



Nahuel Moreno

**Party Cadres'
School:
Argentina 1984**

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Internal document of the PST, 1984

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Buenos Aires, 2024

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Foreword 2024

In December 1983, Moreno conducted a “pilot course” in Buenos Aires with a group of mixed comrades to prepare the party cadres’ school to be held at the beginning of 1984. The topics of the course were:

Introduction: On historical materialism,

I. Stages and situations,

II. What is a revolution

III. The theory of permanent revolution,

IV. The revolutionary party, the working class and the mobilisation,

V. Characteristics of the revolutionary party with mass influence,

VI. The Marxist method (to be developed with examples throughout the course).

After the pilot course, Moreno held two talks with the attendees. In this work, *Party Cadres’ School: Argentina 1984*, are available transcriptions, that were not revised by the author — deceased in 1987 — of the course on the theory of permanent revolution and the different types of revolutions.

As study material in the groups of the party cadres’ school that summer, Moreno and his collaborators prepared a series of “leaflets”, which in total were 13. The first was *Historic Materialism: Elementary Concepts*. From II to XII they were collected and published in the book *Revolutions of the 20th Century*. And the work *1982: The Revolution Begins* also required reading. All four titles are available at www.nahuelmoreno.org.

All notes are by the editors.

The Editors

August 2024

Party Cadres' School: Argentina 1984

PART I

Criticism of Trotsky's *Theses of the Permanent Revolution*

Nahuel Moreno: The theory of the permanent revolution has different stages and stories, which are very interesting. To make it most interesting for you, we'll start with its story, so as not to go as much into the pure, abstract theoretical ground.

Marx formulated the program of the permanent revolution as that the party of the working class is not content with what has been achieved, rather it will continuously move towards more advanced slogans. It is not, in itself, a theory of the relationship of the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution. And what is more worthy of note is that it is a program of permanent revolution but of a national type. That is, he does not take the world socialist revolution as a real possibility. On the other hand, he might have been right because the revolution was not raised in more than two or three European countries. If you read [the *Message of the Central Committee of the Communist League*], you will see it is an entire permanent program regarding a country. However, this same program did not take into account the combination of the democratic revolution with the socialist revolution. To this, it must be added [what was at] the foundation of Marxist theory: that the socialist revolution could only take place in highly developed countries.

While they were dialectical, we have another example of this [placing of an] equal sign, which is fatal. Marx made the same mistake: "If there is a large working class, this equals socialist revolution; if there is a small working class, no socialist revolution". This false reasoning by Marx weighed heavily in the development of Marxism and socialism because, leaning on Marx, opportunistic currents in backward countries, including Russia, argued that the socialist revolution was not on the agenda.

Marx's conception of permanent revolution has, then, these three serious limitations. Although, at the time of Marx they were not limitations. [This conception] conformed to reality. This is why I always alert: this is what works so far but then we continue moving forward. In this, we are a lot like medicine. If you are allergic and go to a doctor, he, if he is good, says: "These past two years, this is the good injection". And you see him four years later and the same doctor says, "You know how medicine progressed? That injection was useless". We are also serious scientists, who keep advancing with reality. What is bad is generalisation. For that era, what Marx said was fitting. What is a pity is that he did not open possibilities for the future to be different.

The second formulation is also very interesting. It has its story, that shows how theory, and thought, are social products, not that one day someone comes up with an idea. That is why it is so nice to discuss amongst us all because anyone can come up with a brilliant idea, a tactic or a small organisational issue. We have to elaborate together. Who reached the edge [of the theory of permanent revolution] was Parvus,¹ Trotsky's teacher. This very talented man believed, against Lenin, that the class that was going to make the democratic revolution in Russia was the proletariat. It is a

¹ **Alexander Lvovich Parvus**, born Israel Lazarevich Gelfand (1867–1924), was a Marxist theoretician, publicist, and activist in the Social Democratic Party of Germany.

formulation completely different from Marx's. It accepts that there may be a workers' revolution in an ultra-backward country, with few workers. Not only does it accept it; it says it is the only [class] that will carry out the revolution to the end.

In this, he differs from Lenin, who argued that the revolution was going to be made by the proletariat and the peasantry, without saying which class would predominate. Thus, Lenin's formulation varies from Congress to Congress. In a Congress — I think of 1906 — the formula is almost equal to that of Trotskyism and Parvus, the great leader and teacher of Trotsky.

The Mensheviks believed that the revolution was bourgeois-democratic and put an equal sign: bourgeois-democratic revolution = bourgeois leadership of the revolution. Terrible methodological error.

We have then:

- *Mensheviks*: the bourgeois-democratic revolution is made by the bourgeoisie.
- *Lenin*: the bourgeois-democratic revolution is made by the workers and peasants, and I do not know who will lead.
- *Parvus*: the bourgeois-democratic revolution is made by the proletariat.

That is how things stand in Russia at the beginning of the century until it appears this brilliant young man that is Trotsky. He was involved in the 1905 revolution, and afterwards, he raised his famous formulation of the theory of permanent revolution, "Not only will the proletariat lead the bourgeois-democratic revolution, but by the mere fact of taking power, the proletariat will start the socialist revolution. There will be two revolutions: the bourgeois-democratic and the socialist." Trotsky argues in the following manner:

"Although Argentina's working class is very small — let us suppose of only 200,000 — it is going to say: 'Let us give land to the farmers, we are going to investigate the killings and tortures and we will judge and shoot all the guilty and a whole number of democratic measures.' But, besides, is not it going to take action in the factory where the worker is working? The worker has the power and has the police and the army, all in favour. And the boss is going to tell him: 'You will work 16 hours'. And then the worker is going to answer 'Yes sir, fine sir' because the revolution is bourgeois-democratic?"

That is the great step that Trotsky takes. From here emerges the theory of permanent revolution, which says that if the proletariat takes power and gives concessions to the people, it has to give concessions to itself. A worker who has all the weapons, with the police station of the district belonging to the workers and the army belonging to the workers, goes to the factory and as soon as the boss does not greet him, will say, "Out! This factory is expropriated." The revolution then becomes socialist because it begins to be specific to the working class and specific against capitalism. Thus, the modern theory of permanent revolution, whose author is Trotsky, arises.

I am going to advance and say what are the mechanics of Trotsky's theory; mechanics that, as we shall see later, have some flaws. Why does Trotsky think the revolution moves from bourgeois-democratic to socialist? Through an objective combination of tasks or through what in Marxism and sociology is called the historical subject? Man is named subject. A group of men is named a historical subject.

Mechanics is how an engine works, how something works. With what gears, and with what type of fuel, does the car move from the democratic revolution to the socialist revolution? How does this step work? According to Trotsky, how do you go from a democratic to a socialist revolution? Because of the subject, or through an inevitable process in which the bourgeois-democratic revolution, by going against sectors of the bourgeoisie, will inevitably become socialist?

It may be that the car is on a slope and moves by itself. This means that solving the bourgeois-democratic tasks means to start attacking capitalism: if you put the car on the slope, it moves by itself. Or does it have to do with a subjective factor? (Subject is the name of the one doing things. In the sentence "the dog bites", the dog is the subject because it is the one that bites.)

[For Trotsky, the step is taken] by a subject but a social one. The key, the engine, the mechanism of Trotsky's permanent revolution has to do with the historical subject. You will see that the famous Preobrazhensky,² a great Trotskyist who fought a lot together with him and who was quite opportunistic but was almost a genius of a man, will point this out many years later. His approach is so sharp that Trotsky is surprised and almost gives it no importance in his first response. Then he realises, and sends a second letter, which says, "Wow! Your premise is very interesting but not correct. Or it is correct in a sense."

Comrade: What is discussed is whether the socialist revolution is made by the working class or a sequence of events.

Moreno: For a car to move, there are two ways: one is that someone starts it up and moves it; another way is to put it up a slope, and the car moves. In the latter case, the movement is objective, no one can stop it, and it is an objective process. In the first case, if a guy gets into the car and starts it up, it is an objective process too — because the car runs — but it is also a subjective process because someone is driving it. There is a subjective process that makes it run: a subject, this or that person. (Philosophically and sociologically, this is what "subject" means.)

Comrade: We say that the democratic revolution goes towards the socialist revolution but it can also go towards the counterrevolution.

Moreno: That is already another matter, which at that time was not even analysed. It arises later when the counterrevolution is seen. It is not part of the first formulation. What I am stating is historic. I have to say how things were. Today we know more, much more than what they knew. They did not consider the counterrevolution.

Comrade: But may the socialist revolution not be reached through an objective process?

Moreno: That is what's raised. What I am doing is showing how [the theories] are. I am preparing the ground to see what their weaknesses are, what their strong points are, or whether they are all strong.

We have to consider the same about Lenin. The Bolsheviks had his interpretation: the revolution was democratic, it was not socialist, and it was directed by the peasantry and proletariat. The great contribution of Lenin is that, in the subjective factor, he argues it must be the centralised revolutionary party. Otherwise, there can't be such a revolution. And it has to be centralised because it is a party for the taking of power. In the state, power is centralised, then it must be a party with military discipline. This is considered one of Marxism's most brilliant discoveries of the century.

To Parvus, the revolution is bourgeois-democratic and the subject is the working class; the party is secondary to him. Trotsky is the only one who says it is bourgeois-democratic that becomes socialist and it is the working class who makes it.

Comrade: The working class without any kind of organisation?

Moreno: For them it is secondary. Both Trotsky and Parvus believe the working class will tidy up the party. It is the working class that is going to dominate the party. Therefore, they are in favour of the Menshevik organisation. The Mensheviks believe that the party is the working class as it wants to express itself, without democracy,³ without anything. It is the concept of Rosa Luxemburg: "The working class is the best thing there is: it puts order in everything". It is an open party, not centralised, controlled by the working class. It is not the party leading the working class; rather the working class is a wing of the party. A party that has almost no role to play in the revolution, it accompanies the process. Rosa Luxemburg had the same criterion: no discipline and no role.

2 **Yevgeni Preobrazhensky** (1886-1937) was a Russian revolutionary and economist. A member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik faction. He accompanied Trotsky and the Left Opposition in the fight against Stalin from 1923. They were both expelled in 1927. In 1929 he self-criticised, supported Stalinism and returned to the party. But he was a victim of the legal farce of the "Moscow trials." Arrested in 1936, he was shot in 1937.

3 We believe this is a mistake by the author and that he meant "without democratic centralism", instead of "without democracy".

In the case [of the Mensheviks], the conception was perfect: as they believed it was the bourgeoisie who had to lead the revolution, they concluded that a party didn't need to lead the revolution; it was neither the revolution of the working class nor the party of the working class. For the Bolsheviks, instead, [it was the revolution of the] workers and peasants, and with a centralised party, a party for the revolution, they had to lead, otherwise, there was no revolution. This is why it is a fundamental subject. The party is the political subject [of the revolution; the class that directs it is the social subject].

The greatest champion, the one who wrote the greatest articles against this kind of party was Trotsky. Currently, it is being reissued what he wrote in 1904, 1905... To him belongs the famous expression, the famous phrase: "In the party advocated by Lenin, the Central Committee ends up controlling the party, and then the Politburo (the Executive Committee) ends up controlling the Central Committee, and then a dictator ends up dominating them all." Afterwards, this has been taken to say that Trotsky reneged on this conception and because of it, Stalinism emerged, [due to] the structure of the Bolshevik Party. Just as it is also said that Stalinism, which does not give freedoms, is the culmination of Leninism; some say this dictatorial structure of the Bolshevik Party is also due to this conception of a party to make the revolution, centralised. This is also false: in the Bolshevik Party there had always been tendencies, sectors, groups, and never anyone was expelled.

This [first] conception by Trotsky of permanent revolution is also national; it is his conception for Russia, something we have discovered lately. [The first conception is that of Marx]; this is the second conception of permanent revolution and the first of Trotsky, which he made based on the 1905 Revolution.

After the 1917 Revolution Trotsky does not extend his conception of permanent revolution to the entire world. He believes that in very backward countries there can't be a socialist revolution. He goes over to Lenin's line. But he changed at the end of the 1920s, 10 years after the triumph of the Russian Revolution, when seeing as in an extremely backward country like China the proletariat directs all, it is the centre of the revolution. And the change leads him to make the great formulation of the theory of permanent revolution, the big one, the fundamental.

What is missing from the previous two theories? The worldwide nature of the socialist revolution, not just as a European. This theory of 1927 takes on board, then, [the worldwide nature of the socialist revolution]. Not only does it take it on board, but it enriches it and gives it a whole new vision because the theory of permanent revolution becomes the theory of the world socialist revolution. It is the first time the mechanics are described, that is, how the world socialist revolution is articulated, but incorporating the world socialist revolution and a great experience that Trotsky takes out of the Russian Revolution. The Russian Revolution leads him to enrich his theory. What can be the enrichment the Russian revolution creates?

Comrade: The revolutionary party.

Moreno: Yes! [Trotsky] incorporates Lenin's political subject in his formulation of 1927. You are going to read the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution*, where he says that who has to lead the revolution is the working class, which must be led in turn by a revolutionary communist party.

Trotsky's second formulation argues, then, that the socialist revolution is worldwide. He argues something very similar to what he had raised about the Russian Revolution — because his first theory was about the Russian revolution or, at most, to [backward] countries with a stronger proletariat, not those very backward — and he adds the political subject; he unites the two subjects [and puts them] to work.

Comrade: He adds the political subject such as Lenin had proposed.

Moreno: Exactly. A revolutionary communist party is needed that leads the masses and wants to take power is needed.

This causes a big argument with Preobrazhensky. Preobrazhensky tells him: "You make a whole structure, and you do not make it as a good Marxist. You will win the argument because you write much better than I do, but history will tell you I am correct, and this is why I want to discuss it

with you. You start from the subjects, the historical subject, from the working class, and that is a bad argument because you have to start from reality and see what reality gives. Not all realities are going to be like the Russian reality. So, if in China the revolution is bourgeois-democratic, it is not ruled out the emergence of a petty-bourgeois party [to make the revolution]. It did not happen within the Russian peasantry but it is not ruled out it will not happen in China. [Reality] changes. Why are you so sure this is the subject? It may be so, it may not. Do not shut the possibility of another subject. It is a very subjective reasoning, rather than objective. If the bourgeois-democratic revolution needs to be done, it is not ruled out that a [petty-bourgeois] current appears and makes it, which then removes the imperialists, and so on. If this happens, with your theory, we are left without a line. It is an extremist theory: it generalises the October Revolution, and we are just entering the East, and we do not know how things are. Let us not rush.” This is the criticism.

Then Trotsky, in his response letter that I already mentioned, changes, takes a different track, and responds to something that, according to us, is fundamental but, unfortunately, he did not develop any further. Trotsky tells Preobrazhensky: “I’ll take your argument. Suppose we are going to remove imperialism and we are going to give the land to Chinese peasants. In China, to remove imperialism and give out land to the peasants is already socialism, and it is the socialist revolution. In China, there are no feudal lords; the peasants are exploited by usurer traders of the towns. So, if we give them the land, we expropriate the Chinese bourgeois class. Otherwise, there is no way out. In other words, it is the objective process itself. If there is a process of democratic revolution, this revolution will be socialist because of its content. And the same if imperialism is thrown out; if their factories are expropriated, this is to expropriate the biggest capitalist factories, the ports, everything that has to do with the essence of China’s socio-economic structure. Then, the subject does not interest me. Whatever the subject, it has to make the socialist revolution.”

But, despite this response, Trotsky went ahead and kept arguing for his interpretation [based on] the subject: the revolution in backward countries could only be done if directed by the working class with a revolutionary communist party.

We believe that the facts have shown [that there is a big mistake in the] written text of the theory of permanent revolution [i.e., in the **Theses**]. Because regarding the organised working class and the revolutionary party we have seen it before, [but] did not happen in this postwar period. To hold that it actually happened would be blind, a Trotsky fanatic, a Trotsky zealot, and Trotsky would be the first to be totally against us. But we remain fanatics of the theory of permanent revolution. Why? Because we believe that is the only theory that, despite this terrible mistake, conformed [to reality].

There were processes of permanent revolution that expropriated the bourgeoisie and made the workers’ and socialist revolution, without being led by the working class and without being led by the revolutionary communist party. That is, the two subjects of Trotsky, the social and political subjects, failed the historical appointment, and did not arrive on time. And yet, despite having failed the historical appointment, we continue to believe that the theory of permanent revolution is the largest find of the century from the theoretical point of view. And, being the few Trotskyists who always insist that the great Trotsky was wrong, I ask, why are we still fans of this theory?

Comrade: Because he was not mistaken in the objective.

Moreno: Very good. But there is another thing more important, the most important, the one which means that there is no one like Trotsky as a theorist: he was right that the revolution was worldwide, that there would be revolutions in all countries.

And here comes into play the counterrevolution. [Because Trotsky said] that, either these revolutions are increasingly strengthened, become more global outwards and more socialist inwards or they stop or recede and what advances is the counterrevolution. That is, there is no possibility of a worldwide standstill between revolution and counterrevolution. This part of Trotsky’s **Theses** of the Permanent Revolution is what has been fully corroborated. So corroborated that political subjects who did not want to make the socialist revolution have been forced to make it by the objective situation itself. That is, we believe that Trotsky did not fully develop his response to Preobrazhensky on how the objective process itself demands [to make] the socialist revolution or to go back. There

is no possibility of stalling, that is, to balance, to keep the **status quo**. Either the revolution advances or the counterrevolution advances.

This, then, is Trotsky's great discovery: the actual, objective theory of the world socialist revolution. And, within the world socialist revolution, each national revolution is part of the world socialist revolution. [The latter] is not a sum of parts but rather [each national revolution is] a part of it. As is the case today with the triumph of the Argentine Revolution. Not for nothing many foreign emissaries came here; for they knew it was a decisive factor for the Southern Cone in the world revolutionary process. They came to negotiate, to see how the current government acts as a firefighter, to get the military leave in Uruguay but to put a president similar to Argentina's Radical president and be relieved, and for Pinochet to leave and also put a guy who will collaborate with imperialism. Did you see how happy imperialism is? Did you read the papers today? The Yankee boss of finance said that Alfonsín and Grinspun⁴ are extraordinary.

This is how theory is created. Lenin and Trotsky did not have [the theory of the world socialist revolution]; they did have a theory of world revolution but not the theory of socialist revolution.

Who can explain a little of all I've said? Ask me questions. You may begin with Marx.

Comrade: Marx says that the working class would take power, and we had to develop the revolution because each time it would tend to want to get more.

Moreno: More or less. What does Marx say about the revolution? He says we need to pose increasingly more slogans and not directly about the takeover of power. He argues that the workers' party and the working class do not have to settle for what they are given but they have to keep raising more advanced slogans. Marx refers to a process. To see this is very important. This is why it is discussed whether it is the theory of permanent revolution.

How is [the revolution] for Marx? Is it of international, socialist, global or national type? It is national: he poses it just for one or two countries. This will cause great misunderstandings. Who are Marx's disciples in this regard in Russia? They are the Mensheviks, who argue that the revolution can be neither socialist nor worker or peasant. The Mensheviks hold on to Marx. Lenin, to a great extent, as well; he also believes that, although the class dynamics are not bourgeois [in Russia] the bourgeois-democratic revolution can't be overcome because the country is backward.

TABLE I-1				
	Mensheviks	Bolsheviks	Parvus	Trotsky
Objective (character)	Bourgeois democratic	Bourgeois democratic	Democratic	Bourgeois democratic that becomes socialist
First subject (social)	Bourgeoisie	Workers and peasants	Working class	Working class
Second subject (political)	Non centralised party	Centralised party	Non centralised party	Non centralised party

Let us consider Russia. For the Mensheviks, the working class was not going to take power [and the political subject] was a party of propaganda, broad. They wanted a party to make propaganda, not to struggle, to have arms and face Tsarism. What two types of subjects did they propose? For the Mensheviks, the social subject was the bourgeoisie, and the political subject was an open, wide, party, not for taking power.

The Bolsheviks say there must be a workers' party that has to take power together with the peasantry. The workers must be armed; they have to make the revolution against the Tsar. This is why it is a democratic revolution because the Tsar rules. The Bolsheviks think it is democratic and

⁴ **Raul Ricardo Alfonsín** (1927–2009) was an Argentine lawyer and politician, president of Argentina on behalf of the Radical Civic Union (Spanish: Unión Cívica Radical, or UCR). He was the first president after the military dictatorship, between December 1983 and July 1989. **Bernardo Grinspun**, (1925–1996) was Minister of Economy during Alfonsín's presidency.

not socialist, and it must be made by the workers and peasants. The party has to lead the workers and peasants. It is a centralised party with great discipline, to fight for power.

There were other centralised parties, although not Marxists. [Lenin] copied much from another party, the so-called populists, same as the **Montoneros**⁵ here, who did not believe in the working class but in the people. But theirs was [an organisation] to make terrorism; they were those who put bombs, those who killed the Tsar. Lenin's brother, who had been a great populist leader, was one of those executed. Lenin, although totally against them, learned from them. He thought that Russia was going to be a capitalist country, that it was not going to be a backward country and that the working class had an important role, and the populist view was that they did not. But in the conception of the party, populist militants were professionals, because persecution in Russia was extreme; if they worked, they would fall prisoners, and hence they hid and lived for the revolution. Lenin incorporated this whole conception of the party. He made it richer, of a higher level; he said the Marxist party, the Socialist Party, had to be this way. But he copied it from these people. I did not include them in the table because they did not claim to be of Marxism or socialism. They are [the predecessors of] the Socialist Revolutionary who later, in February 1917, will take over. What did Parvus say?

Comrade: That the social subject, those who were going to make the revolution, was the working class.

Moreno: And the revolution how was it?

Comrade: Bourgeois-democratic.

Moreno: Very good. He believed that, in the revolution, it was not necessary to touch the bourgeoisie; it was necessary to oust the Tsar and give land to the peasants, but this had to be done by the working class. And what did he think regarding the political subject?

Comrade: That it should be a non-centralised party.

Moreno: It was not a party that was going to fight for power. Despite saying that the proletariat had to fight for power, he felt the proletariat [had to] do it alone; the party was not a key factor.

Look how great Lenin is because of the centralised party. Today, among all who took power, there hasn't been a single party that was not centralised. Including overly centralised, bureaucratic, without democracy, but centralised. However, a non-centralised, open party has not taken power anywhere. To take power discipline was required.

In this Lenin was right but at the beginning of the century, it was not seen. It was seen as heresy: there was no centralised socialist party. This is the mistake of the colossal revolutionary that was Rosa Luxemburg, who had a very similar interpretation of the revolution to Lenin but who was totally against a centralised party. It cost her life, because when the revolutionary process breaks out, although she is a mass leader, she has no place to hide well, she has no organised party or anything, and the officers take her — her and another great leader, Liebknecht — she is kidnapped, killed and thrown into the water. Perhaps this is why mankind has stopped. Because if she — who was with Liebknecht the great leader — had lived, the German revolution would have surely triumphed. In Russia, precisely the same thing happened: they wanted to kill Lenin. But Lenin managed to hide, be protected by the party, and appear at the right time. It is the method of the army. Rosa Luxemburg believed that with the working class, as the working class accomplishes everything, the party was not needed. Or, better said, a party was needed but for propaganda. And when the time came, she had no apparatus, had no places to hide, she had nothing, she had no party. What does Trotsky say?

Comrade: Same as Parvus.

Moreno: He says the same as Parvus regarding the working class being the one that has to make the revolution. What is the difference?

5 **Montoneros** was the main Peronist guerrilla organisation in Argentina. It was born encouraged by Peron himself. In 1973 it supported the brief government of Hector Jose Campora, who was quickly overthrown by Peron. On 1 May 1974 Peron drove them out from the massive rally of the day. It pursued guerrilla warfare between 1970 and 1979. It was primarily composed of young men and women of the middle class influenced in catholicism.

This is the key to the course. Trotsky is against Lenin; he agrees with Parvus that it has to be an open party. Parvus and Trotsky: open party; Lenin did not; he is the only one. [Trotsky changes] after the 1917 Revolution.

“Objective” means what is to be done, and what needs to be transformed. The Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks believed [that the character of the revolution was] bourgeois-democratic. What does bourgeois-democratic mean? The main task is to overthrow the Tsar, who gives no freedoms, and to give freedoms, this simple. Like here; what was the main task? To overthrow the military dictatorship. Bourgeois-democratic means that the main objective is bourgeois-democratic. To Parvus [the character of the revolution is] bourgeois-democratic. And for Trotsky, is bourgeois-democratic that transforms into socialist.

The social subject is what happens in society; instead of the social subject we can write: “Which class leads the revolution”. According to the Mensheviks, the revolution was bourgeois-democratic, objectively, and to be led by the liberal bourgeoisie. According to Lenin and the Bolsheviks, the revolution was to be led by the working class and the peasantry. According to Parvus, by the workers. And according to Trotsky, by the workers and because the workers lead, the revolution becomes a socialist. Why?

Comrade: Because of the historical subject?

Moreno: Because the working class is not going to restrict itself to bourgeois rights, is not going to restrict itself only to democracy. If the workers take power, they will defend the interests of the workers. If not, it is crazy. What does Trotsky mean? If the workers take power, only crazy people can believe that the factory boss will say to them “Out of here, you dogs!”, and the guys, who have weapons, they have everything, will not tell the boss to get out. If the working class rules, it has to [threaten] bourgeois rights because the worker is being exploited every day at the factory by the capitalists. It is illogical that, having the power, they will not go or will not start to go against the capitalist system. And the workers going against the capitalist regime is equivalent to starting a socialist revolution, starting to adopt socialist measures. So, Trotsky takes all of Parvus’s reasoning but develops it further, and he says: “Not only bourgeois-democratic revolution; the working class by taking power, advances and goes against capitalism, it starts to go against capitalism, for this reason the revolution becomes socialist.”

Comrade: The ruling class changes?

Moreno: Sure.

Comrade: Becomes the mass...

Moreno: For Trotsky, the worker, the working class. Who believes that the ruling class will be the masses— workers and peasants— is Lenin, without knowing who will lead. Parvus and Trotsky, however, believe that who makes the revolution is the masses, but who leads it is the working class, the wage earners.

Regarding the political subject, that is, which party leads or what kind of party we must have, the Mensheviks believe the one that will lead is going to be a bourgeois party, and the party we have to have is an open party, not closed, not disciplined, it will not take up arms and will not lead. That is, a party that plays a role of secondary importance. The party playing a role of primary importance is the bourgeois party. The Bolsheviks say it has to be a strong party, centralised, to participate in and direct the revolution; not only to participate in the revolution but also to struggle in the streets, directing the actions of the working class to make the revolution. The Tsar can only be overthrown at gunpoint, and you need a centralised, strong party, so it can direct this armed struggle, this insurrection; otherwise, there is nothing to be done.

Parvus believes that no; it has to be a party like the Mensheviks, open because the working class rising is enough. Those who hold this view within Marxism, that the working class is enough, are called spontaneists: they are those who believe that what the working class suddenly does is always good, it needn’t be led, it needn’t have leaders, the working class spontaneously makes the revolution, and so on. Trotsky believes the same thing as Parvus and the Mensheviks: no need for a

party, or rather, it is necessary to make propaganda but is not the decisive factor. That is, if there is a working class and no party, the revolution is made all the same.

Then, regarding the subject, whom are Lenin and the Bolsheviks closer to? To the Mensheviks or to Parvus and Trotsky?

Comrade: To Parvus and Trotsky.

Moreno: That's right. Because for Lenin the working class is fully involved, it is essential; what he does not specify is who directs it but he sees the alliance as worker-peasant, without bourgeois. It is an inadequate formulation, a correct formula but not specified clearly until the end. We can then do a split: on one side those who believe the revolution in Russia can't be done by the bourgeoisie but rather by the workers and peasants, or the workers, and on the other side those who believe the bourgeoisie will do it.

If we make this split [— Mensheviks on one side; Bolsheviks, Parvus and Trotsky on the other —], and we take everything as a whole, who is closer to the truth?

Comrade: The Bolsheviks.

Moreno: Why?

Comrade: Because they have a revolutionary party.

Moreno: That is right. While the Bolsheviks [regarding the social subject] are not as perfect as Parvus and Trotsky, they have the merit that, taking the two factors into account, they are those closer to the truth because the others completely deny the party. Therefore, it is no coincidence that those who led the revolution were them and not Trotsky, despite the fact he gave the political theory. They saw more and were more brilliant.

Comrade: Why did Lenin pose workers and peasants, and did not say that the working class would be the leadership?

Moreno: Because he saw the working class was very small in number. All of Russia was peasant, and hence he said, "I do not know how this will be". It is about Lenin's style. Lenin was more of a party leader than Trotsky and, therefore, he knew that his opinion was very dangerous because if he was wrong, he would bust militants. Trotsky had more intellectual characteristics: his style was theory, and if it was poor, bad luck. Lenin had this responsibility; he was more careful. Not that he was not brilliant, [what concerned him was] that everything he said would help the party to settle, and not to make a theoretical speculation, even if it was brilliant. For this reason, it took him over 10 years to reach the theory of imperialism. But this is my subjective impression; maybe it is not so.

Comrade: For Lenin, the first objective is bourgeois democracy, is not it the same as when we raise "Down with the dictatorship"?

Moreno: No, because Lenin argued that after [overthrowing the Tsar] they would have 10, 20 or 30 years of bourgeois regime. Otherwise, he would have raised the same as Trotsky. It was Trotsky who posed what you say: the revolution is bourgeois-democratic but it is made by the working class and immediately begins to go against the bourgeoisie. Lenin believed that a worker-peasant dictatorship emerged, which did not give the power to the bourgeoisie but it did establish a bourgeois regime [for Russia] to become like England or another [advanced capitalist] country until there was a large host proletariat — i.e., a period of 5, 10, 20 years — and only then the socialist revolution would be posed. That was an evil that Marx did: Lenin still believed in Marx, that is, unless there is a large working class there can't be socialism.

Comrade: That was seen by Trotsky.

Moreno: Trotsky and Parvus. Trotsky saw socialism, and Parvus saw more: that only the proletariat... For this reason, Lenin was sometimes inclined to think that there was going to be a petty-bourgeois government —not even the Bolshevik Party was going to be in the government — or a combination: the Bolshevik Party [and/or] a petty-bourgeois party. His great merit was that he never considered the possibility it would be a bourgeois party. He believed the bourgeoisie was sold, exploitative, that before making a revolution on behalf of itself preferred to negotiate with the Tsar,

that it was cowardly. And then it turned out it was so, cowards, what produced most terror in them were the peasants, the workers.

Comrade: The Menshevik Party was also a Marxist party, a workers' party.

Moreno: Workers, yes, it was.

Comrade: What was for them the role of the party?

Moreno: Of support of the liberal bourgeoisie. They felt that the party had to vote, to make pacts with the bourgeoisie; much like current Stalinism.

Comrade: After they had made the revolution as well?

Moreno: As well; nothing of seizing power. Once the revolution was made, it was necessary to struggle for the eight-hour working day, for everything the parties of Western Europe had already achieved. It was necessary to begin to struggle for reforms. Nothing of touching [capitalist private property] or of making a revolution; let the bourgeoisie continue at the front, let us support the most progressive sectors of the bourgeoisie and oppose the more negative but to want to make revolution was crazy. Today is full of people who think the same way.

What happened later with the theory of the permanent revolution? What argument was made after 1917 and because of the Chinese revolution?

Comrade: After 1917, analysing what was happening in China and what happened in October, Trotsky incorporates two elements: on the one hand he recognises that Lenin was right, that for the working class to take power a centralised party was needed and, on the other hand, he raises the need for the socialist revolution not to remain at the national level, but to extend...

Moreno: Not only to extend. In fact, now his theory is no longer the theory of how a bourgeois-democratic revolution becomes a socialist revolution in a backward country but the other way around, it is the theory of the world socialist revolution with its [national] parts. In this country, which is backward, the democratic revolution will be combined with the socialist; in such other countries, it is directly socialist. In other words, it takes the entire world revolution with all its peculiarities, all its sectors: the advanced, the backward, and so on. This is the theory. It arises as the theory of the international socialist revolution because the **Theses** do not dwell only on the international revolution or only on the revolution in advanced countries but in all countries. That is, they dwell on the world revolution, of which the revolution in each country is a link, a part.

In formulating the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution* Trotsky formulated a new theory. New because it is different from the first, for two reasons: it takes into account the political subject and he puts it forth as a theory of the world revolution. And then what happens?

Comrade: The discussion with Preobrazhensky, who holds that he is very schematic when saying that the social subject can only be the working class. We could say that Preobrazhensky won the argument because the revolutions that took place after 1940 say he is right: they are not made with the working class as a social subject or a revolutionary workers' party as a political subject.

Moreno: You said it very well. Trotsky said: "If the working class makes a revolution and takes power, inevitably it becomes a socialist revolution right away, in the short term, immediately, because the working class will end up going against capitalism." Then Preobrazhensky says, "You are subjective because you say that the working class takes power. At heart, you are not a good Marxist because you take the most subjective aspect of reality."

Thinking in Argentine terms, a current Preobrazhensky would have said, "You say that only a Marxist revolutionary party and only the working class can save Argentina by making a socialist revolution. The main objective problem in Argentina is to get rid of the military dictatorship, this is the great task and frankly do not bother me, do not be schematic or dogmatic that only the working class and a centralised revolutionary Marxist party can overthrow this government. The class and the party may be neither the working class nor the revolutionary Marxist party. Once the military government is overthrown, it is not ruled out that for 5, 10, or 15 years, the government solve the country's problems without making a socialist revolution. Do not give me dogmatism; do not tell me

that only the working class and the revolutionary Marxist party can rid us of the military dictatorship. You are wrong. Your method is bad because you begin from the subject, which is the working class. You tell me that the democratic revolution is going to be made by the working class, and then, therefore, it will be socialist”.

Now I would add the political subject, which is not what Preobrazhensky says, because he speaks only of the social subject: “[You, Trotsky, say that] if, in addition to the working class the Communist Party takes power, logically it has to defend the interests of the party and the working class, and [the revolution] becomes socialist. It is a poor way of reasoning. Never does a Marxist reason starting from the subject, from individuals, but starting from the objective needs; subjectivity comes later, and the great objective necessity in China is to liquidate imperialism and the landowners in favour of the Chinese peasants and people.”

“Let us bring down the discussion to Argentina. In Argentina, the objective need, that is, what is outside of us, what is independent of the parties, of the working class, of all, the central point of politics is to overthrow the dictatorship. Do not be dogmatic: maybe it is overthrown by the working class and a revolutionary communist party — although Preobrazhensky does not touch the problem of the party — but it may not be, it may be another class, not the working class, but the people in general and not even led by the working class, and also a [petty-bourgeois] party, not a revolutionary Marxist party.”

What the comrade said was quite good: this criticism of Preobrazhensky took place in reality; we have seen the FSLN [overthrow Somoza⁶], we have seen [the fall of the dictatorship] in Argentina. Here the people overthrow it. The working class is not hegemonic in the Malvinas mobilisation. We did not direct it, virtually nobody did, [the dictatorship] falls by itself and all parties give it oxygen and so on. Thus, Preobrazhensky was apparently right in this area. But, why is he wrong? What did Trotsky reply, surpassing his theory?

Comrade: Trotsky takes Preobrazhensky’s arguments and acknowledges that the subject may be another, although he continues...

Moreno: No. Rather than acknowledge, he says, “Well ... I accept your point, let us go to your grounds, we will discuss it on the grounds that you raise: Let us forget about the subject, whether it is going to be a [Marxist revolutionary] party, whether it is going to be of the working class. But if we forget the subject, what happens? Suppose a petty-bourgeois party comes and, in turn, the petty-bourgeois class is fighting against the landlords and imperialism, and is the class that is going to make the democratic revolution. Okay, Preobrazhensky, you are right. But you are not right...” How? What did Trotsky reply?

Comrade: He does not see that the revolution still advances towards socialism.

Moreno: Why?

Comrade: Because in China, to give the land to the peasants...

Moreno: That is it! That is what Trotsky replied: “Look, in the entire world there is no fundamental democratic task that is not anticapitalistic, that is not already socialist, even if it is not carried out by the working class, even if it is not carried out by a revolutionary socialist party. If imperialism is expropriated in China, this means the beginning of the socialist revolution, because the basis of capitalist production in that country is imperialism.”

Here we have the same phenomenon: we overthrew the military but if in the short-term we do not stop paying the foreign debt and the great imperialist companies are not expropriated, the country will not have an increasing democracy but an ever-more restricted one. And to expropriate imperialism is to give a terrible blow to capitalism because 60% or 70% of capitalist property

6 **Anastasio “Tachito” Somoza** (1925-1980) was the 53rd President of Nicaragua from 1967 to 1972 and again from 1974 to 1979. He headed the dictatorship of the Somoza family dynasty (in power since 1937) between 1967 and 1979. He was overthrown by a revolution led by the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in July 1979. The current led by Nahuel Moreno participated in the armed struggle against his dictatorship by forming the Simon Bolivar Brigade. Somoza managed to flee Nicaragua and was assassinated in 1980 while in exile in Paraguay.

in Argentina is imperialist. Therefore, no one can tell me: "If you expropriate imperialism, it is a democratic measure that does not touch capitalism." Touching imperialism is touching capitalism. The same in the Argentine countryside: if we expropriate the landowners and big ranchers, we are touching 80% of private property, of capitalist ownership of land.

This is what Trotsky says, "Do not joke with me. Although the process may be objective, the process goes to socialism." He took the example to the absurd: the democratic revolution becomes socialist even is made by a rascal, a priest, the subject is the priests and the party is a party of priests. And Trotsky replied: "If it does this, it makes the socialist revolution; if it makes the democratic revolution to the end, it is already combined with socialism. It is the own actual objective process because capitalism is closely linked to landowners and imperialism." This was what Trotsky meant.

Then, if you want to defend the Argentine nation, or the Chinese nation, and you want to defend the peasants, even if you say "I do not want to defend the working class", you are making socialism because you are touching capitalism, which is the great enemy of the workers. And if there is a class or a party that is not workers but does that, they make socialism because they have to expropriate the 80% or 90% of capitalist property. In backward countries, there is imperialism, and the land belongs to capitalism. That is what Trotsky replied.

Unfortunately, he did not develop through these concepts. Trotsky returned many times to the analysis of the two subjects. Only in his polemic with Preobrazhensky and in a few other opportunities, he has developed this concept. But a few times; he has remained steadfast in the other. He then wrote barbarities as I have already told you: that in China the guerrillas would cause a reactionary government, which would not help, that the fall of Chiang Kai-shek⁷ was worthless, useful only if the proletariat headed the struggle. He even made an interesting socio-economic analysis but was already maniacal (he was a maniac for the working class). He argued that the Chinese working class had disappeared but for the revolution, this was nothing because, by the Japanese invading, since labour in China was cheap, they would develop industrial production by a huge amount controlled by them, and then a much larger working class would appear. But the war continued and instead of a larger working class appearing, it was a disaster because the Japanese lost. The whole reality did not develop as he said but the revolution continued to advance.

Unfortunately, because of this schema of the subjects, Trotsky, if he did not see the working class struggling with their unions and their Soviets and a revolutionary Marxist party, was always closed to see the possibility of a revolution. The faster we unlearn it the better because we've been chasing our tail for decades: "Is it a revolution? Is it not a revolution?" And, yes, they are revolutions. Let us finish the problem once and for all.

[Nevertheless, we continue] thinking that the theory of permanent revolution is the greatest revolutionary political theory that has been structured. We believe that the two greatest discoveries of this century are the theory of permanent revolution and the uneven and combined development, in addition to imperialism, which Lenin discovered, and the Party, which Lenin discovered. Why? Why do we continue to believe it is the greatest thing there is? We have already pointed out where he went wrong. Why do we believe that it is the theory of theories?

Comrade: Because if the world revolution does not advance the counterrevolution will.

Moreno: That is, either the revolution is permanent, or it stops and reverses. In other words, Trotsky was right against the entire world in that there were no national revolutions, in that it was a world revolution. He was also correct in the fact that, whoever may conduct the process, if it progresses it becomes socialism, and there is no way to avoid that it be socialism. These two successes are colossal; because history has done Trotskyism, has done permanent revolution. And it has done it against those who led the historical process because Mao Tse-tung took power to not expropriate

⁷ **Chiang Kai-shek** (1887–1975), was a Chinese military man and dictator. He succeeded Sun Yat-sen as leader of the Chinese Nationalist Kuomintang Party. He led the fierce repression against the workers' revolution of 1925–1927, and ruled the country ever since. At the end of the Second World War, and after the surrender of Japan, he tried to liquidate the guerrilla armies of Mao Tse-tung, who finally took power in October 1949. After the defeat he took refuge on the island of Formosa, and founded the Republic of Taiwan, with the support of the main imperialist powers.

the bourgeoisie — he has said it a million times — and yet, after three or four years, he had to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Stalin occupied Eastern Europe in agreement with imperialism so the masses would not expropriate the bourgeoisie; three or four years later he had to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Trotsky was right: if one continues to face imperialism one must end expropriating the bourgeoisie. It is something brilliant, even with his error. His errors are partial.

Comrade: It is more or less the process present here, in Argentina.

Moreno: Sure. Either it stops with Alfonsín and later on we go back, or we push on. And today what are already raised are specifically workers' tasks. Today what is raised is whether we recover the family basket [of goods and services] and whether we stop unemployment. They all are socialist tasks already; with capitalism, they can't be solved. And it is raised because we have removed the problem of the military dictatorship. By getting rid of the military dictatorship, everything that arises is socialism; if we push on, we are on our way, else, we go back.

Today, the issue is this: the family basket. It is not just us who raise it, so does the bureaucracy. Although the bureaucracy has already said it is comprehensive. I do not know whether you have read Mucci,⁸ he is very interesting. He speaks highly of the two CGTs: "They are people who know much, with whom we understand each other very well." "We understand each other very well" means that they said: "We understand that the situation of the capitalist economy does not allow giving workers a wage increase so big. We will not bother you; we will not make big strikes." That is why he is so happy. But the problem they chatted about still exists; it is necessary to recover the family basket; it is necessary to eliminate unemployment. All this time will be posed whether or not we pay the foreign debt. Non-repayment of the foreign debt is a terrible blow to world imperialism. This is the colossal success of Trotsky, which to some extent is what he replied to Preobrazhensky. But he did not develop it, did not transform it into a thesis.

This second formulation of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution has this extraordinary virtue: it is a theory of the world revolution. It has the extraordinary virtue to see that every bourgeois-democratic revolution if it continues, becomes socialist, and if it does not, it becomes counter-revolution. It has the serious defect that his theory revolves around the subjects. As the comrade said so well, only in this sense was Preobrazhensky right. But overall Trotsky was right: the revolution was going towards the socialist revolution. Preobrazhensky felt it did not.

We believe that in the last 40 years, there have been different phenomena to those that Trotsky witnessed, and they force us to start developing between us all— or some of you will in a few years— a new formulation, a new way of writing the theory of permanent revolution, taking into account all these problems. We have to state that it is not mandatory for the working class and for a revolutionary Marxist party with mass influence to lead the process of democratic revolution to socialist revolution. It is not required to be so. On the contrary: there have been, and it is not ruled out there will be, democratic revolutions that in the economic field become socialists. This is, revolutions that expropriate the bourgeoisie without having the working class as an essential axis — or having it as an important participant — and not having revolutionary Marxist and revolutionary workers' parties at their head but petty-bourgeois parties.

Specifically, one of the most important laws of uneven and combined development, which are these inequalities, has taken place and, unfortunately, Trotsky did not apply it. Trotsky again made the sin to put an equal sign, and said: "Workers Revolution = made by the working class = made by a revolutionary Marxist party". Again, he committed this grave error, which is a formal logic error, of believing that everything equals everything, and it is not uneven and combined. He did not meet one of the most important laws of uneven and combined development, which says that sectors of a class can make revolutions of another class. That is — note what a contradiction — he did not invert his own [reasoning] process. Trotsky used to say "democratic revolution" and did not put an equal sign; those who put an equal sign were the Mensheviks. The Mensheviks said: "Democratic Revolution = made by the bourgeoisie". And Trotsky laughed at them, saying, "Look, they are not

⁸ **Antonio Paulino Mucci** (b. 1932) was an Argentinian printing worker and trade unionist, who was Labour Minister during the government of Raul Alfonsín.

dialectical. Putting an equal sign is a catastrophe, it is metaphysical. [It is not equal sign,] it is uneven and combined development.” It is his great discovery, he applied it against the Mensheviks, saying, “No: in this century, bourgeois-democratic revolution = revolution made by the working class”. In other words, a class that makes the revolution of another class. Which obeys the law of uneven and combined development: the bourgeois-democratic revolution, a task behind schedule, of the 19th century, in the 20th century is made by an anti-bourgeois class.

[The task was] to overthrow the Tsar. Which was the class that would overthrow him? Was it the bourgeoisie or the working class, which were the fundamental classes? The working class. Here, for example, over the last seven or eight years, was it Balbin,⁹ along with his party, who fought, risked his life and mobilised the bourgeoisie to overthrow Martinez de Hoz?¹⁰ No; Balbin collaborated [with the military dictatorship]. Which was the class facing him? Essentially the working class, not even the middle class. Only one or two years ago, [he was faced by] the middle class, which is also largely salaried, a variant of workers, what is called white-collar workers — doctors, and so on — who are also petty-bourgeois sectors.

Which are the classes that hated this government, mobilised for the Malvinas War, were in fact against the management of the war by Galtieri¹¹ and were thoroughly against the military junta? The working class and the petty bourgeoisie. [These are the classes that fought] to overthrow the military junta to achieve these democratic freedoms, to have parties, to have elections, to end censorship, to have freedom of the press. All of this is bourgeois-democratic; it is what the bourgeoisie achieved in the last century. But what the bourgeoisie achieved in the last century is not socialism. Here Galtieri fell and not a single socialist measure came, but they were all bourgeois-democratic — bourgeois-democratic are called those achieved in the last century. But in fact, what social sector fought for the bourgeois-democratic revolution? The working class and the people did, not the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie inherited it but those who did it were the working class and the people. This is a contradiction.

It was done by the working class and the people, and for these freedoms to continue advancing — for example, to give every newspaper free paper, for all parties to have the same time on radio and television (or five minutes for small parties and 15 for the big parties but give time to them all)— the working class and the people would have to take power. This democracy can't be achieved unless the working class takes power. For Trotsky, then, the task of the bourgeois-democratic revolution had to be done by the working class, which was not a bourgeois class but an anti-bourgeois class. Thus, he mixed a bourgeois task with who had to carry out the task, which was the working class. There was a contradiction: a bourgeois task was done by the working class.

Now, for us in this postwar period, that law took place but reversed: sectors of the petty bourgeoisie have carried out workers' tasks. This shows the role of the middle class. The middle class is doomed, poor thing, to not have its own policy because it is in the middle: it is either with the bourgeoisie or it is with the working class. Even when acting independently it can't have its own policy because there is no dominant petty bourgeoisie economy: the large factories and big monopolies either belong to the people and state, or they belong to the big monopolies. The petty bourgeoisie can't do anything. Next to a large billionaire supermarket, no small grocer can compete. Either you are with the working class, with socialist measures, or you are with capitalist measures. The middle class has no outlet.

9 **Ricardo Balbin** (1904 —1981) was an Argentine lawyer and politician, and the most important figure of the Radical Civic Union (UCR), party of the President in 1984, Raul Alfonsín.

10 **Jose Alfredo Martinez de Hoz** (1925–2013) was an Argentine executive and policy maker. He served as Minister of the Economy under the military dictatorship of Jorge Rafael Videla, between 1976 and 1981. He is considered a representative of economic liberalism at any cost, and intimately linked to international financial agencies and centres.

11 **Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri** (1926–2003) Argentine military ruler who initiated the disastrous 1982 war with Great Britain over the Malvinas Islands during his brief period as the head of the military junta that ruled Argentina in 1976–83. Argentina's ignominious surrender led to the almost immediate downfall of Galtieri and, a year later, the downfall of the junta itself and the restoration of democratic rule.

This postwar period has shown that contrary to Trotsky's opinion, the petty bourgeoisie can go to the left. And sometimes, as in Cuba, it can go further to the left, leaning more towards revolutionary positions than the working class. It was not the peasantry who made the revolution against Batista but it was made by the urban middle class —even very affluent sectors of the urban middle class — and oligarchy sectors. Fidel Castro comes from the great Cuban oligarchy, the sector that produced most sugar in Cuba — something similar to the Tucuman oligarchy here — and was supported by sectors of the great Cuban oligarchy and the great bourgeoisie displaced by Batista. He was from Santiago de Cuba, the centre of sugar. Batista had displaced them, distributing these mills to brothel owners around him and in Havana, they reciprocated him with millions. There was, then, a savage anger of this landowner bourgeoisie against the other, against the disaster in Havana and these new sectors. [This bourgeois sector,] plus the middle class, students, doctors, lawyers, all urban middle class —essentially not peasantry — were set in motion to overthrow Batista.

Che Guevara is a product of this. He leaves Argentina because he can no longer stand the "blacks", which was what he called the workers. A year before leaving the country, he fought on the beach in Mar del Plata with John William Cooke.¹² He leaves with Ricardo Rojo.¹³ There is Ricardo Rojo's book, and you can go talk to him, who was a close friend of Che. Che leaves because he can't stand the people voting. After all, he can't stand the unions. He is a perfect oligarch and yet, he then starts to fight over there for democracy, he becomes a close friend of Fidel and the two begin to increasingly adopt revolutionary positions. I want to show that a non-revolutionary-Marxist party and sectors of the bourgeois class, not directly workers, were forced, driven by circumstances, by the objective development — as Trotsky not consciously had posed against Preobrazhensky — to make a democratic revolution and to go on to a socialist revolution.

But this has huge disadvantages. If it is done by the petty bourgeoisie, precisely for being indeed petty-bourgeois, does not believe in the independent mobilisation of the working class. A good thing is that it carries out a series of progressive tasks but a bad thing is that it does not believe in the permanent revolution, it does not believe in the working class. Neither in Sandinista's Nicaragua nor in Castroist's Cuba have the unions ever been independent. Not at all. Why? Because they do not believe in the working class; they believe it has to be subject to the petty bourgeoisie. They largely resemble the Jacobins: they hit left and right; they control the working class and defend themselves from imperialism. In France, the Jacobins¹⁴ were the same; well off petty-bourgeois, yet great revolutionaries, who made great revolutions.

In conclusion, we need to change the theory of permanent revolution in its wording, to insist on this: without a revolutionary party and primordial, hegemonic intervention of the working class, there have been triumphant democratic revolutions, and some of these triumphant democratic revolutions, directed by petty-bourgeois currents supported by the petty bourgeoisie, have advanced to make the socialist revolution, to expropriate the bourgeoisie. That is, because of the lack of maturity of the working class and because it was a necessity, a non-working class, sections of the petty bourgeoisie, have been forced to make the revolution, first democratic and socialist later.

On another level, the issue is that what this petty bourgeoisie can't do is to establish a true workers', democratic, and so on power. They can't do it precisely because they are petty bourgeois, just like the Jacobins. The Jacobins were very progressive, were magnificent, but what they could not impose was plebeian democracy. They struck to one side and struck to the other because they preferred to remain middle class, and wanted to continue in this intermediate situation, of a middle class not mixing with the working class and the people. This is the problem of Fidel Castro and them all. For this reason, they are based on the bureaucracy because the bureaucracy comes to be the middle

12 **John William Cooke** (1919-1968), a Peronist leader who, after the triumph of the Cuban Revolution, would become the ideologue of the filo-Castro wing of Peronism.

13 **Ricardo Rojo** (1923-1996), Argentinian political activist, writer and lawyer for political prisoners. He is best remembered for his book, *My Friend Che*.

14 The **Jacobins** were the most radical and left-wing political sector during the French Revolution that began in 1789. The period of the Jacobins was one of radicalization and advancement of the anti-feudal bourgeois revolution, linked to an extreme repressive regime known as "terror."

class or a variation of the sort as the technocracy. [And what comes of this revolution they lead] is a workers' state led by technocrats, in other words, the modern middle class, is not democratically run by the working class.

We believe that we must add to this everything we said earlier about the February Revolution and the new democratic revolutions. Trotsky says in fact that the democratic revolution is bourgeois-democratic against feudalism. We will have to now incorporate a new type of democratic revolution that is not against feudalism: one that goes against imperialism and capitalism. As we said before, Somoza, Galtieri and Videla are all ultra-capitalist dictatorships. This has to be added to the **Theses** of the Permanent Revolution, saying that the democratic revolution is anticapitalistic and combined in such a way with the socialist revolution.

And we must also add that there are unconscious revolutions, without the subject of a revolutionary Marxist party; rather, for the most part, almost all revolutions are unconscious. And then see how the unconscious revolution ties with the conscious.

In summary, Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution has been fully confirmed in its essential aspects: as a world revolution and in that if the revolutionary process stops, it reverses and the counterrevolution triumphs. But it needs to have important corrections made regarding the subject, the two subjects: political and social. This is the weak point of the previous theory. What corrections? We must say that sectors of the middle class or the middle class as a whole as a social subject, and parties of the petty bourgeoisie, the middle class, as a political subject, forced by circumstances are capable of anti-capitalist democratic revolutions, that is, of overthrowing Somoza, of overthrowing Chiang Kai-shek. And it is the people in general, without the proletariat appearing as hegemonic. Or the proletariat can have a great influence but it is a petty-bourgeois party who directs it. All types of combinations take place. And these democratic revolutions, with these parties and this petty-bourgeois support, can become socialists, that is, they can end expropriating the bourgeoisie. This modification must be done [pointing out] that it responds to a fundamental law of uneven and combined development: that not every task of a class is carried out by the class and it can be carried out by other classes. Not because the task is workers' it must be carried out by this class.

Let me give an example that is going to make your hairs stand on end: in Argentina, who supported Palacios¹⁵ in favour of labour laws and who supported him to become deputy was the great landowning oligarchy, to which the problem of industrial workers was something they did not care at all. Another example: in Germany, who negotiated with the great socialist leader and supported him to enforce labour laws was Bismarck because as Bismarck represented the feudal lords he wanted to screw the industrial bourgeois and keep them at bay, so they would not be on his case asking him for more and more. So, he decided to screw them and allowed the Socialist Party to achieve gains: he discussed what gains he would give them. They are rare historical phenomena [illustrating that] this is a law: not every task of a class is met by that class. This law has been fulfilled regarding the process of the world socialist revolution: sectors that are not of the working class have been involved in the process of the world socialist revolution.

The other thing to add to the theory of permanent revolution is, first, that the democratic revolutions today are anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist [and that imperialism] is the ultimate expression of capitalism. And, in this way, we inevitably move forward; it has to be transformed into a socialist revolution. The other thing to add is that, for the most part, the revolutions are unconscious, are not October revolutions, and open the way towards the October Revolution. We should specify, then, the transition from unconscious revolution, which we call February revolutions, to October revolutions, which for us are conscious revolutions. We believe that, with these three additions, the theory of permanent revolution is completed to understand the phenomena that are taking place and have taken place in the last 40 years. However, new facts may require the theory of permanent revolution to be modified systematically permanently.

¹⁵ **Alfredo Lorenzo Palacios** (1880-1965) was one of the highest leaders and the most important parliamentary figure of Social Democracy in Argentina, author of many bills relating to labour rights of workers. First socialist deputy, elected by the Buenos Aires district of La Boca.

Comrade: I am not clear on what is the difference between a socialist revolution and an anti-capitalist revolution.

Moreno: In fact, the content is socialist. It is a combination.

Comrade: For example: the revolutions that took place in the last period were conducted by a sector that is not the working class but which carries out the tasks of the working class, partially implementing some socialist measures. It is the case of Nicaragua and Cuba.

Moreno: No. [It is anticapitalistic] before expropriating: when it overthrows Batista and when it overthrows Somoza.

Comrade: Is this anti-capitalist?

Moreno: It also is. But the result is not anti-capitalist. It is unconsciously anti-capitalist. The result is that Somoza falls. The historical task achieved is democratic. And there is no consciousness that whoever does it is an anti-capitalist class, or even the people themselves because it goes against the most brutal expressions of capitalism. It is not conscious of that.

Comrade: It becomes socialist when it expropriates?

Moreno: Sure. From the point of view of the relations of production: the bourgeoisie is expropriated and the bourgeoisie disappears. It is a huge phenomenon. It becomes a workers' state. The fact of expropriating the bourgeoisie transforms every country into a workers' state. Barring some historical exceptions, which occurred in Italy: Mussolini, in the last three months, when he did the Social Republic, expropriated the whole bourgeoisie but in the service of German imperialism. But it is an abortion, an exception. That does not happen again in history. Or will it happen again, something similar to what I said about the phone call from Washington to Asuncion, Paraguay?¹⁶ This happens once in a while, every 50 or 100 years.

Comrade: None of these phenomena deepens the workers' revolution if it is not done with workers' leadership.

Moreno: [In this case] the process of permanent revolution stops. If a consistent revolutionary working-class leadership is not directing it, it inevitably stops and reverses.

Comrade: I had understood that to make a socialist revolution there had to be a socialist government.

Moreno: What I tried to show is that it is not so, that it has not been so, and that it happens in reverse. Without being a revolutionary socialist, a party may be forced to make the revolution: the democratic revolution and afterwards the socialist revolution. The democratic revolution is understood as unconsciously socialist. Democratic for what it achieves: the military regime fell. And, in the end, for us, it is the first step to socialism because a structure fell that is well linked to imperialism, to the finance capital, to all that is the strongest sector of the bourgeoisie. It is a defeat for the bourgeoisie. Though they disguise it; they try for the people not to be aware that it is an anti-bourgeois defeat.

And here a process begins: either the revolution keeps advancing continuously, as posed by Marx, or the revolution, if it stops, reverses. Therefore, we say that Trotsky was right about how the train moved but he failed at the station [in which it stopped]. Trotsky said: "The train has to run and run and run and not stop. And if who drives the train is not the working class and the revolutionary Marxist party, the train will not move or move very little." And we say: "The revolution is so strong, pushes so much that even though the opportunist leadership and the petty bourgeoisie were not socialists, now they are often forced to do [the socialist revolution] because of the pressure."

It can be compared with a moving train: if it is not driven by the Bolshevik Party, the train stops. That was fulfilled. What did Trotsky say? "It stops at 50 kilometres". Facts have proved that it stopped at 500 kilometres. This is when it goes quite far; often it stops after 50 kilometres. Those who go the farthest stop at 500; none goes more than 500. Trotsky said it never goes farther than 50 or 100 kilometres. There is a station called "expropriation of the bourgeoisie". [Trotsky said

¹⁶ See Part II: Theory of the Revolution, First Chat.

that] driven by petty-bourgeois leaderships the train never reaches the station expropriation of the bourgeoisie. The facts have shown that the train does reach it, under pressure from the masses, under pressure from imperialism. We believe that mostly pressed by imperialism rather than by the masses, although the masses push a lot. Always [when they expropriated], we believe, was to save themselves. If left to their own devices...

If [imperialism] does not squeeze and squeeze [the Sandinistas] in Nicaragua, I get the impression they will end up in a settlement. In Bolivia they did not squeeze at all; they gave dollars and ended up fixing everything. It has always been because of the offensive of imperialism itself, which said: "Let us bust this government, even though it is not workers'; for being petty-bourgeois it will get scared and will yield." [And that pressure] has been transformed, then, in the opposite. Fidel Castro was a great friend of the Yankees. He went to the United States [invited] by the government, and was an idol of Yankee imperialism. But he adopted a measure, and the Yankees responded with another. Later the Yankees wanted to get him out of the government and leave in place the president that he had, called Urrutia.¹⁷ They began to screw him because he was a friend; they believed he would give them absolutely everything.

But a great revolution had taken place. Fidel Castro had the masses armed and decided to give them the land, without expropriating imperialism. Imperialism blocked him; then he was forced to defend himself increasingly and to adopt more and more measures. That is, forced by circumstances, they advanced many more kilometres than they had planned, many more kilometres than we thought, and came to a station where we also thought they were never going to get. A station called "expropriation of the whole bourgeoisie". This needs to be added to the theory of permanent revolution so that it really reflects how the revolutions have been.

We do not belong to a church that has a Bible called "Theory of Permanent Revolution" written by Trotsky in 1927, as the Bible was written 100 or 150 years after Christ. Fortunately, we do not have a Bible. No definitive document but scientific documents, which change with reality and with the new study of reality. If I succeed in getting out of this course that you leave convinced that you must think and that this thought be open, then I will have achieved the highest percentage of success I want in this course.

Comrade: Of all these issues, what is never guaranteed is to have workers' democracy. So how do we...?

Moreno: I think so. I think that the great centre of world controversy, even against currents of Trotskyism, is workers' democracy, such a simple little thing that everyone has forgotten. In one of our meetings, comrade Paez¹⁸ was brilliant because he reflected the real, not theoretical, problems. He used to say: "Let us not forget the workers' assemblies. That is all. We, in Sitrac-Sitram, always called an assembly."

That is the crux, and he was right. Without generalising it as a theory, the centre of everything is workers' democracy. Everything is resolved through assemblies. It may not be a great assembly; it is not a serious problem: what is serious is not having mass meetings. It is the crux. And this, which we propose at the union level, we have to propose at the global and country level. This is the total difference, and this then makes all other currents, even those who have led revolutions, be either petty-bourgeois or bureaucratic because the petty-bourgeois do not care about the working class.

Comrade Paez was a fanatic of the guerrilla but he broke with them and came with us although he greatly hated us. He was a great leader; there was going to be a strike in his factory, and the night

17 **Manuel Urrutia** (1901-1981) was a Cuban lawyer and bourgeois politician who fought against the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. In 1959, when Fidel Castro and the 26th of July Movement seized power, he was appointed president of the first revolutionary government. After six months, as measures became more radical in the heat of the mobilisation, Urrutia resigned and soon after emigrated to the United States.

18 **Jose Francisco Paez** (1936-2005) was a leader of the classist and combative unions of the two plants (Concord and Materfer) of the Italian multinational Fiat in the province of Córdoba, Argentina: Sitrac and Sitram respectively, which were vanguard of the working class Argentina in the fight against the military dictatorship of 1966-1973 and against the Peronist union bureaucracy. Paez became leader of the Argentine PST and was part formula with Juan Carlos Coral of the presidential that received 200,000 votes in September 1973 against the formula Peron-Peron.

before came one of the top leaders of the guerrillas and told him, “Leave the factory and come along with us to northern Tucuman.”

“But there is a strike tomorrow”, he answered him. “How am I going to let them down, if I was who prepared everything?”

“Leave the workers”, the guerrilla leader replied,

That evening, Paez thought, “I will not leave the workers. I organised the factory and worked with them.” Comrade Cesar Robles,¹⁹ who saw him every day, told him: “You do not believe in workers’ democracy. You are sectors of the petty bourgeoisie. Many of the guerrillas are children of the big bourgeoisie and are very good guys who want the revolution. But they do not believe in the working class; do not believe that democracy must be given to the working class.”

Paez was our mortal enemy; he used to say we were reformists. But he was in crisis. He thought: “I am the leader. If tomorrow I leave the factory and do not go on strike, and the workers learn that I am leaving, what will these workers think? They are going to lose the strike.” And then he did not leave the factory; he went to the factory and the strike took place. There we said: “he is recruited”. But he never came to our headquarters; in assemblies, or the hallways when arguing with Cesar, he would insult us. Suddenly, Cesar, who was very smart, said: “Something happened because Paez came and said “I was nearby and came to see if you have any publications.” And Cesar thought: “He is in crisis.”

And it was true: years later he told us he had entered into total crisis because guerrillas do not believe in workers’ democracy. Workers’ democracy is central to our policy because we believe in the working class, we believe that democratically organised it does wonders, and does much more than the guerrillas and everybody else. Many comrades, even the working class itself, often do not believe in this because they do not know the history of the workers’ movement. During these 30 or 40 years, the working class has done terrible things but less than the guerrillas. It seems that it is not huge. But it is huge: it makes strikes like those of France, leaving up in the air, totally up in the air, a government like that of De Gaulle.²⁰ And what is and has been doing for 40 years in Bolivia, in Peru...! It is greater than the guerrillas, it is greater than all. The heroism of the working class is amazing.

In Bolivia, there was no way to remove the government, and suddenly the working class began to move and ended with it. In Iran, it is amazing how heroic the working class and the people are. Khomeini ²¹— we need to get our hats off to Khomeini — gave a speech, they went to the streets and 300 were killed. And Khomeini said, “Let us go again against the Shah”. The first time 100 thousand went out and 300 were killed. The second time 200 thousand went out and 500 were killed. Khomeini again called to mobilise, and in the end, they were already a million: the army did not shoot again, and the Shah was sent packing.

I think this is where Chile is going; slowly, but going there. It is not going very fast, as in Iran, but it is going there. Every day they make demonstrations; they have lost the fear of death. People go out, fight, and have begun to burn buses. At night all of Santiago de Chile is transformed, dominated

19 **Cesar Robles** (1936-1975) joined Morenoism in the 1960s in La Plata. He was a leader of the PRT and led the party’s participation in the 1966 port strike. He played a leading role in the factional struggle against Santucho and his turn to guerrilla and party-army conceptions in 1967-68. After the Cordobazo he moved to that province to build that regional, where he won over Paez. He was one of the top leaders of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores of Argentina, and was assassinated by the ultra-right paramilitary gangs of the Triple A in November 1975 in Buenos Aires.

20 **Charles de Gaulle** (1890-1970) was a French army officer and politician who led the Free French Forces against Nazi Germany in World War II. He presided over the Provisional Government of the French Republic from 1944 to 1946 to restore bourgeois democracy in France. In 1958, he led the ‘Algiers coup’, in the midst of the anti-colonial war of the Algerian FLN, took over as prime minister, ended the regime of the Fourth Republic, and reformed the Constitution of France, ushering in the Fifth Republic after its approval by referendum. He was elected President of France that same year, a position he held until his resignation in 1969.

21 **Ruhollah Khomeini** (1902-1989), also known in the Western world as Ayatollah Khomeini, was an Iranian Shiite Muslim politician and cleric. He was the main leader of the 1979 revolution, which led to the overthrow of the last Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, and the end of the 2,500-year-old Persian monarchy. After the revolution, Khomeini became the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic.

by the people and the working class; at night the neighbourhoods are dominated by the working class and the people. They burn and do everything. It is amazing what they can do. We are not aware of the strength of the people.

There is the example of Naples. The German army, the Wehrmacht, was the largest and most powerful than had been seen as an army. When I was young, many people mocked the Italians for cowards. Among the soldiers, they were the worst. And in truth, the Italians have always fought little in wars. But everything has to do with the social process; including as well this business of cowardice or not, too. The Russian army was a disaster; they deserted; they all fell prisoners but it was because they did not want to defend the Tsar; but when the Russian Revolution came, they were loyal. Nobody tells that Naples is the only unarmed people who defeated the Wehrmacht, who defeated the famous German army. It was the people of Naples, unarmed.²² They gave a tremendous beating to the army, which had to retire. And they signed with the people of Naples, with those who represented them, they were retreating from Naples because otherwise they would be destroyed. Meanwhile, Naples was in the hands of the Neapolitans, indicating the strength of the people, because the Germans' was a perfect army.

The power of the workers' movement is amazing, in El Salvador as well: it started with a tremendous workers' movement. Somoza fell after 20 or 30 years [of the existence of a] guerrilla, which was nothing, it was very weak. The guerrilla leads because [when] Chamorro was killed, all the workers and popular movement took to the street; that is the basis of the triumph. It was very quaint what happened with a high guerrilla leader of the Sandinista Front in Paris. A great rally was done for him. As good leftists of developed countries, we, Latin Americans, are always seen as folk events, with enormous sympathy, but folk events. Che Guevara was the idol of all European masses, and therefore they also idolised the FSLN. All the speakers were saying: "How great is the FSLN! What brilliant leadership! They took power." And when the guy, who was very honest, took the floor, he said what happened. He said: "I have been praised so much that I do not know where to stand. We did nothing. The masses began to make tremendous strikes, and then, as there was no party to direct them, we were lucky. We were in the mountains; we were no more than 50. Then the masses took us as direction and we realised that the issue was not the guerrillas. In three days, they did more than we did in three years. Then we realised that the matter came through the cities and not through isolated guerrillas on the mountains." This is why the FSLN wins. They have the merit that when they see this mobilisation, hundreds of thousands on the streets, they realise and say, "The thing comes through here".

Comrade: I am still left with a doubt: how can workers' democracy be guaranteed if the masses follow a petty-bourgeois leadership?

Moreno: It stops, it is never guaranteed, and there is no workers' democracy.

Comrade: And how do we...?

Moreno: That is what we are for: we need to build a party that fights for workers' democracy, and [that party] is us. Otherwise, we would have no reason to exist. I believe in this, although we are apparently very few. I believe in the global process. It has already happened in Poland. Who believed in Poland? Only 30 or 40 years ago we seemed crazy. One used to say: "The working class will make strikes, will clash against the Russian government; intellectuals will go against the government of Russia." Russia seemed like a graveyard, a full graveyard, with millions of people in concentration camps, and we said: "We believe in the Russian working class." Then Poland came, the whole of Eastern Europe, and the entire China.

We said: "We believe in the working class, also in the big countries." Back then we looked like madmen, possessed, because reality was saying otherwise. After the Algerian Revolution great theorists emerged — Frantz Fanon²³ is one of them — who, together with Che Guevara, sent every-

²² The author refers to the Second World War episode known as the *Four Days of Naples*, the popular uprising between 27 and 30 September 1943 against the German forces occupying the city..

²³ Frantz Fanon (1925–1961) was a Martinique-born Afro-Caribbean psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary, and writer whose works are influential in the fields of post-colonial studies, critical theory, and Marxism. As an intellectual and a

one crazy. In the early 1960s, everyone was reading Che Guevara and Frantz Fanon. We looked like lunatics; we were the only ones who were saying that the working class was not oligarchic and aristocratic. They said we need to do revolutions against it: “You have to lean on backward peoples. The revolution goes from the countryside to the city; from the backward countries to developed countries. The working class must be swept: at the beginning of the century, it was revolutionary, but now it is not, it is aristocratic, they are bought with fridges, with comfort”. And we said, “No, sirree!”

We were told the same thing about Poland: “This working class is aristocratic, agrees with the bureaucracy, there is nothing to be done.” And we said: “There are going to be economic crises, there will not continue to be a favourable economic situation for the bourgeoisie, and as soon as the crises begin, small or large, the working class will fight. When fighting, it is above anything: it masters technology, it is capable, it is concentrated and it is infinitely stronger than any popular class because it masters modern technology. It is a modern class. The worker is not scared by a walkie-talkie and is not afraid of a TV because there are workers who make televisions. They are not scared by cybernetics, the electronic calculator because [although] there are other branches [of more backward production], workers communicate with each other and master all the latest technology.” Unlike, for example, a peasant from Peru, which is very backward (if we do not say things as they are, we are demagogues: it is a tremendous backwardness).

We said then, “The working class is going to mobilise” and it mobilised: in 1968, seven or eight years after the controversy with Che Guevara. The working class in 1968 made the great general strike in France, and in 1969 in Italy, everything exploded, more than in France. In Italy they achieve everything: the sliding scale of hours, and enterprise committees. It achieves the maximum that the working class has achieved in this postwar period, due to chains of general strikes, occupations and so on. In seven or eight years they showed that we were right. And now no one talks about it. They have already forgotten even the very own Che Guevara; he is no longer their idol. In the 1960s, Che Guevara was a god. His portrait was taken to every rally. Now he is not even named. His whole theory has been proven false. Today, Franz Fanon is read by no one, but 20 years ago I had to discuss in depth against Franz Fanon and Guevara in any course: the working class will fight, will fight. Our very *raison d'être* is the fight for workers' democracy.

Comrade: Should the party line be workers' democracy?

Moreno: For me, yes. That is why I tell you it is increasingly the centre of our policy: Workers' democracy to exercise power, workers' democracy to direct the unions. We are for the permanent revolution. We want workers' democracy for the permanent revolution. Plus, everything else; making it clear that, as always, it is a system with many slogans but with an axis, and for me, the axis is workers' democracy. I notice this is the point that differentiates us in everything. It differentiates us even from currents that are considered revolutionary, which do not care for workers' democracy. Neither are they concerned, for example, that all unions in Nicaragua vote unanimously. And that is impossible. There can be no unanimous union vote; if there is workers' democracy there have to be different shades. It means, then, that they are controlled from above; some bureaucrats say “Do not vote against it because I dismiss you”. There must be fear, like in the meetings of delegates' committees when they are thoroughly controlled by the bureaucracy.

Comrade: Workers' democracy is the road to socialism.

Moreno: There can be no socialism, true socialism unless it is worldwide. Lenin did one of his greatest works, for example, in the great discussion that opened when the peasants were given the right to sell their produce. Lenin was told: “You are going back to capitalism”. And it was true because he authorised the market. But Lenin is brilliant, he answers from another angle and says, “Excuse me: in Russia there are 100 million peasants and peasants will accept a measure [like this], and display their initiative. Instead, if we adopt a measure that makes 100 million peasants be against it... This measure is much more democratic and puts 100 million peasants on the warpath. The other is quite good on paper but the peasants are totally against it. Thus, we are for the mobilisation, for the

Marxist humanist, Fanon was concerned with the psychopathology of colonization, and the human, social, and cultural consequences of decolonisation.

agreement with the peasants. The Russian Revolution was made thanks to that, this criterion of peasant's and workers' democracy because [actually] Lenin had always fought against land distribution.

In Russia, the left movement had two or three characteristic positions around the land issue. The left-wing raised the nationalisation of the land: "We can't give land to the peasants, because the peasant then buys a plot of land from another, and in 10 or 20 years we have very rich peasants. No, sir: the land is national and this land is distributed. If a guy has four children, we give him a plot four times larger than a guy who is single. And if the next year things change, and this peasant had a son and the first had two children who died, then to the latter we will give him less. It changes from year to year." The revolutionary wing said this.

The Socialist Revolutionary — populists — who were half anarchists and put bombs, logically said, "Distribution of the land, and every peasant to grab what he can." It was the line of land distribution, allowing the strongest to hold the greatest because they had more money.

The opportunists said the land had to be municipalised. It should neither belong to the country as a whole nor be shared by the peasants. They felt that it should be for each municipality. The municipality of Pehuajo owned all the land of Pehuajo; Lincoln's, all the land of Lincoln; Junín,²⁴ all the land of Junín. And then each municipality discussed with all the peasants how it was distributed.

These were the three great lines existing then. Lenin always, all his life, was against the distribution of land, which he denounced as petty-bourgeois. But he made the revolution accepting the distribution of land and without self-criticism, he combined both. Why? Because at that meeting that I've told you about, when he went and spoke to the peasants, who booed him, if he was not for the distribution of land the peasants would not have supported him or supported the socialist revolution. Then, without going back on his word, he agreed with the peasants and combined the two things: "You support us to make the workers' revolution. We continue to maintain that the land be national, but the peasants, the peasants' committees, distribute it".

Comrade: He adapted to the peasant's democracy.

Moreno: Exactly. He adapted to peasant democracy, believing that the greatest thing there could be was that the workers and peasants were united against the bourgeoisie. He was not dogmatic, he said: "If you are not for the nationalisation of the land, we do not make the revolution together." Conversely, they said, "Let us see what we agree on to make the revolution." Because he was respectful of the peasant majority, he accepted the petition of the majority of the peasant Soviet, and thanks to this made the revolution.

Comrade: What was the status of the peasantry in Russia?

Moreno: There were the feudal landlords and peasants much like ours, but much more miserable. [Among the peasantry] there are bourgeois sectors; others miserable, very poor as those in Tucuman,²⁵ and others with relationship almost of serfs.

Comrade: The very formal handling we do of the theory of permanent revolution does not allow us to see that in Argentina there was a revolution with the fall of the Junta and the assumption of Bignone.²⁶ This schematic way to handle this theory does not also make us commit the mistake of not taking part in full in the demonstrations against taxes, tenements, and so on, which largely aim against the capitalist state.

Moreno: I agree that it was a mistake not having given them importance. But everything is relative. Because if a mass party does not give importance to this fact, it is a political crime. A relatively small party has to concentrate its efforts but, of course, the line of the party leadership was that we had to give much importance to the issue of taxes, of rents, they are essential and very important,

²⁴ **Pehuajo, Lincoln and Junin** are three of the big municipalities in the very rich agricultural and livestock area of Buenos Aires province, in Argentina.

²⁵ **Tucuman**, sugar cane growing province of the Argentinian north.

²⁶ **Reynaldo Bignone** (1928-2018) was a former Argentine military officer who served as de facto president of Argentina between 1 July 1982 and 10 December 1983. In 2011, he was sentenced by the Argentine justice system to life imprisonment for crimes against humanity along with other military genocidaires of the 1976 dictatorship.

they fully attack the capitalist regime, especially state power. Everything that has to do with taxes or strikes by state employees [is so]. Some result in checkmate, almost causing the revolution: the post office, for example, is one of them; tax collection is another. Strikes are neuralgic there because they are at the centre of the capitalist system.

Can you imagine a two- or three-month-long strike of the Postal Service? How do the capitalists get their promissory notes, checks, and all that? How does a check go from here to Jujuy, Tucuman, La Plata or Tigre? Imagine a merchant in La Plata, who has no mail and has to travel to Jujuy, has to travel to all the provincial cities and neighbourhoods of Buenos Aires to collect or pay. The capitalist system stops after two months.

The problem of the Postal Service is tremendous. In Italy, it has been a terrible problem, not for the strike but for the chaos. It is a Postal Service Italian style: of three letters sent to us, we get one, and it comes one or two months late. It is a problem that the bourgeoisie has been discussing for years. It was fixed by making a few contracts with large companies to do deliveries; it eliminated the state mail. As in Colombia, where they have a contract with Avianca, the private aviation company. There the state has given it the monopoly of air mail. But Avianca does it very well. Italy did the same. Surface correspondence was tendered because the bourgeoisie was furious with this issue of the letters not arriving. But six months passed, then a year, and each time fewer letters arrived. An investigation was made, and it turned out this bourgeois company loaded four trucks; three trucks distributed correspondence and one had the load burned to earn money and not work hard. Another great scandal of the Italian bourgeoisie.

We also suffer the problem of the Italian Postal Service. I do not know whether you know that with the Italian comrades, we have interrupted relations because, with a lot of luck, an airmail letter from them, and ours too, takes two or three months to arrive —and it is lucky if they arrive. Thus, it is better to visit us every six months or a year because then we catch up better than if we write. So, it is an evil, not only for the bourgeoisie but for us as well.

PART II

Theory of the Revolution

First chat with course trainees

Moreno: First of all, what questions do you want to ask me?

Trainee: I see a difference between the democratic revolution and the February revolution. You talk of a democratic revolution without abrupt changes, for example, the revolution in Spain in 1931, when the King fell. It is a democratic revolution without abrupt changes; it is through an electoral, parliamentary road. There is a democratic revolution and no abrupt change.

Moreno: According to you, we say that with democratic revolutions there is an abrupt change. Ok, but let us see in what sense [we say it]. For us, Spain does have an abrupt change because the regime totally changes.

Let us bring everything down to earth, to examples. The theory is always based on analysing, [in] abstracting reality, hence it always arrives later. When we say that there is no abrupt change, we are referring, for example, to what Trotsky says of the [1936] general strike in France. We have a quote — which we are using in a very reserved way, so much so we would not want it to be used in writing ([we keep it for] the discussion with Mandelism)— in which Trotsky literally says that the general strike is the French February Revolution. That is, he defines the general strike as the February Revolution. It is a phrase in passing. Why, for us, is it a terrible quote against Mandelism? Because Mandelism is attacking us [saying] it is ridiculous for February revolutions to be unconscious. It says there are only February revolutions where there is feudalism. Then this quote shows, first, there is a February Revolution in France, a country of high capitalist development, [that is,] the February revolution is not bourgeois-democratic against feudalism; and second, that it is super unconscious, [something] nobody can deny.

Why did Trotsky call it the February Revolution? The same parliamentary system [remains], it does not change. It is a general strike under a popular frontist government that continues unless we say that the popular frontist regime is a different regime: not a different government but a different regime. Here also it was peaceful because the general strike — if I remember correctly — came after the Popular Front took government, not before. This, no more, is what we mean.

Let us look at this problem. It is not an abrupt change; as far as the regime there is no change. And yet, Trotsky says that the general strike is the beginning of the revolution. In the sense that it is a February revolution and that it began the process towards October. That is what we mean.

Let me clarify that everything we say is stuck with adhesive tape. It is pretty well stuck but when viewed in reverse, it is poorly stuck because they are all very new problems. I will later dwell on this. We need to discuss whether Trotsky is right or not.

Trainee: When you say that the economic revolution is always after February, are you telling us of the possible sequences of the revolution, or is it a general statement?

Moreno: Yes, [it is] general. All the same, I considered the possibility of [a socio-economic revolution in] Paraguay, without a [prior] February. It is not a joke. I take it to the extreme so it can be understood. However, I would not discard it as a theoretical hypothesis. If the revolution triumphs in the United States, get ready to see the most amazing things. I say Paraguay, but this is not to deprecate Paraguay: perhaps [the revolution] maybe by phone in Argentina. Perhaps even in France... [With] the revolution in the United States, we will see the most incredible combinations throughout the whole sector of humanity where there has been no revolution. [We may see] Idi Amin²⁷ leading the revolution and polishing the shoes of the guys rather than dismembering them to eat their liver, as it seems he did. We are going to see anything because it will change the global relationship of forces, giving the most incredible combinations.

But for now, [the socio-economic revolution is] always after February.

Trainee: You say that in Russia there was a sequence in which the expropriation happened after October and the civil war was after the expropriation. You also say that afterwards, in general, there were other sequences. Now, when you say that expropriations can only happen after February, do you say it in general or as one of many possible sequences?

Moreno: These sequences take place in October [and] in all [the revolutions. Expropriations are] always after February. [In Russian it happened] first February, then October, and [then] the other [revolution, the socio-economic revolution]. What hasn't been seen are expropriations before February, among other things because the war can't be won. [In the revolutions of the postwar period that expropriated], while civil war is not won, of guerrilla [warfare], there is no February. And if there is no February, there is no possibility to expropriate the bourgeoisie. It is a bit of a truism, so far.

Trainee: About stage and situation: do we propose that situations may be different moments of a stage?

Moreno: I can't remember well the dictation, but it seems to me that the sequences of epoch, stage, [situation] are not [good]. This is very important; it is one of the points on which we must insist.

What is an epoch? [It is] when the development of productive forces comes into contradiction. Epochs are a half-century, a century, two centuries, or five centuries. The emergence of feudalism takes centuries. Then, an epoch has to do with the development of the productive forces. The definition of epoch is given by the development [of the productive forces], when [this development] is paralysed.

Stage has to do with great triumphs that do not get closed, or with big defeats — -in this case, they do close. For example, the fascist stage has a true fascist regime, immediately after the victory of fascism. Later, a phenomenon takes place: it loses the support of the middle class. Fascism disappears to become totalitarian Bonapartism. Counterrevolutionary, but Bonapartism.

And within these stages, there are in turn different types of regimes and different types of situations. Otherwise, there would be no changes from [one] regime to [another] regime. This is one of the problems the comrades find most difficult to understand. If things are petrified, the possibility of passing from one to another is null. If there is a stage where the counterrevolution triumphed, and within that stage, there can be no revolutionary situations, we are screwed: it'll never change. Then, the situations are the moments that prepare the leap from one stage to another. Else, we stop the transition from one stage to another. To move from one stage to another, there must be situations.

[Also], there may be a revolutionary situation [in which, for example], Pinochet is about to fall, and things get fixed and it goes back again; Pinochet stays, and the Pinochet stage continues.

Trainee: In the course, we present stages as longer periods, and situations as shorter periods, but always within the same stage.

²⁷ **Idi Amin** (1928–2003) was a Ugandan military officer and politician who served as the third president of Uganda from 1971 to 1979. He ruled as a military dictator and is considered one of the most brutal despots in modern world history.

Moreno: We did it on purpose because [the course] was of a low level. It was a topic we almost did not want to touch because we saw it as very dialectical and very difficult to understand. We preferred to give the impression that [stage and situation] are almost the same, and in the following year explain [in depth] what [the difference] was.

Trainee: Why do we now say democratic reaction rather than democratic counterrevolution?

Moreno: We have the impression that seen from the point of view of the regime, saying democratic counterrevolution is an exaggeration. Because in Portugal, obviously, there is no counterrevolution. There is a pretty horrid reaction, but [about] the regime, it has not gone back to Salazar.²⁸ On the other hand, if the Salazarist returned to Portugal, it would be worse than the previous stage. And in Argentina too: if they killed 30 thousand, next they kill 300 thousand.

And if we call “counterrevolution” to what is now happening in Portugal, or now that Alfonsín took government in Argentina, we are left without words. I can see us looking up in the dictionary another word indicating that there are “good” counterrevolutions: “good” democratic counterrevolution, which does not kill or bother anyone, and so on. Then, as we have emphasised the physical problem, we think [best] to keep [the term] “counterrevolution” for when there are tortures, persecution, and imprisonment and not for when, by democratic methods, the workers’ movement gets pigeonholed.

Trainee: But the qualification of counterrevolutionary remains, for example, for the Carter²⁹ Plan, which was carried out using democratic methods.

Moreno: No, no. We want change; we want to make another formula. We believe that calling all these processes “counterrevolutionary” is an exaggeration of the Third International. Rather [we should call them] reactionaries.

Trainee: It is a problem of the Bonapartist regimes. There is reactionary Bonapartism and counterrevolutionary Bonapartism.

Moreno: That is right.

Trainee: Onganía³⁰ was a reactionary Bonapartist regime. In the text, the definition of reaction and counterrevolution is clear. But in the classification, we say we called counterrevolutionary to the whole Onganía stage.

Moreno: Maybe. [In this case] it is a mistake. These are all new issues. We look back and it is full of errors.

Trainee: They are, yes, types of Bonapartist regimes.

Moreno: Very good. Exactly. It is like a triumph of fascism with [reactionary] methods.

For example, I have growing doubts about whether Brazil’s regime was ultra-reactionary instead of counter-revolutionary. Mercedes [Petit] told me that newspapers in Brazil insist that the Brazilian problem has nothing to do with the Argentinian problem. They are terrified. What indicates that there was a revolution in Argentina is that the newspapers, even the worst enemies of the regime and government itself printed important articles saying “Argentina has nothing to do with Brazil”; in Brazil, there were five killed, and almost no repression; there has always been two political parties, political parties are legal: the Communist Party was active and was a wing recognised by everybody [within the Brazilian Democratic Movement (MDB)]. With Garrastazu Medici there was a time it was terrible, very hard, [which had already started with] Costa e Silva. Lately, I went to Brazil; I got more in touch with Brazilian comrades and found that when the coup took place, against

28 **Antonio de Oliveira Salazar** (1889–1970) was a Portuguese dictator, who served as Prime Minister between 1932 and 1968 and temporarily as President of the Republic in 1951. He was the head and main figure of the so-called Estado Novo, which covered the period 1926–1974, although the regime was not consolidated as such until 1933.

29 **James (“Jimmy”) Earl Carter** (b. 1924) is an American politician member of the Democratic Party who served as the 39th president of the United States from 1977 to 1981.

30 **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 Radical president Arturo Illia in a *coup d’état* self-named *Revolución Argentina* (Argentine Revolution).

what I always thought, Castelo Branco's plan was similar to Aramburu's plan in Argentina. So, to what extent did it follow the original program? These should be studied because it would explain why now they find it easier to return [to that program].³¹

Trainee: Bismarckism³² is a differentiated regime or is it a type of policy or methodology used by Bonapartist or reactionary regimes?

Moreno: For me, it is a regime because it incorporates elements: new organisations, new institutions. The first is that it unifies Germany, which was the great bourgeois-democratic task. It overcomes customs, liquidates the government of the 200 princes, and gets a central government. It does not achieve unity with Austria, it does not fully achieve German unity; but in general, it solves everything partially. Later it imposes parliamentary rules. It incorporates the Social Democratic Party and accepts it. Later it persecuted it but it did encourage it. It truly encourages it, as a regime. It is the first regime that tends to lean surreptitiously in a workers' party. As a support of supplementary, non-essential character; but [it does] it to screw the industrial bourgeoisie, so it does not get too bothersome asking for bourgeois institutions that completely dominate. It is such a thing, a hybrid, so rare!

This is new; it is a totally new regime. For me it is a whole regime: because of the unification of Germany, because it tends to rely on the workers' party, because it creates an entirely new type of bourgeois-democratic institution and begins to accept the workers' [institution], the workers' party.

This is full of problems. It is not uncommon for questions and more questions to be asked, or for wrong formulations to be found in older party documents. We believe that if we were to sit an examination, in general, we would do quite well; because I clarify that many of these problems, in a partial, not widespread way, we have been raising for years.

For example, the problem of [the definition] of revolutionary situation. We have been writing for 20 years that there is a new type of revolutionary situation. Today, there are probably several [types]. I am not saying that 20 years ago we found the problem. But [I do say] that, in the past 20 years ago, or more, we have been raising several issues, the search for the solution to several theoretical problems posed by reality. I think we had more or less the virtue of not being afraid of thinking for ourselves, and that has led to large errors but also to quite important successes. For example, in 1947 we predicted that there would be an economic boom of world capitalism. Except for a small group in England, there was no Marxist who subscribed to this. [Also we have been proposing] other issues such as this of the revolutionary situation.

We have always tried to theorise without ignoring the real phenomena. So, I want to raise a methodological alert. When I was young, I always loved Lenin, for his empiricism. And I did even when I was coming, unlike Lenin and Trotsky — and probably Kautsky — from a Hegelian philosophical formation, and, therefore, apparently for my tastes I should be against [empiricism]. Now, already old, I return to my first loves: I love Lenin for his empiricism. Because in essence, this empiricism is, concerning the historical process, the most dialectical it can be; as opposed to certain mechanical type elements, such as the methodology, of Trotsky. Let us find later the words to nuance

31 **Humberto de Alencar Castelo Branco** (1897 -1967) was the first president of the Brazilian military regime who, according to Moreno, took an ultra-reactionary program, but not of crushing the masses with methods of civil war. Succeeding him was **Artur da Costa e Silva** (1899-1969), under whose government repression began to harden. Then **Emilio Garrastazu Medici** (1905-1985) came, who was the hardest of all. And finally assumed **Ernesto Geisel** (1907-1996), who was president at the time Moreno is talking about, under whom they "return to the original program" of the coup and there are certain freedoms and certain scrimped legality.

Pedro Eugenio Aramburu (1903 -1970) was an Argentine Army General. He was a major figure behind the military coup self-named *Revolución Libertadora* (Liberating Revolution) against Juan Domingo Peron in 1955. He became de facto president of Argentina from 13 November 1955 to 1 May 1958. He was kidnapped and executed by Montoneros in 1970.

32 **Otto von Bismarck**, Prince of Bismarck and Duke of Lauenburg (1815-1898), was a Prussian statesman and politician, architect of German unification and one of the key figures in international relations during the second half of the 19th century. During the last years of his life, he was nicknamed the "Iron Chancellor" for the determination with which he pursued his political goals. fundamentally the creation and maintenance of a system of international alliances that would ensure the supremacy and security of the German Empire.

this, so it does not go deeply against Trotsky. That is, to unite the two, [Lenin and Trotsky,] in our “book of saints”. I do not want to lower anyone but to give each its place.

I hasten to say, then, a methodological verification: a healthy empiricism, a healthy empirical habit is the most dialectical thing there is. Because, in fact, this healthy empiricism of Lenin is: “Let the events take place, [let] the revolutions [take place], then we make the theories.” And not, as I think, it is more or less, the approach of Trotsky: “We make theories of how a revolution it is going to be for the whole century.” Trotsky wrote categorically: “Mao Tse-tung is going to a capitalist regime, counterrevolutionary in fact; if he overthrows Chiang Kai-shek, it means nothing to humanity.” He said that for his formulation of the theory of permanent revolution. Today, reality shows this was a disaster.

What does “healthy empiricism” mean? What would Lenin have said? Lenin would have said, “I am half empirical. Why do we not see [what happens]? Then we see, we adjust [the theory] to reality; the reality is so rich, we are empirical, let us not mess about, let us not be so pedantic.” This is how he acted. When you read him, you are going to see how he adapts himself and adopts tactics; always from a passionate study of what reality presents. And immediate reality to [develop] immediate policy; the more general reality to [develop] more general theory. This is why, in theoretical issues, he is always a bit late. Lenin is one of the last to write about imperialism but when he does, he rounds [the subject].

Why do I say this? Because, in fact, we are developing between us all and we are going to see if together we develop, finally, a Marxist theory of revolutions. Note what a serious question! There has been discussion about reform and revolution but we do not have a treatise on the revolutions that have been and the types of revolutions that can be, nor there has been anyone who empirically raised this, which is Leninist: reality is so rich that there may be other types of revolutions.

Hence my insistence about Paraguay, which is taken as a joke, I do not know whether good or bad. (Hands up those who think it is bad so you can be prepared for questions that I’ll ask you in the rest of the course.) Regarding Paraguay, it is objective. We do not know what revolutionary combinations will take place in the future. For this reason, I insist that, if in the future the revolution triumphs in the United States, everything will change and we will see unforeseen phenomena.

I get the impression that forced by circumstances, we are beginning to encode — even to schematise, which is possibly dangerous — to define, to point out what is reform and what is revolution. Everything else is partial, although it may have been as brilliant as Rosa Luxemburg on reform and revolution, as Lenin, as Trotsky on revolutionary situation. **Everything** is up for reconsideration and needs to be reorganised. Actually, it is the big issue, the big discussion within Marxism in this postwar period and within Trotskyism itself. It is the theoretical reason for the crisis of Trotskyism itself. Therefore, it is no coincidence that we amend issues from document to document. We believe we already have some very important directive ideas but they still need to be perfected.

Why do we throw into the waters of this serious problem new comrades, almost with no cultural level, much less a Marxist level? Because, in this sense, I still believe that to some extent the last comes first. Only by capturing all these extremely serious theoretical problems — what is a revolution? What is reform? What is a regime? What is a stage? What is a situation? — that is, by beginning to develop a general theory or a general treaty of revolutions and reforms, on a global scale and scale of the century, we can give the comrades the conceptual tools to understand. Otherwise, if we follow an evolutionary course to do the courses and show them first what Marx said, what Lenin said, Trotsky’s *Theses of the Permanent Revolution*; when they arrive at the definition of revolutions, almost certainly, we will find a new one. That is, the comrades will be late to be able to define.

It occurs to me that it is essential that the comrades learn this even if they find it difficult; it is the most essential that there is. For them what we are teaching them is as important as the *Communist Manifesto*. They do not know it is the latest; then maybe they can see it quite easily.

This is the explanation of the document that we did. With the addition that it is a document that has its history. We thought it would be a course of much lower level; but, as comrades began to

study, they revealed themselves as very intelligent, asking very good questions. (Ernesto pointed out that [the course] consisted rather of questions the comrades made me, rather than mine to them. For example, we did not think of raising the issue of senile Bismarckism.) Then it was completed and a document came up. It was enriched and I was enriched. I was getting clear, fine-tuning and solving several problems. Unfortunately, other problems were clarified; but instead of solutions, all we have is the clarity of the problem. One of them is the revolutions made by the guerrillas.

We gave you this paper, comrades, for you to study; it is something internal, almost as if we had done a course, a chat between us. Now we are trying to schematise. We will give you a new document, simple, for all comrades, in the end, deeper, clearer, better schematised than this; but contradictorily much simpler and easier for the rank and file. Do not make the mistake of giving the paper we are studying to the rank and file. We are going to make a new document, which will have very clear the following chapters:

One: Productive forces, structure and superstructure. Everything is well outlined, with definitions, to make it a lesson for the comrades to study it. It will be similar to what this paper says.

Two: State, regime, government.

Three: Reform and revolution.

Due to time constraints, we do not know, and we have doubts about whether we will make three chapters (fourth, fifth and sixth) of historical type. Either way, they are going to be somewhere. We shall see how, whether schematically and analytically or historically. We are mulling two ways for them to understand much better. If we do it historically, these three chapters would be:

[Four:] Reform and reaction: the struggle of the workers movement and peoples from the last century until 1917. For us, the premium element [in this period] is reform and reaction.

Because it so happens that the Second International, just as it did not use the word “strategy” but only “tactics” it did not use the term “counterrevolution” — to my knowledge — but “reaction”. In Lenin’s *Collected Works*, he is always talking about reaction and not of counterrevolution. (It might be that exceptionally [he did so]. I haven’t read Lenin for a long time. Perhaps, it is full of “counterrevolutions” and my selective and political memory now recalls that he spoke only of reaction.) Whether it was used or not by the Second International, we believe that what happened was essentially a reaction. It is like Thatcher³³ or Reagan³⁴ now. To our knowledge, as a regime, there was no counterrevolution, the workers’ movement was not physically busted until 1917. It was busted through electoral, and parliamentary ways applying a state of siege, and so on. It may be that there have been counterrevolutionary measures, [but] we do not remember [that there have been] counterrevolutionary regimes. What prevailed was, then, reform and reaction.

It is a historical chapter on what happened [in reality]. The revolutions that took place were bourgeois-democratic, made by the bourgeoisie, but it was the French Revolution.³⁵ Throughout the nineteenth century [the stage] becomes increasingly more reformist and less revolutionary; and the only great revolution, the Paris Commune,³⁶ lasted only two months. The attempt to make the coun-

33 **Margaret Hilda Thatcher**, Baroness Thatcher (1925–2013) was a British stateswoman and Conservative politician who was Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1979 to 1990 and Leader of the Conservative Party from 1975 to 1990. She was the longest-serving British prime minister of the 20th century and the first woman to hold the position. As prime minister, she implemented economic policies known as Thatcherism. A Soviet journalist dubbed her the “Iron Lady”, a nickname that became associated with her uncompromising politics and leadership style.

34 **Ronald Wilson Reagan** (1911–2004) was an American politician and actor who served as the 40th president of the United States from 1981 to 1989. He was a member of the Republican Party; his presidency constituted the Reagan era, and he is considered one of the most prominent conservative figures in American history.

35 We interpret that Moreno here meant they are revolutions similar to the French for their bourgeois-democratic, anti-feudal character, not workers’ revolutions against capitalism. Probably he refers, for example, to the German revolutions of 1848.

36 The **Paris Commune** was a French revolutionary government that seized power in Paris from 18 March to 28 May 1871. During the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, the French National Guard had defended Paris and working-class radicalism grew among its soldiers. Following the establishment of the Third Republic in September 1870 and the complete defeat of the French Army by the Germans by March 1871, soldiers of the National Guard seized control of the city on

terrevolution is feudal but it does not win anywhere. There are attempts of counterrevolution, but as the century unfolds... We'll see that there is a very big theoretical problem here.

[Five:] Revolution and counterrevolution after 1917. We believe that the two major events that take place are the workers' revolution and the bourgeois counterrevolution. They are two new categories, unknown in the previous stage, that characterise the stage. We have spoken many times of the stage but now the focus is from the point of view of the regime, of the revolution. The reform does not prevail, although there are many reforms; and no reaction prevails, although there is much reaction. There are two new facts. The two poles are the revolution and counterrevolution.

[Six] The third stage is as of 1943-1944, this postwar period, where no longer any triumphant workers' revolution takes place. All successful revolutions that take place are due to wars: the great war of the USSR against Nazism, civil wars, guerrilla wars or national wars. The great revolutions take place through a process of war: civil war, national war, and war between states. Rather, it seems an exogenous process, of confrontation; not endogenous like the other revolutions. We believe it is a stage with very different characteristics from the previous one to the one before the 1940s.

And also [there is a change in the] counterrevolution. That is, there is a new kind of revolution, and we would need to study whether there has also been a new kind of counterrevolution, as Hansen³⁷ used to say. We need to study whether he is correct or not; if it is one of Hansen's major findings, which has several interesting theoretical approaches. According to Hansen, after the defeat of Nazism and fascism, which is totally crushed in 1944, a different fascism emerges, a kind of guerrilla, terrorist, selective. Hansen gave the example of Guatemala's White Hand:³⁸ they go out, kidnap and kill some guys. But they do not create a movement of lumpen and petty-bourgeois masses that call to a demonstration, killing everyone as the fascists did before taking power, attacking a city, but in a demonstration, together, by the thousands, but the opposite, in hidden ways, with guerrilla methods, as if feeling weak, defensively. It is not a fascist offensive; it is an offensive but with these methods. What needs to be clarified is whether a new type of revolution emerges and whether a new type of counterrevolution does or does not emerge. What I am sure of is that a new kind of revolution emerges that we had never seen. This is why we divide it into the third stage.

Later we would retake the theoretical stages: what is the February [revolution], the democratic [revolution]? We would define them from there, based on the description. Then we would get theoretical conclusions: how a new type of democratic revolution emerges that is not against feudalism.

For example, so you see how all of you can contribute, Comrade *Turquita* sent us an old quote from Trotsky, I think written in 1929 about the German revolution of 1918. Trotsky has written very interesting things about the German Revolution. For example, he said it was a revolution but it took place in stages, by half revolutions. And another thing he wrote is this quote that you, *Turquita*, provided me about the aborted revolution. The comrade has contributed an exciting and very good category of Trotsky. We already knew this, knew the whole development of Trotsky on the subject, but we had forgotten the definition itself.

Trotsky, if I remember correctly, argued that the fall of the Kaiser was a socialist revolution led by the Social Democrats.

18 March. They killed two French army generals and refused to accept the authority of the Third Republic, instead attempting to establish an independent government. The Commune governed Paris for two months, establishing policies that tended toward a progressive, anti-religious system of their own self-styled socialism.

37 **Joseph Hansen** (1910 –1979) was an American Trotskyist and main leader of the Socialist Workers Party. In 1940 he was in Mexico, supporting Trotsky as secretary when Trotsky was murdered by an agent of Stalin. Since the 1970s he headed the alliance and capitulation to Mandelism, he supported the repression to the Simon Bolivar Brigade in 1979 and the subsequent total turn to Castroism.

38 **Mano Blanca** (Spanish for "White Hand"), was a Guatemalan right-wing, anti-communist death squad, set up in 1966 to prevent Julio Cesar Mendez Montenegro from being inaugurated as the president of Guatemala. While initially autonomous from the government, it was absorbed into the Guatemalan State's repressive apparatus and evolved into a paramilitary unit of the Guatemalan armed forces, and was responsible for the murder and torture of thousands of people in rural Guatemala. The group received support from the Guatemalan army and government, as well as from the United States.

Trainee: Frozen by social democracy.

Moreno: Frozen, aborted. It is a very interesting category that seems to me needs to be incorporated: to what extent a February revolution, which does not turn into a socialist revolution, [in which] there is no [victorious] bourgeois counterrevolution, is a frozen or aborted revolution. This would need to be worked on thoroughly; it is within our analysis.

[In the new document] we would also have the stages, the situations, the different types of revolutionary situations. Finally, we would make a schema, High School type, in the desire that new comrades know, of all types of regimes and types of states that exist. This is not necessary, although these schematic definitions will serve us for many issues.

For example: I get the impression that, to define, we have solved a serious theoretical problem we had, which was a terrible mess: the problem of Bonapartism *sui generis*. (Now I begin to clear up a mess that I have had in my head for 30 or 40 years. I do not know whether I feel the same way as the lunatics: I think it was cleared up and, it is the opposite, the mess is bigger than ever. You will tell.)

When reading the course materials, Silvia brought me up, very concerned, the problem of Bonapartism, although without clarifying it. (By quoting various comrades, such as *Turquita* and Silvia, I am encouraging any comrade to bring up some new idea; that is, [e.g.] if they rebel against feminism and a healthy theoretical machismo emerges.) We always tended to touch on Bonapartism *sui generis* of the left. Later we found out that Trotsky speaks of Bonapartism *sui generis* of the left and the right. We get the impression that Bonapartism *sui generis* is a form of state and Bonapartism *sui generis* of the left and the right are a form of regime.

Why [is Bonapartism *sui generis*] a form of state? According to the definition of Trotsky, what characterises the Bonapartism of the backward countries is that it can't be the state [of] the national bourgeoisie. Hence, it is a form of state. According to Trotsky, in backward countries, because the national bourgeoisie is very weak and what dominates is imperialism, there can't be a form of government that is of the bourgeoisie itself, monopolised by the national bourgeoisie. The first definition of [Bonapartism *sui generis*] has to do with the class dominating the state; therefore, it has to do with the state. That is, it is a negative definition:³⁹ Bonapartism *sui generis* is the state of a capitalist country not controlled by the national bourgeoisie. Or if it is controlled, it is in a very limited way; in agreement with imperialism: the national bourgeoisie plays the role of a direct agent. If it resists imperialism, it is controlled by the national bourgeoisie but only supported by the institutions of the working class and mass movement. Then it is regime because it speaks of the institutions.

If [the state] is of imperialism as a fundamental state factor, what sector of the bourgeoisie dominates? Is it foreign imperialism? What institutions will rule? The army, the police; repression will be dominant. If it is Bonapartism *sui generis*, the police and the army too [will dominate]; [therefore it is] Bonapartism. But new strange institutions appear which influence government and mobilise — workers' and popular [institutions]. It is then defined as being a regime.

If we are theorising well, notice the benefits: how suddenly problems that were intractable for decades begin to get solved. Maybe I am wrong but at least it acquires clarity. In this, Trotsky was a little journalistic. You must remember we did not know [whether Bonapartism *sui generis*] was a type of government or a type of regime or what. We did not even dare to suspect it was a type of state. And yet now, apparently, with these definitions, the definition [of Bonapartism *sui generis*] becomes clear. That is, Bonapartism *sui generis* is a type of state, and [Bonapartism *sui generis*] of the left and the right are two forms of regimes because between the left and the right different institutions rule.

Trainee: In a semicolonial country, how do we explain the shift from a Bonapartist regime, either of one kind or another, to a parliamentary regime?

³⁹ We interpret this phrase as reaching the category of Bonapartism *sui generis* through a definition by the negative: the weakness of the national bourgeoisie in the backward countries prevents them from controlling these national states in the same way the imperialist bourgeoisie control their own.

Moreno: [The shift] to a parliamentary [regime] is one thing; to a Bonapartist [regime] of the right is another thing. The parliamentary [regime] is a phenomenon having to do with the rise of the mass movement and can take place for a relatively short period. But anything can happen in a reformist way because it does not change the capitalist character of the state. The parliamentary regime is a new regime, which may have elements of Bonapartism of the right or left or there can be the most incredible combinations. It can also emerge a government, a Kerenskyist-type regime. They are the other two regimes that may occur. They have to do with the process of the class struggle, with the situation of imperialism...

Trainee: Within the Bonapartist *sui generis* state?

Moreno: Yes, it can also happen with democratic elements.

Trainee: Is the state of any backward, semicolonial, country Bonapartist *sui generis*?

Moreno: For me yes. This is why I call it a state definition. But the others are variations. In Argentina, bourgeois democracy is the Constitution of 1853. That is a regime. The state remains semicolonial. Bonapartist *sui generis* is semicolonial state. The bourgeoisie can't control the state to their will. In contrast, in France they do. De Gaulle told the Yankees "I leave NATO." The Yankees told him "You do not leave." And he left. Now, Thatcher says "Do not bother me", and she is not bothered. She began before Reagan to argue she was the greatest defender of social rights, and she is turning this way to win the election. And she did turn. In a semicolonial state this can't be done by the bourgeoisie alone [because] it is very weak. We get the impression this definition is very good: the [state in a semicolonial country] is totally different from the state in an imperialist country. That is what we mean.

[In the new document] then, we will do a description, so that it is understood what is "parliamentary," what is "parliamentary monarchy", what is "federal", what is "unitary", what is "with Senate", and so on. Some of these definitions are going to be ridiculous to you because you learned them in school but we will put everything because the document is not going to be done for you but at the service of the rank-and-file comrades. We will also include senile Bismarckism, which for some is going to be easy and for others difficult. But we want to make a blueprint.

At heart, what are we discussing, comrades? I wanted this meeting with you for two reasons. One is so that we agree on the preparation of the course; the other is for the implications of what we are discussing.

With this controversy between Barnes⁴⁰ and Mandel⁴¹ — which we'll see whether we publish it — Trotskyism has reached its greatest critical point. Many of these problems that we have been raising are now being taken up.

In *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat*,⁴² we raised that there are two types of workers' and peasants' government: one revolutionary and another reformist, counterrevolutionary, petty-bourgeois; one based on the workers' organisations and a democratic revolutionary party and another based on petty-bourgeois guerrillaist parties. Barnes takes this proposition but to say the opposite of what we say. Although, at least he is forced to accept our problem. What is the problem? There is a type of government that destroys the bourgeois state apparatus without destroying bourgeois property.

What does Barnes conclude? That the [type of government] of Lenin and Trotsky, in fact, is the same as that of Castro, Ho Chi Minh and the others. That all revolutions are equal; the differences

40 **Jack W. Barnes** (b. 1940) is the National Secretary of the Socialist Workers Party since 1972. Barnes was a key advocate of the party's 'Turn to Industry' in the 1970s, its exit from the Fourth International (United Secretariat) in the 1980s and its orientation towards the Cuban Communist Party in the 1990s.

41 **Ernest Mandel** (1923–1995) was a Belgian revolutionary Marxist economist, theorist and politician. He was since the postwar period one of the main leaders of European Trotskyism. Since 1951 he headed together with Michel Pablo the revisionist-opportunist sector of the Fourth International named International Secretariat. Since 1963 he headed the United Secretariat. Moreno has several works polemising with him, including *Argentina and Bolivia: A Balance Sheet* and *The Party and the Revolution*, which can be found in www.nahuelmoreno.org.

42 Available to download from www.nahuelmoreno.org.

are conjunctural and of organisms, secondary. The revolution of Lenin and Trotsky is equal to the other revolutions: there is always a period of workers' and peasants' government that takes different forms and does not expropriate, [in which] the revolutionary party [is] joined to bourgeois or petty-bourgeois parties.

Although we used to say [something] similar to what Barnes said, that there were always workers' and peasants' government, we [also] used to say, unlike Barnes: one is revolutionary, because it was based on democratic worker organisations and with the predominance of a revolutionary workers' party also democratic, internationalist, which wanted to do the international workers' revolution. It was qualitatively different from Castro and all of them, who on the one hand said, "Our goal is the national revolution, we do not take umbrage with anyone, we do not want to export the revolution anywhere" and [on the other hand] they were based on an armed party but dictatorial, Bonapartist and non-democratic, and [that] it was not based in democratic mass organisations.

Barnes eliminates this distinction. He takes what we had raised. He believes, as we do, that the expropriation of the bourgeoisie — which means the country becomes workers' — and the destruction of the bourgeois state apparatus are two phenomena distanced in time. But he comes to a conclusion diametrically opposed to ours: [for him] two types of government and essentially the same state structure originate.

From this, Barnes concludes that the entire theory and [the] *Theses of the Permanent Revolution* are totally wrong; that Lenin, who had considered the possibility of a democratic revolutionary dictatorship of workers and peasants, was right. He says, "The text or the theory of permanent revolution did not happen; Lenin was right; the workers' and peasants' government took place, which was what Lenin said." That is, Lenin called it a democratic revolutionary dictatorship of workers and peasants, and said it was going to take different variations — this is what I call the empiricism of Lenin—; instead, Trotsky said a series of issues that did not happen at all.

[Although] I have not read what Mandel says, I did read a very good review by *Lutte Ouvrière*.⁴³ Mandel apparently accepts everything Barnes says. He says Castro is great, that what happened [in Cuba] was an October revolution. (The Mandelists had already rebutted us in this way: how could we speak of a February revolution that had expropriated the bourgeoisie?) But it seems a discussion of two drunks because, after saying the same thing as Barnes — that there is nothing greater than Castro and Nicaragua, and possibly the Vietnamese; that what they did is colossal ([I think] yes it was) — he says, unlike [Barnes], this shows that Trotsky was right and not Lenin and that the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution* are something extraordinary and they work perfectly.

That is why *Lutte Ouvrière* makes fun of them. "Barnes and Mandel agree on everything, mainly that what happened in Cuba, and other revolutions of this type, is as colossal and progressive as the revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky. But they have a deep division between them, one says it fulfilled what Trotsky raised in his theory of permanent revolution and not Lenin, and the other says exactly the opposite. Except for this little detail, in everything else, they have full agreement."

Why am I telling you this? Because truly this discussion is serious, very serious. We must know that we will enter into this discussion because there are very deep questions about permanent revolution and all.

As always, Barnes is much smarter and bolder than Mandel. Mandel is always defending his shop: yes, but no, as *La Parrala*.⁴⁴ Barnes instead went to the end, we must recognise his merit. Because to interpret the last 40 years, the text of the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution* is weak and this is the least that can be said. One reads and reads and hardly can find more than one or two theses that have been met. To this, we must add that we are, from a numerical point of view, a sect. In the most revolutionary stage of humanity, the most revolutionary party that mankind produced is a sect.

⁴³ *Lutte Ouvrière* [Workers' Struggle] is the name of the weekly of the *Union Communiste* [Communist Union], a French Trotskyist party. It was built exclusively in France, outside the Fourth International, and argued that the only 'workers' state' was the USSR in the early years. Its electoral figurehead, Arlette Laguiller, became widely known from 1973 and was a member of the European parliament.

⁴⁴ The author refers to the female character of a Spanish traditional song known as *La Parrala*, who was always undecided.

We are very weak. For me, it is a problem of intellectual honesty to clarify this to you, and eventually, also to the young comrades. We will not fool anyone. Whoever is scared by this can leave.

We are discussing then the future of Trotskyism, whether we have a reason to be or not: it is the biggest crisis; [we are discussing whether] the *Theses* and the theory of permanent revolution are valid.

Marx made big mistakes that Trotsky himself noted. Eighty years after the *Communist Manifesto* was written, Trotsky wrote an article pointing out his big mistakes.⁴⁵ Forty years of this century are worth 200 in relation to that time [the time of Marx]. What happened in the world in the 45 years since the founding of the Fourth International, that is, from 1938 to today, [make these 45 years] worth 200, 300, 400 years in relation to those 80 years [ranging from when Marx wrote the *Communist Manifesto* until Trotsky pointed out its mistakes]. We are discussing whether the same happens with Trotsky as with Marx. Having been mistaken is normal but those mistakes, do they invalidate or not the conception in its entirety?

We, who have the virtue of having been saying for many years in our courses that the *Theses* have serious mistakes... We, who have been insisting that there is an element, a fundamental node of Preobrazhensky's criticism [to Trotsky] that is correct: the *Theses* [of permanent revolution] are structured around the subject and not around the objective process... We, who have clashed with the Socialist Workers Party regarding the Sandinista National Liberation Front and the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola, have said: "We have to give critical support to their guerrilla warfare" ... We, who have said that the bureaucracy has fulfilled the revolutionary process, as Mao Tse-tung did (who has been even extraordinary from the military point of view) ... We, who have been open to all these perspectives; who have consistently pointed out that, at least, there is a different revolutionary situation to the one Trotsky painted... That is, we, who have raised a whole series of "heterodoxies" — in inverted commas — I think we have more merit than anyone, are more qualified than anyone to tell whether all that we said led to a revision like one of Barnes, namely: the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution* and Trotskyism were wrong or, conversely, [as we hold] they are not wrong at all although they were mistaken very much.

After much thought, we concluded that we need to make new formulations and there are many theoretical questions not worked out, open. We, who are revolutionaries, have no treatise of the revolution. It is something incredible. The only treatises Marxism has are on the economy. Our great task is to make the revolution, and there is nothing of anything about the revolution or the politics. There is no political Marxist treaty or Marxist treaty on the revolutions and reforms. It is something to be developed; it is a hole that we have, as in many other areas.

But I get the impression our international current is, indeed, a place of defence and growth of Trotskyism. For two or three fundamental reasons, I believe that, if Trotskyism did not exist, we should reinvent such as it is in its essential formulations, which are almost the essential formulations of Marxism, but now in an almost pure state. Precisely all these weak points make the most primitive and strongest points arise, the granite rocks that make the whole conception of Marxism, and that is, for me, the permanent revolution, the essence of the permanent revolution.

First of all, the axis of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is the international character of the revolution, the international socialist revolution. That is, the central point of any program of a party is that the great task is not to make a national socialist revolution but an international revolution. I think it is an issue of life or death that the Fourth International become strong and for a world party to emerge; the world party and its sections have as its main objective to make a socialist revolution in the world; to achieve this it will make all the sacrifices, all that is necessary; that it has the line of the Bolshevik Party: "We'd rather Russia sink but the revolution be made in Germany because it is a much more important country." Let it be a living policy, of every day; as [we do] in our international current. Our current does not give a dam whether Argentina's party goes down

⁴⁵ Possibly this is a mistake of the author. We believe he is referring to the article "Ninety years of the Communist Manifesto", written by Trotsky in October 1937. See *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1937-38)*, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1976, p.18-27.

if the Brazilian party is going up. This would be great news. If so, if it were possible to change the International and we were asked where we want the current Argentine party and where we want the Brazilian party, in our international current we would not hesitate a minute to bring [the Argentine party] to Brazil and the Brazilian party to Argentina.

However, if we propose the same to the Sandinista National Liberation Front, there are three and only three alternatives: perhaps they shoot a burst of machine gun, put us in jail or send us to a psychiatric hospital. How can we propose them to break their soul for [the revolution] to succeed in El Salvador, which is much more important than Nicaragua [even if it means that] they sink Nicaragua! They already had in their hands [the possibility of] bursting all Central America and, taking care of their patch, they did not.

This point is crucial now for the problem of the danger of the atomic bomb. If there is not an entire policy of a world party to convince the Yankee masses that they have to enter the revolutionary process I do not know how it will all end. [We therefore believe] it remains correct our definition that, so far, in the world revolution all victories are tactical, none is strategic. That is, the monster still lives, it is alive and well and **very strong**. We need a party that sees this, says so and has a consistent policy: that is, to be internationalist, to stand for the socialist revolution, to be conscious, programmatically supporter of the international socialist revolution.

Because the Sandinistas and others are part of the international socialist revolution but they see it as a sum of national socialist or democratic revolutions. As a sum: not articulated as a single revolution. And also, because, without revolution in the United States, today the danger exists not of barbarism but of the disappearance of humanity.

The theory of permanent revolution, then, is the theory of the international socialist revolution. Everything else — Trotsky's documents of 1906 and 1928 — everything is changeable given this colossal success of Trotsky: the international socialist revolution. The thesis is the theory of the international socialist revolution. After all this, we can change everything it says — and we have to change a lot— but not the axis. What we can't do is lose the axis. [This axis] increasingly characterises Trotskyism.

Notice how Mandelism is falling into nationalism. The Swedish comrades report that Mandelism is growing in Belgium, which is very strong. They tell us it is achieving a certain union weight, but it gives increasingly less importance to the international problem. The Mandelist newspapers do not touch any international problem; they are becoming national trade unionists. I do not doubt it, because it has to do with this concept.

So, you may fall on your backsides, but after baring ourselves we find that the essence of Trotskyism is this single large category: the international socialist revolution.

There is also a second category that, when we bare ourselves, we will be surprised at how simple it is. Trotskyists are today the only ones who defend it: it is, fall on your backsides, workers' democracy. We believe in workers' democracy. That is, we want the working class to democratically express itself through its organisms and to take the power to exercise this democracy. We are implacable enemies of any regime that is not democratic. And a by-product of this is that we want the party that leads and heads the democratic organisations of the working class to be also democratic.

I say this because all this theory that I am telling you leads our international current to a very important issue: we are staunch supporters of the regime of the dictatorship of the proletariat which is for workers' democracy. We raise one type of regime against all other existing regimes. That is, we are characterised by the political revolution, the struggle for a type of regime, now non-existent, that is workers' democracy. It is non-existent in workers' organisations in capitalist [countries]; and much less existing in the workers' states.

And the third [category] is a social phenomenon; we believe it is the working class that has to retake, to be the vanguard of the historical process. Because in the last 40 years, with some exceptions, in [places] where there were triumphs, the popular sectors have been [the vanguard, although] there were also great triumphs of the working class.

We have to study whether there is a fourth or a fifth element, but I get the impression that these are the essential elements of the theory of permanent revolution, and also of Trotsky [in general].

Therefore, we, who always said “we Trotskyists are wrong”, are more Trotskyist than ever. As always, if this theoretical analysis is correct, everything becomes very easy. Suddenly the theory is easy and becomes a simple policy and discussion. We Trotskyists are against a single ruling party in the USSR, Poland, China, and Cuba... We are furiously against it. We are maniacally opposed. We are the party against a single-party regime. There may be an exception somewhere but not as a method and program.

Thus, the discussion with Mandel and Barnes becomes incredibly easy. Mandel and Barnes are left together, and how! What happened to Bishop?⁴⁶ We have been pestering that these are very difficult dictatorships that lead nowhere. And it led to the attack between them all and the killing of Bishop. Mandel and Barnes give explanations that are shameful for Marxist newspapers; like that the wives [of Bishop and Austin] hated each other, and so on. And nobody says: “This happened because there was no workers’ democracy.” Today only our current says this! Only our international current tells Mandel and Barnes: “Screw yourself; you said it was a wonderful, extraordinary regime, and look what happened: it was a huge victory for imperialism. Why? Because there was no workers’ democracy”. Our international current is proud: it is the only one that raised workers’ democracy, the only thing that would have prevented them from killing each other.

In this sense, of the permanent revolution, we see the Trotskyist program richer, more powerful, stronger than ever, and not weaker. But, although we make clear that these pillars of Trotskyism are stronger than ever, we also see very large historic type failures. We see very large programmatic, theoretical, policy failures that have to do with everything I’ve told you about the regime, state, and so on.

So, what we are discussing has one purpose: to prepare our comrades for this because this is what is coming. This is one of the essential objectives. This discussion with Barnes and Mandel on the crisis of the Fourth International, and its weaknesses, is the most important thing we have done. The comrades will enter into this discussion because this is the essence of revolutionary politics: workers’ democracy, internationalism, and the working class leading the historical process. These are the three tracks that we vindicate as the essence of Trotskyism, and so from now on we will claim to be Trotskyists in a process of elaboration. This is the great theoretical objective: preparing the comrades for the great problems of the revolution not only in Argentina but throughout the revolutionary process in the world and, ultimately, to prepare them for the great discussions that are going to come and which have to do with all this.

But you are asking me few questions. I worry that you do not interrupt me. I stop for a bit so you can think.

Trainee: In the three elements mobilisation is not included.

Moreno: Okay. The permanent mobilisation can be a special category, a fourth category. Implicitly, we touched on it in the international socialist revolution; it is a part of that. But still, we can put it next to the others.

Mobilisation may be one. What else?

Trainee: We can also add the need for an international party.

Moreno: That is in the first category: [internationalism]. But we can also add the need for an international party. What’s important is to see that there are two or three pillars; and that you see it this way. Because if so, it will also be very, very easy to convince our rank and file: Who are we? We are those against a one-party government... and so on.

⁴⁶ **Maurice Bishop** (1943-1983), ruler of Grenada, was deposed on 19 October 1983 by a coup led by Hudson Austin, the commander of the army, and then murdered. US imperialism took advantage of this situation to invade Grenada and impose a puppet government. Both Barnes and Mandel argued that Bishop, his New Jewel Movement —of which Austin was also a part — and his government were revolutionary.

Comrades, we are elaborating. But I think there are three or four core, fundamental, indestructible concepts of Trotskyism. So indestructible, that they make the controversy very simple. Like the theory of relativity, which was simple and ended with the discussions. We are stronger than ever, not weaker.

Trainee: This synthesis, these three points, how do they differ from the draft of the “Theses of the FI-IC”?⁴⁷

Moreno: [This document] is going there, it is clear. For the discussion on the Sandinista National Liberation Front. Nothing is by chance; this is the last, [the most advanced]. Suddenly we realised that there was a single international organisation in the world that says: “We are for workers’ democracy”.

Suddenly we said workers’ democracy and discovered it was the beginning of a whole battle against the bureaucracy and everything. This is why I applauded Paez so much when he spoke in a meeting and insisted on workers’ democracy. And I said that Paez was right: it was an essential point.

Well, what other questions, comrades?

Trainee: You say there are two types of political revolutions: with or without the destruction of the army. Is not this a difference of such a magnitude that makes them qualitatively different?

Moreno: This is another of the theoretical problems not very well clarified. How do we place the February revolutions that destroy the armed forces? Because, on the negative side, they are equal to the October Revolution; in fact, they destroy the state apparatus; and destroy the bourgeois state. What Barnes says has a certain true element; they are the same in the sense that nothing is left of the bourgeois state. If we end up destroying the armed forces, nothing is left, only rubble. Therefore, there is no government apparatus left. If the armed forces are destroyed the bourgeois state apparatus is sunk. A new type of state arises.

With Lenin and Trotsky, a new kind of state arises. Who rules? The Soviets. What are the Soviets? Workers’ organisations. It becomes a mess with the revolutions [of the postwar period]. Why do we call them “February revolutions”? Because parties rule, not institutions of the workers’ movement. In these revolutions, which we have called “February” or “workers’ and peasants’ government”, parties rule.

Our theoretical process is interesting. We are in doubt. One of these days we may change and say that Mandel is right in one aspect, [the government that emerged with the October Revolution and those emerging with the revolutions of the postwar period] are the same. We do not know yet the genus and the species. We are descriptive. We first called the two governments “workers’ and peasants’ government”; one “revolutionary” and another “reformist”. And then we leaned towards calling them “revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat” to those we used to call “revolutionary workers’ and peasants’ government”; and to the others, calling them “workers’ and peasants’ government”. I get the impression that the latter is correct.

Trainee: You say the difference is that in the October Revolution power is exercised through organisations of the workers’ movement but Lenin says who takes power is the party.

Moreno: But always supported in organisations. Suppose that [power] had been taken by [the party]. It would be an exception; immediately it would have created organisms. I have an outline of a work in which I show that, as the Soviets are disappearing — because the Soviets are left without blood, in fact, disappear — Lenin and Trotsky make every effort to create whole new types of organisms, always of masses and democratic, to lean on [them]. It is the struggle to create organisms...

I think that the rise of Stalinism is deeper than we believe, precisely for this reason. The Bolshevik Party seeks to create mass organisations to control the party and it can’t. It is something

⁴⁷ The document the trainee asking the question makes reference to has been published with the title *The Transitional Program Today* (1979), and can be found in www.nahuelmoreno.org. The **Fourth International – International Committee (FI-IC)** formed in 1980 after the unification of Morenism with the current lead by the French Pierre Lambert. This unification was quickly thwarted because of the capitulation of Lambertism to the Social Democratic government of François Mitterrand in France.

brilliant from them. When they were beginning to be left without the Soviets they sought to create two different types of organisms: some are, I think, the workers without a party — around 1921-1922 — and later others, I believe against hunger. The unions, which must be independent and democratic to be able to make strikes against the state itself, are also brilliant. [Lenin and Trotsky] push systematically, by all means, for control by the mass movement.

I do not see this either in Fidel Castro or anyone else. So do not come to me with an “exception”. That is, to make revolution, any issue. But it is not Lenin’s or Trotsky’s theory or policy. As it is not their theory to distribute land and to make the revolution, they accept some land distribution. But it is not Lenin’s or Trotsky’s policy. Their policy is to rely on democratic institutions of the workers and mass movement. And they make every effort. And, for me, Stalinism triumphed because this failed.

For 20 years I’ve been having a critical hypothesis: that Trotsky screwed up by not giving a *coup d’état*. [I say it] taking now Mao’s experience. Why? Because the only body in which he could have support was the army. So, what he should have done is a democratic army where there is discussion in all regiments. But these should be the organisms that rule: then the army rules. Because the organism that was ruling [under Stalin] was the party bureaucracy. Instead, the military bureaucracy was as positive as the party bureaucracy was in the period before the revolution; it was the most revolutionary bureaucracy. In the eagerness to make war, it was fanatical about developing the revolution in the world. In the army, no one would make socialism in one country. Instead, all the party bureaucracy [did want it]. So, for me, there was no other organism of masses than the army.

Trainee: Trotsky thought that was wrong.

Moreno: Yes. And maybe Trotsky was right. Because, from the point of view of the Third International, that was a dreadful blow, a knife in the back. What? A coup? The most internationalist guy is left discredited.

Therefore, it is an ultra-theoretical hypothesis. But, as a hypothesis, it explains some of the reality: in Russia, there were no other organisms than the apparatus led by Stalin or the army, which was of masses. There was no other. There were no Soviets; everything else is false, it is non-existent. There is no democracy. Else, Stalin does not succeed. Stalin can succeed because the mass organisations disappear.

In *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat*,⁴⁸ we said: that to call the October Revolution “dictatorship of the proletariat” is correct in the sense that it is socialist but the type of government, or — to use current terminology — the type of regime is workers’ and peasants’. We said that [what arises] from October is workers’ and peasants’ government, like all workers’ and peasants’ government who have taken place in the world: China, Eastern Europe... We qualitatively divided the workers’ and peasants’ governments and we said that there are two species, two types of workers’ and peasants’ governments. One type is reformist, in fact, in the end counterrevolutionary: made by guerrilla armies or opportunist parties. There are revolutionary workers’ and peasants’ governments that are based on democratic organisations of the mass movement and are led by a socialist, revolutionary, internationalist party, which has internal democracy.

Over time we changed the terminology; we abandoned the workers’ and peasants’ government and went back to the dictatorship of the proletariat because, for us, the fact that workers’ democratic institutions are ruling is a dictatorship of the proletariat. We are considering a theoretical hypothesis. (Maybe we go back, we are reflecting.)

Previously we used to say: that the workers’ and peasants’ governments are of two types; a revolutionary type and another reformist, ultimately counterrevolutionary. The latter are the [governments] of Castro, of Mao Tse-tung, all we have known that essentially are not based in the working class or democratic organisations of the working class and which are monopolised by a single party. As for the monopoly of power, in fact, it is already single-party. That is, it is not democratic in any

⁴⁸ Available for downloading from www.nahuelmoreno.org.

sense. Neither is the party that takes power democratic; it is usually an army—because it is guerrilla — and it is always nationalist.

Instead, the revolutionary [workers and peasants' government] is the opposite: workers', people's, also workers' and people's — like Soviets — democratic organisations and an internationalist revolutionary party at its head. We called it the workers' and peasants' government because the workers' and peasants' government, at a given time, expropriated.

But here there was also a serious theoretical problem. If we make the classification backwards, according to the schema that we had, the revolutionary workers' and peasants' government arises from two revolutions: from the February Revolution, and later from the October Revolution; this February revolution and [this] October revolution originate a revolutionary workers' and peasants' government. Instead, the [reformist] workers' and peasants' government stems from a February revolution. That is, there is a revolution of February resulting in a workers' and peasants' government that is reformist, counterrevolutionary, and nationalist, without internal democracy, which is not based on the proletariat or its organisations.

Barnes says: "This is false; these revolutions, which you call 'February', are the October Revolution because if there is workers' and peasants' government, there was an October Revolution."

Trainee: For Barnes, has October nothing to do with consciousness?

Moreno: Yes, very much. Because he thinks there is no greater revolutionary than Castro. Then the guy who supports Castro, a single party, without democracy, is a genius and Lenin and Trotsky two imbeciles. The biggest [revolutionary] is Castro. It is the highest level of consciousness; they are those who felt that the armed apparatus of the regime had to be destroyed. There is a conscience —unconscious— of the best of the revolution, which is to destroy the armed forces of the regime. Everything else is platitude. This is to be revolutionary! The others — Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin, Trotsky, everyone —were great at the time, when there were platitudes. Those who destroy the armed forces of the regime are great. There is no higher level of consciousness than the guerrilla. Bengochea⁴⁹ used to say: "The proletariat are jerks. When you tell them [you have to take up arms] they answer: 'Can we get better wages?' What consciousness does the proletariat have? None."

According to Barnes, the revolutions [which he defines as] of October today are a thousand times greater than [the revolution of 1917], and their leaders a thousand times superior to Lenin and Trotsky, who were writers, masturbators, theorists, writers, imbeciles, etc., who managed to get right a revolution in Russia. Instead, [leaders like Castro] are the greatest internationalists in the world, because they make the revolution in each place and besides, they have the correct theory. They are those who say: "Revolution is when it destroys the armed apparatus of the regime." It is the highest level of political consciousness that humanity has achieved. This is the essence of Barnes' position.

This is why I say that Barnes is a very good theorist. He is far superior to Che Guevara, Mao Tse-tung, to all. To him, we are delusional [when we define them as unconscious revolutions]: "unconscious" of what? According to him, we are sectarian: we call them February [revolutions] because we believe [the Russian October] is the greatest but we do not realise what is the greatest. To him they are October [revolutions], but 10 times better. While we put [October] behind February, he puts it in front: it is a better October, which is workers' and peasants' government.

We thought that when Lenin seized power, it was a workers' and peasants' government. Lenin took power after the February and October revolutions; he took it as a result of October. The workers' and peasant's government is revolutionary because it is based on democratic workers' organisations and because the policy, the program of the Bolshevik Party, is internationalist socialist, revolutionary and the Bolshevik Party is also democratic.

⁴⁹ Angel "Vasco" Bengochea (1926-1964) was one of the top leaders of the Argentine party in the 1950s and early 1960s. In 1962 he travelled to Cuba to seek help for Hugo Blanco who was leading the peasant struggle in Peru, was won over by Castroism and broke away to join the guerrilla. He died in 1964 after an explosion in a flat in Posadas Street in Buenos Aires. The expressions Moreno refers to are from the period of the split. See in www.nahuelmoreno.org On *Bengochea's split with Palabra Obrera* (1964) and *Two methods for the Latin American revolution* (1964).

We believe that there were February revolutions that originated unconscious workers' and peasants' governments. Why? Because, by destroying the armed apparatus of the state, they were left up in the air (we need to discuss if this is called a workers' and peasants' government) and could break with the bourgeoisie in a moment. They do not break subjectively, there is no workers' and peasants' government from the start. The February revolution enables the rupture, and an impending rupture because they have all the state apparatus. And suddenly they say, "Let the bourgeoisie go to hell", and the next day they expropriate. [They can do that] because the state apparatus is theirs, of the guerrillas; the military are not there; they do not have to have clashes with anyone.

The contradiction is that they destroy [the state apparatus] and do not want to expropriate. They fight to the bitter end for bourgeois property. But there is a time when imperialism harasses them to such a degree that they are forced [to expropriate]. There is an interregnum; [otherwise], they would be revolutionary and Mandel and Barnes would be right. If they rise to expropriation, then it is another way of the October Revolution. It would be a Bonapartist way or something like that.

(Continues on next page's table)

TABLE II-1				
MODEL I: RUSSIAN REVOLUTION				
<p>February Revolution Insurreccional, urban, it does not destroy the bourgeois army.</p>	<p>Dual Power There are democratic workers' organisms of power. The bourgeoisie is maintained.</p>	<p>I-a</p>	<p>October Revolution The soviets led by the Bolshevik Party take power</p>	<p>Revolucionary dictatorship of the proletariat</p>
		<p>I-b</p>		
		<p>Reform or new revolution? The Soviets led by the reformist parties (Mensheviks, and Social Revolucionaries) take power.</p>	<p>Reformist dictatorship of the proletariat.</p>	<p>Reform or October Revolution? The Bolshevik Party takes government.</p>
MODEL II: BOLIVIAN REVOLUTION				
<p>February Revolution Insurreccional, workers', urban, destroys the bourgeois army</p>	<p>Dual Power The workeer's organisations (COB) dominate because bourgeois power is almost non existent.</p>			
MODEL III: REVOLUTIONS MADE BY GUERRILLA ARMIES*				
<p>February Revolution Peasant and populat civil war made by the guerrilla, which destroys the bourgeois state</p>	<p>III-a (Cuba)</p>	<p>Workers' and peasants' government. The party-army breaks with the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Reconstruction of the burgeois state.</p>	<p>Expropiation</p>	<p>Bureaucratic dictatorship of the proletariat</p>
	<p>III-b (Argelia)</p>			
	<p>III-c (Nicaragua)</p>	<p>Bourgeois government. The party-army does not break with the bourgeoisie.</p>		
<p>* In this table we have incorporated the definitions Moreno makes in <i>Revolutions of the 20th Century</i> regarding Algeria and Nicaragua. On the first, the author says: "The Algerian FLN, from its position as a workers' and peasants' government, backed down to the reconstruction of the bourgeois state" (p.32). On the second he says: "Logically, if the current Nicaraguan government is popular frontist it cannot be workers' and peasants'" (p. 30.). Events subsequent to the death of the author showed the FSLN never was a workers' and peasants' government but it directly rebuilt the bourgeois state.</p>				

But [this is not the case]: as a political phenomenon, it is the February revolution. It is not [workers' and peasants' government] when they expropriate but when they break with the bourgeoisie, even without expropriating, before expropriating. The workers' and peasants' government is always before expropriating.

We say, then, that it is a February revolution, which first destroys the state apparatus but does not break with the bourgeoisie. And then yes, at one point it breaks with the bourgeoisie. It finds

it easy because it controls the entire apparatus of the state, there is almost no crisis. And then, at a later time, it expropriates. There it becomes a dictatorship of the proletariat. And it was a February revolution.

What do we say today? We say that [what emerges in October 1917] is already a dictatorship of the proletariat because workers democratic institutions are exercising power.

Trainee: In *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat* we say it is the dictatorship of the proletariat only when it expropriates.

Moreno: From the expropriation, sure. But lately, we have been inclined to call it a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat [already since October].

Trainee: We should say political dictatorship of the proletariat.

Moreno: Of course. But the essence of the dictatorship of the proletariat is political. We [in *The Revolutionary Dictatorship of the Proletariat*] toyed with variation [I-b], as a theoretical possibility, and we called it workers' and peasants' government. We have now come back to the dictatorship of the proletariat, political dictatorship because we have discovered [this was] another dictatorship of the proletariat, which unfortunately has not taken place, but I think it may happen. It is the dictatorship of Solidarity if it takes power. It is what Lenin considered in 1917 in Russia. Thus, we went back and called it the dictatorship of the proletariat, to differentiate it from the workers' and peasants' government product of the February Revolution.

In other words, we now have three schemas. [Schema I is the Russian Revolution. I-a is such as it happened: [a] February or democratic revolution going on to an October Revolution which causes a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

[I-b is Lenin's hypothesis that the Soviets led by the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks [take power], which results in a non-revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat: [a] February revolution; [later would come] I do not know whether a reform— [here there is a] question mark: we do not know whether an October revolution or reform (Lenin raised it as reform).

Trainee: Is it a workers' state?

Moreno: Same as in the Russian Revolution, when Lenin proposes to the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries to take power, as long as it is that of the Soviets: "You rule but because you have a majority in the Soviets." For me, if this had taken place, there was also a dictatorship of the proletariat, but not revolutionary, [but] reformist. What I do not know is whether, to do this, we had to make a revolution or not. [But] it was a dictatorship of the proletariat before expropriating; because of the Soviets, because of democracy (no, not democracy). It is hypothetical: a Solidarity [government] may be so, but it is not ruled out. I think it is a hypothesis that can happen. Just as Trotsky's workers' and peasants' government seemed a trifle, one little tactic among a thousand others in the *Transitional Program*, and it turns out that all revolutions [of the postwar period] followed this hypothesis.

Trainee: The transition from reformist to revolutionary dictatorship would be very difficult without another revolution.

Moreno: No, it would be very easy. There is voting, everybody votes, the Bolsheviks win and that is it: in a reformist way, it became revolutionary [dictatorship]...

Trainee: Because the destruction of the bourgeois state would have been qualitative. February would have been the qualitative.

Moreno: Yes. This is what we need to discuss: whether the destruction of the bourgeois state is October. But, to what extent, by reformist path or something of the sort can this be achieved in February, to the extent that there is dual power and [the bourgeoisie] is screwed? Maybe it needs a semi-revolution, an insurrection: [the bourgeois state] is destroyed and then, in a reformist way, we can reach the political dictatorship and later to the expropriation.

Trainee: Ruling of a reformist party is also a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat?

Moreno: No. It is reformist.

Trainee: It is reformist and non-bureaucratic because there are Soviets.

Moreno: Of course. This would justify calling it a dictatorship of the proletariat because they are organisations of the working class and democratic. We would define it by the organism ruling.

If this hypothesis occurs, is it necessary or not to make an October revolution? I think there will be two answers: sometimes it is, sometimes it is not. Usually what comes out [of the February revolution that opens this hypothesis] is going to be a dual power. I get the impression that at some point it will be chaotic. If we were to judge all revolutions [that opened this hypothesis, we would see] there was a February revolution, workers' revolution; with workers' organisations; with dual power; its centre is the city; its centre is the workers' organisations. These are the cases of Bolivia, Hungary, the great German Revolution, and the Spanish Civil War.

Trainee: What is the role of the revolutionary party in the February revolution?

Moreno: First, the revolutionary party fully supports it. We can add: that the Revolutionary Party plus the reformist parties make the revolution, although [the revolutionary party] does not have the majority. We will not say, "We are not in it because it does not fit Moreno's definition". We enter with everything. (Perhaps even we make ourselves alone in the October revolution, and then [the reformist parties] are added, taking advantage that they have the majority.) It is not feasible for us to be the vanguard. [But] we enter the revolution; we do not enter government. If we enter government, [the dictatorship] is revolutionary, agreeing with whomever we may agree.

There is an urban February revolution. It is a February revolution similar to the [Russian] — democratic, which later originated the October — or like the Hungarian or German revolutions. It is always the same February revolution. But [the Bolivian (II)], unlike [the Russian (I)], does not cause dual power but directly the destruction of the armed forces. Some, dual power; others, destruction of the armed forces.

Trainee: Is there territorial dual power, prior to the destruction of the army?

Moreno: No. In Bolivia, there was not. In Germany almost there was not, they almost destroyed [the army]. Also, in Hungary. Iran is another example. In Barcelona, they destroy the army. [In all these cases they destroy the army] because of an insurrectional process. Later, there may be a civil war against the city. It is not [the same as] in Russia, which goes to dual power. I am referring to cases in which the army is defeated. What Andres Romero⁵⁰ said [on territorial dual power] is perfect but only as far as a territorial sector. But in Spain, if the leaders had not been so criminal, they would have destroyed the entire army. They destroyed four-fifths, nine-tenths of the army: they destroyed it in Madrid; in the Basque Country; throughout Asturias; they had it liquidated in Andalusia... Two million peasants were marching on Andalusia. They were not liquidated because Queipo del Llano⁵¹ managed the Socialist Party, which he dominated, to begin to say, "Do not come, do not come, he is a general of ours." Queipo del Llano was on the radio saying: "I am a Republican; I am with you." That is, four-fifths of the Spanish army was liquidated, and another fifth survived because of an incredible betrayal.

Madrid was the anarchists' weak point but it was them who liquidated the army in Madrid. They were the vanguard, those who led the Socialists and all, and took a clean sweep. The Republican government refused them weapons, denied them everything, and did not give them a single gun. Then, they armed themselves. They begin to attack; they get killed, keep attacking in waves and take all weapons. All, all weapons, rather than "more weapons", as they asked. With this, they already

50 **Andres Romero** (b. 1943) joined the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT) in 1965. He was a member of the leadership of the PST and the MAS. He broke with the Morenoist current in 1993. From the publication of the magazine *Herramienta* he promotes horizontalist, anti-party and "socialism from below" positions. He supported Zapatismo in Mexico and Chavismo in Venezuela.

51 **Gonzalo Queipo de Llano y Sierra** (1875-1951) was a general of Franco's Nazi-fascist right wing in the Spanish army. During the Civil War he was nicknamed "The Radio General" for his threats and explicitness on the air. Under his control of southern Spain, tens of thousands of Republicans perished as part of the Nationalists' White Terror. In his post-war duties, Franco effectively marginalised him.

win the war. But the Iberian Anarchist Federation (FAI) says: "We showed them that they are selfish and we are fraternal because we are anarchists." They took all weapons to them. "We did not keep a single weapon". They returned the weapons to the army, attacking them as scoundrels because they had not been given a single gun and because of this so many of them were killed. But an anarchist proves himself to be "generous and fraternal". This is never the answer! It was an incredible betrayal, a world record. This is recounted in the book *Red and Black Madrid*, which was an official document of Madrid's FAI, which was written after they liquidated the army in Madrid.

That is, it was possible to have completely defeated the army, as in Bolivia. At this point, it is a situation similar to guerrilla warfare. It becomes a mess because [revolutions] agree on such a point, diverge in such other; the points are combined.

For example, [the Bolivian Revolution] is equal to guerrilla warfare [III] in that in both the army disappears. But [the latter is] a February revolution based on the guerrillas, non-insurreccional, it also destroys the armed forces of the regime, [but] it does not do it through the workers' organisations and the organisation of the working class. And, fall on your back, it has a more revolutionary conclusion because from it emerges the seeds of a new state. When the guerrillas are involved, there is no dual power. The triumphant army takes the government and goes all the way. As it was a civil war, there was an army that defeated another and acted as a conquering army. Instead [in Russia] dual power originates. Only in [Bolivia], exceptionally — perhaps tomorrow it will be the most common — it is a February revolution based on workers' institutions that destroy the army. [In China, Cuba, Algeria, etc. the destruction of the army] is based on the guerrillas; [In Bolivia, in Germany, in Spain it is] based on the workers' movement.

Trainee: What does emerge in each of these cases?

Moreno: In [Russia] a bourgeois government emerges, with a situation of dual power but bourgeois. And in [Bolivia] it is similar but with the total domination [of worker's organisations]. In [Russia], as it is the workers' institutions that make it and these workers' institutions do not disappear, then there is a dual power. As in [the revolutions made based on the guerrillas] there are no workers' institutions, and the only institution is the army and the party that leads it, they take power. There is no dual power. Bourgeois power disappears, and either bourgeois power begins to be rebuilt, or it goes to a workers' and peasants' government. This is the case of Algeria, Nicaragua, and so on.

Trainee: Why in Bolivia did they give away necessarily the power to the bourgeoisie, when they could have won?

Moreno: Because the workers' institutions are present. It is the most frightening revolution.

Trainee: Why don't they transform themselves?

Moreno: Because they are opportunists. Leading are opportunistic bastards who hate the most the workers' revolution. And with the problem that there are workers' institutions. If there is an army, they control it. They can seize power; they issue an order and it is fulfilled. But how do they give an order to a Soviet or a factory committee? We were kicked out of Nicaragua for beginning to organise unions. We did not bother them at all; all we did was to form trade unions and demand workers' democracy. But for them it was tragic: there would be no Sandinista government if we were left for three months in Nicaragua. They were terrified and kicked us out. Workers' organisations terrify them. And they also terrify imperialism; for this is where it yields the most, and tries to fix it fast. Guerrillas do not terrorise it much.

I just read in a Spanish magazine, a very good article by a specialist in Cuban issues. He says that Cuba and Nicaragua are what most worry US imperialism but should not be so because Cuba inexorably falls under their influence. Why? Because a military team dominates. He says: "No problems; as soon as Fidel Castro dies, everyone comes over here" He gives a series of categorical quotes. He says it will happen what happened to Hungary [in 1956], but eight thousand kilometres away from the USSR, so the Red Army will not be able to act. It is a piece of cake. Why? Because the structure is thus: it is an army, there is secret police, and so on, and these people tend to go towards

imperialism —he does not say “imperialism”— tends to inevitably go towards the United States. It is a very good analysis.

However, if they are workers’ organisations it is terrifying. So, imperialism always seeks to fix the problem: it knows that everything that is controlled [by the workers’ movement] has a hellish dynamic for them.

Trainee: What is the difference between Model I and Model II?

Moreno: [In model I] it is without destruction of the armed forces; this is why there is dual power. The armed forces are shattered, anything you want, but do not disappear. It is qualitative. The difference between these two revolutions is qualitative: the destruction of the armed forces, which disappear. This is the case in Bolivia. There have hardly been revolutions like Bolivia. There were many more like [model I] than like Bolivia. In Bolivia, the armed forces disappear.

I am tired of telling the anecdote of Oruro in the first year of the revolution, which we published here in a bulletin because it is incredible. Two days before the date commemorating the Bolivian national day — something like 25 May in Argentina — which is near the end of the year, the commander of the Oruro military district in Bolivia — the Suarez Mason⁵² of Bolivia — who is second in importance, sends the COB a letter that says, roughly: “Gentlemen COB leaders, because we have to do our parade, we strongly beg of you that since you have taken all the weapons and we do not have a gun you lend us guns for 24 hours to be able to parade.” We photographed the letter and published it in a newsletter we put out every 15 or 30 days, so what was happening in Bolivia could be understood abroad and at our party.

There is also the anecdote of the president. No general came out dressed in his uniform. Years without being able to wear a uniform. The guys were hiding, out of uniform. They wore uniforms in the barracks but later they changed and went out in civilian clothing, otherwise, they would get killed. Not even the military aide to the president could go down the street in uniform. One of them was killed in a café because he was in uniform. The poor fellow went outside the government house in uniform, walked five blocks, and entered a café for a coffee and bingo! He was killed because he was in uniform. But in the history of bourgeois regimes, all military aides go out in their uniform: it can’t be that the aide is with the president disguised as a civilian, like an orderly. And Paz Estenssoro⁵³ had to beg for his aide to be allowed to wear a uniform. It is the destruction of the army. That is the difference.

Trainee: Revolutions like Cuba and Nicaragua, do they go towards rebuilding the bourgeois state or towards workers’ and peasants’ government?

Moreno: A government like Algeria emerges, or something like that...

Trainee: Model III is the variation that has most commonly taken place.

Moreno: Yes, it is the one that has most commonly taken place. Almost all successful revolutions are like this. Outside of this [revolution], virtually none has been triumphant, that is, it has finished expropriating the bourgeoisie. It is a February revolution that destroys the armed forces of the regime and either goes to a workers’ and peasants’ government or goes to restitution of the bourgeois regime.

If we accept some of Barnes’ manoeuvres, we can even change the terminology. If, for the fact that it destroys the armed forces of the regime, it is a workers’ and peasants’ government, it is perfect, but it is a government that is trying by all means to go to the bourgeois regime. No need to discuss the names. It is different from the politically conscious break with the bourgeoisie when they say: “The bourgeoisie does not work anymore.” For us, [only] then it is workers’ and peasants’ government.

Trainee: And when does this workers’ and peasants’ government come to expropriate?

52 **Carlos Guillermo Suárez Mason** (1924–2005) was an Argentine military officer convicted for Dirty War crimes during the 1976–1983 military dictatorship. He was in charge of the 601 Intelligence Battalion.

53 **Angel Victor Paz Estenssoro** (1907–2001) was a Bolivian politician and four times President of Bolivia since the revolution of 1952 and in four occasions for the bourgeois Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR).

Moreno: It is a bureaucratic dictatorship of the proletariat. Why? In what institution is based? This was a great theoretical problem.

Trainee: In the army.

Moreno: No. It is based on the army being workers' and peasants' government.

Trainee: In the single party.

Moreno: Before, it was also based on the single or almost single party. This was a great theoretical problem we had, and I think we solved it nicely. Why is a dictatorship of the proletariat?

Trainee: Because of the economy.

Moreno: Of course. Exactly. It is based, then, on an institution called a country or state. Until expropriation, the institutions and the economy on which it rests are bourgeois. If [the economy] changes from bourgeois to proletarian, then it is based on a new institution, which is the proletarian state, the workers' state. Therefore, it is a new type of state that originates the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is a state, i.e. it shows the class that takes possession. It is a dictatorship of the proletariat [because] it rests in a class. More than in a class, it rests on the elimination of a class. So, there is now the danger of returning [to capitalism]. The bourgeoisie is eliminated, and as there can be no other economy than the workers', then a new type of country, emerges, which creates a new kind of state. We can call this state, proletarian or transitional. Perhaps it is better to call it transitional.

The dictatorship of the proletariat creates different types of regimes, which are the ones I am pointing out: one, hypothetical, [non-revolutionary] dictatorship of the proletariat; another, bureaucratic counterrevolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat; and another, revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. But the difference with political dictatorships [of revolutions made by the working class and its organisations, is that the political dictatorship [of revolutions made by the guerrillas] arises first being economic. This is what Barnes denies.

Trainee: We say that first, a socio-political revolution takes place to make the economic revolution: the class in power must change to make the economic revolution. But in this case, it is reversed.

Moreno: No. There is a true element in Barnes because the bourgeois state was destroyed. But it is not the dictatorship of the proletariat. It reaches workers' and peasants' government on account of the tasks it performs. The true element in Barnes is that the bourgeois state was destroyed. Everything: government employees, lawyers, counsellors. Everything was finished. This is what enables [the transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat].

What we have to discuss is whether Barnes is right in that, by destroying [the state], these two [the October Revolution and the revolutions made by the guerrillas] are the same; even [the latter] is superior [to the first], to October. Because what did October do? It destroyed the armed forces of the bourgeois state. What do [the revolutions made by the guerrillas] do? They also destroy them. We do not know whether temporarily or forever but destroy them. They have that in common. So, Barnes says that [the revolutions made by the guerrillas] are as great as or greater than [the October Revolution]: because they both destroy the bourgeois state.

The issue is that October consciously destroys it. They consciously prevent it from going back. They are consciously internationalists because if they are nationalists they have to return to a bourgeois apparatus; not a bourgeois state but a bourgeois apparatus embedded in the workers' state. Because there has to be increasingly stronger police and an increasingly stronger army. And both the army and the police are identical to those of the bourgeoisie. There is no political [revolution]. Therefore, we believe that it is February. But it is a matter of definition.

For us here the uneven and combined development occurs. From the subjective point of view, they are qualitatively different revolutions: the leadership of [the October Revolution] is light years ahead of the leadership [of the revolutions made by guerrillas]. But as far as the destruction of the armed forces of the regime both revolutions are the same.

October is then even, a balanced revolution. Trotsky, in his *History of the Russian Revolution*, says that the October Revolution is when the consciousness of the class evened to the objective situation, while February is when what the class does is not understood by the class itself.

We believe then, therefore, [the revolutions made by the guerrillas] are February revolutions, although they fulfil an October task. **It is more than October, it is more advanced** because it makes civil war, leaves nothing, and sweeps everything. October, instead, had to sweep later with the officers who made the White armies. In [the revolutions made by the guerrillas], within the country, there is nothing left. The Somozaists are fighting outside. It is a manoeuvre of imperialism. Within Nicaragua there is no Somozaism of any kind; it was eradicated. So, this is an explosive combination: in a sense more advanced and way behind in another sense.

This is the fundamental disagreement with Barnes, which has to do with the fact he does not give any importance to whether [the leadership] is internationalist socialist, does not give any importance to whether it is workers' leadership, does not give any importance to whether there is workers' democracy, does not give any importance to whether there is permanent mobilisation, does not give any importance to whether the party is democratic. For us [those leaders] are a hindrance. They are light years behind what the workers' movement has advanced. It was Stalinism that forced the workers' movement to fall back so much.

Well, this whole discussion has to do with the formulation of the theory of permanent revolution. To make it well clear there are different types of revolutions: political, social, socio-economic, socio-political, and so forth. There must be a formulation of permanent revolution that combines types of revolutions, especially the anti-capitalist democratic revolution against the counterrevolutionary regimes of monopolies. And also, the combination between reform and revolution.

That is, numerous theoretical problems arise that we have not yet solved. I will mention some. We have concluded that in the same system, within the same state, regimes can be changed in a reformist way. But before we get into this, I want to finish with the workers' and peasants' government: for us workers' and peasants' government is the government of non-democratic parties. Anything about being involved with workers' and masses' organisations is a political dictatorship of the proletariat.

Trainee: In the countries of Eastern Europe, when the Red Army defeated the Nazis, what kind of revolution and of regimes and governments are they?

Moreno: For us, it is a February revolution and also democratic because a counterrevolutionary regime is defeated...

Trainee: But a bureaucratic and counterrevolutionary regime of the bureaucracy prevails.

Moreno: Yes, but first there was a triumph. There was a triumph against Nazism. There were attempts at the emergence of organisations of the workers' movement, but having no revolutionary party... There were two operations. One was the revolution, which was not social, it was only political: overturning fascism. Since the triumph of Stalinism, there was a period of tremendous democracy with legality for all parties, including the bourgeoisie. Stalinism posed that it would give elections, for it to be a bourgeois regime, without expropriating the bourgeoisie and with bourgeois democracy.

Trainee: At that moment, is it a workers' and peasants' government?

Moreno: Not yet. It becomes the workers' and peasants' government only in 1947. When imperialism declared the Cold War, Stalinism started to drive the bourgeois parties out of government, which was taken over by the Communist Parties or parties equal to the Communist Party (they create very rare fronts as the Polish Peasant Party, which is the same as the Communist Party). They took power and a year later, after 1948, expropriations began. It takes them a year, a year and a half or two to start making expropriations. (Also, in 1948 there was a workers' and peasants' government, for example, in Czechoslovakia, where the 1948 coup took place.)

Throughout Eastern Europe — and in the West at the hands of the French and Italian *maquis*⁵⁴ — takes place the fall and destruction of the apparatus of the counterrevolutionary regime, the defeat of the counterrevolutionary regime. Instead of the armed forces of the counterrevolutionary regime, the Red Army emerges. Therefore, we, from the beginning, have called it dual power *sui generis*, because they are two powers. On one side are the bourgeois parties, the apparatus. In some places the bourgeoisie rules — as in Czechoslovakia, where the chief of government is bourgeois, similar to Cuba. But the real power is the [Red] Army, which in some places is combined with some outlines of workers' organisations but never predominant. There are two powers.

As of 1947, the Cold War, could be understood abroad and in our party, if US imperialism preparing for war against the USSR and it gets hard, the response of the USSR is to kick out of government all the bourgeois parties that respond to Yankee imperialism. Here the workers' and peasants' government begins. Popular-frontism do the same as in Argentina: they kick out the Communist Party. They are measures of both sides caused by the Cold War.

Trainee: Is there at any time a Stalinist-bourgeois regime?

Moreno: Of course. It was at the beginning when there was dual power. "Stalinist-bourgeois" because Stalinism dominates but it tries by all means to be bourgeois: they respect the most reactionary bourgeois parties, and there are negotiations. In London [they negotiate] with Wladyslaw Sikorski⁵⁵ to rule [Poland] together. It is quite a horrifying thing. Had there been no Cold War Stalinism was going there. Stalinism did not want [to expropriate the bourgeoisie].

But the schema I do will not solve everything. What I want is for you to open your mind. Although I think the schema we do is theoretically and politically very useful because it solves many problems.

So, for me, the tactic, the strategy, the slogan and the theory of workers' and peasants' government revolve around the parties. This is very important. This is why I believe that the workers' and peasants' government is a completely different category than the dictatorship of the proletariat. Because, for me, from the political point of view, there hasn't been expropriation yet. I like to call it the dictatorship of the proletariat because it has to do with the slogans. (I had added it in the *theses* [of the FI-IC] and Lambert⁵⁶ removed it.) The dictatorship of the proletariat says what organisms should rule. Instead, the workers' and peasants' government says not what kind of organisms should rule but which parties should rule. The tactic is also as follows: "All Power to the Soviets" is a slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat because the Soviets are an institution. "All power to the COB" is a state-type slogan, non-governmental.

However, the workers' and peasants' government formula is also a regime. It is not just a government; it is the regime of the parties. We propose to the Communist Party and the Socialist Party to take the government to implement such a program. This is the essence of the workers' and peasants' government. Our premise is not [just]: "Take power". That is why the proposition of Lenin and

54 The *maquis* were the underground movement and guerrilla bands of French Resistance fighters, during the occupation of the country in the Second World War. The term became an honorific that meant "armed resistance fighter". The *maquis* have come to symbolize the French Resistance.

55 **Władysław Eugeniusz Sikorski** (1881–1943) was a Polish military and political leader. He was Prime Minister (1922–23) and Minister of Military Affairs (1923–24). During Second World War, Sikorski became Prime Minister of the Polish Government in Exile, Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces.

56 **Pierre Lambert** (1920–2008). French Trotskyist leader. Headed the PCI (Internationalist Communist Party) from 1954. He left the Fourth International and formed the International Committee with the Irishman Gerry Healy with sectarian positions regarding the Cuban revolution. They denied the character of a workers' and socialist state in Cuba. In 1979, Lambert rejected the expulsion of the Simon Bolivar Brigade by the bourgeois unity government of Sandinism in Nicaragua (which was supported by Mandel and the SWP of the USA). This led in 1980 to a unification with the international organization led by Nahuel Moreno (they formed the Fourth International–International Committee, CI-CI). But they split soon after when Lambert broke with the commonly approved revolutionary program (the Theses of the IC-CI) and turned to opportunism, supporting the bourgeois-imperialist government of the Socialist Party in France, headed by Mitterrand. From then on, Lambert's organisation entered into a pronounced decline. See *The Mitterrand Government, Its Perspectives and Our Policy* (1981), *The OCI(u)'s Betrayal* (1982), *End of Unity with Lambertism* (1982), and *Our Experience with Lambertism* (1986) at www.nahuelmoreno.org.

Trotsky is a rare mix of workers' and peasants' government but also of state because they pose: "Take the power, you two, the two parties" — the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary — but based on the Soviets. That is a political combination of state and political regime. That is, Lenin raises what kind of regime of state and at the same time, the political regime of the parties.

Trotsky fleshes out this situation. He develops a new tactic and a new category that is not the same as 1917, although he says it is. It has an element equal to the [tactic] of 1917, which is the government, the regime. But if you read where Trotsky poses workers' and peasants' government, everything revolves around demanding from the parties that form the majority in the workers' movement to break with the bourgeoisie based on an anti-capitalist program. He never adds institutions of the workers' movement.

The example of Bolivia is very good. It was not bad to ask Lechin⁵⁷ to take government, as in a stage the United Secretariat did. But it is a crime that the essential claim was not that the COB take government. They are two different tactics, which in Bolivia could have been united, as they united in Russia; but knowing that they are two different tactics because they face, they give political solutions to two completely different phenomena. One is the character of the state: what new institutions, with what workers' institutions to replace the bourgeois institutions governing. And the other points out which parties are to rule.

Trainee: When did the Unified Secretariat raise that Lechin rule?

Moreno: In 1952. This is already classic within the left. First, they supported the government. Then, in 1954-55, they gave a turn and abandoned critical support, they said the government was of the right and the Lechinist left should overthrow Paz Estenssoro and take government.

About the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution*, we believe everything we say in the document. But we have to raise it all hypothetically.

Trotsky says there is a bourgeois-democratic revolution different from the socialist revolution. I think with Ernesto [González]⁵⁸, we were lucky to hear a brilliant analysis of Peng,⁵⁹ who either died or must be very old, and had been a friend of Lenin. Peng is one of the greatest political geniuses of the century. Without knowing Trotsky, he developed a theory that is almost the same. The guerrillas posed "socialism" and "socialist revolution". Peng takes a stand against them and argues that many forget that they attack the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution* from two angles. One of them, the most common because it is the reformist angle, is that [in backward countries] there is no socialist revolution. But we often forget that there is a grim angle, as grim as the other, which is holding that in backward countries there is only socialist revolution.

I would like that, in the part of the course about the permanent revolution, you thoroughly delve into this very important fact. Here we have a serious political problem, tremendous, which I touch on in passing — if we have time we will make a big book about it. It seems that the fact of capitalist counterrevolution has restated the need that we have to have a democratic revolution. And ignoring that what arises in the developed countries where there are counterrevolutionary regimes is also a democratic revolution, it is maximalism; it is as serious as ignoring the bourgeois-democratic revolution in backward countries. This is very important. I do not know whether it is correct or not. If correct, we need to change the entire formulation of the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution*. It seems to me that it is correct and that Trotsky was aiming there.

57 **Juan Lechin** (1914–2001) was the main leader and bureaucrat of the Bolivian workers' movement since the revolution in 1952. Head of the Federation of Bolivian Mine Workers (FSTMB) from 1944 to 1987 and the Bolivian Workers' Union (COB) from 1952 to 1987. He also served as Vice President of Bolivia between 1960 and 1964.

58 **Ernesto Gonzalez** (1924-2007), an Argentine Trotskyist leader, was recruited by Nahuel Moreno in 1952. For several decades he was a close collaborator of Nahuel Moreno and a national leader of the different organisations they built together. He wrote the book *What Is and What Was Peronism* and was coordinator of the historical research of the Morenoist current *Worker and internationalist Trotskyism in Argentina*, in three volumes.

59 **Peng Shu-tse** (also transcribed as Peng Shuzhi) (1896–1983) was a leader of the Communist Party of China and became a Trotskyist. In the 1952 crisis and division of the Fourth International, Peng aligned himself with the forces of the International Committee and remained linked to the leadership of the SWP until his death.

If correct, it changes our entire strategy regarding the opportunist parties and in good measure regarding the bourgeois parties that oppose the counterrevolutionary regime. As a step towards the socialist revolution, we are in favour of the arrival of a bourgeois regime completely different [from the counterrevolutionary regime]. Just as we were in favour of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and we said it was different from the other, [the socialist revolution], that had to be done, the Tsar had to be overthrown, which was a specific bourgeois-democratic task, we need to discuss whether there is now a specific bourgeois-democratic task, which is to overthrow the counterrevolutionary regime so it can come, at least a bourgeois regime.

There are very powerful elements in Trotsky that seem to indicate that he pointed in this direction. For example, when he states that if in Germany the petty bourgeoisie with its parties breaks with Hitler, what has to be raised is that the ultra-bourgeois parliament take the government. And I contend that this could only be achieved through a revolution. This is, it had to bust Hitler, the SS, and so on. The mess it had to be done to achieve this little slogan: "That parliament overthrow Hitler and name a new government"! It was a lot like our slogan [in Argentina under the military dictatorship]: "That Parliament choose, against the Junta", and so on.

Trotsky puts it another way, on the defensive but revolutionary when fascism advances in Austria. Trotsky says: "We are for the dictatorship of the proletariat but at this time in Austria most of the proletariat is for bourgeois democracy; then we propose that we should work together, making a united front but to fight for bourgeois democracy through mobilisation and armed struggle." He says it with all the letters. In fact, it was a civil war. In this case, it was not a revolution because it was defensive but it foretells the policy of the Spanish Revolution. Although regarding the Spanish Revolution, Trotsky is a little confusing; he rarely has this clarity. He says they are two antagonistic regimes in struggle and [the Republic] has to be defended because it is not by chance that they are fighting. But he insisted on the aspect of the workers' revolution and not in [the struggle between] two regimes, although he also took it as an ingredient. He never said the fight between regimes was the main ingredient.

Trainee: But in the politics of the European resistance against the Nazi invasion, which involved all revolutionaries, often in fact there were relations with the allies against the Nazis.

Moreno: Yes, and with the bourgeoisie.

Trainee: Did they consciously raise the workers' revolution and the struggle against Nazism?

Moreno: Everything was to overthrow the Nazis. Trotskyism was small.

We believe it is possible that Trotsky was completely and utterly wrong in his analysis and his policy on the most important fact — revolutionary and counterrevolutionary— that has happened in history, that is Second World War, and this is why we are a sect.

Trainee: Are you referring to the definition of the character of the war as only inter-imperialist?

Moreno: No, that it was democratic. This is indicated by an old argument between Grandizo Munis⁶⁰ and the Socialist Workers Party (SWP). What was the discussion? When the SWP leadership was trialled [during the Second World War], they did not say: "We are for the defeat of our own country; we do not want to defend our country", as the Bolsheviks and all the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries said in 1914. The entire defence of the SWP was to say: "We are against the government, not for the defeat of our country because we are the most anti-Nazis, we want to defeat Hitler the most." Grandizo Munis told them: "You fell in the most disgusting opportunism." And he had quotations from Lenin. "Lenin", said Grandizo Munis, "argued that the lesser evil was the defeat of their own country — something that is truth — and he posed the transformation of the inter-imperialist war into a civil war. And you never said this in the trial." So, the SWP leaders brought a letter

⁶⁰ *Grandizo Munis* (1912, Mexico –1989, France) was a Spanish politician. He first entered revolutionary politics as a member of *Izquierda Comunista de España* (Left Communists of Spain, ICE), the group led by Andres Nin and in sympathy with the views of Leon Trotsky. In 1940 Munis fled to Mexico and it is at this time his critique of the actions of SWP leaders during the Minneapolis trials. He joined the anti-defencists. He wrote an excellent book on the Spanish revolution and the Trotskyists work, *Milestones of defeat; promises of victory: Criticism and theory of the Spanish revolution (1930-1939)*.

from Trotsky — brilliant, as always — in which he said: “It is not ruled out you will be attacked, that they try to prove you are traitors and by these means to shoot you. You have to be intelligent in your defence.” And he advised everything that Cannon⁶¹ did: saying that Roosevelt’s government was lousy; that it did not fight; that, by being capitalist, ultimately it facilitated Nazism, and so on, and that they were the champions for the military defeat of the Nazis.

I was fortunate enough to meet Grandizo Munis; I was his friend. It was very interesting what he said, but at the time we thought the SWP was correct because they brought some quotations from Trotsky, which were unknown, from some letters he had sent them. All of us then respected Trotsky and his schema so much that we believed Grandizo Munis was wrong. [But] there was a contradiction.

Grandizo Munis was becoming increasingly delusional but I think his delusion has a deep political reason: he remained a dogmatic Trotskyist. He was right: there was a contradiction. But as he loved Trotsky so much — he was his favourite disciple — he did not reply. He followed Trotsky’s line and he then went to an international party formed by different nationalities. He formed cells of Hungarian and Frenchmen so he would not be seen as a nationalist.

[With the recommendation he made to the SWP,] Trotsky was outlining, almost theorising [a policy]. A tactic is emerging, which we know today as “we support the cause but are against its leadership.” It is the tactic of the Malvinas War. The centre is the attack on the leadership of a fair struggle, the focus is not [the attack] to the struggle.

Trainee: The difference between the First and Second World Wars I and II is the existence of Nazism?

Moreno: It is the existence of the counterrevolution. What was the decisive factor in the Second World War, the counterrevolutionary or the inter-imperialist? Was it or not a type of war diametrically opposed [to the First]? And I am beginning to think it was not.⁶² There was a large wing, a very intelligent group of Germans who raised the issue with Trotsky, and he kicked them out — just like Chen Tu-hsiu⁶³ concerning Mao Tse-tung.

If this is so, and if Trotsky was mechanical... We return to Lenin’s healthy empiricism. What do I mean by this? Let us not say any more: “Things will be surely like this.” Let us say: “The political development is based on uneven and combined development; every day there is something new, so every day we have to go back to do theory because we are political and political is responding daily to new situations.” We must put an end to thinking things repeat mechanically. I get the impression that Trotsky made a mechanistic error catastrophic to Trotskyism, which prevented us from facing the greatest revolution and war that hit the world with a correct policy, which was the denunciation of the leadership and not the denunciation of the war.

Trainee: But there were Trotskyists who participated in the *maquis*.

Moreno: It was a terrible theoretical mess. There were [also] Trotskyites and Marxists who went to the SS because they said: “Here is the proletariat and they will go into crisis, and Trotsky says that the proletariat...” The other day I saw on television a fanatical Marxist who went to the SS. One or two years later he left because he could not form a faction, or talk, or anything: the SS were

61 **James Patrick Cannon** (1890-1974). American revolutionary labour leader and founder of American Trotskyism. From the age of 18, he participated in the struggle and in the union and political organisation of the American working class. He was a founding member of the Communist Party. He travelled to Moscow and participated as a delegate to the sixth congress of the Third International in 1928. There, he learned about Trotsky’s critical positions and began his militancy in the left opposition. Expelled from the Communist Party, he founded the American Socialist League and later the Socialist Workers Party in 1938.

62 We think this is a mistake by the author, since his later development shows he believed the Second World War was of a character “diametrically opposed” to the First.

63 **Chen Tu-hsiu** (also transcribed as **Chen Duxiu**) (1879–1942) was a founder of the Chinese Communist Party (1920) and was selected as its first Chairman, and first General Secretary, remaining its undisputed leader for seven years. In 1929 he was ousted from the pro-Comintern CCP. Chen became associated with the International Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky. Like Trotsky, Chen opposed many of the policies of the Comintern. Chen eventually became the voice of the Trotskyists in China.

lumpen, although many were workers. I recently saw it on television here, in one of those programs about Nazism, where a fellow appeared who said: "I was on the left of the CP; I did the analysis that the proletariat was there, in the SS, and then I entered, and I couldn't do anything". Privat⁶⁴ proposed that the Trotskyists had to do entryism in fascist union organisations. Others — who I've met and were very capable — felt he had to do propaganda and entryism because 50 years of Nazism were coming. Only in the end the guerrillas were accepted; before they attacked them. It was a terrible confusion not this so simple: "They are two regimes; there is a counterrevolutionary regime, which is the determining factor".

This is what was said for the Spanish Civil War. Because in the Spanish Civil War, the opposite was said [of what was said in the Second World War], but not very firmly. Trotsky told Shachtman:⁶⁵ "You are right; there are inter-imperialist elements in this war: on one side is German imperialism and on the other side the English and French imperialisms. But it is the struggle between two regimes. The key element of this particular situation is the struggle between the two regimes and not the struggle between the two imperialisms".

Overall, there are two questions. In principle, I am in favour of this [that the Second World War is a struggle between two regimes]. I have doubts about the following: whether before the USSR entered the war, the war of democratic countries [against Nazism] is not positive, and whether indeed there is a struggle between the two regimes. I have doubts, huge doubts that the lesser evil was the defeat of Poland, that for Jews the lesser evil was the defeat of Poland by the Nazis, even though the Russians had not [yet] intervened [in the war]. This is to say, it is a catastrophic failure of Trotsky. There were two regimes: a regime in which Jews could live and another regime in which Jews could not live. Nobody can convince me that one should not "fight for the gold", that we had to say to the Jews: "Do not pick up weapons and start killing Nazis, because [the right policy] is the transformation of an inter-imperialist war into a civil war and the lesser evil is the defeat of England and France". This fellow can't understand anything, he sees us as delusional. It is as if in Argentina we say that Videla⁶⁶ and Alfonsín are two bourgeois regimes. (As Altamira⁶⁷ begins to say and happily he does not say it when we are retreating because we are not going from Alfonsín's regime to Videla's regime but the other way around. But if we were retreating, imagine the meaning.)

Of what I said before I may have doubts but I am increasingly leaning [to believe it was so]. But I do not doubt that from the involvement of the USSR, it no longer is a struggle between two bourgeois regimes, one much more advanced than the other, the most advanced that humanity had achieved as a regime — except the one of Lenin—and the other, the most backward regime reached by humanity (because there is nothing worse than Nazi counterrevolution; it is worse than Egypt under the Pharaohs; it is a planned genocide, above all Nazism is a terrifying thing).

I get the impression that my theory that they are two regimes [in war] is confirmed by what happened after the war and also because of what happened in Japan.

After the war, they were unable to continue the war against the Soviet Union because it was such a brutal mass movement against the Nazis that when they said they would leave the armies [in Europe] to continue the war [against the USSR], the soldiers said: "Just a moment, democracy has

64 Moreno may be referring to **Jacques Grinblat** (1917–1997), aka **Privas**, a French Trotskyist who during the war was a member of the CCI (Internationalist Communist Committee) group, which in March 1944 participated in the unification promoted by Pablo and gave birth to the PCI (which took the name of the old French section that existed during Trotsky's lifetime).

65 **Max Shachtman** (1903–1972). He was a leader of the United States CP and later, along with James Cannon, was a founder of the Left Opposition with Trotsky in 1928. Shachtman was an important intellectual, who promoted the revisionist faction, "anti-defencists" of the USSR against which Trotsky polemised in 1939–1940, in his paper *In Defence of Marxism*. After his break with the SWP in 1940, Shachtman founded the Workers Party. In 1958 he joined the Socialist Party.

66 **Jorge Rafael Videla** (1925–2013) was the general who led the genocidal coup of March 1976 together with Admiral Massera and Brigadier Agosti. Between 1976 and 1978 he served as the de facto presidency of Argentina, of that first Military Junta.

67 **Jorge Altamira** (b. 1945) is a prominent Argentine Trotskyist and historical leader of *Politica Obrera* (Workers Word) party.

already come, bye!” And they began to flee to their homes. There was even this great mystery of a Liberty ship, which disappeared in Marseille, and they claim it was stolen. It means there was also a crisis in the army, or at least in the Navy. Because stealing a ship is no small feat! Only in the Yankee Navy can such a thing happen. In a normal navy, they are counted. Imagine that there are four ships in [Argentina’s Naval Base of] Puerto Belgrano, and one disappears!

In Japan, there is a total change of regime — except for the fact that they leave the emperor. A fascist like General MacArthur⁶⁸ comes and makes elections, free trade unions, and so on; things that had nothing to do with what he thought. Needs to be thought about but to me it seems that we, the Trotskyists, the greatest revolutionaries, lost the greatest revolution in the world, which was the war against the Axis. Everything that we have been witnessing since then is the result of the greatest revolutionary war that has been in the world, which acquired characteristics of defence of the workers’ state regarding the USSR, combined with the defence of the bourgeois-democratic regime, or new conquests, as part of the socialist revolution.

Trainee: In 1938 Trotsky said that the democratic struggles are secondary.

Moreno: No, but he says they are very important. He says they acquired a fundamental programmatic significance due to the counterrevolution. In the discussion with Bordiga,⁶⁹ with the Bordigists, since 1930 — and later he finalises it — he says that now the focus of fighting counter-revolutionary regimes is democracy. Afterwards, he synthesises it in the first *Thesis* of the Fourth International, where he adds a chapter, a short chapter, on the importance of the democratic problem in these regimes. He does not say it is a revolution, but he does say [democratic] slogans are fundamental.

Trainee: According to this analysis, we would have had to apply in the Second World War the same tactics as in Spain.

Moreno: Of course, but on a global scale and with tactical adjustments in certain places: defend Argentina, the struggle against British imperialism in India... But always with the same argument: We need India to become independent so then it can join [in the fight against Nazism], because being Indians a people exploited by British imperialism, they do not want to struggle against Nazism and Japanese imperialism. Always this argument. Transform the whole argument in the same way we did for the Malvinas War. Only this becomes a whole tactic that has to do **with the regimes**.

Trainee: This applies not only to the war between imperialist countries but also to semicolonial countries where there is a counterrevolutionary regime in one and a bourgeois-democratic regime in another.

Moreno: Yes, and also for independent [countries]. “Colony” is a regime, “independent” is another regime, and there may be a civil war because of that.

Trainee: But backward countries are all dependent on imperialism.

Moreno: Oh man, do not come with the abstraction they are all dependent on imperialism. Go and ask an Angolan whether they are independent or not. Before there was not a single black in the police; now there is not a single white. Before [the whites] beat the Angolans to death; now some Angolans beat other Angolans to death.

Trainee: When there was a danger of war between Argentina under Videla and Chile under Pinochet, we were opposed to the war. Now, there is a bourgeois-democratic regime here and in Chile is Pinochet, what position would we have in the face of a war?

68 **Douglas MacArthur** (1880-1964) was an American military leader who served as a general in the United States Army as well as a field marshal in the Philippine Army. He participated in World War I, World War II and the Korean War in 1951. He played a prominent role in the Pacific theatre during World War II. When Japan surrendered after the two atomic bombs, he was appointed Allied representative at the 2 September surrender ceremony. He oversaw the occupation of Japan from 1945 to 1951. A rabid anti-communist and highly controversial, he was the most decorated military officer in US history.

69 **Amadeo Bordiga** (1889-1970) was an Italian Marxist, founder of the Communist Party of Italy and leader of the Communist International. He fought Stalinism from sectarian and ultra-leftist positions. Trotsky strongly argued against the mistaken positions of the Bordigaists.

Moreno: If today's Argentina goes to war with Chile, I consider it very positive. That is precisely what I am saying now. The problem was that [Videla and Pinochet] were two counterrevolutionary regimes that were fighting. Another thing we need to clarify is that we are against a war over the islands. We will argue that the government should clarify that when we win, we gift the islands to Chile and leave Chile. That we fight against Pinochet. We go to help the Chilean people overthrow Pinochet and as soon as Pinochet falls and there are elections and a call to Constituent, we leave. And besides, we gift them the islands and half of Tierra del Fuego. Let them have all of Tierra del Fuego, so there is no doubt what we wanted was a regime change. This is how we talk; else, we play into the hands of the Argentina bourgeoisie. Even if there is war, we can support them critically in this regard: we are the sector that fights for them to have the islands; we are the sector that fights for unity; we are the sector that fights to bring them wheat and everything free so they can eat, and to ensure that elections are held immediately.

But we must look at each war specifically. What is the predominant factor? Is it or not the problem of the regimes? The war of 1939-1940⁷⁰ is strange: on one side are all counterrevolutionary regimes and on the other are **all** bourgeois-democratic regimes. You may say anything you want about the "rich imperialists" but the regimes are different. What does it prevail? Is it the struggle of rich imperialism against poor imperialism? That was what Stalinists used to say when they supported Hitler, that they supported the poor fighting the rich. What prevails is the regime? Or what prevails is the economic struggle of imperialism against imperialism? For me, the decisive problem is the regime.

The German comrades were right, although [this causes] a terrible trend to go towards front populism. Because if there is truly a democratic revolution, if it is almost certain there is a need for armed struggle to succeed against Nazism, when currents that also want to defeat Nazism arise, the possibility arises of unions with bourgeois sectors and the possibility arises of stageiest theory. The Menshevik and Stalinist stages theory comes up again: a democratic revolution that will last 20, 30, 40 or 50 years.

That is the position of the Italian Communist Party now even for developed countries. It is a delirious stageism, and already reformist to the nth degree, because now it is not within a feudal country but in the most advanced countries from the capitalist point of view, they are telling us there are two stages. One is of popular democracy: a very rare bourgeois thing against the monopolist bourgeoisie and in favour of the non-monopolist bourgeoisie, [extending] for 30, 40 or 50 years, and this is the "new democracy".

But it fits a fact: in the stage previous to the defeat of the fascist regime the possibility of unity emerges. The possibility of stranger phenomena emerges. It emerges the possibility of the Warsaw Ghetto, which is a commune, a Paris Commune, one of the greatest things of the world proletariat, and yet it was done with the bourgeoisie. I do not know if you have seen some movies and also some good newsreels showing the struggle between the two wings: [those who wanted to fight Hitler and] the bourgeois who did not want to fight Hitler. [In the ghetto] there was a left wing that pushed for the fight, and all the great dignitaries of the ghetto were against it. The ghetto [rises] when the bourgeois wing, the rabbis, and all those who collaborated with the Nazis realise that they too were put on trains and killed. Then, when they realise this, they give a turn and accept the youth were correct. Then the revolution itself becomes socialist: food must be distributed and so on. [The same applies to the Warsaw Uprising in 1944], which is transformed at the end. Its last call ultimately has to be taken by Trotskyism. We give little importance to one of the greatest events of the world revolution. The last radio transmission from the Warsaw Uprising is amazing. They say, "Let it be known that all governments are guilty." And of the Russians, better not talk about, because the Russians were ready to come in, and if they did, they would shatter the Nazis, who were trapped between the Russians ahead and the Poles from behind and Stalin gives the order to stop the Red Army until the Nazis crash the insurrection.

⁷⁰ We understand that the author is referring to the Second World War before Hitler attacked the USSR in 1941 and the USSR joined the Allied side. Between August 1939 and the beginning of the invasion, Stalin maintained a "non-aggression pact" with Nazi Germany. Trotsky harshly criticised this pact until he was assassinated in August 1940.

There are large theoretical problems. We have already said it is possible to go from one regime to another in a reformist or revolutionary way. This is a tremendous mess because Trotskyism has been built arguing that Stalinism can only be defeated by a political revolution, and we have seen colossal regime changes, including social, socio-political and socio-economic changes of regimes, the three together, in a reformist way. The three revolutions that we say exist — political, socio-political, and socio-economic — we have seen them [occur] through a reformist way, for example in Germany. Bismarck — although with one or two failed revolutions, which in some way put pressure — managed that the bourgeoisie rule more and more.

The Tsar was also going there. According to Trotsky, there was dual power between the bourgeoisie and the Tsar. But from the war of 1914, there were moments of agreement, later of rupture, and again of agreement. Tsarism, from the war of 1914, was becoming more and more bourgeois.

Trainee: What other examples are there, other than the passage from a feudal to a capitalist regime?

Moreno: Of the working class, none. There has been a very confusing example, of which Pablo⁷¹ took hold, which is the absolute monarchies. Because the influence of capitalism in an absolute monarchy is tremendous, especially in lender capital. On the one hand, the court nobility, not the feudal nobility, rules. And also rules what we now call the *noblesse de robe* (nobility of the robe) — which are the judges, a whole layer of very talented high officials. Goldmann's⁷² theory is that Pascal⁷³ is a great ideologue and philosopher of the nobility of the robe. Then, here everything starts to get mixed. Because the characteristic of the French absolute monarchy is that it persecutes the feudal lords. You no longer watch Musketeers movies or anything like that, but 30 or 40 years ago I had the advantage that could quickly give two or three examples. Those films showed the terrible hatred [of feudal lords] to Richelieu⁷⁴ because he persecuted duellists. Two nobles duelled and Richelieu's police always appeared and put both in prison. What Dumas⁷⁵ and everyone else tell is because of the persecution of the landed gentry, which had power, and specialised in duels and the practice of all those things. That is, Richelieu already reflects the enormous influence of the bourgeoisie in all fields. He undermines the strength of the feudal nobility; unifies the country; and has some extraordinary bourgeois tasks that are well within the reforms. Nevertheless, we believe that the weight of the nobility, even transformed into palatial nobility, remains crucial and that the monarch himself, in a primordial sense, remains a feudal institution.

Trainee: Isn't there now in Spain a reform process going in this direction?

Moreno: May be, it may get to it. What I am doing is posing the problems. I raise two huge, tremendous theoretical problems. One is whether, historically, there have been reform processes that have led from one regime to another, and have even worked wonders like that Germany, with

71 **Michel Pablo** (1911-1996) was the pseudonym of **Michel Raptis**, a Greek Trotskyist living in France and the main leader of the Fourth International after the Second World War. Together with Ernest Mandel, they promoted a revisionist policy of capitulation to the Stalinist communist parties, social democracy and bourgeois nationalist movements such as the MNR in Bolivia. They promoted "sui generis entryism", which meant the dissolution of the Trotskyists in the Communist Parties. In the 1960s, he distanced himself from Trotskyism and was an advisor to the bourgeois government of Ben Bella in Algeria.

72 **Lucien Goldmann** (1913-1970). Marxist humanist researcher, sociologist and philosopher.

73 **Blaise Pascal** (1623–1662) was a French mathematician, physicist, inventor, philosopher, and Catholic writer.

74 **Armand Jean du Plessis**, 1st Duke of Richelieu (1585–1642), known as **Cardinal Richelieu**, was a French statesman and prelate of the Catholic Church. He became known as *l'Éminence Rouge*, or "the Red Eminence", a term derived from the title "Eminence" applied to cardinals and from the red robes that they customarily wear. Consecrated a bishop in 1607, Richelieu was appointed Foreign Secretary in 1616. He continued to rise through the hierarchy of both the Catholic Church and the French monarchy, becoming a cardinal in 1622 and chief minister to King Louis XIII of France in 1624.

75 **Alexandre Dumas** (1802–1870), was a French novelist and playwright. His works have been translated into many languages and he is one of the most widely read French authors. Many of his historical novels of adventure were originally published as serials, including *The Count of Monte Cristo*, *The Three Musketeers*, *Twenty Years After*, and *The Vicomte of Bragelonne: Ten Years Later*. Since the early 20th century, his novels have been adapted into nearly 200 films. Prolific in several genres, Dumas began his career by writing plays, which were successfully produced from the first. He wrote numerous magazine articles and travel books; his published works totalled 100,000 pages.

no successful revolution, is economically transformed from feudal [to capitalist] and its political system is transformed from feudal to feudal-bourgeois. Here as well the feudal lords become the great politicians of the regime, in the big bureaucrats. It is the role of Bismarck, who belongs to the landed gentry, Prussian: he saves the bureaucracy, saves the nobility.

Why couldn't there be in the USSR a political reform and not a political revolution, if the law seems to indicate that you can go from one system to another by reformist or revolutionary methods? When looking at the historical process, to what extent should [the Bismarckist processes] be called revolution, or [only] an extraordinary change? This alone is a revolution. And revolution can be an act of violence or many partial acts that eventually cause an abrupt change.

Hansen, before his death, began to develop this very interesting theory along with the SWP. It shows that, either as sectarian or as revisionists, the Yankees are always at the forefront of Mandel. Because the Yankees had written, and Hansen long before his disciples, that the political revolution was an accumulation of reforms. We had never read it. Hansen appeared as an orthodox Trotskyist. Someday we will have to study whether Hansen did not already have great revisionist elements. I do not know. We need to do a reevaluation of his political personality. But he says this definition: in the Eastern [European] states the revolution will not be any spectacular event but it will be an accumulation of reforms, at the end of which we will realise that there is a revolution. That is, a Brazilian process but in the workers' states.

Trainee: All examples of reformist changes of the regime show they were made based on existing classes or class sectors that are already economically powerful under the old regime and want to change it. On what social base could there be a reformist change of regime in the workers' states?

Moreno: How would I know? It may be the technocracy. But I will say the same as you say; it is possible that what you are saying is the explanation. It is possible, but it may not. There is a difference between workers' states and other states. Because the latter are the states of the exploiters, not the exploited, the economic field gives rise to changes in production relations through agreements. That is, you can transform the landowner into a capitalist landowner through a reformist way, through weddings, through agreements. Because the bourgeois buy fiefdoms, because the landlords accumulate money and become bourgeois, because the daughters of the bourgeois marry feudal landlords, as shown in *The Leopard*,⁷⁶ which paints a good picture.

(Although we have to discuss whether there was feudalism in Sicily because there is a very strong theory that holds that Sicily is like Portugal: a great capitalist country that decayed. In Portugal, there is no feudalism but the world's most advanced capitalism, but today is nothing, it is a shred; it was left a shred after being the biggest in the world. But it is not feudalism but a regime in decline for centuries. In Sicily, it is the same. Either way, *The Leopard* is a good example. It shows a noble family whose son married the daughter of a bourgeois. It can be in this way they become engaged.)

Then, within the bourgeoisie, within the bourgeois regimes, yes there is much room for these changes because they are [regimes] of **exploiters**. Then there is a possibility of reforms because in the economic process, in economic relations agreements happen, reform processes happen. And then they give concessions.

Apparently, the law of revolutions is [they take place] when a dominant sector of the regime or the government —there can be revolutions against a government within the regime— refuses to compromise or give up their privileges. Then there is no way other than the revolutionary way. It has to do with sectors; that is, there is a bureaucracy of the bourgeois state. For example, everyone who stole in Argentina. They become richer and richer, they steal more and more. It is Somoza's case. I do not know whether Pinochet is, it may be the case. The Uruguayan [military] may be. But

⁷⁶ *The Leopard* (Italian: *Il Gattopardo*) is a 1963 Italian film directed by Luchino Visconti and based on the novel of the same name by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa.

it is clear in Stroessner,⁷⁷ it is clear in Somoza, it is clear in Trujillo⁷⁸ and here. Then, under no point of view these sectors give [power] away; they pact, but only to continue to dominate; to overthrow them a revolution is necessary. It is the case of the Shah. Who could remove the Shah of Iran? He stole a billion dollars every year. He was taking over the whole industry. He was sinking the Iranian bazaar bourgeoisie. He was doing all kinds of things. So, conditions are ripening for a revolution, there is no way out but revolution. And if they do reforms, it is for this sector to continue to dominate for socio-economic interests. There may be reform in any sector because they are exploitative regimes. And as exploiters, there can be tremendous agreements or disagreements.

[In the case of the Roman Empire], there came a point where they could no longer live together because the specific interests of each sector went against the interests of the other. Then they had to discuss, and a regime of property relations was discussed. That is, the revolution of property relations was discussed, that is, to eliminate slavery.

I get the impression that, regarding the working class, this law is transformed. There can be no reform [in moving] from the bourgeois regime to the workers' regime, because [the workers'] is a regime of the exploited that, basically, goes towards the destruction of the states, the state. Then it has everything against: it has all the exploiters against, has all the bourgeois institutions against. And one can only oppose this united front through a revolution.

What do I mean by this? Not all social revolutions were the direct result of a revolution but there were rearrangements. But there is a social revolution that can only be imposed by methods of civil war or revolution. And this is demonstrated best by all the failures of the past 2500, 3000 or 4000 years. All revolutionary processes covering slaves, [people] without property, sectors exploited by landlords, by bourgeois or whoever, they were all violent. No known process was not violent. Yes, there were reform processes but to change the regime of the exploited.

For example, some comrades believe— and perhaps they are right— that feudalism arises because it was imposed by the barbarians. And I think that it arises through a process of reforming the Roman Empire itself, together with the barbarian invasions. There are many contributing factors, but, contrary to popular belief, the decisive factor emerges in Italy and not in the periphery. It arises with the famous settlement edicts or laws of the emperor, which are already a direct regulation of the slave system. It is a reform of them that at heart is deep, it is social: it changes the character of the landowner. But it can be done because they are exploiters. The worker of the land does not disappear, slave before and servant afterwards, but it is there. If the slave or the servant had wanted to break free of its exploiter, whether slave landowner or feudal landowner, he would have had to make a civil war or a revolution.

That is: specifically, in the passage of this social revolution [—the workers'—], it is synthesised another revolution, which is that of the exploited against the exploiters, and not [the passage] of an exploiter social sector to another exploiter social sector.

But this does not solve the problem of why a political revolution is necessary. It is a serious problem. Why there can be no reform in the USSR? For me, there can be no reform because precisely the totalitarian nature of the regime is the condition for the privileges of the sector that dominates the state. They can't give away privileges, [which is what would happen] if the totalitarian regime disappears and a democratic regime comes; it is an impossibility. Everything seems to indicate it is so. But maybe it is not. We need to keep an open mind and be willing to say "we were wrong".

77 **Alfredo Stroessner** (1912–2006) was a Paraguayan military officer, politician and dictator, who served as President of Paraguay from 1954 to 1989. He ascended to the position after leading an army coup in 1954.

78 **Rafael Trujillo** (1891–1961) was a Dominican politician, military officer and dictator from 1930 until his assassination on 30 May 1961. He served as president as generalissimo of the army from 1930 to 1938 and from 1942 to 1952 and governed indirectly from 1938 to 1942 and from 1952 to 1961, using puppet presidents. His 31 years of government are known as the Trujillo Era and are considered one of the bloodiest tyrannies in Latin America. His government was characterized by anti-communism, repression of all opposition and the cult of personality. Civil liberties were non-existent and human rights were constantly violated. It plunged the country into a state of panic where a death could be covered up as an "accident" and anyone who disagreed with the Trujillo regime could be imprisoned and tortured in one of the clandestine prisons designated for that practice, and more often than not, they ended up dead..

The regime is the source of the privileges. That it is a one-party, dictatorial regime, and so forth, it is the source of privileges. That is to say, it is [the regime] of a sector, of a minority bureaucracy that, in this, meets the condition of exploiting class without being it. It is a caste that we call oppressive to indicate it is not a class. But it is oppressive, and their privileges depend on such a regime. It can't accept elections, can't accept democracy because then begins the disappearance of the caste and its privileges.

Well, these are all elements that are present. You have to see, depending on the level of the course, the extent to which you present them. What is important is that the comrades begin to understand. You have to give them little; but also, you have to be prepared to open the discussion because we want the comrades to know as much as possible. You have to know how far to open the tap and that the discussion with Barnes and Mandel points to all this discussion of the Fourth International because it is one of the course's goals.

The first goal is that they know why we call democratic revolution [the process of Argentina in 1982], being at the same time fanatics that it has nothing to do with the revolution in Nicaragua, fanatics that it has nothing to do with Portugal, fanatics that it has nothing to do with February in Russia or with Bolivia. Nevertheless, we think it is a revolution. I say this to get used to not arguing about names but rather go to the content. If someone says, "I think it is not a revolution because it is not like that of Bolivia", we reply: "We are in complete agreement. We call it revolution, but why? Because for us it is not the same as in Brazil. Because what came [in Argentina] is something no one planned or measured, it is an abrupt change. Do you believe it was measured? Do you think Galtieri, Videla and Bignone said, 'Well, take it easy, within a year, after the election, we all go to prison'? Do you think they planned to be hit and insulted as happened in La Plata? That there was a timetable? Put this way—and also to make them laugh a little— I am going to make high theory."

He answers us, "No, it was not planned."

"Ok", we say, "this, which was not planned, which emerged as new, we call a revolution. What do you want to call it? Do you want to call Argentina reform? And Brazil, what do you want to call it? ¿Sub-reform or counter-reform with reform? What we need to agree is to give a different name to what happened in Brazil and Argentina, then we do accept that it is not revolution."

Thus, we clarify the issue and end the discussions.

This is the first goal: to explain why in Argentina there is a democratic revolution.

The second goal is to prepare ourselves for the discussions, for the great debate about whether or not the Fourth International is useful and why. Ultimately, it will be what will shatter the Partido Obrero [Workers Party], all their entryist work and everything they may do to us if our comrades understand it. For you and us all, a huge job is coming our way: to educate the party in this. There is no more important task. Those who get convinced of this will be as previously were those convinced of the *Theses of the Permanent Revolution*: unmovable. And this is indispensable for understanding the new phenomena, it is essential for the program. This is the second goal: to begin this process [in the party]. That is, we do not want theory for the initiated — you — and theory for the illiterate — who are the others — (just as we do not want self-criticism to be kept to ourselves but self-criticism for everyone). We want the same for everyone to the extent that it is understood, and adapting ourselves [to the level of the comrades]. This task is essential.

Third major goal. The most important. The last chapter, the one that has to do with the party. If you see that the course begins to extend, you have to leave the last two days for this. And tell the comrades: "Fellows, the rest you keep studying; our think-tank says that within two or three days there are documents." And as we already have to be critical and self-critical, you have to tell them, "Expect them within two years because they never meet the dates." Thus, you begin to prepare them for the course on the party coming next.

We want to make here a course that meets two or three basic goals. The first connects with the entire document: we want our new militants and cadres to begin mastering the terminology. It is not a medical handbook. If we now talk to a comrade about senile Bismarckism, about left Bonapartism

sui generis, of state-type slogans, and so on, the comrade gets scared and says: “What! Do I have to learn medicine? So many drugs! How difficult is everything!” So, we want them not to be scared, for them to master it, let them know it is easy and see that is not as big as the list of all medicinal products but smaller. It is not as difficult as learning the medications by heart. And it is indispensable. We want them to know what Bonapartism is, what is state, what is regime, what is government, what is senile Bismarckism, what is non-senile Bismarckism, what is classic Bonapartism, what is everything. So now we will finish the course with the classification.

Second goal. I have been told: “Why, against our previous system of asking questions, in this course we ask so little?” This is not unconscious; it reflects an objective. [To this question,] we have answered it is because we did not want to give it a schematic character. We want to see if we instil in the comrades what we have said about Lenin and Trotsky. We want to see if we instil in them that they have to think every day, they have to be critical. Not to believe we have all the problems solved. So, I tried to solve the problems and to clearly explain the mess Marxism is. We try to create a critical assimilation. This is, that they see that every day new phenomena happen; that we are in the most spectacular century known to history, and it is spectacular because every day there is a new phenomenon.

That is also a key goal of the course: that they be critical, so they elaborate. For this reason, the chapter on permanent revolution is very important to show them the different types of revolutions, and that there can be new types of revolutions like those Lenin and Trotsky considered, and others, like the joke of Paraguay may arise. And the course has to be critical: may they learn that Lenin and Trotsky were wrong and that we also make a lot of mistakes.

All the theoretical part of this course aims to end in the practical part: what party we build. We want you to learn that democratic centralism means critical centralism. Democracy means criticism. Democracy means doubt. Democracy means permanent ongoing discussion and constant doubt; fundamentally in the rank-and-file comrades. We want to educate rebels and revolutionists. That is, people who live in doubt, who live criticising and discussing. We’ll have a great party when everyone is like this. Hence, the theoretical part of the course is to avoid believing that it is a Bible-type course, a dogma. On the contrary, [it is intended] to be something alive. You critically open the discussion to the extent you can. Let us see whether afterwards we change or not, to the extent that we see how far the course goes.

We put this course at the end as a trap, to see whether we can achieve this education of what the party should be. Previously, we had the hypothesis that the chapter on the party was an indispensable course and the most important. After the first round, we have become convinced that it is the most important chapter. Because, comrades, we have discovered something hurtful, when we said that in the party the rank and file is consulted on how many newspapers to sell, or how much to contribute, there was not a single comrade who said that in their region the rank and file is consulted. It was emotional, comrades, of sentimental type. I am not exaggerating. It was the course that impacted the most. It continued like this. They all said they had never been told that, everyone.

It is shameful for us. It has to be an embarrassment to you. So, I authorised the comrades, because they were middle cadres, to tell the rank and file that the party has serious bureaucratic deviations due to its clandestinity.

The comrades say they never [are consulted]. They are only issued orders. Therefore, we do not educate rebels but soldiers. The course is useless if the conclusion is not that we educate rebels in the realm of theory. It will also cause charlatans but... well; it is the price we pay. But the price we pay to have our party. Because the other price, having soldiers is very expensive, because it is the price of having a party opposite to ours: it stops being a revolutionary party. There can’t be a revolutionary party without revolutionary militants, without revolutionary sympathisers. The whole atmosphere has to be the opposite [of what it is].

And I make it clear that the comrades have been left speechless. A new female comrade took me aside to tell me this was the best part of the course.

When I asked: "Is not this what you are explaining?"

"No, comrade", they answered. "We are told otherwise. It is the first time we hear this."

I told them that the instructions of the Secretariat were to go to local headquarters and ask each comrade how many newspapers he requested, and once the comrade gave the amount he was to be told: "Lower the number! Do not be a showoff. Do not give a high number." If the comrades told us five, or 10, we, the leaders of the local headquarters, had to say half or a third: "Do not take five; take two, three". When I told them that, frankly, we almost had a fit, they were astounded; we almost had to bring an iron lung. The first surprise was: "What? Are the comrades to be asked? And once they answer they are challenged to sell only half?" They looked stunned.

Beware: from this, they concluded that our party was not disciplined. Happily, they said it and then we could clarify that yes, there is a strict discipline, and they have to try [to keep it].

But discipline is top-down and democracy bottom-up. What does this mean? I am afraid that many of you will not understand, that there is a contradiction, because I saw it on the course. When they understood me well, they said, "Ah, fantastic, then we sell the newspapers the comrades told us. We even have to consider the possibility of being told a quantity and fewer being sold." Then the party is a free-for-all. How many newspapers are sold? The leadership says: "Ask the rank and file". Everything the rank and file says is added up and that is what we sell. But, as we are ultra-democratic, as we are in favour of anarchism of the rank and file, for the following issue we sell half and say, "Let us sell half". And we always do what the rank and file say.

And this is not the case. In the party what the leadership says is done while there is no Congress. And the Congress, in turn, is one of the leaders because they are the cadres elected by the rank and file. The party's Congress is not an assembly. And this they did not understand. So, what are the discipline and the calculations? The leader should know what his local area, his region are. And when the meeting of the Executive Committee is done, he — though the rank and file told him five and he said two — has to say: "I will sell seven". Because he, in his own analysis, may think they are seven, but not demand it from the rank-and-file comrade. How do you sell seven? I am sending him to sell two, and he will sell them so easily that the next day he will say that two is too few; then I'll say, "You know what? You were right. You could sell five. How right you were! Instead of five, sell seven." It is the policy of the leader. He adds up everything they requested and amounts to 20, and he reports: "I sell 50". It makes to the condition of the leader.

And that same analysis goes up until it reaches the Central Committee or the Executive Committee: "We will sell 30 thousand newspapers with such a political operation", which is disciplined. But, at the rank and file, almost no discipline. Even if they tell us they can't sell them we make no issue, no mess. The one who made a mistake was the leader who said: "This comrade, who told us that he could sell five, was right." We even have to combat the danger that he will pay them out of his pocket. Let the comrade himself notice that the important thing is that we want to know the truth. Let him tell us: "No, look, within my life regime I can only sell two." And let him notice that we see this as ok, without making any ideological terrorism. Then there is a dialectic of discipline and democracy.

Those who have to meet the commitments to the bitter end are the leaders, and the higher the more so. And the further down we go, who can have the luxury of not complying with anything or almost anything is the rank-and-file militant. But the leader will have to explain why certain line was developed.

Is that clear, comrades? Because we will begin to be very strict with the leaders and increasingly anarchic with the rank-and-file comrades. And we will demand that the leaders be anarchic with the rank-and-file comrades.

Well, comrades. I do not think I've forgotten anything. If I forgot something charge it to my account as the tango *Mano a mano* says but adapted to Marxism. Charge on the account of the course, not the of the "otario".⁷⁹

Trainee: In your latest creations, I notice a greater weight of the superstructure, of the political. Am I wrong?

Moreno: You are not mistaken. Because the problem of the regimes has not been worked by Marxism. There are virtually no more than a few sentences... But, for example regarding the permanent revolution, we insist that Trotsky is right but not in the approach. Instead of taking the subject, you have to take the object. Here **we take the structural factor to the bitter end**. In the traditional course of permanent revolution, we have always said that Preobrazhensky was right that we had to do the objective approach, but he was not right in not seeing the process of socialist revolution. Today as well: the democratic revolution is more socialist than ever. Because the other was anti-feudal and now it is anti-capitalist. I do not want to repeat that. I wanted to point out how you have to do the course. Think about it.

Trainee: In the course, you do not touch in depth the problems of method: uneven and combined development, movement, contradictions, and so on.

Moreno: We almost did not have time to touch the problems of the method. We put the problems of the method in the points we considered very important. We did not do a method chapter but instead, we sprinkled it. We got the impression that we had no time and it was best to dialectically explain the problems instead of going to abstract dialectic. What you need to do is, for example, where the course touches on uneven and combined development, explain it here.

Trainee: I thought whether there was a need to put a bit of method at the end.

Moreno: My impression is it is not. Take the examples and give the method there, and take the question of the method when the example is discussed.

Today's chat is essentially about the new elements that are not outlined here. Although they are not sufficiently developed, this is the basis of all that lies ahead in theory. We'll have to go deeper, to enter into the discussion with Barnes, refine, change, and so on.

Second chat with course trainees

Trainee: The school is very superstructural and theoretical and does not give importance to the class struggle and our involvement in it.

Moreno: Because that is not the goal. The goal is to see if we convince people of what Trotskyism is, in a very clear way. The course seems very difficult but it is to reach a very simple conclusion. Not only now but also in the discussion with Mandel, and with everyone. So, for us, this is theoretically very deep, whether we are right or not. Because the whole purpose of the course is: Do you know what Trotskyism is? Trotsky was mistaken a lot. And do you know what our international current is? It is the only organisation that is for a regime of workers' democracy. That is why: regime, regime, regime. Regime of workers' democracy.

Trainee: Where?

Moreno: In the unions.

Trainee: Why is it so huge?

Moreno: They are in favour of a one-party regime and we are against it. Are you in favour of the one-party system?

⁷⁹ In the tango *Mano a Mano* (Head to head) paraphrased by Moreno, "otario" is a term of the slang of Buenos Aires generally meaning silly; it is used to define a man who, seduced by a woman, agrees to all her demands and ignores her infidelities.

Trainee: No.

Moreno: Come to Trotskyism. Are you in favour of having democracy in Cuba, the right to have many parties and that the workers say whatever they want, to make parties and factions? If you are in favour, you are a Trotskyist. Then opt: here or there.

Regime of workers democracy, with the word “workers”. The Cuban regime is undemocratic.

That is the whole purpose. We believe we have to do an in-depth theoretical course, insisting on the regime. Thus, when we reach the end, we can ask what the essence of Trotskyism is, whether Trotsky was wrong or not, whether [the petty-bourgeois leaderships] could expropriate, etcetera. And they will be able to answer everything we explained to them before. We are the most critical of Trotsky but we are the most in favour of him. We may also ask, “Do you know what our international current is?” And they will answer, “It is this. We are 500, 1000, 2000, and 13 in the world. But we had to create it because those who fight for a regime must unite.”

And today, we have concluded that the betrayal, the weight of the counterrevolutionary apparatuses, etc., have made Mandel, Lambert, Barnes and everybody — except the anarchists, who are not for breaking [with the bourgeoisie] either but are for anarchy, i.e., that there be no regime... [We concluded that] there is only one organisation in the world which is for the regime of workers' democracy.

All of this course, seemingly so theoretical, is for this political conclusion. And we believe that if we convince them that we are the only ones who stand by the workers' revolution, within 50 years — unless they throw an atomic bomb against us — they remain ours.

Trainee: The party has two points: the struggle for the permanent world revolution and workers' democracy.

Moreno: Exactly, yes. And internationalism.

Trainee: That is already in the world revolution.

Moreno: Not only that, at this very moment we are already for the [world revolution here]. We take power in Argentina and say, “We are willing to give it to Brazil; let them sink us in Argentina and save Brazil.” That is not the case in Central America. Then we believe that if we can convince them of this, the darkest controversies, with Mandel, Lambert or whoever, become clear. Because, for example, what would we say now to the SWP, Mandel and Lambert?

“Pardon me, can you tell me what happened in Grenada?”

“Well, the wives quarrelled...”

“And do you believe it is Marxist to say they were killed because the two women quarrelled?” We'll give them a different [explanation]. Do you know why it happened? Because a system of democratic freedoms did not exist. Because then nobody would have been killed. This marriage and that marriage would have gone to an assembly, they would have spoken. There it would have been voted that the one to draw a gun would be killed by everyone else together because there is democracy without it being a workers' state.

Well, the same thing happens today in Nicaragua. Where is it discussed whether or not to approve the Contadora⁸⁰ pacts? If Lambert, Mandel and Barnes are here, I tell them:

“May I? I want to go two or three months to Nicaragua to get space in radio and TV every day to say that Contadora is the ultimate, nothing else. And then, tell me where we are going to vote because I want to also be present for the voting. Are you in favour or not?”

They will say, “No”.

“Dear Lambert, we have nothing more to say. We are for different regimes, which is the most serious thing we can have, even though it is the most abstract and most general.”

⁸⁰ **Contadora Group:** formed by the governments of Mexico, Colombia, Panama, and Venezuela, and supported by Fidel Castro, to stifle the development of the Central American revolution, especially in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. It took the name from Contadora Island, in Panama, where the first meeting was held on 7 January 1983.

If the course is useful for this, it is useful; otherwise, it is not useful.

Trainee: For that it is useful.

Moreno: What else do we want to give the comrades? The last thing we would do is to explain tactics or strategy because then we end up confusing them all. I see it like this, I do not know. That is, on the one hand, the objective.

And the other major objective is how the party works based on democracy. How the regime is centralist but it is also profoundly democratic. And it is critical.

Therefore, we believe that the essence of the theory of permanent revolution is those three or four points. And in the rest, Trotsky was wrong in everything. That is what I believe, that he made dreadful mistakes. It is my opinion but maybe I am confused.

So, we think it is a nice course to prepare for the next five, 10 or 20 years of the discussion to be opened and that is ultra-theoretical because it is going to be around regime. For example, I think that we can now define the regime of Lenin and Trotsky as the opposite of the Stalinist regime. It is great that we go out to say it is the opposite, that the Kadets had democracy; that Martov⁸¹ intervened in 1920. Even to start making history. We believe that it is antagonistic to the Stalinist regime. They are two regimes. We are for the regime of Lenin and Trotsky. When democracy is suppressed in the Soviets — relatively, but it is suppressed: civil war swept all parties who are not in favour of the Soviets — that is already extemporaneous, the unusual, the circumstantial. Their trend is the opposite. It is democracy in the Bolshevik Party and democracy in the Soviets. It was that simple.

Hence, all this business about the regime, and so forth, has this goal: to explain how the regime of Lenin and Trotsky — which is the regime of the Paris Commune, which is what was getting imposed in Germany — emerged. The German Soviets had an extraordinary democracy: there were right socialists, centrist socialists and the socialists of Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht;⁸² they gave their speeches and voted, and it was a living chaos. They went out to fire shots in Berlin, and in all of Germany; there were sectors in Germany in which the proletariat had taken power. The greatest revolution the world workers' movement has made is the German, not the Russian, only it was lost. It was amazing, well above the Spanish — and this one was also like that.

Trainee: The more mobilisation, the more workers' democracy, and the more democracy, the more mobilisation.

Moreno: We believe the same. In perspective, yes, but there is not an equal sign. We do not rule out reformist sectors taking the leadership of the workers' movement. We do not rule out that the working class at a time be tired; reformists come and say, "Do not pay attention to these revolutionaries and let us seize power, that we go about it the reformist way." On that, we agree.

Trainee: to have permanent mobilisation there must be workers' democracy.

Moreno: Of course. Democracy gives us the perspective of discussing it again. Then it is nice. We take, as Lenin and Trotsky, the possibility of dictatorship of the proletariat with other leaders. That is, with [organisms] of the working class, [but] with another party.

81 **Julius Martov** (1873–1923) was a social-democrat politician who became the leader of the Mensheviks in early 20th-century Russia. He was an old friend and mentor of Trotsky, who described him as the "Hamlet of Democratic Socialism".

82 **Karl Liebknecht** (1871-1919) was a German socialist and anti-militarist revolutionist. A member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) from 1900, he served in the Reichstag from 1912 to 1916, where he represented the party's revolutionary wing. He refused to vote for war credits when the Social Democratic Party capitulated to the German imperialist bourgeoisie. In 1916 he was expelled from the SPD parliamentary group for his opposition to *Burgfriedenspolitik*, the political truce between all the Reichstag parties for the duration of the war. During the November Revolution that broke out across Germany in the final days of the war, Liebknecht proclaimed Germany a "Free Socialist Republic" from the Berlin Palace on 9 November 1918. On 11 November, together with Rosa Luxemburg and others, he founded the Spartacist League. In December his call to turn Germany into a soviet republic was rejected by the majority of the Reich Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils (*Reichsrätekongress*). In late 1918, Liebknecht was one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD). Shortly after the suppression of the Spartacist uprising in which he played a leading role, he and Rosa Luxemburg were assassinated by members of the Guard Cavalry Rifle Division.

Those we convince of this will not move away from Trotskyism if they agree; else, they will. But the same will happen to those who become convinced they are for democracy as to those convinced that fascism is the worst thing you can have. Anyone can be a fascist but the person convinced that it is barbarism, something monstrous, can't be fascist. As soon as we convince [a comrade] a one-man regime in which they put in anyone prison for thinking is a monstrous regime, [although] it may be a workers' regime, having expropriated or not, he is a Trotskyist. If we do not [convince him], he is an agent of imperialism.

This is the essence of the course; together with the consequences in our party itself. You know that to be able to lead this you must begin to be democratic, to give initiatives, to have a crisis, to have a great basis for criticism, and so on. What worries me is whether we can give the course and be understood or not, whether they will like it or not, whether we can reach those easy conclusions that I say...

Trainee: You spoke of workers' and peasants' government that does not expropriate.

Moreno: Sure. Before expropriating. Otherwise, it is not a workers' and peasants' government, it is a proletarian dictatorship.

Trainee: Bureaucratic dictatorship like Cuba.

Moreno: Of course. [It is] not revolutionary dictatorship. But this is after it expropriated. The theory has to work with the actual phenomena. What happened in Cuba? There was a guerrilla, a civil war of one or two years. They crushed Batista's army. They were left with no army, without public employees, without anything, no bourgeois institution. They destroyed the bourgeois state, and then came a government based on the Rebel Army of Castro: petty-bourgeois, with a military-political discipline, that is, total, military, very harsh discipline. [The government orders:] "You support the bourgeois, not expropriate him". And no one can say, "No, I want to see him expropriated because I am in favour of expropriation." [If you do, the government answers:] "No, sir. It is a military order".

Then, because of this military character, it is a strong government, not as weak as the Kerenskyist government, which rules with the bourgeoisie. Because its plan is for a stage. They are petty-bourgeois or Stalinists who say: "Once we overthrow the fascist regime, we make a bourgeois-democratic regime, and the bourgeois-democratic regime lasts 10 or 20 years."

Trainee: Without the bourgeois parties in government?

Moreno: No. With the bourgeois party in government. The president of Cuba is the biggest bourgeois in Cuba. The boss, superior to Fidel Castro, is Urrutia, President of Cuba. They take him. He is the man of imperialism, their trusted man. He is a great bourgeois, as Martinez de Hoz. Suppose the Tupamaros⁸³ take power and take as president [the Uruguayan equivalent of] Martinez de Hoz. We deny it; we are totally against calling this government "workers' and peasants' government". Not yet. This is our difference with Barnes, and nowadays with everyone.

When is it the workers' and peasants' government? When they dismiss Urrutia and break. There is no agreement with imperialism. Who has an agreement with imperialism is Urrutia. He betrays them, imperialism wants to crush them, and they defend themselves and dismiss him.

Thus, first, they destroy the bourgeois state but they try to rebuild it. They have not yet rebuilt it because the basis of the new state is an army that is petty-bourgeois. It is a critical stage of the bourgeois state, tremendous because it has destroyed the previous one and has not succeeded in making a new one. And who rules? The petty bourgeoisie. But the petty bourgeoisie can't have a state because there is no dominant petty-bourgeois economy. Then, it is a strong government, Bonapartist, similar to the Jacobins.

83 **Tupamaros** was a left-wing urban guerrilla group in Uruguay in the 1960s and 1970s.

I wonder whether you know what is considered a brilliant definition by George Sand⁸⁴ about Robespierre.⁸⁵ It is considered of the highest scientific depth, despite being a literary metaphor. George Sand said Napoleon is Robespierre on horseback. Robespierre also repressed, and persecuted, although he was petty-bourgeois, the opposite of Napoleon, who was [the] bourgeoisie. [The guerrilla party-armies] have elements of Jacobinism: they are petty-bourgeois and they can't stabilise. Hence their Bonapartist character, for two reasons. One: the bourgeois state disappears, and all that remains dominating society, almost being a state, is the strong, centralised party-army. The second reason is that it is a party army that can't acquire a petty-bourgeois state even if it wants it because the state will be bourgeois or [workers']. [Under] the Jacobins it could only be bourgeois. But at this time the petty bourgeoisie has two alternatives, rather than [only] one as at the time of the Jacobins: to be either workers or bourgeois. Even in the economic process. The future of all petty-bourgeois artisans is becoming either a worker — to get into the services or whatever — or for some to become bourgeois or semi-bourgeois. So, that is the perspective. In this perspective they refuse. But when they dismiss Urrutia, at least they already say, "We broke with the bourgeoisie agent of imperialism and we will take measures for this break." There comes a time when the measures they begin to adopt come to the expropriation of the vast majority of the bourgeoisie and imperialism; they lead to the monopoly of foreign trade and economic planning. [They are] the measures adopted after they make a workers' and peasants' government.

Trainee: These measures lead them to become a workers' state.

Moreno: Of course. And by being a workers' state [it is] a bureaucratic dictatorship. Already before it was bureaucratic, quite Bonapartist. It remains a Bonapartist regime. The regime does not change; it remains [the regime of] the army... What changes is the state: from a bourgeois state in total crisis to a workers' state.

Trainee: Is the workers' and peasants' government the political transition from a bourgeois state to a workers' state?

Moreno: That is dangerous. That is what Barnes says — which may well be so, we'll have to research it. It is a political transition of rupture with the bourgeoisie, but of the petty-bourgeois party, the party that wants to be bourgeois and can't. This is very important. It is different to the October Revolution, which breaks the bourgeois state as part of its policy of going to a workers' state. It is an interregnum.

Trainee: October goes to the workers' state consciously.

Moreno: Not just consciously but in their practical measures. Instead, this workers' and peasants' government is still in doubt about whether it goes towards the workers' state or even backward, as it did in Algeria. If imperialism loosens up, it goes back. Until now, it has never been seen that they advance if imperialism [does not] bother them. As it is now being revealed with China or Yugoslavia. For us, China and Yugoslavia were the same. What is happening with China is one of the greatest theoretical triumphs of our party. Why? It seemed the opposite. The Chinese bitched against imperialism and imperialism against the Chinese. And Yugoslavia, however, said, "How great imperialism is!" And imperialism [answered] "How great Yugoslavia is!", "How great Tito!", "How wonderful!" And they traded with Yugoslavia. We said they were the same. The problem is that imperialism got it right... it has squeezed, has tended to squeeze into China, and instead, it opened all its doors — finance, trade, all — to Yugoslavia. And as they are bureaucrats, as soon imperialism relented, they

84 **George Sand**, pseudonym of Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin de Francueil (1804-1876), was a French novelist and journalist. One of the most popular writers in Europe during her lifetime, Sand is recognised as one of the most notable writers of the European Romantic era. She has published over 50 volumes of diverse works, including short stories, plays, her memoirs and political texts, in addition to her 70 novels.

85 **Maximilien Robespierre** (1758-1794) was a French lawyer and statesman, widely regarded as one of the most influential and controversial figures of the French Revolution. Robespierre campaigned fervently for the right to vote for all men and their unhindered admission to the National Guard. He also advocated the right to petition, the right to bear arms in self-defence, and the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade. He was a radical Jacobin leader who rose to prominence as a member of the Committee of Public Safety, the organ of the First French Republic that was primarily responsible for the so-called "Reign of Terror." His legacy is notable for his progressive views for the time, beyond his involvement in political persecutions..

went there. Yugoslavia has advanced tremendously towards being a semicolonial country, although it is not, it remains a workers' state. But much progress has been made. In Yugoslavia, there are capitalist elements of all kinds. And China is now praising Yugoslavia. What we are seeing in China as soon imperialism said, "Ok, let us start to trade" is even more than in Yugoslavia. Because they are authorising the Chinese community in the entire south of Asia, which is very rich, to come back and put businesses, that they have the right to withdraw profits, they sign the guarantees they want, everything. Today China is the breakout in terms of bourgeois development in China.

Trainee: Is dictatorship a definition of state and also of regime?

Moreno: Always, if it is a state, it has a regime. Because it **cannot be** a state in which the class changes and the same institutions remain. Are you going from a bourgeois state to a workers' state and the institutions will not change? It is crazy.

Trainee: Is the workers' and peasants' government the definition regarding the regime?

Moreno: Of course, not regarding the state.

Trainee: To the regime and the government?

Moreno: Yes, to the regime and the government.

Trainee: Is it more correct to call proletarian dictatorship to what we called workers' and peasants' government in Russia before the expropriation?

Moreno: For me, yes. But all the same, let us not argue about names; let us understand the phenomenon.

Trainee: To be a dictatorship it must expropriate the other class.

Moreno: But not from the standpoint of the state. It has to do with a class taking the state. The problem we have why we can't call it the dictatorship of the proletariat [to the seizure of power by the party-army guerrillas], although we can call it workers' and peasants' government, is that truly the working class does not take the state. So, for us this is qualitative. We do not believe it is the same, as Barnes does. I do not think that with Fidel Castro the working class took power. We want to point this out. Then let us give it any name you want. If you want to call it workers' and peasants', workers' and revolutionary government, perfect. But for us the difference is qualitative. That a union take power or that a group full of petty-bourgeois take power, to me, are opposite things. Even if the COB takes it, I am willing to also call it a proletarian dictatorship, reformist, not directed by us, but taken by workers' institutions.

Then I make this qualitative distinction. When the workers are in truth those who take power, for me it is the dictatorship of the proletariat. When in truth the workers are not those who take power, firstly, it is not even a workers' and peasants' government because sometimes they take power with the bourgeoisie. When they break with the bourgeoisie it is workers' and peasants' government, and by an indirect route: not because the proletariat takes power through their organisms but because they eliminate the bourgeoisie, which **is different** from eliminating its institutions and imposing workers' institutions, because bourgeois institutions, the bourgeois army and police, continue. It is an example of combined and uneven development.

Trainee: The state apparatus is bourgeois?

Moreno: Bourgeois.

Trainee: Even if they expropriated, why is it the dictatorship of the proletariat if there is no workers' power?

Moreno: Because there are two variations to define. This question is very nice. One thing is that the working class with its institutions take power, the state; destroys the other state and takes it. But there is something else as big or bigger than the institutions, which is to change the country. If the country is transformed from bourgeois into workers', non-bourgeois — no matter how many ways you look at it, but if it is defined only by the institution, it is sectarian — here the change of changes took place. A change 20 times larger than defeating the institution bourgeois-state.

First, the bourgeois state is already defeated and pulverised. This is the secret that explains why they can go the reformist way, first to break with the bourgeoisie and later, also in a reformist way, to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Because the bourgeois state is reduced to a little pile [of rubble], not even a little pile, it is dust. But when they expropriate the bourgeoisie the mother of changes takes place. It is no longer an institution that defeats another and dismisses it. A class disappeared from the map. Then everything changes. Then this Bonapartist power becomes a Bonapartist power of a workers' country which can only have a workers' state. A workers' state with bourgeois organs, whatever you want, but it can't be anything but a dictatorship of the proletariat. A dictatorship of the proletariat led by a caste or the petty bourgeoisie — we need to define this well because I have doubts whether caste is not half...⁸⁶

Trainee: Can this be verified by the negative? If there was expropriation, the only way to go back is by civil war.

Moreno: Of course. Perfect. Without a doubt.

Trainee: Workers' and peasants' government is regime and government?

Moreno: For me, workers' and peasants' government is regime, as Kerenskyism. "Government" is to name what kind of government there is.

Trainee: Castro's regime before expropriation was Bonapartist within a workers' and peasants' government, and when it expropriated became a bureaucratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the regime is still Bonapartist.

Moreno: Of course.

Trainee: Regarding the regime, there was no change.

Moreno: In a sense you are right and not in another. It is Bonapartism but of a workers' state. Then there are differences because the country changed, and certain relations changed. For example, before the bosses' organisations had a small influence on Bonapartism; small but it existed. Did Fidel consult them? Yes, he consulted and negotiated with them. If the bourgeoisie suddenly disappears, it no longer is part of the regime. The landlord bosses' organisations are no more.

Trainee: In terms of form, by being supported by the bureaucracy, this regime raises the need for political revolution.

Moreno: Without a doubt. It is Bonapartist, as the comrade just said.

Trainee: Can we define the workers' and peasants' government as a transitional state?

Moreno: I define it as a capitalist state in total crisis because it did not expropriate the bourgeoisie. If they expropriate it [they create] a workers' state.

Trainee: Can the workers' and peasants' government reorganise the bourgeois state without counterrevolution?

Moreno: Of course.

Trainee: I say it is in transition because they can reorganise the bourgeois state without counterrevolution.

Moreno: What transition? In total crisis and transition, but it is capitalist. Otherwise, it is nothing, it is hermaphrodite...

Trainee: What is the difference between a revolutionary situation and a revolutionary crisis?

⁸⁶ This unfinished sentence by Moreno suggests that the definition of the bureaucracy as a caste is correct — as it gets its privileges from its dominance of workers' organisations and not from owning the means of production — but insufficient, since for the author "the bureaucracy, instead, does not work in the capitalist companies; it is not a structural part of the working class, but rather of the modern middle class according to Trotsky's definition. (...) The bureaucracy is the agent of the counterrevolution within a workers institution, over which it takes ownership to have a privileged life, separated from the working class" (*The Transitional Program Today*, p. 40).

Moreno: Crisis is only four days, five days, a month, not more. It has to be resolved right away because when there is a crisis, the state, the government, and the entire system are up in the air. The bourgeoisie can't [allow it]. It may be 20 days but there must be a way out.

Trainee: The crisis is a more explosive situation.

Moreno: Yes, a few days. A [revolutionary] situation lasts years.

Trainee: In the five-point document you wrote in 1981, you define the situation differently.

Moreno: Why? Stage tells what the relationships between classes are, tells how these relationships are, whether a [class] is on the offensive or not. The regime [is] the institutions. They are completely different categories. Stage and situation are not.

Trainee: The definition of the situation that you do in the five-point document of 1981 is different. There you defined the situation by the objective prerequisites, and here we are not defining on objective premises but in another sense.

Moreno: Why in another sense?

Trainee: Because we define the situation as a moment within the stage.

Moreno: Yes, but the moment when the triumph of the revolution is approaching. It is the same: we are given the objective situation that may allow the revolution to succeed, nothing else, it is that simple.

Trainee: Then, the definition of a situation is nothing more than about time.

Moreno: No, the situations cause the inflection: they are those that allow you to go from a counterrevolutionary stage to another, [revolutionary], stage.

Trainee: But they have to do with time.

Moreno: Oh, of course. The situation is always a much smaller part of the stage. It is at the point of change. Therefore, its definition is very important.

Trainee: Is the regime defined by the superstructure?

Moreno: The class struggle is always present.

Trainee: The definition of the regime by the freedoms is not bad.

Moreno: It is very good but it has to do with the institutions, it is not abstract. The first freedom is whether the unions [and] the parties have freedom.

Trainee: There are old definitions that are useful for the new ones.

Moreno: We have been working on this for years. There are no surprises. But [the old definitions] do not have the structure that we have now. They are full of mistakes and successes. It is a path of setbacks, of comings and goings. For 20 years — since Cuba — we have been working on that revolutionary situation is not as Trotsky said.

Trainee: Trotsky does not deny that there may be revolutions without a party; only he puts the party as a condition for success.

Moreno: But for me this is sectarianism. For him the fall of Chiang Kai-shek is not a revolution, [although it affects] nothing less than a third of humankind. Then, it is not [just] a mistake. Trotsky tells Chen Tu-hsiu that he shouldn't support [Mao], who is crazy; how he can think the fall of Chiang Kai-shek was important if Mao was the same as Chiang Kai-shek? It turns out that Chiang Kai-shek fell and four, five or six years later they expropriated. Then, one of two things: either Chiang Kai-shek was going to expropriate the bourgeoisie or Trotsky's mistake is no longer just a mistake: it is a monument that would make a boy who just comes to Trotskyism laugh.

This kind of sectarian exists. There is a recorded discussion with Stéphan Just⁸⁷ and Lambert. Stéphan Just — who is a Trotskyist fanatic, who believes that Trotsky was always right — believes that after the defeat of Hitler and until 1953, the world revolutionary process went from bad to

⁸⁷ **Stéphane Just** (1921–1997) was a leader of the OCI(u) together with Pierre Lambert. The latter expelled him with his usual bureaucratic and slanderous methods in the 1980s.

worse, and the counterrevolution went much further. It is written; that they proposed a draft [resolution]. I screamed until I was hoarse. Lambert is smarter and abstains. Stephan did not accept; he believed that until 1953 the counterrevolution had advanced increasingly. Why? Was he an idiot? He was a Trotsky fanatic, and Trotsky had said that if Mao succeeded it was as bad as or worse than Chiang Kai-shek. Then, if Mao succeeded, it was the greatest triumph of the counterrevolution in the world because it is the world's largest country. His approach was: "Stalin in the USSR and Mao in China triumphed; then let us wave goodbye". For him, the uprising began in 1953 and not in 1949. Why? Because then [the Berlin insurrection takes place].

Trainee: But it is just the opposite because Europe stabilised.

Moreno: Of course. From 1949-1950. The Cold War began in 1947. So, I still believe that **for me** — I may be wrong — he does not see the importance of this fact; he does not see the February revolutions, only the Octobers. He does not prepare us for the following: "Look guys, get ready because to throw out the fascist regimes there will have to be great revolutions, with thousands of dead, that will destroy armies. And that is great; we have to support them, although they will be led by bastards..." Trotsky strongly pointed [towards this]]; but he did not conclude the great overall theoretical conclusion. But he never pointed out that there were February revolutions.

Trainee: When speaking of France, he says it is workers'.

Moreno: But there he is right. For this reason, we say "February" when it is unconscious. There, yes. In the French Revolution, **there was no** previous revolution to prepare the socialist revolution, which ties up with the socialist revolution, like February to October [in Russia]. But in Spain there is. In the fascist countries, there is. Maybe the day of tomorrow it will not be the case, and an October Revolution will break out. We want that. We are against the Stalinist approach of revolutions by stages. We are against the Stalinist view that the revolution is democratic and only democratic. We believe it is combined. We do not renounce anything that Trotsky says in this regard. But, due to the weight of Stalinism and our null influence, they have been doubly democratic: have been democratic because the main goal was to bring down a fascist regime, and have been democratic because Stalinism restrained them, taking them to a new bourgeois-democratic regime. Do you understand the role of Stalinism?

Trainee: Is this the conclusion for Argentina?

Moreno: Yes, but essentially what it is now posed is directly the fight against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois government, not against a regime. Or rather, yes against a political regime but also a social regime. Against everything. The axis of our policy now is to pull down capitalism: economically, politically, culturally, and everything. And besides, I think that this will now be explained very clearly to everyone because we state: "What is your major problem? For you, for what do you want to fight the most now?" Hunger, or a house, all the problems are anti-capitalist. Or against Alfonsín's law that the military judges the military: it is also anti-capitalist.

Trainee: Is there a contradiction between revolutionary optimism and the alternative "socialism or holocaust"?

Moreno: Naville⁸⁸ says that if they throw the atomic bomb, nothing happens. I still believe that it does happen. Naville says they scare us with the holocaust; it is a manoeuvre of imperialism.

Trainee: Does Naville say they are not going to throw it?

Moreno: No, no; he says that, even if they throw it, nothing happens. He reminds me a bit of Posadas.⁸⁹ Do you know Hansen's joke against Posadas? Posadas said the Third World War was in-

88 **Pierre Naville** (1903–1993) was a French Surrealist writer and sociologist. He was a prominent member of the "Investigating Sex" group of Surrealist thinkers. He was a Communist and in the 1930s became a Trotskyist, before joining the PSU. He made important studies on the subject of alienation and on Stalin's USSR.

89 **J. Posadas** was the pseudonym of Homero Romulo Cristali Frasnelli (1912-1981) an Argentine Trotskyist leader who joined in 1941 the Fourth International. With opportunist positions his miniscule group was recognised in 1948 by the Second Congress as Argentinian section because of his submission to Michel Pablo's orders. He capitulated to Peronism and supported South Korea against North Korea. When in 1953 the Fourth International split between the revisionist International Secretariat and the "orthodox" International Committee, Posadas sided with the revisionists Pablo and

evitable, and that Russia had to hurry and quickly throw a bomb on New York. Then they kill 12 or 14 million Yankees and win. And all the problems were finished: we entered socialism. And Hansen — the Yankees and British have a high sense of humour — said he disagreed completely, but Posadas' positions were very interesting. To test them, he suggested he go to New York to do a tour explaining to the Yankees how progressive it was for an atomic bomb to fall on them; that he wanted to see the outcome of these internationalist speeches.

Trainee: Are you optimistic about the Yankee proletariat?

Moreno: On the one hand, I am a fabulous optimist. I think we are already on the verge of the fall of US imperialism because of El Salvador. I think it has become one of the most terrible deceptions. The current issue of our newspaper is historic because it raises the issue thoroughly. Everything that happens is that El Salvador is about to win. It is already a Vietnam but nothing less than right next to the United States. What the [leaderships and also] all the currents of the Fourth International are doing is something terrifying. They are giving victory to the ultra-reactionary bourgeoisie of the area, which is terrified because the revolution advances. That is, it is better than in Spain. It is a thousand times better than in China. In El Salvador, they are giving imperialism an awful beating. Then there is a smokescreen: that imperialism is about to invade; that it swallows up everything; and that we must give in.

If imperialism invades, it becomes a mess. In three, five, eight or 10 years it is the end of imperialism. That is the truth. It is already taking a monster beating. If it invades Nicaragua, it receives another terrible beating. They may occupy half, they may finish liquidating all Nicaragua but 20, 30, 40 thousand [Yankees] will die. And it becomes a mess in all of Central America. In this sense, I am very optimistic.

In the sense of solving the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the working class, I see our international current as very small, I see it very isolated. And I see problems. For example, the response of Partido Obrero (PO) to the letter we sent to them is a terrifying thing. These are people who do not give a damn about the revolution. [For them] we are the least. So, this creates some pessimism, because [in Argentina] there is an extraordinary situation... Suppose they believe that we are scum; why does not [the situation] take precedence and they say, "Well, they are scum, but let us see if we are a little stronger"?

Then it is worrying. We are in the most critical moment in the history of the Fourth International because the contradiction between the objective and the subjective is bigger than ever. But maybe not; perhaps they say that in El Salvador there is a guerrilla wing that does not want to give in and it is the strongest. Then we will see if [another possibility] opens up.

Furthermore, neither the Russian nor the Yankee working class, which are the giants, have come into action yet. Let us see if they do. From an objective point of view, the process is better than ever. Imperialism is losing and is getting a spectacular beating at the border of the United States. Then it gives cause to be very optimistic.

But we look at the subjective pole and it is sad. We are the only ones growing, and a lot. Our party in Brazil is doing very well; in Colombia, well; in Spain, they have a crisis but have many good militants, are fine to take part in the process; Peru, which I thought was very bad, is relatively well if we take into account the stage: they finally have excellent student work, have very good student militants, have very good intellectual leaders, have very good work in the countryside, have nothing in the proletariat of Lima but leaders are beginning to emerge.

From the point of view of what are the Fourth International and our international current, we are, then, very well. But one sees the situation and wonders: What do we do in El Salvador to prevent their surrender? Because so far, the only thing preventing the surrender of the revolution is the objective situation. Objective and subjective. Or imperialism, who lives screwing up.

Mandel. Later on he broke with them to form his own "International", with some influence in Latin America. After his death the "Posadists" practically disappeared.

I have great confidence in becoming a world party [with mass influence]. It is evidenced by the intervention of the Simon Bolivar Brigade in Nicaragua. I get the impression that it is qualitative; that is, at any time it gives us a tremendous advantage over anything that appears. And I also think that Stalinism... The Italian CP had already begun to lose many votes; the French CP was already in their last breath; now the Spanish... Phew! It is a catastrophe. So, if the Stalinist slab is removed it gets fantastic for us. As in Argentina: if the CP blows up, God forbid! Only us and the Intransigent Party will be left. And from the political point of view, the Intransigent Party is nothing; it can't do anything in the working class, or leading trade unions. [Maybe] Intransigent Party members [can do it], but not the Intransigent Party. It is not a workers' party; it is a carnival. That is, I do not see it as a political opponent as leadership of the workers' movement. They can take away votes from us; they may get a lot and we may get nothing; but I do not see it as a party to lead the workers' movement.

Trainee: Sometimes we call Kerenskyism government.

Moreno: Yes, as a type of government, which means a regime. There is no doubt. The best proof that Kerenskyism [is a regime] is that defines a phenomenon in which there were four or five different types of governments; only at the end does Kerensky rule. But everything is Kerenskyism.

Trainee: From Prince Lvov on.

Moreno: Yes, or immediately thereafter.

Trainee: Was Trotsky's policy against fascism, correct?

Moreno: Yes, it was totally correct, colossally correct. What we attack is that he was not consistent, [because] his policy against fascism when about to rise, which is brilliant, he does not repeat it after it climbs to power. What does Trotsky say? "There is no more important task than to avoid, by methods of civil war, fascism coming to power." I do not know whether you know he even comes to propose that the USSR go into Germany. He says: "If Hitler takes power, the Soviet Union should invade Germany because it can't allow this expression of barbarism." Trotsky is an exceptional genius. Hitler had to be stopped from climbing to power. Even the USSR, as soon as Hitler rose, had to bring in the Red Army. Moreover, it has to say it and has to call the workers' organisations — the social democracy, all of them — and give them arms. The Red Army has to come in and take over Germany to destroy Hitler. Afterwards, to give the power to the socialists or whoever, so no one believes they want to invade. But fascism had to be defeated.

And Trotsky also said, "To overthrow the bourgeois government is secondary; the great task is preventing Hitler from rising." Furthermore, he says, "It is secondary whether, to prevent Hitler from rising, we let bourgeois democracy survive." He says all kinds of things: "We must unite against fascism; it is extraordinarily important to unite against fascism" and so on. If the Socialists and Communists in Germany joined or if Austrian Socialist Party began a civil war against Nazism, Trotsky would have fainted, because it was what he said.

It is already concerning that he does not have this policy regarding Chiang Kai-shek. It is very strange. One does not understand why, in [relation to] China, he says it has no importance that Mao fights against Chiang Kai-shek, that they are the same. Here a terrible contradiction begins, the second serious contradiction: after Nazism triumphs, why is not fundamental to overthrow it? It is not an axis, the essential axis of his policy. If the essential axis was that Nazism did not rise, why, once it rose, is not the essential axis to overthrow it? Overthrow it also through the united front, unity of action. There is a contradiction, and I think it is always because of the same phenomenon: October. And always because of a perfect analysis of Trotsky: if mass revolutionary communist parties existed, he would change his whole policy. But the problem is they do not exist; then reality must be accepted as is.

I do not see Trotsky saying: "The great task is to overthrow Hitler, and this is a revolution and has to be done by methods of civil war, and so forth". It is the other way around. I see him as a workerist. About China he is tragic. Chen Tu-hsiu tells him that the working class had disappeared; no longer there was a working class (that is something that happened in the entire decade). And Trotsky then said that a revolution only can be victorious when the Japanese by invading — they

invade Manchuria —will develop industry and by developing industry there will be more workers than before, and when there are more workers than before there is going to be a revolution that overthrows the Japanese.

Perfect, it is a hypothesis. But in the meantime, what? Do the peasants, the middle class, do they withstand or not Chiang Kai-shek and the Japanese? There is a schema here: the schema of October.

Well, comrades, I want to explain three schemas or models that will come with the course materials.

Model I: the Russian Revolution and its regime

One: February. Two: Dual power. Three: Kornilov. Four: workers' and peasants' government. Five: October Revolution. Six: expropriation. Seven: Civil War.

Trainee: What workers' and peasants' government does point four talks about?

Moreno: The proposition of Lenin, which did not happen.

Trainee: But this slogan is prior to Kornilov.

Moreno: Yes, but it arises in the same moment and continues later when for 10 or 15 days Lenin said that a chance reopens for the [reformist parties] to take power

Trainee: As a tactic.

Moreno: Not [as] tactic, as a proposition of regime. It did not happen, but all the same [we put it, because] it is hypothetical. It is a category. We are seeing the categories that arise. These seven categories emerge in the Russian Revolution of 1917. The seven are very important categories and we are going to see later how they develop.

TABLE II-A						
MODEL I: REVOLUTIONARY STAGE 1917–1923						
I-a: Russian Revolution						
February Revolution	Dual Power	Kornilov's coup	Workers' and peasant's government	October Revolution	Expropriation of the bourgeoisie	Civil War
Socialist unconscious: made by the workers, peasants, and soldiers. Democratic: defeats a feudal-bourgeois regime	State remains bourgeois but in deep crisis. There are two powers. There is a very weak bourgeois government suspended between the two powers.	Capitalist, non-feudal counter revolution	The bolsheviks pose the hypothesis that the Soviets led by opportunistic parties take power in an opportunistic way. This would originate a non-revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.	Destroys the bourgeois state and originates a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.		Territorial and with armies
I-b: Aborted Revolutions						
They begin with a February Revolution similar to the Russian but abort because the parties leading the masses stop it from becoming triumphant socialist revolutions (Germany, 1919; China, 1921, etc.)						

FEBRUARY: First, you already know why it is unconscious because, in fact, it is a revolution made by the workers and peasants. They are workers, farmers, people and soldiers. That is, it is not [made] by the bourgeoisie. [Second,] **it defeats a feudal-bourgeois regime**, the tsarist regime at that stage. Then, because of the character of the class making the revolution, and because of the task it fulfils— which is largely anti-bourgeois because it defeats a bourgeois regime— it is a socialist revolution, but its objectives are bourgeois-democratic. Bourgeois-democratic task.

But neither the leadership of the masses nor the masses are conscious it is a socialist revolution; they believe it is a bourgeois-democratic revolution. This is why it is unconscious. That is, the masses are unaware of what they do. That is always the case because, according to Trotsky, the mind, the thoughts, is the hardest thing to change. It is much easier to change behaviour (something that modern psychology agrees with). Trotsky says that in October the consciousness of the masses gets level with what they do.

Then February, as a revolution is characterised by two phenomena: it is unconscious and it is democratic. These are two characteristics, rather than a single one. It does not change the character of the state, which remains [bourgeois]. The other characteristic, which we will look into later in dual power, is about the Kerenskyist government.

DUAL POWER: A dual power and a very weak government emerge, among other reasons because of dual power. The state remains bourgeois but in a deep crisis because huge elements of workers' power arise. There is a workers' power in the country, not just [a bourgeois power]; that is, there is a dual power: sectors dominated by bourgeois power and sectors dominated by workers' and peasants' power. For example, the bourgeois power says "Do not distribute land" and the peasants grab all the land. This is dual power. At other times, the [bourgeois] power says "We will make a military offensive", and it is done. But it becomes a disaster and then the soldiers say "Let us desert" and they desert. That is, they live in permanent chaos, characteristic of dual power.

This leads to the emergence of an extremely weak government, which we call Kerenskyist, which is suspended between the two powers [in a situation] that is not resolved. In short, dual power is a characteristic of the state; it is a state in crisis. But unlike the state arising from [the revolutions made by] the guerrillas, it does not disappear altogether; therefore, it is dual [power]. And, in general, it remains bourgeois. Sometimes very weak, up in the air, but it remains bourgeois because the leadership of the mass movement and the workers' power are in favour of it being bourgeois. This is then, the main element.

Trainee: Is the regime Kerenskyist?

Moreno: The regime is Kerenskyism. It is a government, a very weak type of government, up in the air due to the dual power. Then, for the state, it is dual power and for the regime [it is] Kerenskyism.

Trainee: Are dual power institutions part of the regime?

Moreno: Of course. [The institutions] of workers' power are. This is the contradiction: it is an enemy power [of bourgeois power] that, because of its leadership, supports the other power. This is why I say it is a bourgeois state. Otherwise, I would call it a hermaphroditic state, which is the characterisation that the left Social Democrats wanted to do, that it is a very good state, that a bourgeois government has to exist and on the other side the Soviets. They sold us this tale in Spain, and all the way, in-depth; especially by that old man who died recently, [Diego] Abad de Santillan,⁹⁰ who was a great theorist.

Trainee: About the combined state?

Moreno: No, he did not call it a combined state. And the anarchists were worse. They used to say, "What do I care that the bourgeoisie has the power if I have the weapons?"

⁹⁰ **Diego Abad de Santillán** (1897–1983), pen name of Sinesio Vaudilio García Fernández, an author, economist and leading figure in the Spanish and Argentine anarchist movements.

Then, the regime is Kerenskyist, and the situation of the state is bourgeois but in total crisis because there is dual power.

KORNILOV: A great success of Trotsky, which he did not generalise. Trotsky polemised a lot with those who thought that Kornilov was a pro-Tsarist and pro-feudal coup, saying he had not one millimetre of feudal. For him it was totally capitalist, it was a capitalist counterrevolution, not like the coup of the King in France. I consider this an example of the great genius of Trotsky. Trotsky puts a capitalist sign to the counterrevolution, that is, he foresees fascism. In short, Kornilov is the capitalist, not the feudal, counterrevolution.

WORKERS' AND PEASANTS' GOVERNMENT: Lenin and Trotsky considered the possibility that, through a reformist path, the Soviets led by the opportunist parties took power without making any revolution. And this they called workers' and peasants' government. But this formula of them combined two elements. Later we will see that Trotsky changed, and did not combine the two elements, he implied them. It has to do with the times, it changes with the times. Trotsky says somewhere that [his proposal of] workers' and peasants' government is the same as what Lenin raised in 1917, and that is what he proposes in the [*Transitional*] Program. This is false, wrong, or right within the confusion between regime and state. What do [they] propose? That the Soviets led by opportunist parties take power. They are two institutional problems. That the Soviets take power means a dictatorship of the proletariat. And what direction it has is a problem of secondary importance. At that time, the decisive factor of the slogan was that the Soviets took power.

Beware, because for us this hypothetical possibility has tremendous importance. For us, it is not the tactic of workers' and peasants' government, it is the tactic of a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat. And we believe that, as soon as the Russian or Yankee proletariat comes into action, we will see many, many [opportunities to apply it]. Maybe it will be the great slogan of Trotskyism, and tremendous, forcing the Solidarities from around the world to take power, and them refusing. [It may be] a bomb.

Trainee: Would this dictatorship of the proletariat be reformist?

Moreno: Yes. It may be centrist or of Trotskyist-like parties. Not ours but quite democratic.

Trainee: Is not that revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat?

Moreno: No, but it is a dictatorship of the proletariat because it rests on workers' institutions. [Power] is taken by unions, by the Soviets, and with democracy. They even give us much democracy because they are the vast majority. They stay quite calm and begin to discuss whether to pact with imperialism, they ask for loans and atrocities of the sort. If Walesa ended up taking power — being kicked in the rear by the proletariat, he was getting kicked so much that in the end, he took power — he was going to do all that. But it would be a dictatorship of the proletariat, [and] much better than Fidel Castro's (this is what we discuss with Barnes).

We do not rule out that variation. We believe it is a hallmark of Lenin's and Trotsky's genius, [although] poorly worded because what truly can be called workers' and peasants' government is when we demand from the parties to take power. But not supported by the organs of the working class but by the mere fact that they are widely majority and have a mass audience. Then, we demand from them to break with the bourgeoisie and take power, without institutions and anything, or resting on them but in a secondary [way]. The determining factor that later Trotskyism proposed is the party. It does not propose the organism as an essential point. It confuses, or combines, parties with organisms. Later, they are separated because, if the parties take [power], it is a regime; but if institutions take it, it is a state, and the state changes.

OCTOBER REVOLUTION: The October Revolution is the one that destroys the bourgeois state, mainly the armed forces — an essential element — and completely changes the state. A workers' state emerges, a revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat led by a revolutionary party.

EXPROPRIATION: Once the bourgeois state apparatus is destroyed and a new state emerges, it expropriates the bourgeoisie. And then emerges [what we call a workers' country], rather than [workers'] state. I think it is a mistake to say state because in this word two categories get confused. One

state is the country and the other [state] is a state in the sense of who rules: the apparatus, the police, the army. All this is confused; then, to avoid [confusion], especially with new comrades [...].

CIVIL WAR: It is a territorial struggle of classes and armies. Armies clash. This is the definition of civil war. This is the ultimate, what guarantees that after triumphing in the civil war, [the working class] remains in power in Russia, and all of Russia becomes workers.

Up until 1923, all revolutions that took place — the German, Hungarian, and Chinese, which are the great revolutions — are like this, they occur following these guidelines. But with a difference. Here we would have to put another model, which is that of the aborted revolution. Hence [the Russian Revolution] is model **I-a**, because it is the only triumphant. And model **I-b** is the aborted revolutions. Especially Germany, which is very socialist. The Kaiser is a very capitalist instrument. It is the proletariat who makes it. It is profoundly socialist, and it is aborted by the parties that directed the masses, which prevents it from becoming a successful socialist revolution, though it is socialist. Especially the German but the others too. They have democratic revolutions — for example, China, which began in 1921, or [rather] in 1910 and continues — and aborted [socialist]. The quotation from Trotsky provided by the comrade called these revolutions aborted; [aborted] by the leaderships.

Trainee: In all these revolutions is there a February, a dual power, a Kornilov...?

Moreno: Yes.

Trainee: Other than an October.

Moreno: Yes, because of the leadership.

Trainee: It does not reach a workers' and peasants' government.

Moreno: No. [In the Russian Revolution] there was no workers' and peasants' government either. It was a theoretical possibility that did not happen in the Russian Revolution or the others. [On the others, what happens is] the failure of the revolution.

Model II: Period 1923-43

Model II is [what takes place] in the period from 1923 to 1943.

TABLE II-B	
MODEL II: COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY STAGE 1917–1923	
II-a: Political revolution in the workers' states (Trotsky)	
II-b: Revolutions against counter revolutionary regimes in capitalist countries	
II-b1: Spanish Revolution 1931	It is product of a great crisis of the bourgeoisie; it is peaceful, without clashes in the streets and does not affect the army.
II-b2: Civil Wars	Spain, 1936 (to stop the triumph of a counter revolutionary regime). China, 1938 (after the triumph of the counter revolution)

The counterrevolution takes place. A barbaric, totalitarian, fascist, capitalist regime emerges with methods of civil war. This is what is new. That is, it tortured, killed, persecuted. It is the beginning of the next stage of capitalism. It is where key elements of barbarism occur, of what is to come after capitalism. There are profound elements of slavery, that is, it begins to impose a new slavery like at the beginnings of capitalism, like in the Mediterranean era. For example, millions and millions of men go to labour camps in Germany. It is no longer a small phenomenon in a prison where a few work.

This, then, is a totalitarian, one-party regime that triumphs and imposes itself on the working class with methods of civil war. It is, therefore, a regime within a bourgeois state; the state remains bourgeois.

The same counterrevolutionary process [occurs in Russia]; exactly the same takes place: methods of civil war, one-party system, totalitarianism, no freedom. It is Stalinism. But they are bureaucratised workers' states, or whatever we may like to call them. It is all the same, or nearly the same, except [the class character of the state]; they are two antagonistic, opposite states.

Here Trotsky discovers a category or updates a category, which is political revolution [Model II-a]. This is, [a revolution] to change the regime and not the state, although the state is also thoroughly changed because it is no longer bureaucratic; the bureaucratic caste does not control it any more. Thus, it changes the type of state. Type of state means what class sector dominates the state. Overall, the bourgeoisie dominates but some states were of the finance capital, [or] commercial capital. For example, in France, each stage of the bourgeois government is defined by the sector of the bourgeoisie that dominated: the commercial, financial, and industrial bourgeoisie. It is traditional in Marxism.

Trotsky discovers the political revolution, but only for Russia. In the case of Stalinism, he says: "There are different regimes". He does not say it about the totalitarian regime [in general]. He says: "There must be a political revolution of democratic type, and socialist".

In this stage, we see the emergence of civil wars to face these [regimes (Model II-b)], as in China and in the Spanish Civil War, which are the two most important facts regarding these regimes. It is a new phenomenon, not foreseen by Trotsky either, although he advised methods of civil war.

But another phenomenon takes place — which we could have placed before — which is the Spanish revolution of 1931 [Model II-b-1], which is completely novel. It is completely novel because, although meeting the same objectives as the February [revolution in Russia], it is not equal to February in the sense that [in February] there is confrontation in the streets, mass mobilisations, and so forth. [The Spanish Revolution of 1931] is the product of a great crisis of the monarchy and the bourgeois regime and a massive vote. With the army nothing happens, it is not even scratched. Instead, the February Revolution resulted in a dual power, there was a crisis in the army, and so on. [The Spanish Revolution of 1931] does not use methods of civil war; there is no confrontation of the masses. Trotsky's slogan of workers' Soviets and dual power fails. It is, initially, a much slower revolution, more peaceful and with less mobilisation than the other great February revolutions. In this respect, it has nothing to do with the German, Hungarian and Russian [revolutions].

Trainee: When do civil wars happen to face these totalitarian regimes?

Moreno: [In the case of] the Spanish Revolution, [the civil war] is later, but not in China; this is why I involve them all. In China, the guerrilla war against Chiang Kai-shek began in 1928. It is a new phenomenon, of resistance to bourgeois totalitarian regimes. The Spanish Civil War was a civil war to prevent the triumph of a totalitarian regime. We can even divide [this model in two]: one is [the Spanish Revolution, where the civil war was] before the triumph of a totalitarian fascist regime, and another is [the Chinese Revolution, where the civil war is] after it triumphed. But both cause a civil war.

Ok, I already told you we do not understand why Trotsky, who saw so well the need for civil wars before [fascism] raised, who saw so well the problem of the Spanish Revolution — that we had to support the Republic — did not have a similar policy towards Mao. It was very progressive for Mao to triumph because, being a colonial regime, the problem was even clearer.

Model III: After 1943

Model III are all revolutionary triumphs after 1943: the revolutionary triumphs that led to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, no other revolutionary triumphs.

TABLE II-C				
MODEL III: REVOLUTIONARY STAGE SINCE 1943				
III-a: Revolutions lead by the guerrilla that expropriate the bourgeoisie				
Civil war	Triumph of the civil war	Popular frontist government	Workers' and peasants' government	Expropriation of the bourgeoisie
Against the counter revolutionary or fascists regimes.	Total destruction of the bourgeois state and inauguration of a strong Bonapartist regime based on the guerrilla party-army.	The party-army dominates but rules together with sectors of the bourgeoisie.	The party-army breaks with the bourgeoisie and imperialism. The state remains bourgeois.	The country becomes a workers' state. It begins a bureaucratic dictatorship of the proletariat.
III-b: Bolivian Revolution				
Insurreccional type, urban and workers that destroys the boourgeois army.				

It is characterised by a completely different sequence. The civil war is first rather than last. It is directly a civil war against the fascist or semi-fascist totalitarian regimes. China's method which used the method of civil war on the defensive, since Chiang Kai-shek triumphed— not before— becomes generalised as a method, [as] fundamental strategy. And the fundamental strategy was to overthrow Chiang Kai-shek's regime.

So, first, in the new revolutionary stage opened since 1943, the method is civil war. China began in 1928, but in this new revolutionary stage all take this approach, it becomes generalised.

Second, the civil war triumphs, which means a colossal revolutionary triumph; what triumphs is a revolution. That is, [the triumph of] this civil war means the triumph of a revolution, which is of enormous depth because it results in the total destruction of the bourgeois state; total: nothing remains.

Third, a very strong regime [arises]. Look at this serious contradiction: the state apparatus is destroyed, but a new class apparatus does not arise; in fact, the destroyed bourgeois state remains because the bourgeoisie still dominates. But, unlike the Kerenskyist, a strong Bonapartist regime emerges. Because it comes from the civil war, it is [the regime] of a party army; therefore, very strong. Thus, an army takes power with political, not [just] military, discipline. Without any [institution] of the working class. Power is not taken by organisms of the working class or the working class; at best they can help. The power is taken by an organism, a petty-bourgeois institution, which is the guerrilla army, generally supported essentially by urban or rural petty-bourgeois sectors. Central Europe, China, Vietnam, Korea, and Cuba: they all have the same [characteristics]. It is, therefore, a model.

Trainee: You say that this model happened since 1943, but it is confusing with China, which began in 1928.

Moreno: But I said that China is the forerunner of what will happen after the war. China wins after [1943]. I am talking about the model. So far, this is what took place.

Besides, the regime is Bonapartist not only for the institutions but also for its policies.

Fourth: It is a regime of terrible contradictions but like every Bonapartist regime — in this case strong — it becomes stronger to see if it fixes them. What is the terrible contradiction? The petty bourgeoisie can't have a petty-bourgeois state because there is no dominant petty-bourgeois economy. Today the dominant economy is the big industry, large monopolies, and the big banks. This means it is either bourgeois and monopolist, or workers'. It can't be petty-bourgeois; it can't be artisan, a state of small peasants. Thus, it is a Bonapartist based on petty-bourgeois institutions, which inevitably will go either towards the bourgeoisie or... [towards a workers' economy]. The

bourgeoisie at this stage, in this century, originates bourgeois or workers, both economically and politically. It is the epoch.

It is very similar to Jacobinism, but with the difference that Jacobinism had only one alternative, the bourgeois state, because it did not have the proletariat in its own country, and the bourgeoisie itself at that time was not monopolistic, ultra-centralised.

It is Bonapartist, then, for the institution, which is an ultra-disciplined, politically disciplined army, and the Bonapartist role it fulfils: attempting to avoid this contradiction.

The state remains a bourgeois state, completely in crisis; non-existent bourgeois, a shadow of the bourgeois state. It is a bourgeois state because this Bonapartist regime bets on the bourgeois state. I say "bets" on a bourgeois state because it has been liquidated. It is the contradiction of the civil war: they only want to go against the fascist regime but destroy the bourgeois state.

Fifth: workers' and peasants' government. Not the one posed by Lenin and Trotsky because it is not based on workers' organisations; it is the party army that breaks with the bourgeoisie.

In other words, in the first stage, it is a Bonapartist bourgeois state, the revolution triumphs and the state is destroyed. For example, Cuba with Urrutia: [as] Urrutia is in government, it is not a workers' and peasant's government. When they break with Urrutia and he is dismissed, which politically is to break with imperialism, [there] is workers' and peasants' government. But still, it is not a workers' state: the bourgeoisie has not been expropriated. The economic and social revolution that is to expropriate the bourgeoisie hasn't yet begun.

Trainee: Like Mao until 1954?

Moreno: Of course, until the Korean War. No, but it is when it expropriates; where it expropriates, the economic and social revolution is there. It is not based on the Soviets and workers' organisations but based on a party, such as I said.

All this seems to indicate — as we have already touched upon — that the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie in general play a role of prime importance. Their role is not random but essential, although it can't reach the end because it has no possibility of a petty bourgeoisie economy. But the petty bourgeoisie takes on enormous importance; it fulfils a great number of workers' tasks.

Even today, talking about all this, [Comrade] Greco wondered to what extent the perspective raised by Trotsky in the *Transitional Program* has occurred because Trotsky's perspective was of a revolution [where] petty-bourgeois parties leading the working class [take power], and the whole process was petty-bourgeois: the rank and file and the leadership. Trotsky considered the working class with its organisations and its petty-bourgeois leadership; he did not consider a petty-bourgeois rank and file.

Why do we say this? Because there is a possibility Trotsky was right in the near impossibility of the workers' and peasants' government that he posed. He posed the working class led by petty-bourgeois, and here the working class, so far, has not taken part as a determining factor. Then, to what extent is there a deep problem of class: [the relationship is] a petty-bourgeois leadership to petty-bourgeois rank and file?

[All these processes can be classified as model **III-a**]. Model **III-b** is the Bolivian Revolution, which is of insurrectionary type but destroys the army, destroys the bourgeois state, which is reconstituted very slowly. But it is of the classic type; it is like February: it creates a dual power. And [at that point] is cut out for not taking power and it takes a heavy blow.