police have shown the true character of the government and the repression unleashed. All workers are warned every mobilisation they make will mean an equal or worse confrontation.

We do not believe that the government intends to take the army out into the streets. It will try to keep it in the barracks but it will use the police and gendarmerie and strive to transform them into a specialised body for massacring the people.

But let it not believe the police will be able to do this for free. There is nothing superior to the people's and workers' initiative in confronting it. The already famous cats of the Cordoba students show us the way.

The student resistance will be bettered when it is taken up by the workers' movement. The most important clashes will take place in the streets, in the demonstrations and student and worker rallies that are being prepared. The best thing is to try to get these rallies authorised. If to get authorisation, it is necessary to do them in closed premises, we should do them there. The important thing is that once the rally is resolved, it must have a body of activists ready to support it against the attack of the police or the provocateurs. The activists must be organised, permanently equipped with all the necessary means to fight bravely but also avoiding provocations and adventures.

Workers and student activists have not yet adjusted to the new circumstances. However, they are only new to the young generation: the Argentinian workers' and popular movement has been

built and developed in a relentless struggle against police and fascist repression. We must insist on this historical experience: demonstrations and rallies, once resolved, are held, and picket lines of activists put their lives at risk by guaranteeing them by all means. Let the regime know that every demonstration or rally will be a test of fire.

To achieve this, the world revolutionary movement has made considerable progress. The time has come for the activists, strongly organised and supported by the student body, the people and the workers' movement, to apply this experience.

If the situation were to worsen to a degree that would force the government to take the army out on the streets, the work must change its tone: from confrontation to the persuasion of our class brothers under service. Before they get to that point, we must talk to every comrade under service, to convince them of the justice of our struggle.

## For a left front

For a left front of the parties and organisations that claim to be of the working class to stop the government offensive! Let's avoid the trap of the democratic front or unity!

The government, just as it has launched an offensive against the university and the student movement, will launch another one in a preventive way against the vanguard parties, including the left.

All the groups and parties claiming to be from the working class have the problem of how to confront the government and its self-defence.

This defence is combined with two phenomena: the irreversible crisis that Stalinism has in the whole world since Nikita Khrushchev's speech and in our continent, in a dramatic way, since the Cuban Revolution; and the opposition of bourgeois and middle-class political sectors and parties to the government.

And today we find that two lines that we had rejected for years as opportunists are filled with new content: the left front and the Democratic Union.<sup>21</sup> Why?

### Before...

The left front had no meaning (at the beginning of Peronism) because the Argentinian left, the socialist and communist parties, were the momentary transmission belt, within the workers' movement, of the Yankee colonisation. The Democratic Union was the instrument, the political organisation of that same colonisation in the country.

### Now

The situation is different with some socialist parties, left-wing groups and the Communist Party itself. They may be sectarian or ultra-opportunistic but the objective situation has placed them in opposition to the US regime and colonisation. They can no longer be defined as "the momentary transmission belt of the Yankee colonisation in the workers' movement", as in 1945.

The crisis suffered by the Communist Party will accelerate at this stage, although superficially the struggle in clandestinity seems to prove otherwise. Inevitably, the bureaucratic tendencies will lean towards the structuring of a popular democratic front with the People's Radicals and other liberal sectors of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie; the other tendency will tend towards

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<sup>21</sup> **Democratic Union** (UD) was an electoral alliance made in 1945 between the Radical Civic Union, the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the Progressive Democratic Party to face the Peron-Quijano ticket in the 1946 presidential elections. It was supported and financed by the Rural Society, the Argentine Industrial Union, and the Stock Exchange and by the former United States Ambassador, Spruille Braden. [Editor]



militant resistance, relying as the only way out on the independent mobilisation of the working class. The right-wing line of the popular democratic front will clash with the objective situation itself for a whole stage since it will be almost impossible for them to find bourgeois liberal sectors willing to confront the reactionary government in a front with the Communist Party.

We should not rule out the possibility, if the dictatorial and reactionary character of the government and the economic recession deepens, that bourgeois sectors will accept the united front with Stalinism and with leaderships of the workers' or left-wing movement, and that therefore a bourgeois front of resistance to the dictatorial government will emerge a new Democratic Union.

Leaving aside that for us it seems difficult to become concrete since the bourgeois parties aspire to achieve the elections using pressure and not by mobilisation or agreement with Stalinism if it were to be constituted it would be very different to the 1945 front and it would be transformed into a relatively progressive phenomenon, and at the same time in a dangerous trap for the workers' movement. Progressive as far as it fights against the government offensive, for the return to democratic rights; a dangerous trap if the workers' movement accepts the bourgeois and opportunist leadership instead of taking it as a circumstantial and limited agreement.

From this analysis our policy must emerge:

## The left front is a struggle front

We continue to be against the perspective and programme of democratic unity revived by Stalinism. We oppose it with our policy of class unity, which we transfer to the political level in the proposal of a left-wing front of all parties claiming to be from the working class. We want a front of the parties, which starts from the premise that only the working class, with its methods of struggle, can confront the current government.

The united front has the special goal of achieving common action among all the militants of the left. That is, the united front is not a propaganda platform for opposing different positions but the attempt to develop a platform that allows us to take common action. In other words, it is a front of struggle.

This will demonstrate at the same time, the opportunistic or sectarian role of the different leaderships, groups or parties of the left, essentially of the Communist Party.

We are proposing this at all levels, starting from leadership to leadership.

Today, the place where this front can develop most easily is in the student movement, since at the level of the factories and the mass movement; it will be very difficult to find the CP and the different sects. Instead, as we said, in the student movement this united front has immediate possibilities of being achieved through our slogan of maintaining and developing the centres of the FUA underground to transform it into a real anti-imperialist revolutionary student centre that joins the workers' movement and the reorganised CGT.

This proposal is part of the left front and the deep development of every common task we have with the left. To the leaderships and parties of the left, fundamentally to the CP and the anti-imperialist socialist parties, we say: let us defend ourselves from the attacks by the fascist groups in the University, let us organise the common publications, let us elaborate a common and minimum programme of action against the government (defence of the prisoners and democratic rights, Constituent Assembly, for the expropriation without payment of the national and foreign oligarchy to overcome the economic crisis, for a workers' and popular government, defence of North Vietnam and the FLN guerrillas, support for Socialist Cuba and the Guatemalan, Colombian and Venezuelan guerrillas).

To the leaderships and militants of the many left-wing groups and grouplets of the student movement we say: comrades, let us finish once and for all the endless discussions about the influence of lysergic acid on psychoanalysis, the history of the Argentinian left-wing groups and about the reasons for the differences between the Flemish and the Walloons in Belgium. The time has come for

common action, for us all to confront the reactionary government together. It was Marx, not us, who said that common action is worth more than discussions and programmes. The present government gives us the basis to achieve the front that unifies us in action. Let us not delay one minute more. This is the last chance to rise from the fifth dimension of lysergic acid, the disputes of the Walloons and Flemish or the pedantic exhumation of yellowish documents of ours for the endless polemic, to the common action that surpasses everything and that proves those who have it right. Let us not stop discussing anything but let us accompany those discussions with a common activity against the common enemies: the reactionary government and the opportunists.

The common slogans that fit the reality must be accompanied by the call for militant class methods, of action, and without hiding that this minimum programme of common action is part of our revolutionary objectives, of linking with the workers' movement, of development of the class struggle, for a workers' and popular government. We do not suspend by the united front any of our positions, keeping a differentiation and political independence within it. These proposals will develop the crisis of Peronism and Stalinism and will allow the best groups of independent leftist activists to be nucleated within the common action.

## Regarding the bourgeois opposition

Nor should we have a sectarian position. We are in agreement with it on every problem in which we agree but completely against the possibility of a united front since the axis of our front is precisely the struggle against imperialism and the bourgeoisie linked to it, a proposal which cannot be accepted by the bourgeoisie itself.

## The new "Democratic Union"

If the historical variant of the emergence of a workers' and popular resistance front made up of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois sectors were to occur, we should study tactically our policy towards it, starting from the premise that our strategy cannot be other than to break it up to develop the workers' and popular front with workers' leadership or the left front, on the one hand, and its transformation into a limited agreement with the bourgeois parties, on the other.

These possibilities are already present in the student movement, the only place where Stalinism and the left have strength. To our proposal of a left front, felt by all the currents and militants of the left in the student movement, the Stalinists respond with a proposal of an anti-interventionist front with all the bourgeois currents: Catholics, integralists, gorillas,<sup>22</sup> Radicals, etc.

This proposal is subordinated, on the part of Stalinism, to the fact that they notice at some point that they may lose their leadership; then they turn to the left so as not to lose it to the bourgeois currents.

Our policy is clear on this. We do not refuse a limited and precise agreement with the bourgeois currents to fight against the measures of the government but we raise first the slogan of making a left front so it is this front which calls for or discusses the agreement with the bourgeois currents.

If the establishment of the anti-interventionist front becomes a *fait accompli*, we will participate in it tactically with our programme to get the left front to become independent of the bourgeoisie. At the same time, as long as this has not been achieved, we propose an action plan that clearly distinguishes us from the bourgeois currents and that serves to group the leftist sectors: agreement with the CGT and the workers' movement, mobilisations that are indeed revolutionary in their methods.

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<sup>22</sup> **Gorilla** is a term from Argentina's domestic politics, historically used to refer in a derogatory or pejorative way to those who gave a coup against Peron. Over the years, the term has been extended to a greater or lesser extent to other countries in Latin America, as synonymous with "reactionary right". [Editor]

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## Let's build union oppositions

The acceptance in the most important unions of the bosses-government plans, by the bureaucracy of the different sectors, means its historical crisis, possibly definitive. We are referring, of course, to the bureaucratic regime as a whole since certain bureaucrats or sectors of the bureaucracy can re-adjust themselves in the face of the government and bosses offensive. The discredit of the bureaucracy, the lack of trust in it, is reaching incredible limits. The workers and union activists feel they are left to their own devices in the defence of their standard of living and work. And they notice, at the very least, a vacuum, a lack of direction.

In contrast, the trade union vanguard draws important experiences: if the union and its leadership do nothing or cannot do anything about the situation, they are not willing to leave the way open for the bosses and the government. But we do not believe that all the union activists repudiate the leadership because of this. Many consider they really can't do anything or that what they do — negotiate on all levels — is fine. The attitude of the activists goes then, from the feeling of emptiness (nobody defends us) to the understanding and repudiation of the role of the bureaucracy.

The bosses' government offensive forces the vanguard to draw on its experience without giving it any breathing space. Lay-offs, factory closures, the intensification of work, the brutal cost of living all demand that the best activists face up to the defence of their comrades. This is when they find themselves left to their own devices. All the union leadership does is negotiate and, ultimately, forced by circumstances, provoke a conflict without preparation. Activists who begin to despair open up to any advice, opinion, or discussion that will allow them to stop the bosses' offensive. Hence the current ease of contact with union activists: they are thirsty to discuss and change ideas on how best to stop the bosses in their sector, factory or section.

This situation of the vanguard, which sees its fellow workers and itself threatened by a brutal offensive by the bosses and sees no way out, facilitates union work, elevating it from the merely industrial to union work. The idea is for the union activists to make contact with each other to exchange experiences and try to prevent the bosses from achieving their goals.

We must start from the immediate problems that concern them (the bosses-government offensive) and then raise them to an understanding of the role of the bureaucracy. On the other hand, the bureaucracy, to save some of its prestige, will often be forced to speculate with class-struggle positions. Thus, it would be a serious mistake to focus these contacts between activists of a union on denouncing the union bureaucracy. The struggle, the contacts between the activists are immediately caused by the anti-worker offensive of the bosses and the government. Therefore, the fundamental objective of these contacts cannot be other than to coordinate the experiences to confront this offensive, including the possibility of the united front with the bureaucracy and the bureaucratic sectors that also resist, although with their methods, the bosses' offensive.

It is necessary to generalise, provoke, and develop these contacts between union activists from the same union and even from the same area and locality. The objective of these meetings and contacts is the same, everywhere: how to stop the bosses-government offensive. From them must emerge (and our efforts must be in this direction) a higher form of vanguard organisation. This organisation should publish a bulletin that centralises the experiences and advises how to deal with the offensive of the exploiters.

This organisation and publication of the union bulletin of the activists of the union, area or locality has a long-term objective: to prepare and organise a class-struggle union opposition that will challenge the leadership of the union to the bureaucracy. This objective, we insist, is long term, since only large mobilisations against the bosses or the union leaderships will make possible the transformation of these contacts and bulletins into a union opposition that can dispute the leadership of the union to the bureaucracy. The current work to establish contact among union activists, so they exchange experiences on how best to confront the bosses' offensive, rides on the main work which continues to happen at the level of the factories and the historical tendency to structure alternative class-struggle leaderships.

The solution of this situation comes out of the framework of the current apprenticeship of the vanguard, of our bond and work on it and of the current crisis of leadership, to move to another arena: the mobilisation of the working class.

This will set the tone for overcoming the current contradictions. In other words: without the workers' rise, there will be no overcoming of the leadership, nor massive materialisation of the union oppositions. This is precisely what makes our proposal of union opposition a propagandistic and virtual line, probable and not absolutely sure, since it takes into account elements of reality, the advance of the vanguard and the total crisis of leadership but the start of the massive struggles of the workers' movement is unpredictable, the only element that will make possible the emergence and victory of true class-struggle union oppositions.

## **The leadership crisis of the workers' movement and the role of the party**

Any change in the objective situation has a serious danger for the party: its adaptation to the new situation. This danger is aggravated when it has been brought about by a defeat of the workers' movement. There are inevitably centrifugal tendencies concerning the future or the past of the party. Impressionist, essentially petty-bourgeois criticisms arise. They try to overcome the harsh reality of the present by placing the objective blame for the leadership of the workers' movement on the subjective ones of the party in the past, and they try to overcome the same reality with a proactive attitude: the party, with a bold formula of any kind, can immediately overcome the reality of class relations. Even more serious than this is the policy of doing nothing but propaganda, without understanding that a revolutionary party is only made at the beat and the forefront of the possible and real actions of the working class.

In every change of situation, the true revolutionary Marxist position, about the party, is to highlight precisely the specific form, national or regional, in which the most important world contradiction is manifested: the crisis of leadership of the mass movement and the stages of this overcoming linked to the development of the party. This will be our method.

The new situation, in this regards, combines two decisive facts: the historical crisis of the current leadership of the Argentinian workers' movement with the existence, also historical, of a national revolutionary party, ours, with great influence on the vanguard of the working class and student movement. This is why, contradictorily, the new situation opens enormous possibilities to our party, at the same time as serious dangers. Among these, we must point out the following: first, the attempt to overcome the actions of the mass movement and the formation of new revolutionary leadership, by voluntarist measures separated from the mass movement and our hard work within it; second, the belief that the development of our party is independent in a region from the national party, and nationally from the regional and the world party; and, third, more dangerous than any other, as we said, is the tendency to only make propaganda or save the party.

On the contrary, it is a question of continuing more than ever the work in the workers' and mass movement; participating and leading all its actions, to accelerate and overcome the present crisis of leadership of the workers' movement and at the same time being aware that our party can only develop as an integral part of a world and regional party. In other words, party-building is an uneven and combined process, national, regional and worldwide. Without work in the national mass movement, there is no development of the party but neither there is without the development of regional and world leadership that overcomes regional or national centrist, opportunist or sectarian deviations. The fact this is a contradictory, dramatic process, full of drawbacks, does not mean there is another one or that it can be avoided. It is the only one that exists and we must understand that.

Within the present situation of the country, which imposes the defence to the bitter end of the workers' movement and the training of the vanguard, the defence and development of the party is transformed into one of the great political tasks.

It goes without saying that there is no other defence of the party than to always participate in every action of the mass movement in the front line. But in the actions of masses and not of just the party although without practising any kind of tail-ending.

The number one duty of the party is to fight for the leadership of the workers' movement or to pose itself as an alternative to the present leadership in the face of all the problems of the working class. This duty becomes urgent in this stage, given the crisis of the union leadership and our character of the only national party with certain influence in the whole working-class vanguard.

We are neither propagandists nor the left opposition of the union bureaucracy but its fierce enemies since we are fighting to replace it in the leadership and for that, there is no other way than to participate and aspire to lead all the possible or real actions of the workers' movement.

Having clarified this, we must emphasise that the current defensive stage imposes on us and enables us to achieve three fundamental tasks:

a) Defend and intensify our current work in the student and workers' movement, developing our left front approach to defend ourselves, essentially through clandestine work and propaganda. The party makes its great leap from legal work, with important elements of agitation, to illegal work, with a fundamental insistence on propaganda. We must learn in-depth the two tasks of propaganda and clandestine work, which are very easy if you know how to face them.

b) Use to death of every legal loophole. If the party is not educated in the use of legality, a death certificate has practically been issued. Every Bonapartist regime, because of the contradictions it suffers, inevitably leaves legal loopholes that have always been its undoing: elections under Louis Bonaparte, elections in Bolivia under the fraudulent government of Urralagoitia, creation of the soviets to oppose them to the clandestine socialist organisations, by the czar in Russia. The use of legal loopholes is a life and death issue for the party.

c) To help the process of Latin American revolution with everything. We are in a position to come out of this Bonapartist stage as the great party of the Argentine working class. This stage will possibly liquidate the current bureaucratic union leaderships. The field is now clear for us. If we do all we said through these pages, the PRT (Revolutionary Workers Party) will be the party of the workers' revolution in our country. We have no doubts.