

40 Points For Action Here

Uruguayan Anarchist Federation

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Today we present in English the FAU text “40 points for action here”, a material of balance and analysis of the social situation and the struggles of 1968.

The authoritarian advance in Uruguay was relevant at that time, as was the resistance to it and the new levels of popular struggle that were developing. In this context, the “40 points”, as well as being a balance sheet, mark an orientation of work in the trade union milieu, but are extendable to the whole social milieu, focusing on political organisation as the decisive factor.

It is a material of enormous relevance that is still valid today and can guide the work of social insertion in the most diverse situations. It is very useful today.

The text is made up of several points that deal with the national situation at the time, the political and ideological changes, the disastrous role of reformism in putting the brakes on the struggles and attempting to channel them into the electoral-institutional terrain and, finally, the approach to the method of class-based trade union building and struggle to be deployed in the framework of a general strategy of rupture.

We hope that this material will be of use to anarchist comrades all over the world. Health and Up with those that Struggle!

At the end of the year, the events that have taken place since 13 June have only confirmed the characteristics of the regime as described above. There is, however, a variant. The nature of the events that have taken place, the depth of their effects and the historical density of these last few months perhaps give them the dimension of an unprecedented experience. As a result of its rapid development, a new, unprecedented situation has arisen in the country which requires careful analysis by all those who aspire to bring about a change in the heavily negative trend that has prevailed in these last stages of the national process.

A REPRESSIVE MODEL FOR URUGUAY

Although the goals pursued by reaction are continental in scope and correspond to a global policy drawn up by US imperialism, the specific procedures for applying them in each country are adapted, as good as bad, to national peculiarities. That is why in Uruguay, a country with a civil and legalist tradition, the first thing that was done was to create, through the “orange” reform, broader legal means for repression. Then, now, they began to use these new legal powers.

1) It is clear that in Uruguay, the best formula for reaction and imperialism is not, at this stage, the classic type of gorilla dictatorship, but the *constitutional dictatorship* enabled by the current text. This provides a “strong” Executive and a legally subordinated Parliament that has also proved to be in fact pressuriseable and complacent.

This operational formula enables the manipulation, for the benefit of the oligarchy, of the deep-rooted legalistic myths so eagerly spread by our traditional political liberalism. There is nothing better than institutional, “democratic” clothing to dress up the essential gorilla reality of the regime. Never before has the crude reality of violence and oppression inherent in the bourgeois regime become so evident, the role of mere and deceptive appearance to which the most expensive and famous institutions of democracy are relegated, when the demands for the preservation of the socio-economic foundation of the system impose the need to resort to open violence.

The most salient feature of the present moment is that, for the first time in many years, the reaction seems ready to come to an end. Long months of persistent repression, developed according to a coherent plan of gradual implementation, bear witness to this. It is useful, at this point, when the situation appears to be entering a new stage, to assess some characteristics of this immediate unprecedented escalation.

2) Repression is intense but measured. It does not close off all possibilities, while it unloads the criminal rage of the police against the student and labourer fighters. But it always leaves something that “can be lost”, that is at risk if “disorder” continues: the constitution and “legality” with whose suppression liberals and reformists are blackmailed; “autonomies” that are violated and restricted but not suppressed, to be used as hostages against “responsible leaders”; trade unions that are “regulated” but not suppressed. This gives the sell-outs, who have played such an important role in the repressive plans, reasons of “principle” to co-contemplate their retreat or betrayal. They are provided with a field of possible collaboration, more or less express or conscious, with the regime. In defence of the preservation of legality or autonomy, it is more justifiable to stop the struggle and divide it.

3) With the help of the media apparatus, for the first time almost unanimously regimented, public attention was focused on the area that was most convenient for the government: the repression of “student disorders”. The generally spontaneous characteristics of these, and the isolation in which they were often left, were used to encourage the hostile reactions that these mobilisations could eventually provoke in certain sectors of the population. The aim was to present, as a simple problem of “public order”, the application of security measures which, in reality, con-

cealed an unprecedented attack on the standard of living and freedom of the vast majority of the population, through the freezing of wages and salaries, and various repressive measures. Some sectors of employees and workers, whose incomes were frozen, whose work was endangered, were convinced that the whole problem consisted of the student “riots”. The already agonizing “stabilization” by decree of the prices, which was painfully endured for a short time, pointed to the same confusing result. The less spectacular nature of the trade union mobilisations, which were more effectively blocked by the reformist apparatus, favoured this misunderstanding, which has allowed so many people to see the confrontation posed as being outside their own and personal interests.

4) Repression was focused, selectively and progressively (militarization, discounts, suspensions, imprisonment, dismissals), seeking to isolate and defeat separately the key or more radicalized sectors within the autonomous entities; banks, Ancap, Ute were the centre of this selective repression of a union type. The persistent lack of a global plan of struggle by the popular movement, left practically without a central direction by the defection, perplexity and hesitations of the reformist leaderships, facilitated this policy.

5) The repression was complemented by the promotion of yellow unionism as a diversionary technique and an attempt to capitalise on the disbelief and fear generated by the repression in the less combative sectors. The difficulties suffered by the workers do not, however, bode well for the long-term success of these attempts, in which the dollars and training of the US IUES act in coordination with the employers and the government.

6) The state regulation of trade unions and university elections is the “institutional” balance that the government intends to leave as a permanent repressive form with the security measures. What they had not yet been encouraged to include in the “orange” constitution is now being introduced. The aim is to subdue two fundamental centres of resistance and, in the process, to blackmail the hesitant of all kinds. With the trade union regulation (included in COPRIN), it is a question of conquering an old, repeatedly frustrated aspiration of the reaction: to get hold of the unions, to control them, by transforming them into appendages of the state.

The provisions of the regulations are clear in the sense of slowing down and rendering less effective any trade union mobilisation that may be developed in the future. The aim is to create more favourable conditions for the surrender and divisive action of the yellow organisations and then to invest them as “genuine” workers’ representatives. Control to paralyse and divide the trade union movement appear to be the clearest aims of this law. Of course, the plebiscitary mechanisms that it establishes to take any measure of struggle try to give weight to the less conscious and more pressurized sectors, which are expected to be influenced more easily, by avoiding the discussion in assemblies and by properly using the action of the publicity and repression apparatus. A similar significance is given by the so-called University Law which, through the control of the Electoral Court and the parliamentary imposition of procedures for the appointment of authorities, enshrines a principle of subordination to the government. In both cases the purposes are similar. It is not a question of suppressing the unions or making the university disappear. It is a matter of dominating them, of limiting them to the role that the reaction wants them to play within the system.

7) Schematically, the trade unions are reserved the function of a docile computer element, disciplining the workforce; with which they can negotiate responsibly, without conflict. In times of economic difficulties, the bourgeoisie does not refuse to dialogue. What it wants is to dialogue

with a sufficiently complacent interlocutor; always understanding the “needs of the country” interpreted according to the interests of the bourgeoisie, of course.

For the university, the aim is to give it the role of training technicians, or technocrats, aseptically unaware of any problem that is not strictly professional. Who do not want to see beyond the limits that the bourgeoisie considers acceptable at every moment. It is the castration of the political projection of the sciences that is sought. A university that is more coherent with the bourgeois order in crisis, more obligingly functional for the preservation of the status quo.

Trade union regulation and university law tend to re-establish the oligarchy’s control over two vital centres of social power which, due to the peculiarities of our historical process, have become too autonomous. When their situation starts to become critical, the bourgeoisie has to centralise all power.

8) Constitutional reform, trade union regulation, university law, are all successive steps in the same direction. As the causes of the deterioration of the system are still in place, there will surely be further steps. The current dynamics of the process cannot but lead the regime to increasingly authoritarian political formulas. The typical liberal forms are now not very functional for the interests of the dominant classes. This is the meaning of security measures. They necessarily lead to a kind of historical frustration insofar as they attempt to solve, with political means of power, problems whose roots lie in the very economic and social structure of the system. The price and wage freeze attacks the symptoms of a disease that is deeper. But the ruling classes do not want the “cure” of the country because that cure is their death. Therein lies the contradiction that they will never be able to solve: their domination is opposed to the real solution of the problems that determine the uninterrupted deterioration of the economic-social situation. Repression only postpones, in the immediate future, the outcome that will be fatal to them. But at the same time, it brings that outcome closer in the long term. That is why there will be no more lasting normality. The situation will demand ever greater doses of repression that will create conditions in the long term for more forceful popular responses.

9) In short, it is the national version of the gradual collapse of the capitalist system on a continental and world level. Here, as in another dimension in Vietnam, imperialism and its acolytes need ever greater doses of repression to postpone their definitive death for historical minutes.

It is from this perspective that what is happening in a “liberal” country that on 13 December 1967 dawned upon the dissolution of six political organisations and the closure of two publications and which now – one year later – has been living under an extraordinary regime for six months, makes sense.

There are so many other characteristics that give the tone of the process and explain the security measures.

- absolute and almost total foreignisation of private banking
- unimpeded domination of economic life by that same bank and related sectors of traders and speculators, several of whom personally hold key government positions.
- accented subordination of all the powers (the Legislative, the Judicial and the “fourth power” of the media), to the Executive, establishing a legal dictatorship that does not formally end with the other “powers”, but rather instrumentalises them as coverage of the Executive’s dictatorship, which is in turn an instrument of the oligarchy.
- Small contacts, plans for complementarity, exchange and economic, political, territorial and military integration, under the patronage of the dictatorships of Argentina and Brazil and of eco-

conomic groups controlled by American and European capital.
-Strengthening and technification under US leadership of repression apparatuses, especially political police and shock forces.

PAST AND PRESENT

In order to understand the evolution of these six months of turmoil, we must take into account the concepts and working methods that, over the previous years, helped to shape some characteristics of the trade union and popular movement.

Special consideration should be given to certain weaknesses of the one who recognises its origin in the hegemonic role that reformism has played in its direction during the previous stage. Even at the risk of biasing the approach, let us point out some of the aspects of current incidence. It goes without saying that the verifications we make also affect future possibilities and powerfully condition any strategic forecast that is drawn up.

10) The trade union and student movement has been the main force of resistance to the reactionary policy of the government.

Neither political parties, nor parliament, nor institutions or personalities with their well-known statements, have been major obstacles to government action. The effective resistance has taken the form of strikes, occupations and street actions by workers and students, through which the spirit of struggle that exists in a vast sector of the people has been shown.

The extent of the process of aggregation that has been taking place in our country, driven by the need to defend the economy against inflation, demonstrated on this occasion its potential value as a factor of change. However, the accumulated forces did not have the opportunity to express themselves fully, due to harmful labour criteria, which are rooted in easier times and constitute the core of the reformist style of union action. It was demonstrated once again that the need to accumulate forces is only one of the important aspects within the task at hand. No less important than that is, obviously, knowing what those forces are wanted for and how they should be employed. This implies outlining a strategy that goes beyond empiricism and improvisation.

11) The outbreaks of proletarian resistance occurred spontaneously, as the various unions were directly hit by the repressive measures, and in each case, they became more or less isolated. The solidarity actions were biased and entangled by the inaction of the "official" apparatuses, permanently concerned that things would not get any worse, that the situation would not become uncontrollable. In this they were consistent with a strategy that they still apply today: to delimit resistance and protest, to contain it within limits that do not prevent from looking for a negotiated solution. The basic thing, for this, is not to give "excuse" to the reaction to hit. This approach is based on the assumption, which experience has shown to be wrong, that repression is a mere "political" episode on the surface. From this, the theory of "isolating the government" was developed, seeking the alliance of politically opposing bourgeois sectors (which, in order to be possible, requires not "scaring" allies with "excesses" of resistance to repression). The uninterrupted succession of coups applied by the government in the last two months, in which that line has prevailed, proves the error of its assumptions and the ruin of its methods.

12) The lack of an overall plan of struggle, with coordinated actions of progressive development, deprived the popular movement of a generalized and profoundly demonstrative experience of the extent to which the thesis of reserving forces for the most difficult battles was fallacious.

These combats have arrived and the theories of containment, of parsimonious and miserly use of these forces have continued to be applied.

It is clear that the lack of a plan of struggle in offensive when there were conditions for it, allowed the reaction to choose the moment and the way of striking, by virtue precisely of the paralyzing theory of “avoiding pretexts to repression”. The real reasons for this are to be found in the economic-social deterioration of the regime and not in the popular mobilisations. Until today, it has never been seen that retreat is the best way to confront reaction, which does not imply that always and in any condition one must “go forward”. The strategy can and must be offensive. Tactics can require retreats.

13) Faced with the escalation of repression, certain sectors of the “left” have once again appealed to the traditional dossier: taking refuge under the wing of the old and typical Uruguayan liberalism, more or less tinged with populism or utopian developmentalism.

Middle class nuclei, the weak “national bourgeoisie” (entrepreneurs dependent on the domestic market, small and medium sized industrialists and traders) form the social base of these sectors, promoted by some as the natural allies of the trade union movement. Added to this is the still broad ideological clientele of those who dream of a return to the “happy Uruguay” of the so-called Batllista cycle. These liberal sectors are adopting the left variant of the middle class, which is materialised in the “legalistic” desire to return to “normality” by making a pact with the trade union movement if necessary. Convincing it, through dialogue, to agree to make sacrifices to “save the country”.

Of course, the persistent adoption of that tessitura by the reformist left implies admitting a weakness for the popular movement that they do not perceive in their desirable “allies”. Alliance policy in itself is not reprehensible, and can be useful when faced with it.

The negative is the abdication at the hands of these bourgeois allies of all possibilities, of all hopes. The vanguard role that only corresponds to the workers’ and popular movement is given to the representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie and petite-bourgeoisie who, as was to be expected, have given the most exhaustive demonstration of their impotence. The fact is that the liberals, the developmentalists, sometimes become bold insofar as there are (or they believe there can be) people on the street, and they become hesitant and timid when this does not happen. In any case, their help does not go beyond parliamentary speeches and frustrated attempts to carry out public acts, which have never prevented the establishment of any dictatorship, either constitutional or otherwise. The containment of the people’s struggles is condemned to failure as the crisis of the system deepens. The reformist apparatuses are finding it increasingly difficult to curb or channel it. When the official apparatus does not channel the disconformities, they seek channels outside the apparatus. In the present circumstances the struggle has developed within more or less spontaneous characteristics. From this derives its intensity, but also, inevitably, its weaknesses.

14) In fact, the reformist apparatus is conceived and built as an element of framing the mass, to use it as a mere pressure group, to represent it in negotiations, much more than to lead it in the struggle. When the struggle takes the form of hard confrontations, the “central leaderships” in fact cease to lead. Classic trade union measures (strikes, actions) alone are not enough.

Repeated strikes, without being part of an overall plan, wear down the unions exposed to repression. Stoppages, sometimes lasting a few minutes, do not stop the repression from taking place because of their brevity. Acts are forbidden. The reformists’ arsenal rapidly exhausted

their resources and very soon they were at the limits of their possibilities. From that moment on everything becomes a search for openings that allow for honourable withdrawal.

For that, it is necessary to be forgiven, to pose as a victim before the middle class and the liberal bourgeoisie in order to get their support. And to seek the cooperation of entities as characterized as, real example, the Chamber of Industries; to lower the level and tone of complaints; to adapt to the possibilities that are becoming less and less demanded. At the end of the day, a “great triumph” can be proclaimed on the basis of whatever small thing is finally granted.

15) The struggle for immediate objectives is not in itself wrong; quite the contrary. The more precise, more concrete and more understandable by the people are the issues of struggle (the immediate platform) the more possible it will be to promote popular and trade union action and thus create awareness on the issues of substance (the programme).

It all depends on the objective and therefore on the method applied. It is not reformism to fight for immediate objectives. As it is not a revolutionary tactic to “prepare” without acting on everyday things, to neutralize oneself until “the revolution comes” (which will never “come”). On the other hand, it is possible to verbally postulate the most complete programme, national and international, and be a stubborn reformer, if it is believed and taught that the method to conquer this programme is a legalist, parliamentary, electoral method.

What differentiates a reformer from a revolutionary is fundamentally the method, basically related to what each one wants. The reformer, reformism, has a strategy to endure within the system, constituting a pressure group to obtain peaceful and legal changes within the system. The revolutionary by the direct action of the people processes struggles, fights the ideological battle, in order to create the conditions for the revolutionary forging of the people’s power.

WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN THESE SIX MONTHS

The experience of the security measures, as a kind of dress rehearsal of dictatorial recipes, has allowed to accumulate experiences and to detect, with more precision, the weaknesses of the popular movement. From this, a strategy for the future and political guidelines have been quite clearly outlined, which have the merit of having withstood an initial general confrontation on the tactical plane.

16) The despotic essence of the regime was more than ever in evidence. The image of an exceptional Uruguay, long elaborated by the bourgeoisie, was gradually blackened until it disappeared. Our belonging to oppressed and convulsed Latin America began to be, instead, palpable. The violence acquired a Uruguayan citizenship card. Vast contingents of workers and students prepared themselves for the confrontation and in the action they proved and showed that the security measures and the gorilla violence of the legal dictatorship were not the end of the world. It is negative and dangerous that broad layers of so-called public opinion are starting to get used to living under extraordinary detention. But the antithesis of this, which is both positive and dangerous (but for the oligarchy), is that broad sectors of the population are beginning to get used to fighting and organising in the semi-clandestinity imposed on them by the regime.

In the student centres, in many unions, determined groups were formed and strengthened. Temperate in the hard solidarity of the struggle, they learned to recognize each other, beyond the borders of the unions, and to think and apply together new forms of resistance and protest. Everywhere, daring fighters, many with no previous experience, and without means, had in check trained police, armed with repressive means proven abroad, who had not only vast logistic resources, but also the greatest impunity for their organised rage.

The struggle led by young workers and students has played an important role in the political life of the country. In front of it, the regime showed its repressive nature, its hard criminal face. Suddenly, it is no longer the codes, the parliament or other fetishes of the Western and Christian civilisation that appear to consecrate the authority. It is no longer compliance with the rules theoretically agreed upon by all, which constitutes the so-called "rule of law", the means to govern. Between the government and the people, the intermediaries (politicians, editorialists, lawyers) have almost disappeared. The regime becomes laconic: it speaks through the mouth of its shotguns, its revolvers.

The government may be trying to restore the traditional image; it may still be ridding itself of some of the most hated figures. For a growing number of Uruguayans, however, the veil will surely have fallen. This is one of the positive balances achieved by the struggle of these months.

17) The powerlessness of the reformers has been evident throughout the process. The thunderous proclamations of elements of that current as to their disposition to resist, with the most extreme means, including the violation of university autonomy or with the revolutionary general

strike the hypothetical gorilla strike, have demonstrated their emptiness and their character of smoke curtain.

In the places where the most serious clashes took place, these were promoted by militants of revolutionary or independent organisations. Whoever reviews their history will see that in them the guiding and leading role was not given to the reformist leaders. This was not an obstacle for honest and militant militants affiliated to reformist guidance and leadership parties to participate actively in their upswing.

18) There is a whole new and broad class of militants, emerging in the course of these struggles, who are now joining free of the reformist blinkers.

This development, the fruit of concrete practice, has not been the work of any ideological current or preaching. It is the situation itself that places every honest and combative militant who acts without artificially created prejudices, in the revolutionary camp. A united action among several unions, some of them of recent appearance in the vanguard of the trade union struggles, was outlined.

Faced with the powerlessness of the central organs to lead the struggle, the most combative unions and militants gathered as a tendency to push the struggle forward.

Such is the case of the six unions that on 17 July proposed a global plan of struggle to the CNT.

In this incorporation of new unions and militant workers ready to face the hardest repressive measures, lies the most positive and real accumulation of forces.

A similar phenomenon occurred in the student camp, where, together with Medicine, Architecture, Fine Arts and other university centres, sectors that until now have had little relative gravitation played a very important role, such as Teaching, Secondary Education and UTU. New forms of struggle appeared. Especially the street mobilization of the students acquired unprecedented levels of militancy.

19) The incalculable potential of struggle shown by the masses in the face of repression has destroyed the myth of the “passivity” of our people.

The occupations of the factories and the organisation of the resistance against the foreseeable police attack and the so-called “open occupations” of the students testified this militancy and made contact with the neighbourhoods and other striking sectors possible.

In some cases, original modalities were used, in the student CAMP, such as the so-called counter courses, which inaugurated a common area with other sectors.

The conditions have been created for a revolutionary line to have, for the first time potentially, forces to make an important impact.

SOME LIMITATIONS OF THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

20) The fundamental shortcoming has been the lack of an overall strategic concept. The response to the security measures has basically been spontaneous. Reformism, which holds key positions, has not driven the struggle or coordinated it. The lack of a revolutionary political centre with the gravitas and strength to fulfil this role led to the struggle being unleashed and sustained “union by union” without a sufficiently coherent and forward-looking overall perspective. For this reason, a counterattack was made, leaving the initiative almost always in the hands of reaction. The dilatory and “moderating” attitude of the reformist apparatus, the only one existing on a general scale, contributed to accentuating these difficulties, which still remain. Developing coordination mechanisms, in the midst of the struggle and the difficulties created by repression, without a long period of prior work, is a difficult but inevitable task in the current conditions. It is vital to persevere in this direction since its lack has clearly emerged as one of the most negative factors.

21) The subsistence of spontaneous “localist” inclinations that contribute to bias the struggles, hindering their coordination. This is closely linked to the above. It is still difficult to mobilise masses far from their respective factories, banks or study centres. This situation favours repressive action and hinders the possibility of carrying out bigger activities that give a basis for an integration of all efforts.

22) The elementary nature of organisational methods. The information, the organisational work, continues to be carried out mainly in the places where people naturally connect: workplaces or study centres. The effects of the closure of the university and of the lycées and industrial schools showed the precariousness of the organisation set up on these bases. In any future struggle, the conditions must be created to continue to operate outside the usual places of study or work. The above-mentioned modality is certainly the most consistent with the spontaneous level of work. But in overcoming this lies the possibility of bypassing some of the most effective repressive dossiers that have been applied.

23) The inadequacy of mobilisation on the streets, within certain modalities, as a permanent and exclusive resource. Its repeated use over a long period of time has negative effects on public opinion. It seems appropriate to alternate it with activities that help to create links with the less active sectors of the population. The lack of sufficient work in this direction by the student movement facilitated the task of isolating it and turning it into a “scapegoat” for repression.

Naturally, posing the problem and facing solutions requires overcoming the stage of spontaneity in which, to a large extent, the student body moved.

The positive aspects, but also the limitations of international student mobilisations, must be correctly assessed. These are powerful stimulants for a mass mobilisation that cannot be limited to the student body itself. If methods are not developed to integrate student action with that of

other popular sectors, it can be relegated to a sacrificial and even heroic but socially superficial agitation, marginal and without a future.

24) The still insufficient participation of the trade union movement to actively and publicly mobilise the masses to support it. The workers are on strike, in the most combative unions factory occupations. It is more difficult to carry out important street demonstrations. It is the school of a long state paternalism and its counterpart, the reformist methods of work.

The successes obtained in the period of the “fat cows”, applying those methods; the vast organisational work developed in times when the reformist policy was viable, gave prestige to their procedures. This is why it is insisted on continuing to apply them when this reformism no longer fits in with reality, when it only survives as a paralysing ideology.

25) The raising of the political level of the working class is in fact still spontaneous, in contradiction with the reformist line. That is why it is not possible to contribute to the development of a relatively revolutionary practice and consciousness without destroying the ideological obstacle constituted by the reformist conceptions. These are not defined only by the membership in this or that group or political party, but by the application or not, in facts, of revolutionary methods of action and organisation. Of course, the reformist practices are coherently applied by the Communist Party, which inscribes its political line in an international strategic conception that, as we know, is not revolutionary. That is why the development of a revolutionary action and consciousness leads in fact to the confrontation with the orientation, the leadership and the apparatus of that party. This is proven by the facts.

REFORMISM DRAWS RIGHT-WING CONCLUSIONS

As well as positive aspects, in these six months the popular movement has shown limitations and shortcomings. For many, this creates scepticism or pessimism about the possibilities of trade union action as an important factor in the struggle against government policy. As well as no methodology of a revolutionary type is being put forward, at the level of mass work or at other levels, certain currents that, while continuing to proclaim themselves as supporters of Che, Fidel and Olas, draw *right-wing conclusions* from the situation they are experiencing.

The real shortcomings of the trade union and popular movement demand efforts to overcome them: through struggle, through processing facts that create awareness, through inseparable ideological and organisational work. This will make the strengthening of the people's movement and its vanguard detachments possible.

But those who draw *conclusions from* this process from the "left", from the right, think otherwise; perhaps what they have always thought coherently and which, given that the situation was not yet so defined, was concealed until now.

26) One of these right-wing conclusions, which is at the root of others, is the lack of faith in the people, in the unions, in the struggle, in direct action. From this derives a practice focused on management, conciliation, dialogue. *Less dialogue and more struggle to confront the government*, has been proclaimed from the revolutionary left. More dialogue and less struggle is concluded from these claudicating theses.

The security measures; the reactionary escalation against the freedom and the living standards of the people; the conspiracy of the bankers, the ranchers and the bourgeoisie against Uruguay, do not promote among those who think this way a radicalization of actions and concepts. On the contrary.

"Defending the constitution", "returning the country to normal", is the watchword, the idea-force, the line of these currents. This is the way to go — and we are going — very far. For the time being it means sticking to the legitimacy of the "orange" constitution. But...didn't we agree that the "orange" was an appropriate text for the crudest oligarchic domination? To accept this legitimacy is to give up essential positions. The bourgeois constitution and legality end up being accepted as a natural and immovable order, outside of which it is not even possible to reflect. This is precisely giving the battle on the ground chosen by the enemy, accepting its basic assumptions, the mechanisms that it has deemed necessary to constitutionalise, and then trying to breathe through its loopholes, objecting that such "excesses" are illegal. As if he forgot that the "orange" constitution was drafted by the Uruguayan oligarchy and promoted by the empire, precisely for that purpose: to curtail freedoms, freeze salaries, apply the Monetary Fund line and impose order.

27) The reformist orientation is an orientation of *restoration of* something that existed before; it is a return to the 13th of June, to the moment that gave rise to what we now have; it is a

conservative orientation. That in the first place. But in addition, this “return to normality”, this return to 13 June is-as we have seen-impossible, it is utopian.

And to make the “struggle” for these conservative objectives, for this utopian restoration, viable, what is logical, what is coherent? To postulate conservative, not revolutionary methods, what are these methods? Reformist methods. They are expressed in theses such as: It is necessary to stop the struggle in order not to give excuses to the repression and thus isolate the government; it is vital to defend the privileges of the parliament, where a great battle for freedoms must take place; it is necessary to open up to the alliance with the bosses of industries and Freemasonry. And in parallel: to create “broad” movements, not with the aim of promoting and deepening the trade union struggle (which would be correct), but to dilute the trade union struggle, relegating it to a secondary level. And later, for all tastes: to support the progressive wing of some traditional party ; or to increase the electoral front of the left (the current one or another that is invented); or to create a third party for the 1971 elections. As we can see, all the same, regardless of intentions and labels. The reformist path, the path that history has shown to be the dead end. It leads to trying to perfect and increase not the revolutionary methods of work, but the reformist methods. Those who are thinking in this way are stubbornly evaluating the possibility of realising “fronts” with politicians and sectors that have repeatedly shown their hesitations and extreme weakness. (Many of them did not even dare to vote against the COPRIN project in the Senate).

When the repression questions the most elementary rights, the reformists are clinging to an electoralist perspective, in the service of which they intend to put all the mobilization , the real fight of the masses. Thus a new derivative for popular energies is attempted.

Those who draw the right-wing conclusions from the experience of security measures believe that it is because of too much struggling and not too much retreat that the current situation has been reached.

In the background of all this there is an ideological conception, which is at the root of the analysis they make of the reality of the country, and of the methods they use in common , the so-called “left wings” that continue to plan within the right wing parties; and the right wing leaderships of “left parties”. Together they constitute a kind of “His Majesty’s Opposition”, an increasingly harmless backdrop to the regime’s growing despotism.

GROW, IN ORGANIZATION, IN EXPERIENCE FOR A PROLONGED STRUGGLE

1. The resistance movement has not weakened due to the lack of popular support and “the lack of politicisation of the masses”; if the struggle has not reached higher forms in extension and depth, it is not because the people have spontaneously chosen to “tame”. 2. It is not the trade union organisation that is questioned by the absence of a growing and planned resistance. 3. The political conceptions transplanted by reformism are not attributable to the popular movement or to trade unionism.

28) What fails is a certain conception of the trade union movement: the union conceived as a mere organisation for negotiation and pressure; the union used for simple ministerial or parliamentary procedures; the union that only lives actively when there are wage conflicts.

Of course, lobbying is inherent to the union and must remain so. But the way in which it is carried out, the dimensions attributed to it, is what circumstances themselves require to be changed.

The demands and levels of struggle imposed by the crisis raise the need to use new methods of trade union action or, if you want, to adapt to our days the best of the tradition of revolutionary trade unionism. The period of the “fat cows”, of the more or less easy things, created favourable conditions for a methodology of procedure, conversation, management and dialogue. Now the reality is very different, also the methods must be.

29) There are several things that are already clear, which have been evidenced by practice. No single union can achieve major successes. Developing concrete solidarity mechanisms and actions on a large scale is decisive.

Not isolating oneself means taking into account the spread and public impact of the conflict or mobilisation. Union support, support in the neighbourhood, support in the population. The reaction begins by isolating before openly repressing.

From this we can conclude on the one hand the importance in the clarity of the objectives of any union struggle; concrete objectives related to the general interests of the working class and the country are a fundamental element. On the other hand, the aspects of enlightenment, propaganda and agitation around mobilisation or conflict. In the present conditions of regimentation of the publicity apparatus, this forces an intense, original and direct agitation and propaganda work. Hand in hand with the above, the verification of the importance of the facts, as the best form of propaganda. The main thing is never the negotiations, but the measures of struggle that make possible a propaganda that is attended to and a favourable “negotiation”. The spreading of the method of occupations and the willingness to resist violent unemployment mark this dignified and effective way, through which the trade union is and can be more and more a useful weapon of action.

30) The disintegration of the reformist ideology is beginning to take place among the most conscious and combative sectors. But reformism, which is weak when it is fought, recovers and appears as soon as the struggle weakens or ends.

This raises important problems because every union groups indiscriminately developed sectors ready to fight, hesitant sectors that support it circumstantially and weak sectors that never support it. These elements are combined in different ways depending on the circumstances, to the point that very often it is difficult to recognise in a trade union in conflict its own peacetime physiognomy. The aim is to involve as many workers as possible and with as much intensity as possible in trade union action. The closest contact with the broadest base is vital at all times. From that point on, the decisive thing is not to have the formal leadership of the union, the majority of the executive committee, which does not mean ignoring the usefulness that this often has. But what is decisive, in all cases and in any union, is the leadership of the active sector, of the one that weighs when there are mobilisations, of the one that is able to create the conditions for the struggle. The work at the base of the union, among the militants, in the assemblies, in the mobilisations, on the streets, is the central work; the participation in the more or less administrative life of the institution must be developed according to the other work.

31) For all these reasons, it is essential that each union should have a grouping that brings together the most combative part. Its action must be permanent: to organise the comrades with methods in accordance with the present times; to promote actions; to train; to guide. The grouping of the most combative to act together within the union and the union, not isolated from it, ensures the continuity of the work. The ups and downs of the life of any union, the victory or defeat in any vote, do not interrupt its work or frustrate it. The new times make groups of this type nuclei of basic action; the experience of these six months shows it.

32) The absence of grassroots momentum is a feature of reformist working methods. Verticalism and bureaucratism are an expression of this. At their root is the fear of “excesses” and “overflow” from the masses and their active and protagonist participation. This is how the union is kept uninformed, passive, with the feeling that the issues of the union are the property of the leaders. This often leaves the organisations in the air. That’s where the yellowness comes in. The trade union must have continuity in its action, the more active and permanent participation of the whole union must be promoted, and opinions and initiatives must be encouraged. This must be one of the basic objectives of the advanced trend within each trade.

33) For a large sector, especially young workers and students, these security measures constitute an enlightening and definitive political experience. The police bullets that killed three comrades have mortally wounded the old and deep-rooted image of the liberal Uruguay. Nobody can honestly believe anymore that we live in a “country of freedom”. It is a whole historical cycle that is coming to an end and which many are already evoking, almost unconsciously, as a kind of “lost paradise”. That normality that so many want to recover, without recognizing that the only true alternative that the future offers us is crude regression or revolution. Without recognising that, finally, the already indissoluble, very Latin American reality of our backwardness and underdevelopment has emerged to the surface of our political and social coexistence. A large part of the people, somewhat perplexed, refuse to recognise themselves in that image. Many want to avoid confronting this reality. But the ruling classes, who know it well because they have benefited from it, know that they have only one way out to postpone its collapse, to gain time: repression.

This situation results in de facto dictatorship, which is not incompatible with “constitutional legality”.

Does it signal the end of the struggle? Does the enemy hold the key to the situation? No. The last few months of security measures show it. The struggle changes in form, in terrain, in methods, it grows or decreases, but it continues. To search at each juncture, at each moment, for the appropriate levels and methods, assimilating the experiences that the process leaves behind, that is the function of the vanguard elements. A function that only an organisation can fulfil.

34) This raises issues that are closely linked to the best form of trade union action, but which necessarily go beyond the realm of trade unionism. The regime does not act only through its trade union apparatus (Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Rural Federation, Bankers’ Association, etc.). Nor does it act solely through the political apparatus provided by government posts and party structures. Nor only by spreading propaganda and bourgeois ideology through its press, radio and television. Nor only through its police and military apparatus. The oligarchy, the current regime, acts against the people, with a policy, an ideology, a bosses’ action, a military action. All this is part of the continental strategy of imperialism.

When it comes to drawing conclusions from the current situation, it is important to be clear about the impossibility of separating these factors. Those who were the protagonists of the resistance against the oligarchy in these six months, the young workers and students, the old fighters, the groupings and advanced tendencies of the unions, are the ones who have to lead the resistance and the advance in the periods that are coming. It will be them and the vast contingents that will be integrated into this already powerful force in action and ideological struggle.

We think that it is important to define some criteria in this sense:

35) It is essential to develop a political centre in a position to promote, coordinate and lead struggles on a general scale. Most of the existing leaderships are predominantly reformist. They do not adapt to the new situation, and consequently with positions of backwardness they do not lead or promote the struggle.

36) The structuring of this political centre is initiated by the most conscious and concerned sectors. The effort is focused on clarifying and organising these sectors first. They form the skeleton that will backbone a broader movement. They are its little engine. Efforts cannot be wasted. The basic thing, at this stage, is not to mount a vast, amorphous, soft mass movement vulnerable to repression. What is fundamental is to build an organisation of cadres, capable of operating under the conditions of widespread and lasting repression.

37) The organisation needed must be adapted to the activity in times of severe repression. This imposes certain criteria of structure and method that can immediately hinder its effectiveness in public propaganda. This is the inevitable price that must be paid to ensure the durability of work conceived in terms of prolonged struggle as imposed by the reality of our country.

38) The concreteness and development of the political centre is processed in the struggle. Within the struggle, the militants are selected and developed, experience is accumulated, and strategy is refined.

The path towards the concretion of the political centre passes, at this stage, through the formation of tendencies at the union level (groups, lists, etc.) of stable and coordinated functioning.

39) A strategy for the prolonged struggle, in our country and now, implies staggering, in parallel or successively, the different types of actions, at the different levels.

40) The main thing is the wear and tear of the enemy’s forces and the accumulation of one’s own forces. At the organisational level, as at any level where the confrontation takes place, ac-

ording to the levels it has acquired. Since the struggle must be predictably hard and prolonged, intense action must be taken from now on. And to act lasting longer than the enemy.

This process is not only experienced by our country, of course. It has here, as it had everywhere, its own characteristics. But it is Latin American, and it is universal. Nowhere has it been His Majesty's opposition, parliamentary opposition, reformism, that carried out the resistance and thus created the conditions for social change in the interest of the people and the country.

The opposition that matters, the opposition that makes resistance, the opposition that creates conditions for change, is an extra-parliamentary opposition, a popular opposition, an opposition that has direct action as its method.

In Russia in 1917; in Spain in 1936; then in China, in Algeria, in Cuba, now in Vietnam, by the direct action of the people, of their vanguards, they have confronted the oligarchy and imperialism, the conditions for revolutionary change have been created.

They have never been effective to resist oppression, to stop fascism, to make revolution, methods that are essentially conservative. The "broad fronts" of the electoral type, with a practice that reserves a role for the people as a group, which seeks to constrain them to the *indirect action of* mere support for the central task, reserved for minorities of professional politicians dedicated to creating the parliamentary opposition to the regime, have never decided the course of history.

The experience of the revolutions of our time, the experience of the guerrilla struggle in the Third World, the experience of the European students and the American black movement all indicate that there is only one solution. And only one method. Adapting itself, no doubt, to the characteristics and the situation of each country.

The path of direct action is also our path. Direct action by the *whole people*, which thus acquires a real measure of its power, becomes stronger every day, forges its political consciousness and its organisation. Direct action of *the vanguard detachments*, acting within the people, promoting the processing of social facts, waging ideological battle, dynamising. The great engine of the struggle of all the people, the small engine of its vanguard detachments, inseparable aspects of the same path to create the conditions for freedom and socialism in Uruguay.

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