



Nahuel Moreno

The Three Periods of *Estrategia*

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Foreword

The text by Nahuel Moreno that we present here was published as the editorial for the first issue of the theoretical journal *Estrategia* (third period), in January 1964. In it, Moreno outlines the “history” of his political current’s first widely circulated theoretical journal. This history reflects the evolution of the current itself, shaped by the growing understanding of the need to connect with the working class, the proletarianisation of the militancy, and the major national and global struggles — particularly in Cuba with the advance of expropriations and other socialist measures beginning in the early 1960s, and in Peru with the unionisation of peasants and the agrarian revolution led by Hugo Blanco.

The “first period” of *Estrategia* never made it to press. The “second period”, consisting of three issues, was edited by Milcíades Peña and was published between 1957 and 1958. In 1959, two issues were published. The third period began publication under the direction of Nahuel Moreno in 1964 and consisted of eight issues (the last one published in December 1968).

All notes are by the editors.

The editors

October 2026

The Three Periods of *Estrategia*

The three periods of *Estrategia* are closely linked to the history of the Argentine leftist movement and to the personal fates of some of its key figures. Each of these periods reflects clearly defined stages in our historical process. Therefore, as the main protagonists of *Estrategia* throughout its various periods, we will take the liberty of tracing the history of our magazine in broad strokes.

Liborio Justo¹ and I deserve credit for the name *Estrategia*. But primarily Liborio Justo, that enfant terrible of the infamous oligarchy, known in literary circles as Lodobón Garra and in political circles as Quebracho. The idea for its publication came to us in the early 1940s, as we were engaged in a titanic struggle to defend the theory of national liberation. I carefully emphasise here the meaning of the word “theory”: we were mounting an academic, bookish defence — based essentially on quotations from Lenin and Trotsky — of the need to fight for national liberation, given the country’s semicolonial nature.

Armed with our arsenal of quotations, we waged a no-holds-barred battle that consumed rivers of ink and required a tremendous financial and personal effort to publish stacks of meagre bulletins that no one read, and newspapers distributed at factory gates.

This battle was waged against the Stalinist theory of popular fronts with “democratic” imperialist powers — precisely the country’s main exploiter —, the apoliticism of the anarchists, and the ultra-revolutionary stance of most Trotskyists, who called on the workers to undertake socialist tasks.

However, the project was thwarted, and thus the first period of *Estrategia* was stillborn. The process of Argentine national liberation opened up before us unexpectedly, along a path that we — illegitimate children, but children nonetheless of the Argentine left — failed to foresee. And then, Liborio Justo, the rebellious golden boy of the oligarchy, who dominated an era of the Argentine leftist movement, withdrew from the movement and sided with his class, vanishing from the revolution to rebuild his fortune...

But there were also internal reasons. A core group of young Trotskyists had discovered the dilemma: it was necessary to penetrate the workers’ movement — “become proletarian or die”. And so, the initial *Estrategia* project was consciously set aside.

The silence of our magazine’s early period speaks volumes: we threw ourselves wholeheartedly into the living process of national liberation — the creation of new unions, Peronist internal commissions, and Peronist delegate committees² —in short, the workers’ organisations that were springing up like mushrooms in the struggle for national independence against Yankee imperialism. *Estrategia* had borne fruit in

1 **Liborio Justo** (1902–2003), aka “Quebracho”, son of President Agustín Justo (who governed from 1931 to 1938), is regarded as one of the founders of Argentine Trotskyism. Drawing on Trotsky’s theses, he argued that the primary task of the Argentine and Latin American proletariat was to achieve national liberation, arguing that Argentina was a semi-colonial country dependent on British and American imperialism. In July 1942, he broke with the Fourth International, accusing the leadership of the SWP in the United States of being “agents of Wall Street”.

2 In Argentinian labour legislation, since the 1940s, enterprise or workplace committees are called **internal commissions**. In enterprises with a large number of workers, the workers elect their delegates, and these form the **delegates committee**; then the **delegates committee** elect a smaller **internal commission**.

the opposite way: instead of a magazine of quotations, it became a feverish effort to develop the workers' movement. And we were intoxicated with joy, with activity, with self-confidence: we had found the path.

This experience, this activity, matured us in both intensity and scope. Contact with international Trotskyism — and especially Latin American Trotskyism — gradually completed and refined our internationalist vision, allowing us to learn a great deal and gain invaluable insights for our own country.

Through that activism, we learned something that would otherwise have been difficult to grasp: that correct generalisations are all the more useful the broader they are. And this is because our experience forced upon us, through hard lessons, a simple truth — one around which formalists and dialecticians have been fiercely debating since the time of Port-Royal logic. We learned that, contrary to what the formalists claim, there is a rich interrelationship between the scope and intensity of concepts, and that the more we know and generalise, the more intense and precise that wisdom becomes... To put it bluntly, just as we had done with the workers' movement, we now also discovered theory in its true dimension as an indispensable tool, a formidable weapon of struggle, which — by generalising more and more — allowed us to better define the course of action for the country, the union, the factory, or the very section in which we were active.

So yes, it became necessary to revive the original *Estrategia* project, with new content and a new approach. The theoretical journal of the national revolution had something vital to offer its readers. The role of Peronism and the revolutionary strategy towards it (primarily the well-known tactic of entryism) were subjects of essential theoretical discussion, into which our current was able to pour the fruits of its fruitful revolutionary learning. And for the task of editing *Estrategia* in its second phase (the first for the reader), an agreement was reached with a young intellectual, Hermes Radio,³ who was a direct disciple of our tendency and who carried out the work faithfully and with complete honesty.

Thus, the three issues of *Estrategia*⁴ in its second period rank amongst the most serious and responsible writings on national liberation in our country and in Latin America.

This phase came to an end when the workers' vanguard and the contributors to *Estrategia* themselves were decimated by the reaction of the “gorilla”⁵ and “neo-gorilla” governments.

Now, with this issue, we inaugurate the third period of *Estrategia*. It follows — albeit belatedly, as theory always does, being a twilight discipline — the global and continental historical process. *Estrategia* will now, inevitably, reflect a theoretical problem: the concrete, precise and current struggle of the Latin American masses to seize power, necessarily responding to the reality we have been living since the great Cuban Revolution.

This opens a new historical stage in the struggle for national liberation, unifies it across the continent, and transforms it into a revolutionary and permanent struggle in its dynamics: whilst in our still-subjugated countries the conquest of bourgeois democratic freedoms, national liberation or the agrarian revolution remains pending, in Cuba — which paves the way for Latin American brotherhood — the transition to socialism is underway.

We are confident that *Estrategia* — as part of our current's activities — will rise to the challenge of this new phase; our revolutionary Marxist-Trotskyist methodology has enabled us to interpret the reality of the democratic and nationalist movements. Furthermore, the current revolutionary reality, and its

3 **Hermes Radio**, pseudonym of **Milcíades Peña** (1933–1965) an Argentine historian, politician, and Marxist thinker. In 1947, he joined the Grupo Obrero Marxista (GOM), led by Nahuel Moreno, which later became the Partido Obrero Revolucionario (POR), of which he was elected a member of the Central Committee. He actively participated in party formation. However, in 1952, he left the organisation, in disagreement with Moreno's decision to privilege territorial militancy over theoretical training. In 1957, again together with Moreno, Peña founded and directed the *Estrategia de la liberación nacional y social* (Strategy for the National and Social Liberation) magazine (1957–1958). Finally, in 1964, he launched the very prestigious journal *Fichas de investigación económica y social* (Cards for Economic and Social Research) (1964–1966), in which he, besides) advancing chapters of his unpublished works, translated Marxist authors such as Charles Wright Mills, Henri Lefebvre and Isaac Deutscher. He married and had two sons. Peña committed suicide on 29 December 1965, at the age of 32.

4 Three issues were published between 1957 and 1958, along with two *Cuadernos de Estrategia* (Estrategia notebooks).

5 **Gorilla** is a term from Argentina's domestic politics, historically used to refer in a derogatory or pejorative way to those who gave a coup against Peron. Over the years, the term has been extended to a greater or lesser extent to other countries in Latin America as synonymous with “reactionary right”.

finest leaders, sometimes speak — without realising it or wishing to acknowledge it — in the language of Trotskyism. When Mao Tse-tung⁶ speaks of “a course of uninterrupted revolution”, or Che Guevara⁷ states that the revolution cannot be halted and must continue to advance, they are speaking that language. The most eloquent examples are provided by the very course of the Cuban revolution, confirming the tenets of Trotskyist theory and the current objective need for Latin American unity, which validates the programmatic proposal of the Federation of Latin American Workers’ States, formulated exclusively by Trotskyism almost 30 years ago.

But we do not consider ourselves the only revolutionaries. On the contrary. We have frequently erred — whether as individuals or as sects — into a form of ultra-revolutionary zeal that turned us into unwitting agents of opportunism or reaction by ignoring democratic or nationalist movements. Few Trotskyist tendencies managed to discover the true path, as the group that inspired *Estrategia* did.

Viewed as a whole, Trotskyism has suffered from an insurmountable contradiction: whilst upholding a correct theory and programme, albeit in an abstract form, it has, at certain times, been in total opposition to Ibañism⁸ and the FRAP⁹ in Chile, and to populism in Brazil and Peru. Many of us have failed to adapt the program to the actual course of the class struggle in our respective countries, and when we did manage to do so, we have hypostasised that process, ignoring the importance of armed struggle and other methods employed by sectors of the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie. We have often failed to be creative and have taken the path of least theoretical and practical effort.

As a result of this inability, Trotskyism missed the boat in a revolution that it had effectively prepared and led, such as the great Bolivian revolution, and left ample scope for the initiative and action of revolutionary petty-bourgeois currents. In the remaining cases, such as in Cuba, there was a divorce between the correct theory and program and the leaders of the masses who were following the path laid out by them; between Trotskyism, which commented on, interpreted and predicted events with unrivalled insight, and those who were shaping history.

But this rift has not diminished the importance of the program and theory — in short, the Marxist tradition — for the realisation of revolutionary achievements. On the contrary, it has never been more necessary than now to use that tradition to guide the destiny of these achievements. The task is to bridge the gap so that revolutionary theory and practice may illuminate one another.

This process is unfolding before our eager eyes and on two fronts. Practitioners, such as “Che” Guevara, are rising to the task of formulating a theory and a program that are correct in many respects. And we, the Trotskyists, are endeavouring to understand current revolutionary practice, to incorporate it into our program and theory, thereby confirming it, enriching it and, crucially, applying it.

The example of Peru shows that these are not mere wishful thinking: the Peruvian masses, who today are at the forefront of the continental struggle, are led by a Trotskyist who succeeded in achieving the

6 **Mao Tse-tung** (current romanisation **Mao Zedong**) (1893-1976) was the main leader of the Chinese Communist Party from the 1930s. He led the peasant mobilization and the guerrilla army that defeated Chiang Kai-shek in 1949 and seized power. He was a proponent of the reformist and Stalinist concept of “revolution in stages”. However, the vigorous revolutionary mobilisation went beyond the orders of the Communist Party and Mao himself, resulting in the expropriation of the bourgeoisie and the emergence of a bureaucratic workers’ state. In the early 1960s, Mao spearheaded China’s break with the USSR, which was formalised in 1963. In the following years, Maoism exerted a significant political and guerrilla influence in numerous countries.

7 One of Guevara’s central slogans was “socialist revolution or a caricature of revolution”. We recommend reading *Two Methods for the Latin American Revolution* (1964) and *Guevara: Hero and Martyr of the Permanent Revolution* (1967), available at nahuelmoreno.org.

8 **Ibañism**: movement and policies advocated by General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo (1977-1960), twice President of Chile, in 1927-1931, and then in 1952-1958.

9 The **Popular Action Front** (FRAP) was a coalition of Chilean left-wing political parties founded on 1 March 1956 and dissolved in October 1969. It was structured as a close-knit alliance comprising the Communist Party (outlawed at the time), the Popular Socialist Party (PSP), the Socialist Party of Chile (PS), the People’s Democratic Party and the Democratic Party of Chile.

objectives we set out in this editorial. And the path taken by Hugo Blanco¹⁰ and his heroic comrades will soon be followed by hundreds of Latin American revolutionaries.

Estrategia aims to be the tool for this achievement, providing the theoretical groundwork for the seizure of power by Latin American workers and the creation of their Federation of Workers' States.

This is why we believe that this third phase will be the most fruitful and also the most enduring, as we will probably not cease publishing it until we launch the fourth period of *Estrategia*: the one that will address the theoretical problems of building socialism — that is, the problems faced by the workers once in government, following the triumph of the revolution.

Nahuel Moreno

January 1964

10 **Hugo Blanco** (1934–2023), was Peruvian, born in Cusco, and became the main leader of the country's peasantry and left. At the age of 20, in 1954, he traveled to Argentina to study at the National University of La Plata. In 1957 he began to be active in Palabra Obrera, the organization headed by Nahuel Moreno. In 1958 he returned to Lima and joined the POR (Revolutionary Workers' Party). He participated in the mobilizations to repudiate Richard Nixon's visit, and had to take refuge in Cuzco to escape repression. Working as a newspaper vendor, he joined the Federation of Workers of Cuzco. Blanco, who spoke Quechua since he was a child, became involved with the numerous peasant delegates and their struggles. From Chaupimayo he promoted peasant unionization, which became massive, and led an agrarian revolution in the valleys of Cuzco and the Central Andes, with the formation of peasant unions, land seizures and armed militias, and a strike that lasted nine months. They achieved a series of conquests that in fact proposed an agrarian reform. He was arrested in 1964 and sentenced to death, but a vigorous international campaign prevented him. After years in prison, he went into exile in Chile, Argentina and Sweden. He was part of the TLT-FLT. In 1972 he presented together with Moreno and other leaders Argentina and Bolivia, a balance sheet (available in nahuelmoreno.org) polemicizing against the guerrilla deviation of Mandel-Maitán-Frank (available in nahuelmoreno.org). He wrote the book *Land or Death. Peasant struggles in Peru*, Pathfinder, 1972. Upon his return to Peru he was a deputy of the Constituent Assembly in 1978–1980, a deputy in 1980–1985 and a senator in 1990–1992. He gradually distanced himself from the positions of the Fourth International and since 1994 he vindicated Zapatismo and horizontalism. Until his death he remained linked to the struggles and the peasant federation and with fraternal relations with Morenoism and other groups of Trotskyism. See among other texts by Moreno *Peru, Two Strategies* (1961-63) and *On Bengochea's Split with Palabra Obrera* (1964), in nahuelmoreno.org.