



Nahuel Moreno

**1954, Key Year of
Peronism**

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1956

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Foreword to the 2021 edition

In the 1940s, Peronism emerged in Argentina. Since then, it has endured as one of the main protagonists of the country's political and economic life.

One of the most outstanding features of Peronism in its origins is that being a bourgeois nationalist political movement, it won the massive and fervent support of the working class, transforming itself into the backbone of its union organisation. For decades, the advances and setbacks of the workers have been — and somehow continue to be, although Peronism has long since lost that devotion that was synthesised in “life for Peron”— directly linked to this support to a bourgeois political leadership and a bureaucratic union.

For its part, a tiny revolutionary force also began to develop in those same years. We refer to the current of Trotskyism led by Nahuel Moreno, which was taking its first steps in its bonds with the workers in the industrial heart of the time, Avellaneda, in Greater Buenos Aires. This is how a small organisation was founded in 1944, the Grupo Obrero Marxista (Marxist Workers Group, GOM).

To define very briefly the characteristics that identify this current, let's say it was the only sector of Trotskyism that set out to grow alongside the Peronist workers, in their struggles, from their internal commissions and delegates committees, but fighting politically the government the workers supported. Specifically, it did not capitulate to the pressure of Peronist bourgeois nationalism. At the same time, it also fought against the growing bureaucratisation of the unions, demanding trade unionism independent of all bosses' governments and with democratic and mass-meeting methods. This task of building a revolutionary party together with the Peronist workers, without any sectarianism, was developed against the opportunist revisionist orientation of the Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel sector of the Fourth International (International Secretariat). This sector encouraged a totally wrong position of capitulation to the Stalinist communist parties in Europe and to the bourgeois nationalist leaderships in the semi-colonial countries. Its small group of local supporters supported the Peron government.

This pamphlet, *1954, Key Year of Peronism*, was reissued by the PST in 1972 and by *El Socialista* in 2012. It is one of the works that collectively expresses the theoretical elaboration and the political proposals that were developed in the direct heat of the participation in the class struggle in the 1950s, among the majority Peronist workers. In it,

the central definition of that time was developed: “No economic, political, or military phenomenon of any Latin American country can be understood if it is not understood that as of 1939 the Yankee colonisation plan became an immediate threat, an urgent problem for all Latin American countries.” After the invasion of Guatemala in 1954 and the fall of the nationalist government of Jacobo Arbenz, the work pointed out, only Argentina had not yet succumbed to the imperialist

offensive. This was the fundamental framework for raising a revolutionary policy in the face of the Peronist government and for the workers who followed it.

At that time the POR published its newspaper *La Verdad* (The Truth) and it was built as part of the Buenos Aires Federation of the Socialist Party of the National Revolution (PSRN), led by the brothers Emilio and Enrique Dickmann, who had distanced themselves from the Socialist Party because of their anti-worker positions and had managed to obtain the legality to participate in the 1954 elections.

The pamphlet characterized in all its breadth the offensive of Yankee imperialism against Argentina and all of Latin America and gave a program and slogans to promote the struggle of the workers against this imperialist offensive and in defence of their interests before the bourgeois nationalist government headed by Peron.

The offensive of Yankee imperialism intensified in 1955, driven by growing opposition to the government among the bosses, the active mobilization of its faithful from the Catholic Church and the “gorillas”, Radical, Social Democratic and Communist parties. The political positions and controversies of the party to fight against the coup that was finally consummated in September from 1955 have been compiled in the work *Who knew how to fight against the “liberating revolution” before 16 September 1955?* (also available at nahuelmoreno.org).

Over 60 years have gone by. Even today, the Argentine working class has not managed to build a political alternative independent of any bosses’ government, particularly of the successive Peronist governments, although they no longer have that solidity of the early times. To advance in this way, and fundamentally in the perspective of achieving an authentic government of the workers and the people and the victory of the socialist revolution, the experience and the elaborations that Nahuel Moreno and his current forged in his long career are an essential tool. This is why the reissue of this work, which is at the same time both, lived history and present and future political struggle.

All notes are by the editor.

Mercedes Petit¹

August 2021

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), 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); *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) and in *International Correspondence* (www.uit-ci.org).

1954, Key Year of Peronism

The most important events to take into account in the working-class struggle against imperialism and capitalism, during the last decade, have been:

1. The process of colonisation of Latin America by Yankee imperialism intensified enormously since the beginning of the Second World War; its course continued with a series of important victories for imperialism and reached its climax with the intervention in Guatemala. This intervention signals an important change, in which Yankee imperialism goes on to colonise practically the entire continent, even with armed intervention.

2. Although British imperialism got as much or more colonising covenants from Peronism than it did during the infamous decade,² it is a fact it could not use them and its relationship with the country and with the government changed as a consequence of its weakening and the world crisis. The actual retreat of British imperialism, regardless of the papers signed to date, could not be used by Yankee imperialism to replace it and colonise us. This was because of exceptional historical circumstances: a semi-colonial bourgeois economy not complementary to Yankee imperialism; the determined support of British imperialism; the relative power of this bourgeois economy, a privileged situation as a consequence of the war and the postwar period. The disappearance of some of these exceptional historical circumstances increases the danger of Yankee colonisation.

3. The capitalist development in the country after an intense evolution during the last 20 years, added to the agrarian crisis that took place in this period, has a decisive influence and weight in the current economy of the [Argentine] Republic. This process of industrial development was accompanied, during the decade from 1940 to 1950, by a general enrichment which, as of this last year, transforms into a period of slow worsening of the general situation of the country and of the working class. After more than 10 years in which the government did not appeal to the loans of imperialism, Cereijo,³ in 1950, materialises the first loan of imperialism in the Peronist era. The law of establishment of capitals is another way to open the door to new direct or indirect loans. The situation of the working class would worsen day by day, although not in a catastrophic way.

4. The privileged situation of the country during the last 10 years and the profound differences of the Argentine economy with the other Latin American countries have done no more than hide the scourges of the national economic structure: backwardness of the industry, large landed property, petty internal market for the lack of Latin American economic and political unity, production to increase capitalist and imperialist profits. These disguised blights begin to manifest and threaten to ruin the country and the workers.

2 The **Infamous Decade** in Argentina is the name given to the 13 years that began in 1930 with the *coup d'état* against President Hipolito Yrigoyen by Jose Felix Uriburu. This decade was marked by lack of popular participation, prosecution to the opposition, torture to political prisoners, growing dependence of Argentina from British imperialism, and the growth of corruption.

3 **Ramon Antonio Cereijo** (1913-2003) was an economist, Minister of Finance of the Peron government.

5. During the last 10 years of general enrichment, there was a colossal strengthening and renewal of the classes most linked to the capitalist industrial production. The industrial bourgeoisie, the modern middle class, and the industrial proletariat came to have a new specific weight in the relations between the classes. At present, the working class has an extraordinary specific weight because its increase in absolute figures is much greater than that of the other classes, which, added to its special characteristics, gives it a colossal superiority over all classes of the country. In addition, the specific weight of the capitalist zone par excellence, Greater Buenos Aires, which has more than a quarter [of the working class] of the entire Republic.

6. The recent formation or strengthening of these classes has not given them time to crystallise, neither them nor their more advanced sectors, in political organisations that reflect their interests. But this political crystallisation is inevitable, even if it is opposed by the attempt of a Peronist totalitarian organisation. Peronism wants to stop or control the new political organisations in formation.

7. The exploiters as a whole, mainly the new industrial class, try to overcome the crisis in development with the equivocal slogan of productivity, which for them means greater exploitation of the workers, and through economic agreements with Yankee imperialism.

8. All this change in relations between the classes, the government, and Yankee imperialism was reflected in important political changes. Within the ultra-reactionary nature of its social and political legislation, the government allowed a broader democratic play with the working class and Yankee imperialism, with the aim of strengthening its internal situation in its negotiations.

Thus, on the one hand, it strengthened its relations with Yankee imperialism and, on the other hand, it started a new policy in relation to wages: apparent lack of interest so as not to lose face. In the face of the emergence of a new political force that tries to play the game of complete capitulation to Yankee imperialism —the Church and its party—, the government tries to preserve itself with a timid campaign that does not attack either imperialism or the Church at its base.

9. The emergence of Frondizism⁴ at the head of Radicalism and the attempts to form a Catholic party show the crisis of Radicalism as an organ of capitulation to Yankee imperialism and as a representative of the exploiters who want that capitulation. Frondizism is no longer useful to those plans and the Church arises to create this political organ.

10. The working class had begun a whole mobilisation; slow, but mobilisation nevertheless, which was cut by the failure and the defeats of the last collective agreements. Despite the defeat, there has been learning by the working class, mainly by its vanguard. They have understood the role of the CGT leadership and the harmful dependence of the unions on the State. Despite the momentary retreat of the working class, the vanguard assimilates the experience and prepares for the new rise, which must begin very soon, in the form of skirmishes against the concrete manifestations of the bosses' offensive. The great experience the vanguard has taken or is taking out is that the struggle for economic improvements becomes a struggle against the state trade union bureaucracy and against the government's repressive measures and of union control.

Let's stop the Yankee plan to colonise Latin America

Because geographically it is part of the same continent, US imperialism finds itself having to colonise the most developed semi-colonial continent in the world: Latin America (we except Eastern Europe). Latin Americans, in turn, find themselves struggling to achieve full independence and unity against the most powerful imperialism history has known. The two phenomena complement each other: the United States has encountered and will continue to encounter fierce resistance from Latin American countries to its colonisation plans; the struggle of the Latin American countries for their liberation will be one of the most difficult, if not the most difficult. Furthermore, this colonising plan of the United States gives the anti-imperialist struggle an ultra-concrete and simple character: against the Yankee economic, political, and military plans.

⁴ Followers of **Arturo Frondizi** (1908–1995), an Argentinian lawyer and politician who was later on elected President of Argentina. Under his program of "Developmentalism", he encouraged increased foreign investment.

The beginning of the last Great War meant a very important change in the inter-imperialist relations and in the Yankee plans for Latin America. The European weakness and the colossal economic weight the United States was acquiring allowed it to accelerate its old plan of total colonisation of our continent. The year 1939 means the beginning of a new stage in Latin America; the stage of the drastic liquidation of the other imperialisms in the exploitation of our continent and the stage of the execution of the Yankee plan of colonisation in it. No economic, political, or military phenomenon of any Latin American country can be understood if it is not understood that as of 1939 the Yankee colonisation plan became an immediate threat, an urgent problem for all Latin American countries. In short, the phenomenon the world has seen clearly after the war, the Yankee plans to control and colonise the world began in 1939 on our continent. This decisive fact was not understood in all its scope by any current of the workers' movement. The world events have accelerated this Yankee tendency to the Latin American colonisation since its failures in the world reinforce its interest to the Latin American colonisation and to entrench themselves in the continent. This is why the struggle and resistance of the Latin American peoples to the American colonisation plans are so important. We are already almost part of the Yankee economic continent and our struggle is as important as that of the Yankee black workers' or peasants' movement.

In fact, this Yankee plan, which was put on the agenda since 1939 because of the circumstances already mentioned, was not denounced, nor understood in all its magnitude and importance for Latin America by any social or political current and, least of all, by the Communist Party, which for years served as a transmission belt of those colonisation plans in the workers' movement. We are no exception: we have not known how to make an exhaustive analysis of that plan and we have not been able to denounce it with all the magnitude and precision that were necessary.

Until the invasion of Guatemala, the Yankee plan had its victories and its defeats, its ups and downs. Although it had progressed, it could not be carried out completely since for its execution the diplomatic norms of the "good neighbour" were observed. The irruption of Castillo Armas in Guatemala is an important leap in the methods of Wall Street. With the dominion over Guatemala, the colonisation plan begins to come to an end. In the last two years, the State Department has managed to control almost all of Latin America; the fall of Vargas,⁵ the coup by Batista,⁶ Castillo Armas, the taking over of Paz Estenssoro,⁷ prove it. Contradictorily, the resistance and clarification of the Latin American mass movement accelerate colossally in relation to Yankee imperialism.

We must understand this relationship of forces, these defeats for the Latin American movement, in order to draw all the necessary conclusions for Latin America and our country, possibly the last stronghold not yet dominated by Yankee imperialism.

Let us avoid that Yankee imperialism dominate our country

This general trend, based on the colossal power of the US, to immediately transform all Latin America into a colony was clearly reflected in the national economy and politics since 1939. Since then, no political or economic phenomenon can be understood unless it is studied and unless this simple question is raised: what is the tactic of Yankee imperialism, in this emergency, to apply its colonisation plan?

5 **Getulio Vargas** (1882–1954) was President of Brazil, first as a dictator, from 1930 to 1945, and in a democratically elected term from 1951 until his suicide in 1954. He favoured nationalism, industrialisation, centralisation of the economy, measures which would improve the popular standard of living, and class conciliation. For the latter, Vargas won the nickname "The Father of the Poor".

6 **Fulgencio Batista** (1901–1973) was a military man and Cuban dictator. He was the elected President of Cuba from 1940 to 1944, and the U.S.-backed authoritarian ruler from 1952 to 1959, before being overthrown during the Cuban Revolution.

7 **Victor Paz Estenssoro** (1907–2001) was a Bolivian lawyer and politician; four times President of Bolivia for the bourgeois Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario (MNR – Nationalist Revolutionary Movement).

The crises of the Ortiz⁸ government, of Castillo⁹ later, and 4 June 1943 are mere episodes in this struggle of Yankee imperialism to colonise our country. Deep economic and social structure reasons, which have nothing to do with any racial characteristics, have conditioned our country not to be totally colonised. The main one of these reasons is that the entire capitalist structure of the country has been based on the production, for the world market, of agricultural products that are competitive of the US production. From this insoluble antagonism arises an organic incompatibility between Yankee imperialism and the national capitalist economy.

To this incompatibility is added the diversification of Argentine foreign trade and capitalist production, which gave the Argentine governments a broad base of manoeuvres. Another important reason is our country has been preponderantly exploited by British imperialism, although not totally. This situation of British semi-colony has lasted approximately until the nationalisation of the railways or until the expiration, by natural death, of the Roca-Runciman Treaty.¹⁰ The nationalisation of the railways shows the setback and general weakness of British imperialism in the world, reflected in particular in Latin America and in our country. Regardless of this, the agreements between British imperialism and the Peronist government, especially the purchase of the railways, subjectively represent a victory of British imperialism, since it weakened according to its momentary plans and convenience and not for an anti-imperialist offensive. Nevertheless, it was still an extraordinary setback. From that moment a period of slight British domination opens; domination that is friendly and social, on a defensive level by the British. Specifically, the senior partner of a firm went bankrupt and the junior partner tried by all means that this bankruptcy was as slight as possible being amenable to the plans of the senior partner. Notwithstanding, bankruptcy was still bankruptcy. This is how British imperialism, through its good relations with Peronism, achieved colonising pacts (mixed exploitation of the railways, an extension of the Roca-Runciman treaty, the signing of the Andes pact, etc.) but was unable, because of its general weakening, to make them comply. The infamous decade, of total submission to the Roca Runciman treaty and to British imperialism, with the nationalisation of the railways, was buried by British exhaustion and not by the anti-imperialist will of the government.

Our tendency was carried away by the unilateral analysis of diplomatic and commercial agreements, without seeing under the water the true relations between imperialism, the country, and the government. It was correct to denounce government capitulations but much more correct would have been to underline the true relations and, what is more important, the changes in inter-imperialist relations and with the country. Even much more favourable, for the country and the bourgeoisie, have been the relations with the other European imperialisms, which have come out of the war practically liquidated. In short, for Latin America, including for our country, the war had a consequence: the only imperialism that remained in a frankly offensive, colonising attitude was Yankee imperialism.

The contradiction for our country is that the war meant objectively — not subjectively — greater independence since British imperialism has not yet been replaced by Yankee imperialism, although this has already achieved two important steps to do so and tends with all its might to achieve it. Peronism is halfway between the weakening of British imperialism and submission to Yankee imperialism. Precisely the weakening of British imperialism explains, ultimately, two decisive facts of Peronism: the need to resort to social demagoguery to get the support of the working class

8 **Roberto Marcelino Ortiz** (1886–1942) was an Argentine politician, president of his country between 1938 and 1942. Shortly after he assumed as president, Ortiz became ill with diabetes, a disease that would later leave him completely blind. Because of this event, he delegated his powers to the vice president, Ramon S. Castillo.

9 **Ramon S. Castillo** (1873-1944) was a conservative Argentine lawyer, judge, and politician belonging to the National Democratic Party. In 1938 he became Vice President after the victory of Roberto M. Ortiz. Upon his death in 1942, Castillo assumed the position of President of the Nation. He was overthrown by the military coup known as the Revolution of 1943.

10 The **Roca–Runciman Treaty** was a commercial agreement signed on 1 May 1933 between Argentina and the United Kingdom signed in London by the Vice President of Argentina, Julio Argentino Roca, Jr, and the president of the British Board of Trade, Sir Walter Runciman.

and that it has systematically defeated, as a consequence of this support, the internal agents of US imperialism and colonisation.

Until 1944, the government resistance to Yankee imperialism follows the traditional line of relying on British imperialism, European imperialisms, and the bourgeois sectors friendly to them. This traditional anti-Yankee front was weakened day by day: the decay of its spine, British imperialism, and the desertion of fundamental sectors of the big bourgeoisie, financial oligarchy, big industrial bourgeoisie, and grain houses, which go over to the other side, to the pro-Yankee. The anti-Yankee front had to defeat the socialist and communist parties in the service of Yankee imperialism in the workers' movement. This defeat was easy, very easy. Two factors conditioned it: the betrayals of the old parties of the proletariat and the new working class litters not educated in the tradition of those parties. The ease of defeat allowed the subsequent support of the entire working class to the anti-Yankee front, although the working class was added to that front thanks to the demagoguery or social concessions the government makes, thanks to the extraordinarily good economic situation of the bourgeoisie.

The support of the working class, *en bloc*, as a class and throughout the country, allowed Peronism to defeat in the ballot boxes the Democratic Union and subsequently Radicalism as the outpost of Yankee colonisation in the country. These defeats forced Yankee imperialism and the sectors of the bourgeoisie linked to it trying to settle the problem through military coups. The threatening use of the working class, on the one hand, and the strength of the country's economic development, on the other, allowed Peronism to succeed in the coup phase of Yankee imperialism.

The weakening of British imperialism and the latent crisis of the national economy have been forcing the Peronist government to reach, or try to reach, important economic agreements with Yankee imperialism, in its eagerness to save the great capitalist and livestock profits. Imperialism, politically defeated, knows it is, or will be, essential in the economic field and seeks to impose increasingly colonising conditions. All this explains the important capitulations made by the government, which have not been, on the other hand, total surrender. The Rio de Janeiro Treaty and the loan, on the one hand, fall within this relationship; at the same time, the fact the bilateral agreement is not yet signed and the submission is not the total condition, on the other hand, the current contradictory situation.

The Peronist wins indirectly produced a deep crisis in Radicalism. Frondizism, as a new political current that reflects the modern urban middle class, does not provide the same usefulness to Yankee imperialism as [Radical] Unionism. In agreement with the most reactionary sectors of the bourgeoisie, it tries to use the Church to form a large Popular Party that will serve to structure a new Democratic Union, colonising, for the 1958 elections or to accompany, if necessary, the future coup d'états.

The political defeat of Yankee imperialism within the country forced it to change its tactics with the government and with the country. But it did not change its strategy. With either good or bad diplomatic relations, the plan is the same: it totally overpowers us or imposes, if possible, a Castillo Armas. Today, the almost complete Yankee victory in Latin America contrasts with its situation in Argentina.

Imperialism tries to solve this contradiction in favour of its plans, trying to use the critical Argentine economic situation in order to force the government to reach a colonising agreement.

Let us unite with other currents to denounce and stop the plans of colonisation of Latin America and our country

It is our obligation to systematically denounce the plans and advances of Yankee imperialism. Moreover, we must emphasise any independent attitude of the Latin American governments and any hesitation or claudication of them, i.e., the denunciation of the Yankee plans of Latin American colonisation must be a permanent factor of our activity.

Our first denunciations should be about visits by diplomats and secret negotiations. The workers must know what are the proposals and the negotiations carried out with the sinister Yankee imperialism. No secret negotiations!

This campaign against the Yankee colonisation plan must be broad, very broad, without sectarianism: agreements to carry out common acts where these plans are denounced, technical agreements with those timidly resisting these plans, etc. All this must be done in a bold way, without limitations. Everything that is coincidence, in this regard, must be developed without any sectarianism. Let the whole world know the most consistent fighters against the Yankee plan to colonise Latin America are us; that regardless of the antagonism that separates us from all Latin American governments and bourgeois or petty bourgeois currents, and of our intransigent class criticism of them, we stand for the unity and independence of our countries against Yankee colonisation.

At the scale of the United States, we must develop everything that unites the workers and anti-imperialist currents. Our criticism must be to develop this unity and not to hinder it. The diplomatic agreements of Santiago de Chile are positive in their formulation. Our criticism is not to its formulation but to its application by the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy. That the Commission in charge of applying the Santiago Accords be formed by democratically elected representatives of the Chilean and Argentine working class!

In other words, our strategic goal at this stage is to achieve a broad anti-imperialist Congress of Latin American workers to discuss the economic plan for all of Latin America, to paralyse the crisis and prevent the growing misery, to adopt a program of struggle against landowners and the national exploiters and, above all, against the Yankee plan of Latin American colonisation. If the immediate danger is not to understand the need for a bold union against the plans of Yankee imperialism in Latin America and in each of our countries, the opposite danger is to capitulate, to make concessions to the bourgeois tendencies that resist, that have frictions or that openly oppose the Yankee colonisation plans. This aspect of the anti-imperialist struggle, like all the minor ones, cannot deviate us from our historical goal: to liquidate exploitation in any of its forms or manifestations, with us at the head as representatives of the working class.

Just as we are for the defence of the country, of all its inhabitants, against the Yankee colonisation plan, we are also for the unconditional defence of the farmer or peasant against the offensive of the landowner. With the goal of defending the peasant, we are willing to unite with whomever, journalists, small-town merchants, Radical politicians, government officials or technicians. But what we will never accept is that to fight against the landowner together with other currents or personalities we must abandon our intransigent struggle against exploitation in all its forms, and mainly, the exploitation that our class, the working class, suffers from the own farmer. No conciliation in this regard. Whoever is willing to march together with us for a common goal — the struggle against the Yankee plan — must know we will never abandon, for a moment, our relentless struggle against the exploitation of the working class by the national exploiters.

In this way, we will strengthen the working class and, ultimately, the struggle against imperialism and the landlords since the working class is the only one capable of truly solving the problems of the other working classes. If we abandon the struggle of the workers or labourers against their *estanciero*¹¹ or industrialist, it is possible we will gain the timid sympathy of the latter or of a sector of them towards unity with us to go against the colonising plan but we will inevitably lose the trust of the worker or the labourer who verifies that, in the name of the fight against imperialism, his boss rides a Cadillac and he must die of hunger.

We are willing to join the *estanciero* or the industrialist against the colonising plan of imperialism and we will even arrive, in exceptional circumstances, to delimited agreements. But let everyone know, both the *estanciero* and the labourer, we are the party that reflects the historical and

¹¹ *Estancias* are large landholdings spread over extensive areas, often 10,000 ha or more. In the Argentinian grasslands, the pampas, *estancias* have historically been estates used to raise livestock (cattle or sheep). *Estanciero* is the owner of the *estancia*.

immediate interests of the labourers and, in this sense, we encourage and educate the labourers so they fight economically and politically against their boss as its natural enemy since he enriches at the expense of the workers' misery. This does not prevent that in a circumstantial fight or clash between the imperialist plans and the *estanciero* or industrial, we may reach a limited agreement with our enemy (the bosses) to fight the enemy of the country (imperialism).

We must and we can use the same tactic it in relation to Latin American governments, among them the Peronist. This has not yet been transformed into a Castillo Armas-like government. It offers, on the other hand, serious resistance to being totally controlled by the Yankees, despite the capitulations. We are willing to reach an agreement with the government to explain to the workers why the bilateral agreement with the US is not signed and why it should not be signed. Today, we lukewarmly agree with the government and its organisations it is necessary to fight against the military coup and the plans of the Church.

But we should not confuse these agreements with Peronist politics, which is diametrically opposed to ours. While Peronism respects and encourages capitalist profits, for us, there is no salvation and organisation of the national economy if capitalist and imperialist profits are not fully attacked. While Peronism believes that through government officials it can and should settle the disputes between capital and labour, as also carry out the economic plans, we believe that only the working class through its democratically elected representatives should rule the country to truly solve the economic problems for the benefit of workers and the nation. Our position, not for simple, ceases to be correct: no trust in the government bureaucracy or the national capitalists, although we agree with them at some point of the program and at some point in time; only the working class can rule us to really stop the Yankee plans for colonisation and to overcome the national economy for the benefit of the workers.

The social and political importance of the proletariat is decisive

The influence of modern capitalist development in the country has encompassed an almost total scope. Not because the industrial proletariat is a majority but because of the influence and development of capitalist industry in the country. All the classes linked to industrial capitalist production — industrial bourgeoisie, new middle class, and the industrial proletariat — have gained an enormous weight in their relations with the other classes. But this growth and greater importance have gained colossal dimensions in the industrial proletariat. It has become the decisive class, fundamental for its number and its weight in the country. The middle class, in its ancient and modern forms, plays a role of great importance but secondary, in the same way as the agrarian revolution does. This change, of fundamental importance, in the relations between the classes in the country, is linked to the fundamental importance of the industrial urban area: Greater Buenos Aires. With its five million inhabitants, which means a little over $\frac{1}{4}$ of all the country inhabitants, this colossal urban industrial concentration directly shows the importance, the decisive weight of capitalist production and the proletariat in the general relations of the country. At the same time, it shows also its backwardness because it remains an important petty-bourgeois concentration.

Peronism is nothing more than a confirmation and indirect demonstration of this fact. Within modern Argentina, only two governments had a broad popular base: Radicalism and Peronism. Radicalism rested fundamentally on the people, on the poorer middle class of cities and towns. Peronism, on the other hand, achieved the support as a class of the modern industrial proletariat. This is a historical event, which shows the relative weight of the proletariat in the whole country has become decisive.

But this support of the workers to Peronism has taken place in historical conditions completely favourable for Peronism and the bourgeoisie, of general enrichment. Important sectors of the proletariat have become petty-bourgeois in their standard of living or have improved it substantially. Because of this and its relatively recent social formation, the industrial proletariat, like the new

middle class and even the new bourgeois sectors, have not yet socially stratified and have not settled politically.

The classes, class sectors, and the vanguard of those sectors, especially the most important — the working class — have not adopted their political organisation. In recent years, the political life of the country has turned around the Yankee colonising offensive, the contras, or the defence of the country as it was (bourgeois and of *estancias*) and of Peronism. The general enrichment and the recent formation or strengthening of the modern classes have caused the lack of political delimitation of the different classes. The general impoverishment, by emphasising all economic and social contradictions, puts on the agenda the sedimentation and political action of each class and its vanguard. The proletariat, which has already voted as a class for Peronism, that is, for who reflects and defends an Argentina bourgeois and of *estancias*, will seek its own political and union representation, surpassing Peronism as an alien representation. The formation of the Workers' Party is the most important historical task.

Only the government of the Argentine working class will avoid the danger of crisis looming over the country and the workers

From the capitalist point of view, Argentina is the most developed country in Latin America, although Independence brought the distribution of the land, the emergence of the large landed property. It did not inherit from the colonial period semi-feudal relations of importance.

The agrarian and industrial revolutions, which began at the end of the last century and which are complementary and parallel until the First World War, in a certain sense, had the hindrance of the great landed property until the great crisis. As a result, a massive settlement, a colossal colonisation of independent farmers has not been achieved but rather a relatively small and sporadic one. This is why an extraordinary internal market did not emerge which would have allowed the subsequent development of a very powerful industry. Despite this, agricultural colonisation in Argentina was the most important in Latin America and created the most powerful internal market in the entire south of our continent. This is why agricultural colonisation is accompanied by the emergence of modern industry, both for foreign and domestic trade.

The First World War interrupts this process of general capitalist development, upward and parallel, agrarian and industrial revolution, development of the world and domestic trade, to enter deep contradictions.

Until the great crisis of 1929, there is a relative development of agrarian colonisation and important technological development of industrial production. Beginning in 1929, Argentine agrarian production entered a deep crisis in opposition to the industry that developed in an extensive form protected by the semi-protectionist policy of conservative governments. This industrial development has the limit of a restricted internal market, impoverished by the agrarian crisis. That is, industrial development is no longer parallel to the development of colonisation and agrarian production but its opposite. This will be, from then on, one of the basic contradictions of the capitalist structure of the nation. Industrial development is no longer based on the internal market of small producers (farmers, market growers, etc.) but on their crisis and their subsequent proletarianisation. The purchasing power of the domestic market increases by incorporating these proletarian layers but it creates the conditions for a violent crisis of overproduction as we have never seen, given that the new layers incorporated into industrial production have been removed from the countryside, not replaced by new litters of small producers, i.e., independent buyers. The importation of machinery and foreign capital allowed the bourgeoisie to develop industrial production without resorting to the mass use of unemployed agrarian workers. The infamous decade is the decade of unemployment and misery, of industrial development and the agrarian crisis; it is the decade of the country's general impoverishment, despite industrial development.

This process of general decline of agrarian production and industrial development continues at the beginning of the Second World War but with an important change: the massive use of rural workers, without jobs because of the agrarian crisis.

There is also a relative enrichment because of two facts. On the one hand, the total lack of foreign competition and, on the other, that during the war and in the years immediately following almost no part of the national income was used to renew and surpass the technical level of the productive apparatus. In other words, this general enrichment was, in a certain sense, accelerated wear of the machines and the inherited techniques and a mortgage on the future. The industrial development is carried out using a greater amount of labour and not through the overcoming of the technique and the incorporation of new machinery.

The postwar period, with the colossal prices of agricultural products, allowed the renovation of the light industry equipment needed, with urgency, but the technique of the production and transport apparatus of the country was not substantially renewed. By the year 1949, this situation began to make a crisis. The Korean War allowed postponing this crisis by raising the prices of raw materials although the crisis was not overcome and it continued to drag, which creates increasingly serious problems for the country and the workers.

The attempts to overcome it by making a new agrarian colonisation have failed. In the same way as those attempts made to achieve “humanitarian” investments of Yankee imperialism since the latter will make these investments with the aim of colonising us completely. In these conditions, the bourgeoisie and the government see the solution in a policy of austerity of the working class, of greater exploitation of it and of development of marginal or unproductive branches of production, such as oil, blast furnaces, etc. A stage of general impoverishment has opened that will be characterised by the use of important parts of the national income in the acquisition of the machines and the technology the production apparatus needs and in developing very expensive industries to save foreign currency, such as blast furnaces or oil. This serious situation, this economic pincer, will be inexorable under the current capitalist regime.

We alert the working class. Although the crisis has not yet manifested itself with intensity and, on the contrary, exceptional circumstances such as relatively intense capitalist development and the important diversification of foreign trade have prevented the full manifestation of this organic crisis, the working class has to ask itself: Why has the standard of living systematically lowered for two or three years? Why has there been a tendency for a decisive economic agreement with Yankee imperialism for four years? Simply because the bosses and the government know of the serious contradictions that plague the national economy.

Yankee imperialism tries to use these contradictions to wrest colonising pacts from the country and the government. The bosses try to overcome these contradictions by “capitalising”, a term that, in plain English, means to get greater profits by super-exploiting the workers. The government aims to reach an agreement with the Yankees but avoiding capitulating completely to the colonising pacts and helping the “capitalisation” plan of the bourgeoisie and trying to save social peace and the support of the working class.

Our party, which reflects the historical interests of the proletariat and the country, disagrees and opposes all the aforementioned solutions since they leave standing imperialist exploitation, the landlord’s income, the profits of the *estancia* owners and industrialists, which leave standing the economic and political division of Latin America. We believe these are precisely the reasons for the crisis that is dragging the country and the violent crisis that will inevitably happen. The good harvests and prices in the world market have only delayed the crisis but the real reasons for them are those we have mentioned. In our country, all the structure and economic policy are directed to guarantee the capitalist and imperialist profits and the income of the landlords. Hence, there is no Latin American union because the same happens in all other Latin American countries: the landlords, capitalists and imperialist companies defend their “market” from the competition of other capitalists. For having guaranteed, for years, the increasing profits of the imperialist livestock and industrial companies, the national industry is not equipped.

That is why only substantive solutions will overcome or avoid the underlying crisis which has not yet surfaced but which workers already feel. These substantive solutions are:

- Plan the national economy taking into account mainly the other Latin American countries and the growing increase in real wages of the workers.
- Radically eliminate agricultural rent, whether paid to the landowner or the State. The current or future farmer must be the owner, paying nothing for the land he works. This will allow a massive amplification of agrarian colonisation and immigration and an unsuspected expansion of the internal market.
- The systematic increase in the real salary of all workers. This increase will be carried out thanks to a progressive brutal tax that will fall solely and exclusively on the profits of capitalist and *estancia* owners.
- Ultra-democratic workers' control of large companies, to avoid "tricks".
- Congress to draw up plans for Latin American economic cooperation and stop the offensive of Yankee imperialism, of all the workers' organisations of the continent.
- Immediate nationalisation of large foreign companies and large financial consortiums. CADE [Argentine Electrical Company] and the meatworks must belong to the country and since they are already paid they must not be paid for.
- Rupture of the Rio de Janeiro treaty and all pacts tying us to Yankee imperialism.

Only one class heading the government is capable of applying these measures: the working class supported by all workers.

The working class does not believe in this, nor does it believe there are serious contradictions in the national economy. It is our duty to insist now, systematically, that the working class must rule the country to save itself and save the nation.

As nowadays there is no truly representative organisation of the working class that has remote possibilities of taking power, our campaign in this sense must have a propagandistic rather than an agitative character.

We cannot seriously believe the CGT can take power because it is part of the power (and not precisely because it takes part in it but because it is controlled by the government). In short, there is no possibility the CGT take the government in its entirety. Therefore, although we can insist that CGT representatives go to ministries or take all the government for the sole and exclusive benefit of the working class, we must be aware this is impossible because of the nature of the CGT and, consequently, it is necessary to add to the tactical slogans the description of the true democracy and independence of the workers' movement that would make this slogan feasible. We will not propose economic ministry of the CGT in isolation but democratically elected in a Congress, after a broad discussion among all the tendencies of the workers' movement to know what economic program the working class will apply, through its representatives, in the economic management of the country.

In any case, with this report, our tendency opens a dialogue of historical character with our class and with each worker. To solve the crisis, basic measures are needed and only the working class in power will adopt them.

Let's stop the offensive of the General Economic Confederation (CGE) against the workers

The bosses, now firmly organised in the CGE, face the latent crisis of the Argentine economy with a simple plan: to exploit the working class as much as possible. Not because the bosses are against the technification of production but because by following the goals of capitalist production — getting profits, benefits — the bosses try to get them by all means and the easiest and most expedient is, precisely, to increase exploitation. This is the way the CGE faces the technification of production.

The Peronist government has made and makes the greatest efforts to control and, as far as possible, curb this bosses' offensive in order to guarantee the social peace so necessary for the bosses themselves. At the same time, it defends the purchasing power of the market. But these attempts to channel the capitalist offensive against the working class to avoid a violent reaction from it prevents neither the CGE offensive nor that the government itself approve, officialise, the most important measures of that offensive. By government orders, the CGT does the same.

The CGE aims to achieve legislation that directly benefits it. Currently, it requests the foreign currency from foreign trade be granted to it, in order to be the one which distributes it among the companies. This request means asking that all the foreign trade of the country be controlled by the industrial bourgeoisie. The CGE dares to request this because it has already made very important advances.

During the past two years, the bosses have achieved victory after victory. The most important of these has been the last bargaining agreements, with the important price increases they gave rise to. Indeed, over the past years, the government allowed important increases that made life more expensive and decreased the real wage of the worker. The last bargaining agreements raised the problem: the working class will pay the wage increases itself, ultimately harming itself, decreasing its real wage. CGE advocated this policy and the government, tempering the claims of CGE, ultimately gave the solution the CGE requested: increase wages but increasing prices much more.

But not only was there a capitalist offensive in relation to real wages, .i.e., with the high cost of living but also within the factory in the pace of work, in the medical service, as well as the inhuman treatment given to the workers inside the factory. In all these aspects, the bosses have made advances and the workers have retreated.

In other words, the important advances Peronism has granted to the workers have begun to be lost during the last years. The person who does not acknowledge that under Peronism the working class improved extraordinarily in their standard of living, or even small gentrification in their level of life and mentality, does not understand anything of the national reality. But those who, at the same time, do not understand we are living a moment in which the bosses, with the lukewarm authorisation of the government, is snatching these gains one after another, although that process has just begun, understand nothing of what is happening. We must patiently show to the workers, especially to the Peronists workers, that there is a colossal capitalist offensive against the standard of living and working conditions of the working class, an offensive which hides under the ambiguous slogan of productivity.

We are in favour of increasing productivity for the sole and exclusive benefit of the working class and the country, and not for the sole and exclusive benefit of the big imperialist and capitalist companies. Therefore, we are for productivity controlled and directed by the working class, as the only guarantee this productivity will not be used to increase capitalist profits. We deny CGE the right to sit on an equal footing with the workers' representatives in any Congress whatsoever. The 50 million annual earnings of the Di Tella family are not as good for us as the 6,000 workers of their company. For us, the well-being and control of the 6,000 Di Tella workers matter; Di Tella's profits do not matter at all to us.

Thus, we believe it is so urgent to discuss the economic situation and the problem of productivity and that the workers' movement as a whole, with the CGT at the head, discuss the bosses' offensive.

But, whether or not a democratic Congress of the workers' movement is held to discuss the economic problems facing the country and **the bosses' offensive**, it is necessary that now, in each section, in each factory, and in each union, **we face the bosses' offensive all together, leaders and workers ranks, Peronists and anti-Peronists**. The main enemy, in each union or factory, is the bosses and not our co-workers.

Today, the bosses have started an entire campaign in favour of piecework. It is our duty to oppose it and patiently explain to our co-workers and delegates what this monstrosity means and how it is part of the bosses' offensive. Our militants fight in the first row against the CGE offensive.

The Peronist government and movement at a crossroads

Ten years after the *coup d'état* on 4 June [1943], we can make a synthesis of the new period inaugurated in the government's character.

The terrible Yankee pressure on the government and the country triggered the coup of 4 June. The 4 June coup is the response of the anti-Yankee sectors of the country and the army as a whole to the serious split of the Argentine oligarchy in pro-Yankee and anti-Yankee. The political condition of 4 June was, unarguably, the crisis of Justo's Concordance.¹²

The government of General Justo¹³ meant nothing other than the domination of the country by the oligarchy, i.e., by the wealthy sectors of the bourgeoisie intimately united to the great financial oligarchy, in turn, intimately linked to British imperialism. Yankee imperialism was the one which took the longest to recover from the crisis and, as a result, could not have a frankly offensive attitude in relation to the Latin American countries given the magnitude of the crisis in their own country. The US accepted the British predominance and it accommodated to it. As from the 1939 war, Yankee imperialism began to apply rigorously its plan to colonise Latin America and Argentina. The situation could not be more favourable: Europe was bleeding and losing, day by day, its economic influence, while the United States, thanks to the war, could finally overcome the great crisis of 1929.

The oligarchy's own ranks reflected this change in inter-imperialist relations. Important sectors of the oligarchy wanted to predominate over the others through a total agreement with Yankee imperialism. The Bemberg bank oriented itself in this direction, as did the large grain consortiums, which, with the European market in jeopardy, saw in their close collaboration with the Yankees the only possibility of taking over the Latin American grain market. The same thing happened to the industrial bourgeoisie; they saw the US as the imperialism that could provide the capital needed to develop its industry. The landowners linked to industry thought the same thing.

For the livestock bourgeoisie, fundamentally of Buenos Aires province, this Yankee penetration was almost fatal, as it was for British or German imperialism.

The 4 June coup prevents the power from falling into the hands of the sectors of the oligarchy who are completely subordinated to Yankee imperialism. The coup arises to prevent the old dominant sectors of the economic and political structure of the country from being swept away, cornered, by the Yankee offensive on the country and to prevent the agreement of Yankee imperialism with other sectors of the oligarchy. The coup is to prevent SOFINA,¹⁴ the meatworks, railways, and livestock production from ceasing to be the foundation of the bourgeois structure of the country. They defend this archaic structure from Yankee colonisation. Hence, the permanent contradiction that will give rise to the peculiar dynamics of the regime that arises on 4 June 1943. It is reactionary to the extent it defends the old structure of the country, it is progressive to the extent it defends the country and the government from Yankee colonisation. This phenomenon is already known by Marxism. The regime of Chiang Kai-shek militarily had a similar situation with the Japanese: it defended the country as it was, feudal and semi-colonial, from Japanese colonisation. A special historical situation has had as a result that the process of Yankee colonisation in Latin America was not manifested militarily but politically and economically; however, the process has existed and exists. The regimes of 4 June have been characterised by having defended the country, with the old structure, from that colonisation.

The progressive weakness of British imperialism and the colossal power Yankee imperialism had been taking — the same happened between the cattle and industrial bourgeoisie (close friend of the Yankees) —, the German defeat and the complete European decadence forced the 4 June

12 The **Concordance** was a political alliance in Argentina. Three Presidents belonging to the Concordance (Agustin P. Justo, Roberto Ortiz, and Ramon Castillo) were in power from 1931 to 1943, a period known in Argentina as the "Infamous Decade".

13 **Agustin Pedro Justo** (1876–1943) was a military officer, diplomat, and politician. President of Argentina from 20 February 1932 to 20 February 1938.

14 **SOFINA** (Société Financière de Transports et d'Entreprises Industrielles), Belgian holding company, headquartered in Brussels, and at the time the largest shareholder in the electrical utility company and the tramway network in Buenos Aires and Rosario.

regime to lean on the working class as support of the government against the Yankee offensive and the bourgeoisie linked to it. The government's policy towards the working class deserves a separate chapter since it is, in the final analysis, what characterises the Peronist government against all previous governments.

The division of the oligarchy into pro- and anti-Yankee had been reflected in the union bureaucracy itself and in the workers' organisations, in the division of the CGT prior to Peronism in two organisations: one, apolitical, which played into the hands of the Castillo government and another, pro-Yankee in extreme, formed by the bureaucracy that responded to the House of the People and the CP. In this, as in so many other things, the government of 4 June continued the policy of Castillo's government but in a much more forceful way. It liquidated the pro-Yankee CGT and fully supported the anti-Yankee CGT. At the same time, it tended to drastically control the workers' movement, making it part of the state. This caused deep clashes with the old trade union bureaucracy that had founded the anti-Yankee CGT and which, for that reason, broke with the Farrell¹⁵ government and with Colonel Peron.

Peron could easily sweep away the pro-Yankee CGT and greatly develop the CGT and unions that did not sympathise with the Yankees or did not depend on them, because of special historical circumstances:

1) The colossal increase in national income, the profits of all the producing classes of the country and the development of capitalist production, which allowed Peronism to make important concessions to the working class.

2) The emergence of a new proletariat from the countryside, and small gentrification of the educated proletariat in the worst reformist traditions of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party.

Here, too, Peronism plays a highly contradictory dynamic. To defend itself against Yankee imperialism and its agents in the country, given the weakness of the anti-Yankee imperialist and bourgeois sectors, it is essential to rely on the working class; but, since it defends the existing bourgeois structure, it needs to totally control the working class. Relying on the totalitarian apparatus, Peronism develops the union organisation in all corners and guilds of the country, raises them, and speaks to many workers, for the first time, of union and class organisation. But, at the same time, it stais; it inaugurates a rigid state control of the union movement, creates a fabulous, rich and privileged bureaucratic caste intimately linked to the State.

The superb economic situation prevented the clash of Peronism with its shackled and handcuffed ally — the working class. There was a paradox that a henchman was placed by the side of the Argentine working class, so nothing is done without official authorisation. But, the same henchman granted economic gain after economic gain. Since 1952, this situation has changed radically with the change in the economic situation. The change has not been catastrophic, it has not been a brutal one, but it exists, and every day will be more noticeable. The defence of the bourgeois structure of the country forces the bosses and the government to carry out an offensive against the working class to super-exploit it and to reach an agreement with Yankee imperialism. Specifically, they need to re-equip the country's production apparatus in conditions of low price in the world market of the basic products of the country: cereals and beef. In these conditions, if the re-equipment does not come out of the profits, it has to come out of the workers' exploitation.

3) The Peronist government, that thanks to the support of the working class defeated Yankee imperialism in the elections and later in the military coups, finds the needs of the bourgeois production it defends force it to an agreement with the giant, which it has defeated politically within the country: Yankee imperialism. But agreement does not mean surrender, and imperialism tends to it, inevitably. Hence, Peronism, as a bourgeois front that resisted Yankee colonisation with a workers' base, at the same time that as a Bonapartist regime nationalised the country, has entered a crisis.

¹⁵ **Edelmiro Julian Farrell** (1887–1980) was an Argentine general. He was the de facto president of Argentina between 1944 and 1946 during the so-called Revolution of 43. Farrell had a great influence on later Argentine history by introducing his subordinate Juan Peron into government and paving the way for Peron's subsequent political career.

It cannot continue to count on the enthusiastic support of the working class because it allows the offensive against it; on the contrary, the class will distance itself from Peronism. It cannot count on Yankee imperialism to limit its claims; on the contrary, these will increase. The government and its movement will find themselves facing the Yankee offensive without the enthusiastic backing, initially, and the opposition later, of the working class, for the CGE plans of greater exploitation and misery allowed by Peronism.

Our tendency should encourage, highlight, and tend to a technical agreement with the government in all its resistance to the Yankee colonisation plans. But we must not forget we are the party that defends the interests of the working class and, consequently, our task of defending the country from Yankee colonisation is accompanied, indisputably united, with the independent class movement of the working class. And let's not forget we trust neither the Peronist methods nor the Peronist policy of defence of the current structure of the country. Therefore, when we agree technically or politically with the government, we must know how to highlight that this coincidence is completely partial and not a general policy. That is, as, since the first day, we continue fighting against the lack of democratic freedoms and against the staid unions but, above all, we will continue to attack irreconcilably the old structure — of the *estancias*, meatworks, and bourgeois — of the country whose fierce defence is the *raison d'être* of Peronism.

The crisis of Radicalism forces Yankee imperialism and the bourgeoisie to organise the new Catholic party

Alvearist¹⁶ Radicalism along with Reppeto's¹⁷ socialism became the best political agents of the Yankee plans of colonisation of the country. Closed the way of the polls by the government of the Concordance that responded to the oligarchy and the colonising Roca-Ruciman treaty, Alvearism focused on the increasingly closer collaboration with Yankee imperialism. Its old connection with the financial oligarchy, the big cereal houses, and the big industrial bourgeoisie, led Alvearism, together with all these sectors, to favour the Colossus of the North. The popular current against the conservatives in power, against fraud, at the end completely progressive, for being channelled by Alvearism responded in the last instance to the Yankee plans of colonisation of Latin America and the country. Once Alvear disappeared, this contradiction would emerge clearly with the Democratic Union of 1946. The Radicals, Socialists, and Communists were intimately linked to Braden. They led old sectors of the working class and of the middle class against Peronism, under the slogan of political freedom, but they served, ultimately, the Yankee plan to colonise the country.

The victory of Peronism begins the crisis of Radicalism, as of all pro-Yankee sectors. Immediately after the victory, the Movement of Intransigence and Renewal emerges in an organised manner, which soon reaches the leadership of the Party.

This new current since its inception gives rise to two wings: the one grouped around the Province of Buenos Aires and the Federal Capital and the one that responds to Sabattini¹⁸ and the interior of the country.

Fronidism is formed by the new leading cadres and its support base is in the big cities. Lebensohn in Junín, Balbin in Eva Peron, Larralde in Avellaneda, and Frondizi in the Federal Capital. The new layers of the middle class, professionals, employees, technicians, the student body, form the Frondizist Intransigence. It is an incipient manifestation, but manifestation nevertheless, of the

16 For **Marcelo Torcuato de Alvear** (1868–1942), better known as Marcelo T. de Alvear, who was an Argentine politician and President of Argentina from 1922 to 1928. As a politician, he became the leader of the anti-personalistic faction of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), co-founded by Yrigoyen, opposed to some of president Yrigoyen's policies. In contrast to Yrigoyen's popular style, Alvear belonged to the self-appointed "aristocracy" of Buenos Aires and never tried to hide it.

17 **Nicolas Repetto** (1871–1965) was one of the main leaders of the Argentine Socialist Party.

18 **Amadeo Sabattini** (1892–1960) was an Argentine politician member of the Radical Civic Union (UCR). He served as Governor of Cordoba from 1936 to 1940.

important change that took place in the country in the last 20 years and was reflected in the structure of the middle class and, indirectly, in the Radical Party.

Sabbatism was confined among the “old” Yrigoyenists or the old leaders of the parish. Ultimately, it reflected the old sectors of the rural bourgeoisie that resisted the domination of the party and the government by Yankee imperialism or the financial oligarchy. In the cities, Sabattinism was more noticeable, same as Yrigoyenism, in the declassed or poorer sectors of the petty bourgeoisie or in some sectors of the working class. Sabattinism, like Yrigoyenism or Pueyrredonism, could not carry out a policy determined by its link with the large or middle agrarian bourgeoisie and was characterised by the personalist, chieftain-like, character of its organisation and its politics.

The last few years have shown us a violent struggle of tendencies within Radicalism. The Unionists have endeavoured to reconquer the party, so it serves the big bourgeoisie and Yankee imperialism. Frondizism and the Sabattinism have disputed the leadership of Intransigence and, therefore, of the party. Frondizism has won as a consequence of the greater weight of capitalist relations at present.

In a sense, this current is progressive although it suffers all the contradictions of the petty bourgeoisie, being incapable of an independent policy. It votes against Peronism, for its petty-bourgeois hatred to the working class, which it looks at with envy for its new political and social weight. Frondizism has looked at the struggles of the petty bourgeoisie against Yankee imperialism in Latin America with sympathy but, at the same time, it does not dare to go against the Church because of its influence among the working class.

The contradictions that gnaw at Radicalism and at the Frondizist leadership have eliminated Radicalism as a useful political tool of the bourgeoisie and Yankee imperialism. The bourgeoisie has today a strong economic organisation which we must relentlessly denounce for its reactionary economic plans: the CGE. But it lacks a popular political organisation. Yankee imperialism is in the same situation.

The Catholic Church has become the organisation of this new political current the bourgeoisie and imperialism need. Until recently, the Catholic Church has been anti-Yankee in Latin America and in the world. Intimately linked to backward, rural bourgeois sectors, the Church watched with horror the Yankee financial penetration in the industry that undid the objective bases of its domination. Hence, the Church's contacts with Radicalism and Peronism and its connection with the large *estancia* and estate owners who, in turn, were the great friends of the Church and the natural enemies of the Yankees and the unbridled industrial development.

Since the end of the last Great War, the Church has understood the need for a general crusade against the revolution in the world and has placed itself unconditionally at the service of the head of the modern Holy Alliance: Yankee imperialism. The Church is, in the world, in the front row next to the United States and its plans for world domination.

This is how the Yankee industrial and financial barons have adapted to the medieval Catholic liturgy, and the latter to the “horrors” of Protestant industrial development, both in Argentina and in the world.

This change in the politics of the Church and Yankee imperialism was clearly reflected in Europe. The great Catholic parties of France, Italy, and Germany are at the service of the big bourgeoisie but, mainly, at the unconditional service of the ultra-reactionary Yankee plans. These parties, in an effort to get a popular foundation for the Yankee plans, are capable of sacrificing important interests of their bourgeoisie but they always serve the interests and ultra-reactionary plans of the US. The Church subordinates everything, with its self-preservation instinct developed over centuries, to the defeat of the revolution in the world and, therefore, to the execution of the Yankee plans.

In Brazil, they have organised in São Paulo a tremendous popular movement around Janio Quadros,¹⁹ who has displaced, in a few years, the traditional politicians of that State. Regardless of

¹⁹ **Jânio Quadros** (1917–1992) was Governor of Sao Paulo in 1953-1955 and later President of in 1961.

the social demagoguery of Quadros, there is no doubt this movement serves the Yankee colonisation plans of Brazil.

In our republic, the attempt to create an important catholic party responds to the combined policy of Yankee imperialism and the bourgeoisie for giving itself a popular party. This party will rely on broad social demagoguery within the petty bourgeoisie and the working class to better serve Yankee imperialism and the bourgeoisie. That is, the formation of this new party is a terrible danger for the Argentine proletariat and, as such, we need to fight it and denounce it before the working class, without falling into the game of Peronist politics limited to partial, but secondary measures, against the Church. Without fighting squarely against the bourgeoisie and imperialism, it is useless to fight the Church which rests, at this moment, on that economic and social base: Yankee imperialism and the national bourgeoisie.

Without ceasing to support the governmental measures that go against the Church, we will propose the true substantive measures that go against it, which are the ones that also go against CGE and Yankee imperialism.

The last agreements close one experience and open another

Since 1952, as we have said, a whole new period was opened in the learning of the Argentine proletariat: the period of Peronism and staid unions. This learning was based on the change in the economic situation of the country. The relative unemployment of 1952 produced the first manifestation of this learning and of the improvement of the working class in its activity. The guild that started this mobilisation and this learning was the textile; precisely the guild which suffered the most from unemployment. As a result, in December 1952, the union repudiated the Blue slate and voted for a new experience, the Green slate. The lack of organisation of the Green slate, product of the lack of experience and combativeness of the best union activists, produced its immediate bureaucratisation, without serious resistance by the activists.

The rubber guild, after a magnificent strike, achieved an independent and powerful leadership, which made, keeping certain Peronist forms, an authentic class politics. To some extent, the same happened with the tobacco guild.

The metalworkers' guild, in Avellaneda and Capital, was oriented towards the formation of a new class leadership: new litters of militant delegates and good internal commissions emerged. This phenomenon was general and the bureaucracy was forced to take it into account. In railways, activists of the failed strike were voted for middle management positions.

All this happened until the negotiations of the collective agreements. That is, the working class was looking for a way out of the economic problem in different ways in each factory and each union, but the important thing was that it was looking for it. The union vanguard made colossal learning.

The atomisation and the Peronism of the working class on the one hand, and the pro-bosses politics of the government and the CGT, on the other hand, characterised these movements and ultimately led this entire rise to failure. All these movements were carried out under a strong Peronist hue, generally directed by the communists who, understanding the role of the government, could play the role of union leaders. The inevitable link between the trade union and the political aspect caused by the totalitarian character of the government took on, for the political and union backwardness of the worker mentality, a curious combination: the movements were Peronist for their public expressions and in their trade unionist character but they were political for the nature of their leaderships and the dynamics of the trade union movement which was causing them to collide with the government. This contradiction was the product, we insist once again, of the confusion of the Peronist proletariat itself.

This curious combination, this backwardness of the proletariat and the vanguard brought about the victory of the government and the bosses during the last collective agreements and the dreadful metallurgical adventure.

The metallurgical defeat was accompanied by the tobacco defeat and the brutal takeover of the rubber union and, shortly after, by the defeat of the two most progressive slates of Alpargatas.

These defeats have meant: the defeat of the working class in the renewal of the collective agreements, the closing of the stage opened in 1952, and the initiation of a new stage we will try to specify.

The molecular process, the learning of the working class and, fundamentally, of its vanguard, the union activists has been extraordinary. Regarding this, we must distinguish the activists who have assimilated the defeats from those who, frightened, have defected from the struggle. Tamet is the best example. Its best activist during the rise does not want to know anything but another, from a population abroad, writes to continue the union struggle. The one who keeps on, the one who assimilated the defeat is already qualitatively an activist of his class infinitely superior to the one he was before the defeat. He knows much better the capitalist offensive and the procedures of the bureaucracy. He knows how to fight one and the other. This activist is worth today much more than two or three activists without experience. In this sense, union activists who have not abandoned the struggle have learned enormously about the government, the CGT, the bosses' association and the bureaucracy. On the other hand, in the different factories and sections, the working class is learning there is a terrible bosses' offensive. This learning is not even but it is general. And the working class sees or will see itself forced to defend itself and the experiences of the Green slate, metalworkers and tobacco strikes, etc., are or will be very useful.

The bureaucracy itself is compelled, in order not to discredit itself completely, to reject some of the bosses' pretences in the factories, the least important ones, although it supports the general policy of the government and the bosses. We must understand this phenomenon in order to develop the united and trusting action of the working class. To develop the unity and action of the working class, if possible, from the small skirmishes against the bosses' offensive that arise every day and, sometimes, the bureaucracy itself leads. At the same time, we must know, as the last movements demonstrated exhaustively, the CGT leadership is useless for any actions of any importance against the bosses and for developing when the conditions are favourable the new forms of organisation created by the working class itself.

The working class atomisation manifests itself in two obvious facts: 1) it reacts in different forms against the capitalist offensive in each factory or section, with no coordination; 2) union activists assimilate the experience but with no connection between them, without forming any tendency.

The defeat of the collective agreements caused a retreat reflected in the fact the outlines for the formation of union class tendencies have failed, they were frustrated. Both the working class and the vanguard continue to suffer the bosses' offensive and defend themselves in isolation. The vanguard assimilates these struggles, which leads to a higher plane the understanding of the working class and the vanguard for the new emergence of class currents. For a time, we will have to settle for partial battles, including some important ones, until a class current emerges in some important union. However, the pressure is exerted on the formation of this class tendency in the most important unions. It is quite possible the textile union election, in distorted form, give origin to the class current, repeating the Green slate experience on a much higher plane. The same will happen in the other unions and guilds.

To overcome the atomisation, new forms of organisation are required for the working class that overcome the CGT's discipline, when conditions lend themselves to it. This does not happen at the present moment. Of course, we must aim to create union oppositions, as well as to organise the class tendency in the union field.

Labour Party or immediate class political organisation of union activists

The Argentine working class does not have a party that organises it. In the same way, it does not have a workers' and peasants' government. Achieving them is a great historical task but we must be aware these are not tasks that can be achieved at this stage. CGT is incapable, because of its structure, of becoming independent from the Peronist government and its state apparatus to make an independent party, such as taking power in opposition to Peronism. Mechanical assimilation of the Socialist Workers Party's slogan of Labour Party cannot be done in our country. The reason is simple — unions and union federations in the US are not subject to the state but the CGT is. From this arise a fact and a combination of tasks: in the United States, the Labour Party must be formed to take power with it. The slogan Labour Party is immediate, agitative, is on the agenda; to carry it out the fulfilment of any other general task does not stand in the way. Among us, it is not like that, the independence of the unions from the State is in the way to achieve a Labour Party. But to achieve this, we need first the independent trade union and political organisation of union activists. Therefore, the two urgent, immediate, agitative tasks are the forming of union oppositions and the political organisation of the workers' vanguard.

The slogan Labour Party, like the slogan of a workers' and peasants' government, takes on a propagandistic character. This propagandistic and agitative combination of slogans does not mean, that in certain historical circumstances — a severe economic crisis and a violent revolutionary crisis —, they do not combine immediately and agitatively because of the historical process. Between the raising of the different slogans, it is unnecessary there be huge lapses of time. But the importance of the slogan reflects the relationship of the working class with the bourgeoisie, imperialism, and the government at a certain stage and today it is necessary to fight for the union activists to have their political organisation.

The Communist Party cannot be the party of union activists

If we accept there is a decisive element in the understanding of the Latin American and Argentine reality, which is the Yankee colonising offensive, we have to recognise the Communist Party has been, during an important period of the last 15 years, at the service of this colonisation attempt.

The socialists of Repetto and, fundamentally, the communists were the workers' agency of the Democratic Union. Instead of defending a consistent class line and of fighting for the freedom of our nation from British and Yankee imperialism, in the name of freedom, Stalinist communism played the game of the Yankee imperialism offensive in the country. Codovilla²⁰ and the Communist Party proposed, during 1945 and 1946, the signing of the inter-American treaties that tied us to the car of Yankee imperialism. The Democratic Union had a foreign policy program that meant nothing more than the smooth and plain delivery to Wall Street.

The cold war and the victory of Peronism changed the policy of the Argentine Communist Party. Yankee imperialism, the great friend of Russia, became its most important enemy. As a result, the Argentine Communist Party radically changed its line in the country.

“The main enemy is Yankee imperialism and Peronism has many good, positive sides, mainly because it resists the Yankees.”

In this stage, which opens in the year 1947 approximately, the Communist Party gives to the CGT the unions still not covered by themselves. Just as the previous stage was one of capitulation to the Yankee imperialism's offensive, as of this change they serve the reactionary plans of the government with no criticism or resistance.

²⁰ **Victorio Codovilla** (1894–1970) was a leader of the Argentine Communist party and became one of the most important leaders of Argentine and South American communism.

As the pressure of Peronism became very strong, the bureaucracy that controlled the Communist Party aspired to keep it independent and, at the same time, control the Argentine workers' movement. The tendency to subordination to Peronism clashed with the needs of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Peronism, within the workers' movement, appears to the leadership of the Communist Party as its most important enemy. If Peronism were to disappear, Stalinism is likely to control (finally!) the Argentine workers' movement to put pressure on the Argentine bourgeoisie and imperialism. The Communist Party without controlling the workers' movement is nothing; controlling it, it can get and achieve concessions. This is one of the most powerful reasons the Communist Party fell back into the most complete opposition after its flirtation with Peronism.

Besides, their position of National Unity leads the Communist Party and its leadership to look for political allies and the only thing they find is the Radical party as the only important force capable of forming the great front they advocate. This is how they fall victim to their own theoretical errors.

After expelling the Real tendency, which capitulated to Peronism, the Communist Party has openly oriented towards pure opposition. In fact, they struggle to organise a great front against Peronism, a front that has no program and cannot have it because it would be formed by the worst elements of the bourgeoisie and the Church. The Communist Party has actually defended the Church, in its friction with the government, by claiming the right of Catholics to build their movement and their party without clarifying to what forces in the world the priests in the country respond.

In doing so, the Communist Party has committed a betrayal against the interests of the workers since the Church is the spearhead of the world and national reaction.

Furthermore, the Communist Party contradicts itself between its definition of Peronism and the politics it has before it. While it recognises Peronism carries out a contradictory policy which is not of total submission to Yankee imperialism and that it enjoys the support of the working class and that, moreover, imperialism tries to colonise the government and the country, its policy towards the government is as if this had already submitted to Yankee imperialism, trying to unite all the forces against Peronism, including the Church.

We believe we must unite urgently all those who oppose the Yankee offensive against the country. Even join with the government and Peronism when it collides in some way with the imperialist plans while still criticising Peronist bourgeois politics as radically opposed to ours. But not only must we unite with those who oppose the Yankee offensive against the country, but also we must unite the workers against the capitalist offensive; fundamentally, we have to join the Peronist workers. But we can never join them if we despise, mistreat, insult, and ignore the colossal gains Peronism granted to the working class. We have a policy radically different from the Peronist one but we cannot ignore the conquests it granted to the working class since this is the reason for the support it enjoys in the proletariat.

The unity of all workers is fundamental for us and the understanding and unity with our Peronists co-workers is decisive. Our slogan is: Let's defend from the bosses' offensive the gains Peronism granted the workers! For the Communist Party the fundamental slogan is another: Let us join all the contras, not all the workers, against the Peronist government!

Let's build the great party of the workers' vanguard forming now a legal left-centrist party

Different political and social forms try to overcome the atomisation and apoliticism of the workers' movement. Peronism is the historical stage in which the political organisations of the proletariat in the country are lost. This stage that opens up is of the political organisation of the working class and its vanguard. This process will be long and difficult but it has already begun to happen. We must understand it and integrate fully into it.

Without losing the fundamental contact with the class struggle, with the factories and the trade unions, we must and can use the progressive currents of the student body to strengthen the

current of integration and formation of the party of the workers' vanguard. The same happens with legality, it can and should help incredibly to touch and organise politically the workers' vanguard.

We are extremely weak to use legality in all its possibilities, even to win it by our single effort; but, at the same time, we are the only ones who can establish a nexus, by our structure and program, between the legal party and the workers' vanguard. From this contradiction arises the need, for us, to use legality to the fullest, to link ourselves, to that end, with currents we conceptualize as left-centrists to gain legality in common. The unity with the centrist groups, to achieve together the legality through a single party, is completely progressive.

This legality, this unity, and this party will be based on its work in the working class, fundamentally in us. We will be his spine.

This explains why, at the present moment, we are the pole of attraction to the student left groups and the workers' vanguard.

The **Socialist Party of the National Revolution** (PSRN) is nothing more than a stage in the formation of the left-centrist party, our main political-organisational goal at the present moment. In this sense, we should look for a solution. The **Socialist Party of the National Revolution** must become a left-centrist current in the short term, or we must look for another agreement or union to set up that organisation.

This legal left-centrist political organisation is progressive mainly because of its legality and its national character. We know, consciously, this organisation is the opposite of a proletarian Bolshevik one and that our tendency, through it and fighting against the petty-bourgeois tendencies, aims to build a Bolshevik and non-centrist organisation.

Specifically, we need to form, through agreements with centrists and progressive groups, a legal left-centrist party to allow us to better reach the workers' vanguard. The experience of the **Socialist Party of the National Revolution** must be liquidated in a short time: either it serves for that purpose or it does not work and then we leave.