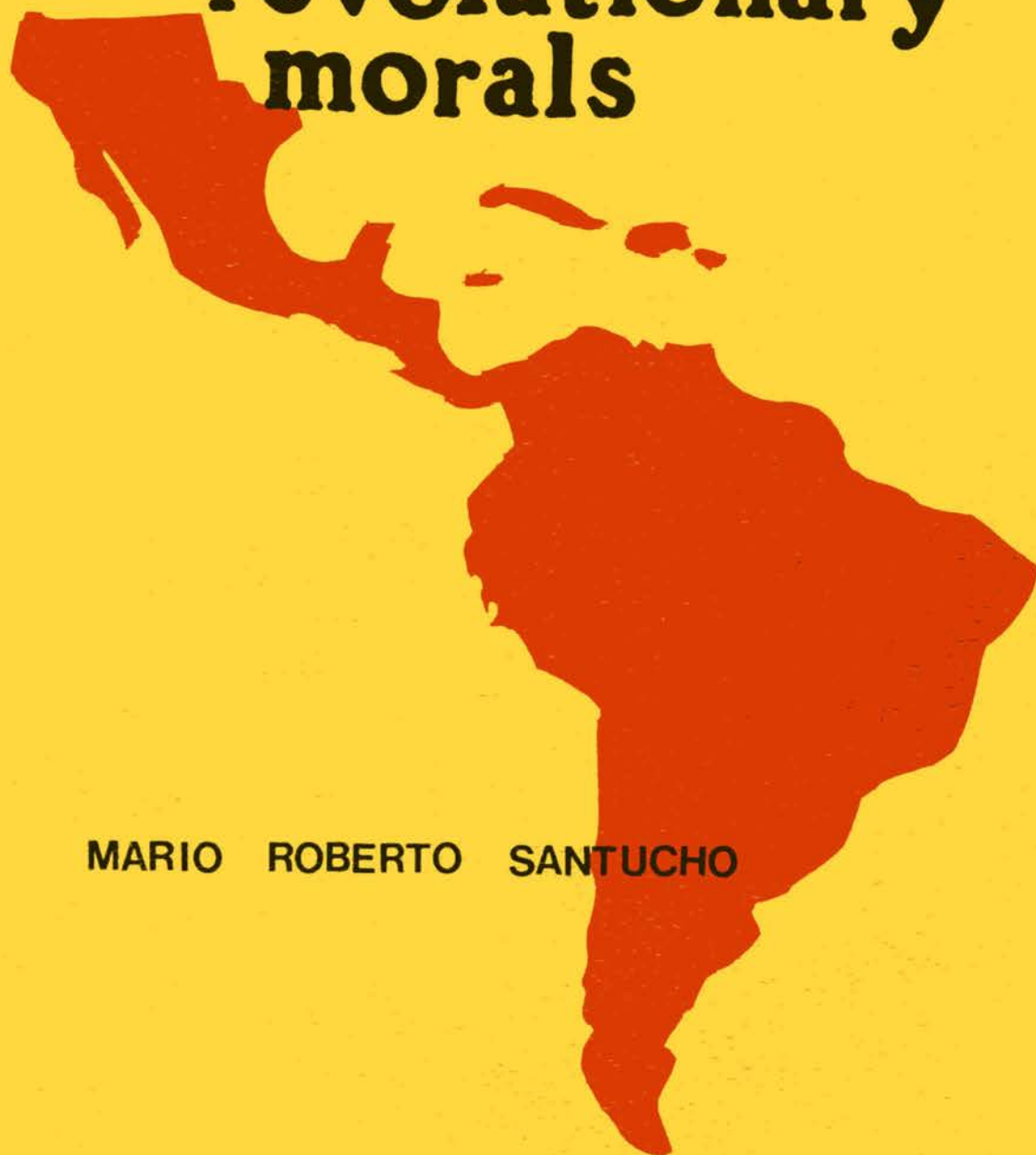


**notes
on
revolutionary
morals**



MARIO ROBERTO SANTUCHO

INTRODUCTION

"A communist can not be egotistic. To the extent that he goes on conquering egotism and translating self-respect into love for his comrades and he converts himself into a generous, brave, honorable, trustworthy and loyal person, he will be able to change the society in which all of these are changed into their opposites, and he will return humanity to a society where these human virtues can develop the way they once did and were able to humanize us. This is the dream of every good person. The forces that want to destroy are a minority. Illness is held back by health, and health is the signal that we humans are in harmony with nature, of which we are a very beautiful and intelligent product."

*Dona Consuelo Lee Corretjer
from "Talking with Comrades"*

It is with the above thought that we reprint one of the most significant theoretical works ever produced by the Latin American Revolutionary Movement. For, in an era of "New Communist Thought," the questions as to the nature of the communist movement and the building of socialist society are widely debated; yet, very little, if any, attention is given to the question of the character of those who struggle for this new society. While people continue to polemicize about every matter under the sun, little thought is given to the process by which one rejects bourgeois values and builds new communist ones.

We believe that this phenomenon, like all other things, has a profoundly material basis. There can be no question that the lack of both theory as well as struggle around this most important issue arises from the fact the much of the leadership of the socialist movement is by its class origin petty bourgeois and actively chooses to remain so. There can be no mistaking the fact that it is this which has given birth to the reformist deviation of the communist movement and created the so called social democratic third road. Let us make no mistake about it.

We within the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional, M.L.N., recognize the fact that social democracy is not a period of transition, but rather it is the perpetuation of capitalist domination in a partnership with opportunists and cowards who are too frightened to enter into open battle with the enemies of the working classes of all countries. Furthermore, let us state once and for all to both the pseudo-revolutionary left and their comrades in the social democratic left that we, as Lenin before us, recognize that:

We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies and we have to advance under almost constant fire. We have combined voluntarily, precisely for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not to retreat to the adjacent marsh, the inhabitants of which from the very outset, have reproached us with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now several among us begin to cry out: let us go into this marsh! and when we begin to shame them they retort, how dogmatic you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the liberty to invite you to take a better road! Oh yes gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render you every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word "freedom" for we too are "free" to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards it!

We dedicate this work to Angel Rodriguez Cristobal, revolutionary, comrade, and martyr. Defender of the island of Vieques and the nation of Puerto Rico. His life was a lesson from which all may learn.

**DARE TO STRUGGLE!
DARE TO WIN!**

Carlos Soto Arrivi
Arnaldo Dario Rosado



Luis Rosa
Ricardo Jimenez
Oscar Lopez
Dylcia Pagan Morales
Haydee Torres
Alicia Rodriguez
Pablo Marcano Garcia
Jorge Albizu Orta

Carmen Valentin
Adolfo Matos
Ida Luz Rodriguez
Elizam Escobar
Carlos Alberto Torres
Felix Rosa
Nydia Ester Cuevas

To all those who fight from clandestinity

VIVA PUERTO RICO LIBRE Y SOCIALISTA!

LONG LIVE A FREE AND SOCIALIST PUERTO RICO!

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NOTES ON REVOLUTIONARY MORALS

IMPORTANCE AND LIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

Today, the Leninist assertion that the bourgeoisie in capitalist countries exerts its class dictatorship — that is, its domination of the working class and the entire country — is commonplace among the revolutionary sector.

However, one lesser-known aspect is the concept of the hegemony of the bourgeoisie in society, which complements its domination in social practice.

This Leninist conception has been precisely defined by Gramsci in his *Notes on Machiavelli*, where he points out that the State is the "complexity of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its domination, but also obtains the active consensus of the dominated sector of society."

In this paragraph which we have cited Gramsci clearly raises the question of hegemony. This means that if the bourgeoisie still has us under its domination, it is not solely by virtue of its repressive apparatus but first and foremost, because a considerable sector of the people continue to adhere to bourgeois conceptions and because practically all the people continue to live according to the system of life that the bourgeoisie have constructed.

For example, bourgeois hegemony is manifested in the mass media that daily bombards us with ruling class ideology, not only in the general political sphere, but also in every aspect of everyday life, providing bourgeois "models to emulate" through the radio, theatre, movies, novels, sports, and in thousands of other forms.

It appears in the unions absorbed by the capitalist regime as an escape valve from social tensions. It is manifest in the churches, clubs, sports, in every aspect of human life.

Here is where the problem of hegemony flows into the problem of ethics, or morals. This is the question raised by

Che Guevara in his impassioned call for the construction of the New Man. This is the question raised by the mobilization of the multitudes of the Cultural Revolution in China. This is the problem that the revolutionary sectors in Argentina are beginning to raise, with its calls for the proletarianization of its cadre and militants.

This issue can not be taken as a mere aspiration of wishes, as those who try to transform Che into a simple romantic legend would prefer. Nor is it an issue that can be left for after seizing State power, as others believe.

On the contrary, it is an issue that is at the very center of the problems of Revolutionary War.

Lenin has clearly established that the proletariat will not be able to establish the dictatorship of its class, which is to say, the conquest of political power if they have not won the great majority of the hearts and minds of the working class and the people.

If we correctly understand proletarian hegemony, as we have outlined it above, we can see that proletarian hegemony consists not just in winning the majority of the people to the ideas and political program proposed by the proletariat, but also puts forth the problem of the "new morals."

This problem becomes particularly important in the present stage of worldwide revolution. Imperialism finds itself in the final and irreversible crisis of its domination. The growth and affirmation of the socialist camp and the Revolutionary War of the colonial peoples have made imperialism's final defeat into an obtainable reality.

But precisely because it is confronted with its definitive crisis and defeat, imperialism will dispute inch by inch, each and every position it still holds, clinging to them tooth and nail. As demonstrated by the practice in our country and the rest of the world, revolutionary war will become more savage, cruel and hard every day.

We cannot even begin to think of winning this war, if we have not already

decided to begin the construction of the new man, of the man capable of struggling and winning the war, in the very practice of the war.

The lucid Australian journalist, Wilfred Burchett, clearly points out in his book, *Why the Viet Cong is Winning*, that these "little yellow men in black pajamas have converted themselves into the most formidable war machine known in history," because they have learned to "win the hearts and minds" of their people, and they have been able to accomplish this because they have from the first moment given particular attention to the political and moral formation of their cadres, their combatants, and their entire people.

It is here that the question of hegemony — the conquest of the hearts and minds of the masses — and the ethical aspect of this issue, become the very center of the dialectics of the war.

The construction of the new morals emerges as a tool just as valuable and essential for revolutionary victory as the ideological economic and politico-military struggle. It is linked to these other struggles; on the other hand, the new morals will only be constructed in the practice of the war. However, we must not take the term "practice of the war," in a limited sense, as in moments of political-military combat, but rather in a broader and more profound sense; to be precise, in the organization of the totality of our lives in relation to war, with the people, with our comrades, our mates and our children, with our families, with the people around us in general, and with the enemy.

Only in this manner will we achieve a revolutionary morality — a combative morality which here and now constitutes the necessary transition to the socialist morality of tomorrow.

This is the key to the epic of the Vietnamese. It is impossible to understand that a people could wage 40 years of almost continual war unless we understand that those people have removed even the very seeds of their daily life, inserting that life which is oriented along the new axis of the revolution.

If we want new Vietnams in Latin

America, as did our beloved Che, we must learn how to creatively apply the lessons of the Vietnamese experience to our reality, not only in the practice of the strategy and military tactics, of ideological education, and of political work, but first and foremost, in the sphere of revolutionary morals.

INDIVIDUALISM, THE ESSENCE OF BOURGEOIS MORALS

Just as socialist society can only be seen as the dialectic advancement over capitalist society, socialist morals and their embryo, revolutionary morals, can only be seen as the dialectic advancement over bourgeois morals. Bourgeois morals are the expression of capitalist relations of production in the relations of everyday life between human beings and of their attitudes towards them.

Marx proved that capitalist society is basically a society of producers and commodities, and that the archaic and anonymous character of commodity production, has the power, among other consequences, of objectifying human relations.

Social relations which are in reality relations between persons, appear as relations between objects, things. Specifically, as the relationship of all people and all things to a very special thing, Money: the commodity among commodities, queen of commodities and the supreme god of our time.

As a general medium of exchange and circulation of commodities, money, — and commodities in general — are transformed into a way of life. The possession of money determines whether or not one possesses other commodities (food, clothing, etc.) It means life or death, a miserable subsistence or languishing in the lap of luxury. Labor loses its character as a creative activity, man's specific and superior activity, and is transformed into a simple means of obtaining money, and the possession of material things becomes the goal of life.

Confronted with the anonymous capitalist market that surrounds him like a jungle, each person behaves in this way, and is pushed to fight, to compete for

survival. The worker is pushed to compete with his working class brothers in order to obtain a job, to keep it and to earn more money. The capitalist competes savagely with other capitalists in order to win away their clientele, and increase his profits at the cost of the others.

The petty-bourgeoisie compete among each other sometimes to survive, sometimes to excell, and sometimes to "advance in life."

In this savage competition of everyone against each other, or better stated, of everyone against the market, that appears as an anonymous hostile force, each person has no other point of reference than his own individualism.

Every individual struggles to survive and triumph in the battle against the hostile forces of the market, which are none other than the rest of the people, just as each individual constitutes part of these hostile forces for each of the others.

Therefore, individualism constitutes the essential characteristic of bourgeois morality, since it emanates from the mercantile character of the relations of capitalist production.

How is this individualism developed and manifested? Once capitalist hegemony is established in the productive relations, thereby establishing bourgeois hegemony in society, individualism becomes the dominant feature of human relations.

Adults consciously or subconsciously transmit individualism to their children, who begin to nurse individualism with the first swallow of mother's milk. The child will compete against his brothers for nourishment and parental attention. He will compete for toys, in school he will compete for better grades, and at play or in sports, for the victory of his team. Finally as an adult, he will compete ferociously in industry, commerce, science, the arts, politics and war. Individualism becomes the basic skeleton of the personality, which is integrated on this base and formed by the competitive mold of capitalism.

In this way, individualism operates not just on the level of conscious thoughts, of opinions and current ideas, but also on the level of emotions, feelings and reflexes conditioned by the environment, of the

spontaneous unconscious attitudes, of the embryonic formation of any thought.

Individualistic characteristics and behaviors are constituted in each person's basic personality. These characteristics and behaviors are reinforced daily through the use of mass communication media, schools, etc.

Herein lie the dimensions of the problem. This is why it is so difficult to struggle against individualism. To become a revolutionary, it is not enough to consciously acquire the ideas of the working class, the most general consciousness of the problem. On the contrary, it involves a true revolution within our very selves, a radical change in opinions, tastes, inclinations in regard to the most common things and daily attitudes that surround us.

In a word, it involves the total disintegration of our individualistic personality and a new reconstruction and re-integration along proletarian revolutionary lines. Just because this is a difficult task, it does not mean that it is any less urgent or necessary. On the contrary, individualism is a veritable gangrene which continually destroys what we build. How can we defeat the enemy forces still powerful and willing to wage a cruel and prolonged war, if we do not begin by destroying the advance guard of the enemy forces that operates in our very hearts and minds: bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism.

PROLETARIANIZATION AND THE UNION OF THE MASSES

We have pointed out that in order to combat individualism it is necessary to totally revolutionize our personalities, to integrate it anew, along revolutionary lines.

We have also pointed out that this can not be achieved through mere introspection and self-punishment, but rather in practice: revolutionizing and transforming the whole of our relationships with those around us.

Social practice establishes a dialectical relationship between the subject and its medium. To the extent that man forms and transforms reality through his work, his human relations, or any activity which he exerts; that same activity and the conditions that the surroundings impose also

form and transform the subject. This is the essence of Marx's statement that "existence determines consciousness." Any one that has a working class social practice will also tend to have a worker's consciousness. He who has the practice of a policeman will have the consciousness of a policeman. This is the primary key to the question of proletarianization. Does this mean that just because they are workers they are free from this nefarious individualism? Categorically no. The wage labor of the workers is precisely the basis for market production, since that very labor is considered by the capitalist as a commodity to buy and sell to obtain surplus value which constitutes the foundation of his capital. Thus, the worker is not free from the oppression of the market; instead, he suffers more acutely than anyone; and bourgeois hegemony in society tends to generate individualism in his personality, too.

However, the very role that the worker fulfills in commodity production instills in him the opposite tendency. In fact in capitalist industry and especially in the large modern factories, organized in assembly lines the interdependence of the different partial jobs is so close that the worker tends to acquire easily a consciousness of the social character of the production realized by his class and the contradiction between this character and the private ownership of the commodities.

The practice of collective work and the obvious injustice of its private alienation instills in the worker a tendency contrary to the individual tendency that society as a whole imposes. This positive and winning tendency is reinforced by many other elements of its social practice.

Collectively the workers suffer in their homes and neighborhoods the consequences of their social oppression, in the form of malnutrition, substandard housing, inadequate healthcare and limited if any, access to the official culture of society — collectively, they are fired from their jobs or go on strike, collectively they collide with the police when expressing their protests; and when the class struggle is developed, they collectively suffer the gunshots and bombardments.

This exploited situation instills in the worker a profound class hatred and a tendency towards egalitarianism that constitutes a negation and surmounting of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism.

Marx points this out with total clarity in the Chapter 5, Vol. I of Capital, when he states: "From the very beginning, the worker is on a superior plane to the capitalist, given the fact that he (the capitalist) has taken root in the process of alienation of labor and is absolutely satisfied with it; while, on the contrary the worker, in his condition, as victim of this process, finds himself in a state of rebellion from the beginning and interprets his condition as a process of subjugation."

Which of these two tendencies is primary in the consciousness of the worker, the negative individual tendency imposed by bourgeois social hegemony, or the positive collective tendency that rises from his exploited character? It is a problem that is resolved in the class struggle, taking note that individualist features are manifested more often in the less politically advanced sectors of the working class, while in the other sectors, authentic proletarian virtues such as humility, simplicity, patience, the spirit of sacrifice, breadth of views, decisiveness, tenacity, the desire to learn, generosity and love for his fellow men, tend to predominate.

Regardless of the extent to which these virtues win out in each individual personality, what is important is that the very condition of the workers, due to the character of their role in production, objectively contains the possibilities of overcoming individualism by generating the characteristics and points of views that tend to overcome it. This is the essence of the idea of proletarianization, that is, acquire the characteristics and viewpoints of the proletariat, understanding these not as the subjective characteristics and viewpoints of the individual workers, which may be as bourgeois as those of his employer, but as the characteristics and viewpoints which emanate objectively from his class character, historically concerned with the liberation of humanity, the liquidation of all classes.

Proletarianization is the basic condition the essential first step in combatting and liquidating individualism; and with this step, all the manifestations of bourgeois hegemony, in order to establish the social hegemony of the proletariat, which in turn constitute the first important step towards the conquest of political power.

How then, do we achieve proletarianization? Although it may sound trite, the fundamental manner to proletarianize the revolutionary organizations is to constantly increase the proportion of workers in their ranks, to increasingly win over those vanguard workers that reflect the authentic virtues of their class. However trite, it is well worth repeating because many revolutionary comrades, although they sincerely recognize this need in theory, fail in practice to fill their revolutionary ranks with workers.

When the base and leadership of revolutionary organizations are constituted by a clear majority of workers, then they will have acquired the political maturity with which to fulfill their historical mission.

Individually, for the revolutionaries of non-proletarian origin, the proletarianization process begins with sharing the social practice of the working class, its way of life and work. It is erroneous to believe that merely by embracing and struggling for the ideology of the working class, one will acquire its characteristics and viewpoints. Even taking up arms is insufficient if our daily lives remain locked in the framework of bourgeois or petty-bourgeois social practice.

But as indicated above, it is also erroneous to believe proletarianization consists solely of working in a factory, or living in a ghetto. If on the one hand, the situation of the working class instills in it a positive tendency; then on the other hand, the bourgeoisie exerts a contrary hegemonistic pressure on the whole of society, including the working class, generating, therefore, the tendency towards individualism.

Proletarianization, the development of the new morality, is a more complete and profound process, which concerns every revolutionary militant, including the workers; but most of it concerns the non-

workers. Part of the proletarianization process is to situate our own lives in workers conditions, but it does not end there. On the contrary, as the revolutionary begins to incorporate proletarian conditions in his life, his work and his struggle and new demands are formulated. He begins the long path which we must follow, that will not only liberate peoples as such; but will also liberate each person out of the narrow cell of individualism. As Leon Trotsky stated: "Someday the revolution will liberate man from the dark night of the circumscribed 'I.' This long and marvelous path of man's liberation from all his chains can only begin from a point of departure that every revolutionary and revolutionary organization must reach in order to initiate the march to victory; in the bosom of the very class who with their hands, hearts and minds each day creates the values and turns the wheels of history." In the palpitating breast of the popular masses who most crudely suffer the alienation of their work, and are most denied by capitalist society, but nonetheless each act affirms the fundamental values of man, the values that will be restored by the revolution: LABOR, THE FUTURE OF OUR CHILDREN, AND THE GREAT FRATERNITY OF HUMANITY.

INDIVIDUALISM IN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATIONS

There are many manifestations of individualism deep within the revolutionary currents, each of which reflects with different nuances the bourgeois hegemony over the newborn organizations of the proletariat and the people. Only through the practical development of our proletarianization, through the permanent exercise of criticism and self-criticism, can we characterize and correct them all.

In this work we shall point out only the most important, those that are most visibly and continually corroding the efforts for the construction of a revolutionary proletarian organization in Argentina: subjectivity, self-sufficiency, the search for prestige, cliquishness, liberalism and fear for one's self. These and other manifestations of individualism have a common character-

istic: placing personal considerations and precautions before the interests of the revolution, taking oneself as a point of reference, instead of the historical process, the working class, and the people.

A. SUBJECTIVITY: This manifestation of individualism consists of incorrectly utilizing the scientific methods of analysis; instead of analyzing the objective reality following the teachings of Marxism and reaching the corresponding conclusions no matter how disagreeable; it proceeds in reverse: by wishing and manipulating the method, conclusions are reached to correspond with our desires and goals. For example, there are comrades that characterize a particular zone or front of struggle as unprofitable for revolutionary activity because they are unwilling to go and wage struggle or to continue struggling there; or the reverse, to justify their own errors, they characterize their activities as very important, covering up personal desires to remain in that area.

This grave deviation can and has reached the extreme of deforming the characterization of a complete historical era in order to accommodate personal desires of continuing to lead or returning to a comfortable bourgeois or petty-bourgeois existence. Subjectivity is also manifested in the failure to honestly recognize one's own errors and limitations, seeking to down play them to others or provide false interpretations.

B. SELF-SUFFICIENCY: This is a manifestation of individualism that consists of underestimating the capacity of other comrades and of the masses, and overestimating one's own capacity. The self-sufficient comrade will always believe that he knows everything, that he is the only one who can do things. He will give little or no attention to the opinions of other comrades and the masses. He believes that there is nothing he can learn from them and on the contrary, will attempt to impose his own science on others. Haste, thoughtlessness and pedantry are consequences and natural complements of the attitude. The end result is that the self-sufficient comrade will lose the respect and esteem of the others and lose sight of reality, which in turn will lead him to subjectivity in order to justify

his errors, thereby creating a vicious circle extremely harmful to revolutionary development.

C. THE SEARCH FOR PRESTIGE: This manifestation of individualism generally complements the aforementioned ones and more acutely demonstrates the most essential feature of individualism, putting the individual person before the interests of the revolution. This consists of trying to do things correctly but not for their usefulness. Revolutionary tasks are taken up to win merit, to be flattered by others and to flatter oneself. This is prevalent on all levels, but is particularly noticeable and harmful among the leadership.

The rank and file militant who is guilty of this manifestation of individualism seeks to excel in the eyes of his leadership in order to be praised and considered for the next "promotion."

The middle cadre who exhibit this manifestation, on the one hand seeks to be admired and respected by the base membership in order to use them to orchestrate their desires and "promotions" in the organization; and on the other hand, seeks to excel and win merit before the leadership in order to ascend to their positions. Finally those elements in the leadership of the organization who are guilty of this serious deviation behave like caudillos-despots seeking the militant's admiration and competing for admiration among his peers.

This form of individualism creates serious problems in the ranks of the revolutionary organizations.

Firstly, a spirit of competition is created among the comrades who fall into this form of individualism, generating confrontations, problems and deviations. Instead of contributing modestly and silently to the collective success of the organization and helping the other comrades make their contributions, they seek to project themselves individually at the cost of the others, attempting to monopolize the easy tasks that bring quick glory while leaving the obscure and difficult tasks for others; covering up their own errors instead of correcting them, while loudly pointing out the short comings of others, leading them to make mistakes or knowingly letting them

fail only to project their own success or diminish their own faults.

On the other hand these comrades distort reports and viewpoints, projecting the negative aspects of the activities and opinions of others while emphasizing and inflating their own merits. For example, in taking on an activity that has been developed in the hands of another comrade, they report negatively citing multiple errors and deficiencies in the project and after a short period of time they issue an excellent report on the advances made in the task.

Through this they attack the sources of understanding. An organization has numerous instruments of knowledge — its own militants; however, if the organizers in charge of centralizing activity operate on the basis of information that has been distorted by its militants or those in charge, they will formulate a mistaken impression of reality or will make mistaken decisions that will lead to errors through the organization.

Finally, this search for prestige will lead to the formation of cliques and the utilization of bureaucratic practices.

D. THE SPIRIT OF CLIQUES

This manifestation of individualism is a direct result of the ones previously mentioned. It reproduces at a group level, what the search for prestige signifies at the individual level and consists of the construction of groups, more or less closed, that seek splits or privileges for its members.

This is represented at the base level in "Team Chauvinism;" where each organism tries to stand out as the "best," forgetting the role that each plays in the correct development of the organism as a whole. This deviation leads to competition between teams while their superiors in the central organisms fight over the materials necessary for the activity, the best combatants, the front of struggle, etc. When the groups who are guilty of this deviation should be collaborating in an act, each tries to subordinate the others in order to take the best role in the task and excell. This deviation also emerges as regionalism. Groups from the Port, Rosario, Cordoba, Tupaman, etc. try to stand out as the best

forgetting that the revolution is a national and international problem. Regional competition arises, which produces the aforementioned problems on a larger scale. This is what we describe as the spirit of cliques at the organizational level. There also exist other forms of expression at the organizational level. One form consists of a group of compañeros who had relationships before or outside their activism in politics, and form groups outside the organizational structure.

This is the most harmful form because it breaks security and creates all kinds of problems. The comrades who form these cliques trade gossip, and the problems of the organizations, endangering the security and the correct operation even leading to the construction of real internal pressure groups (factions). However, the most harmful of these are cliques at the intermediate and leadership level. This inevitably leads to bureaucratic practices and creates service problems.

This deviation begins to manifest itself through seemingly innocent means, as in the following examples; the elements in leadership form a "private language" to communicate certain comments or references to special deeds and tasks that the base membership does not have access to.

In this way the members of the clique constitute an "inner circle" to which the common mortals have no access. Their relationships to the base membership are paternalistic; they are told that certain things are not for their knowledge and are compensated with inflexible attitudes, with vague promises of entering this circle of insiders if they get good marks.

If this error is not averted in time and severely corrected by the appropriate comrade or by the organization, the clique continues to grow daily. Its members favor one another; they avoid pointing out their own errors but emphasize those of others. More and more, the clique becomes a group bureaucratically separated from the base membership and a differentiated faction in the midst of the leading elements. When this level is reached, the clique serves as a vehicle with which to violently channel any tactical difference. This difference no

longer appears as a question of different criteria which can be resolved in practice, but rather is utilized as a pretext to unleash an open class struggle in the organization to defend the interests of the group.

However, even in its more embryonic forms, it is extremely harmful — not only in its potential capacity to transform itself into an actual clique, but also for the immediate problems caused by it: mistrust, resentment, competition, inattention to the collective interests of the organization. This is why it is necessary to be vigilant with respect to the embryonic forms of cliquishness such as subjective friendship and sidekick-ism.

In order to facilitate this vigilance, it is preferable that the relationships between comrades be serious and political; especially among the comrades in the leadership and with the base membership. Naturally, we can not, and should not become cold unresponsive beings. Vigilance does not exclude healthy affection between comrades, camaraderie, or good humor, but we should be careful not to encourage subjective friendships, so that our relationships are not based on things other than the commonality of historical objectives, in which the principal interest is the revolution.

E. LIBERALISM: Mao Tse Tung has discussed liberalism broadly and scientifically in his renowned work *On Liberalism*. For these problems we will refer the reader to his general text and discuss here only one particular aspect of liberalism which is very widespread in Argentinian revolutionary organizations and has caused grave damage — liberalism with regards to security matters.

This form of liberalism is based in subjectivity and self-sufficiency and consists in over-estimating one's own capacity and under-estimating that of the enemy. But on top of this basic form, there appears in practice many related variations that are rooted in other manifestations of liberalism: strict adherence to routine, lack of enthusiasm or interest in tasks, the tendency to take the easy way, etc. In order to justify this, comrades affirm that the problems are necessary consequences of the activity, and that security can be main-

tained only when the politico-military activity is poor. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is a fact that reformists and those afraid of war use questions of security as an excuse for not fighting or not working among the masses. But the experience of the organizations that have a true revolutionary practice demonstrates that intense activity and the question of security are not contradictory. On the contrary, an activity has continuity and strength when the problems of security are cared for. In the reverse, when we are careless about security, the first setback provokes a "chain reaction" that holds back the activity both in the short and long run. We will not expand on the technical aspect of security, because surely each organization has numerous materials based on the rich experience acquired to date on this subject. What we want to emphasize is that liberalism is far from being an example of courage and proletarian decisiveness as some comrades believe. On the contrary, it is a dangerous manifestation of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism that reveals serious irresponsibility in the comrades who fall victim to this, and acts corrosively against the efficiency and advances of the organization.

F. FEAR FOR SELF: The frequent and material prolongation of any manifestation of individualism is fear for oneself. The comrade who conserves features of individualism tends, consciously or unconsciously, to preoccupy himself with his own person more than with the organization; the ultimate justification of the individualist and his point of reference for all his projects and desires, is himself. The individualist can sincerely struggle for the Revolution, but wishes personally to benefit from its fruits. He is consumed consciously or unconsciously by the fear of losing his life or being seriously physically or mentally injured. The individualist will tend to be weak when he finds himself in difficult moments, in which the work of many people over a prolonged period of time is involved, when it is his decision whether to advance or retreat under enemy fire, when it is his decision whether to co-operate or remain

silent under torture or when confronted with the real or apparent threat of death. What in daily practice appear as minor defects in apparently exemplary comrades, will be revealed in those moments in all their magnitude, as the true cancer of any organization, the flaw that can lead even well-intentioned revolutionaries to disaster.

THE CORRECTION OF INDIVIDUALISM

There is no set prescription that will alleviate individualism. We will extract the best methods of correcting this evil based on the revolutionary practice in the heart of the masses. However, there are some basic guidelines which arise from experience already acquired. In the first place, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the true role and dimension of individualism in the revolutionary ranks. We must not treat this problem lightly, but must maintain a strict and permanent vigilance together with all comrades, particularly with those comrades in the leadership. Second, we must enforce the constant proletarianization of the organization and of each comrade, as we have previously outlined. Third, the constant exercise of criticism and self-criticism around every aspect of activity, keeping in mind individualism and its diverse manifestations as a practical and particular aspect.

We must point out two aspects of the question of criticism and self-criticism. The whole world recognizes in theory the value of this great revolutionary guideline, but it is not always utilized correctly in practice, and comrades fall into one of the two following deviations: sometimes criticism is used as a weapon of personal attack, to criticize those comrades whom we wish to slander; while other times, we will remain silent regarding the errors of others, in an effort to avoid having our own errors pointed out. Sometimes one is guilty of both deviations at the same time: the second deviation with our friends, and the first with other comrades. The same thing occurs when one is the object of the criticism. It is common for comrades to become angry or upset when criticized, and attempt to counter with other criticisms or to find fault with the criticism. It is therefore necessary to create an atmosphere conducive to criticism and self-criticism,

exercising it on a daily and systematic basis without waiting for the problem to hit us on the head before we deal with it.

It is interesting to note what the Vietnamese do with respect to this. Burchett says in *Why the Viet Cong is Winning*, "The basic organization of the Vietcong is the trio. Each day every trio meets and analyzes the day's activities." These meetings generally consist of criticism and self-criticism sessions. Meetings of this sort are held every week, at the squad level, every two weeks at the platoon level and monthly at the company level.

It is also useful for every comrade to place emphasis on self-criticism before beginning his criticism.

THE FAMILY IN REVOLUTIONARY PERSPECTIVE

In the previous chapters we have pointed out manifestations of individualism as the essential features of bourgeois hegemony in the ethical sphere.

We now want to promote discussion around these manifestations in the particular area of the couple, the family and the raising of children. In his book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels has demonstrated the class character of the family, refuting the erroneous belief that the family is a "natural" institution, which is the norm of "human nature." In this sense, he demonstrated that the family structure that we know is a phenomenon of capitalist society, that is historically determined. However, Engels did not propose what the socialist couple

or family will or should be like. He did not do so — in fact could not do so — because the family is an element of social relations and a socialist family could only be projected on the material basis of socialist relations of production.

Therefore, revolutionaries can only conduct ourselves in this as in other ethical questions, with a transition morality appropriate to the epoch of the transition of capitalism to socialism in which we live.

However, it is important to point out that Engels supports and defends the bourgeois monogamous couple as a form of

family relationship superior to other forms previous to the transition into the socialist family.

In effect the freedom of human beings and their harmonious development are more viable, although not totally achieved, in this form of family than in the forms that preceded it: polygamy/polyandry, group marriage, and promiscuity.

Engel's theoretical affirmation is confirmed in the practice of the worker states. The construction of the new family arises in these countries from the monogamous couple as its basic cell, demonstrating that it is superior as a unit of construction of the socialist family. Revolutionaries in countries still held by the enemy must keep in mind that we must achieve our own forms of transition in the heart of, and in opposition to, bourgeois society.

Above all, it is important at this moment when traditional bourgeois morality is attempting to revolutionize itself through what some commentators have called the sexual revolution.

This false revolution consists simply of reversing the traditional bourgeois concepts concerning the family, couples, and love. However, it remains part of the sphere of bourgeois hegemony in its two essential questions, the petrification of human relations and is presented as the remedy for all ills. On the other hand, it places sex, and in particular the female sex, at the service of the capitalist system, in the expansion of the market, in the self-image that bourgeois hegemony and the function of the superstructure try to give. This can clearly be seen in the role that the image of the woman and sex in general play in advertising, fashion, the mass media of communication, and so-called public relations. In order to construct a new morality of sex and the family, revolutionaries must begin from radically opposed viewpoints. In the first place, the relationship of the couple and family relationships should be stripped of the general petrification that commodity production imposes on all relationships. We must understand that our partners and our children are not the objects of our pleasure or of our needs, but rather integral human beings whose personalities are not restricted to one single aspect,

either sexual, pertaining to the family, or filial, but have many aspects that compose the totality of the human persona. If we understand this, we will achieve a basic supposition from which to advance in this area: the absolute equality between the sexes and the integral character of the personal relationships of the couple or the family.

In the following section we should raise a second problem. What is the material basis for this relationship? Sex or social activity? Consciously or unconsciously the belief that sex is the material basis for the relationship of couples characterizes the majority of these relationships, including between revolutionary comrades. However, modern psychology and numerous experiences demonstrate the opposite: only when a couple has a harmonious relationship in other areas, can sexual satisfaction also be achieved. On the other hand, those relationships which are based purely on sex end up being frustrating in all aspects, including sex.

The couple can only base themselves in an integral relationship between partners, which is materially based in their own social activity, the concrete role that they play in society: that of militant revolutionaries.

Therefore, the revolutionary couple is an integral relationship between two people who have an axis, a material base: their revolutionary activity. The relationship will be harmonious and positive to the extent that it contributes to the revolutionary advance of the comrades and the enrichment of their relation to the revolutionary organization, the working class, the people, and the whole of the revolutionary process. This should definitely not be interpreted in a mechanical way i.e., that it is enough to belong to the same organization and be good militants in order to establish a good match. It is clear that other things are necessary, other aspects, other affinities, other affections.. However, we should interpret it dialectically.

We should understand that for revolutionaries, the couple is not a "personal" entity peripheral to political relationships and activities.

On the contrary, the couple also is a

political activity. Its members can and should find in it a true basic cell of their political activity, integrated into the totality of their relationships. We say "basic cell" because in it the members will find the first element for confrontation of their own revolutionary advances and the first point of support with which to realize them. But we say integrated with the totality of their relationships, because the revolutionary couple should not constitute a closed unit that begins and ends with itself, but as we have previously mentioned should integrate their relationship with the whole of the organization, with the working class, the people, and with the whole revolutionary process. In fact, the couple can and should join into a form of community life developed by the group of comrades who share living quarters (if that is the case). This group constitutes the basic cell, not only of the politico-military activity of the organization, but of a life-style that constitutes an appropriate transition towards the future style of socialist life. In the bosom of the organization of the home, the comrades who constitute a couple — as well as those who do not — would share all elements of their daily life. Not only would they actively integrate themselves into the revolutionary activity, but they would also integrate every element of their daily lives, sharing their resources through a mutual fund and rotating the domestic and practical tasks of the home, the tasks related to revolutionary activity and also tasks related to the daily life of the group; as a result they share their free time, diversions, studies, etc. In this embryonic life design, the revolutionary couple contributes to the stability of the group and finds in it the means to positively integrate their relationship into the totality of their social relationships. However, this "politico-family cell" cannot isolate itself from the reality that surrounds them. To proceed in this way would be like trying to grow the revolutionary organization like a hot house plant, separated from the rest of society. It is a certainty that we will never construct any revolutionary organization in this way. The revolutionary organization should be clearly delineated from the masses in the or-

ganizational aspect, as Lenin has pointed out, but politically should be open to the masses, as he also pointed out when he said that we must learn from the masses in order to educate them. It is worth adding among some comrades that revolutionaries sufficiently mature, they have more to learn from the masses than to attempt to teach them. This is also valid in the sphere of the construction of a new ethics for the couple and for the family. This basic politico-family cell that is comprised of the group of comrades who share living quarters should be permanently open and tied to the masses, not only in its more general political relationships, but also in their everyday life. When we earlier raised the necessity that the comrades share the domestic tasks of the home, the utilization of free time, studies, etc. it should be understood in the sense of sharing, not only among themselves, but with the masses. This shows the importance of living among proletarians. Revolutionaries will learn from the masses by opening up our family units to our neighbors and the masses that surround us, and integrating ourselves with them.

In this way we share in confronting the triumphs and errors of their practice and viewpoints, and will be able to attribute to the masses the legitimate progressive advances that are made in our life as revolutionaries. In passing, we state that at the same time this is the only way to correctly guarantee security.

RAISING CHILDREN

In the first place it is necessary to depart from the fixed opinions deeply rooted among some comrades that revolutionaries should not have children because they limit them in their revolutionary work. This affirmation is incorrect.

It is true that we can cite cases where comrades who, for fear that their children might be harmed, have demonstrated weakness before the enemy, that because of their children they have been careless about their revolutionary activity. However, this does not mean that the children are the cause of these individualistic atti-

tudes, but on the contrary, that they are an effect, another manifestation of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois individualism, which is manifested in this case as fear for their children, or carelessness in their work. As in other circumstances, it is manifested in other ways. The revolutionary can only be whole to the extent that he is a complete human being, who develops the whole of his human condition; as vice-versa, the revolutionary activity is the basic condition for the integral development of the personality.

In this sense, the natural and instinctive human tendency to prolong the existence of its species can and should be treated in a revolutionary manner. This surely does not imply the obligation of being a super mother or father in order to be a complete revolutionary; but it does imply the opposite, meaning that the fact of being a good mother or father is not in opposition to, but rather complements the formation of a complete revolutionary.

But in order to accomplish this, it is necessary to break from the current individualist attitude regarding children. This individualist attitude consists of building one-sided parent-child relationships, one-sided in the same way that all other human relationships become one-sided, by considering only one aspect of the person. In this case the condition of our children. This common attitude regarding children is the natural prolongation of the individualism that comes from bourgeois hegemony. From the moment that their own individuality is constituted under this hegemony over the center of their values and point of reference, these are the persons who bear our most intimate elements.

In order to eradicate this individualist attitude we must begin by learning that our children, like any other person, do not have just one single aspect, which is to say their character as children, but that they are human beings like ourselves, and as such have their own needs of integral development like anyone else. We have pointed out that high among these human needs is integration into the historic process in which we live. Naturally, in the case of children, these necessities have very special characteristics, since their youth requires

from the adults, a special protection, and it impedes their understanding of many issues.

In this sense, we should begin by understanding that children are not short adults but children. Our first obligation is to provide them in each case with the elements of understanding of their circumstances in terminology appropriate to their age and provide them with the protection that their vulnerability and defenselessness require. This attention must be provided in a revolutionary, not an individualistic manner based on the viewpoint of ethics founded in collective life. This means that the attention given the children must not be in contradiction to the whole of the activities of the revolutionary, but must be integrated with them. The children of revolutionaries must share every aspect of their parents' lives, including the risks. Although of course, we must try to provide special protection for the children appropriate to their tender age, but always insuring that this special protection is not in opposition to the superior interests of the revolution. The beautiful image of the Vietnamese woman who carries her child with her rifle at her side, which we have seen in various magazines and posters, is a symbol of the new revolutionary attitude toward children. The Vietnamese afford their children all types of special attention, but when at times it becomes necessary to share with them the risks of war, they do not hesitate to do so. In order for this revolutionary attitude toward children to become possible, it is necessary to integrate them into the concept of the couple and of the family unit that we have mentioned previously.

We should bury once and for all the concept that the rearing of children is solely the "mother's task," even in its most elemental practical aspects. The rearing of children is a common task of the couple, and not only the couple, but also of all the comrades who share a house. We should actively promote a new attitude with regards to this. When one speaks of sharing in the bosom of the collective home not only the politico-military activity of the group, but also the study time, the utilization of free time and common tasks of

daily life, these tasks should include the superior task of raising the children of the comrades who share the house.

With respect to this it is interesting to point out the experiences of the revolutionary people of Cuba, on the Isle of Pines. There young couples experience new models of communal life, practicing among others, the common rearing of children. The experience is highly satisfactory for the parents as well as the children, demonstrating in practice what psychology had established theoretically: what the children need is not so much "their" mother or father, but the image of father and mother. Which is to say, everything that this signifies in affection, protection, support, personality identification for learning, etc. And these images are perfectly interchangeable when this interchange is effected correctly, even when the child distinguishes which are his biological parents. If children are not raised with their parents in current society, they experience all types of problems; this is not due to the deficiency as such of their parents, but because the people who replace them do not fulfill the role of a revolutionary parent. Which is to say because individualism will not permit them to treat other children as their own. If on the other hand, one invests in the rearing of children all the caring and affection that one would give one's own child, the child would experience no deficiency whatsoever. It is the differences that one makes with them which harms them. This revolutionary attitude towards the rearing of children is perfectly possible and we should promote this within the framework of the new family unit that should be constituted by the group of comrades living collectively.

As such, it constitutes a genuine task, as important as any other political-military task, because it concerns nothing less than the education of future revolutionary generations, those whose shoulders will bear the task of constructing socialism.

Finally, this attitude should be complemented by serious attention which should be given by the revolutionary organizations to the care of the children whose parents are dead or imprisoned. The organization will grow to take up not just the most urgent material aspects of the care, but also

with promoting the integration of that child into a new family unit in the heart of the organization. This is particularly important in the case of the children of non-proletarian comrades. Generally, these children remain in the care of grandparents or uncles, and in this manner, the child will lose all the advances that their parents have made in the struggle against bourgeois and petty bourgeois individualism once he begins to feel the influence of bourgeois hegemony in the home of his grandparents or uncles.

This aspect should also be integrated with the lives of the masses. The children should also integrate themselves into the life of the masses in a manner which is appropriate for them, living and playing with the children of workers. And parents should equally share the responsibility of child rearing, by confronting with neighbors their practices and viewpoints on the rearing of our own children and theirs, giving general attention to the problems of children, without establishing hateful differences between "our own children and those of others."

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Based on the general criteria raised in the above sections, we should analyze in particular the problem of the woman, understanding her concrete situation here and now. In bourgeois society, the woman, especially the working class woman, constitutes a particularly exploited sector of exploitation and oppression in general. We should differentiate in this situation between the differences which are derived biologically in their role as mother, and those elements that are purely social in order to integrate the former into a scheme of ethics and to combat the latter.

In the first case, it is clear that during pregnancy and nursing, maternity entails special obligations. The female comrades must assume this reality and not believe that they can be active in the same way when they become mothers. There will be logical limitations, and habitual practices.

But these limitations should be understood in a revolutionary way, as problems imposed by the higher task of educating future revolutionary generations and

should be compensated in practice by another type of viable activity, like study, for example. Her partner and other comrades should understand this problem and support the women comrades in a revolutionary way, helping them to understand and overcome these practical limitations. This also can be accomplished to the extent that our daily life is integrated into the life of the masses. For example, learning from proletarian women about how they do child-care for each other and many other ways.

On the other hand, other forms of limitation and oppression of women are manifestations of bourgeois hegemony, such as we have pointed out above.

These expressions should be actively combatted. To achieve this, revolutionary organizations must take up, among their struggles, the liberation of the woman, particularly the working class woman. The double exploitation to which women are submitted is very visible in the form of lower salaries, inferior working conditions, and sexual harassment by their employers or the personnel hierarchy. On the other hand, this struggle can only go as far in practice as the extent to which proletarian women integrate themselves into revolutionary organizations.

It is obvious how much bourgeois hegemony manifests itself in the heart of our organizations by way of the large deficit in working class women.

It is very important that the whole organization and in particular its women, preoccupy themselves with winning more proletarian women into our ranks, elevating them to revolutionary cadre, and proletarianizing themselves.

We should raise the particular problems of women and direct ourselves to them by winning them into our ranks in order to struggle for these demands and for all revolutionary objectives.

The proletarianization that we demand for all organizations should be especially emphasized among the female elements.

Only in this way will we resolve in practice the problem of the double oppression of women and integrate the ethical aspects of this question into our efforts toward the construction of a new revolutionary morality.

SELF CRITICISM

In the preceeding sections we have tried to initiate the criticism of bourgeois morals in the area of love and the family. We should also complement this criticism with a self-criticism of the reflections of the morality in our ranks. The practical cases are numerous, and we will try to summarize them in a few typical cases.

In the first place, there is the projection of the disunity of the couple with the practice of militancy. Frequently, couples who are involved in an inharmonious relationship become weak in their militancy. This is a manifestation of individualism that arises from considering the couple as a separate entity apart from the whole membership. This should be overcome by considering the couple as a political-military cell, as we said above.

In the second place there is the opposite case, mutual protection, trying to avoid one by one other risks in one's tasks or showing weakness in the face of the enemy by fearing for the security or physical integrity of the comrades. It is a genuine lack of respect of the revolutionary personality by another, and it has the same individualist origin as the previous case.

A lack of respect for one's partner can be seen when a separation is required by one's tasks or because one or both comrades fall into the enemy's hands. Frequently in this case, comrades tend to begin new relationships. It is a comfortable way to resolve one's own immediate deficiencies and it exhibits strong individualism — not putting oneself in another's place and not looking at the whole array of things from the point of view of the higher interests of the revolution.

It has the same origin mentioned before and also the erroneous belief — either conscious or unconscious — that the material basis for the couple's relationship consists of the most elemental manifestations of sex and not social practice. This does not mean that it might not be legitimate and positive to begin a new relationship in certain circumstances. But it should always be done through a careful analysis of all the elements, and not in a thoughtless superficial and hurried way, giving in to circumstances and superficial impulses.

All these deviations can be corrected only with the criteria cited above, and their correction will contribute to the construction of a revolutionary morality and to the advance of its revolutionary organizations.

Since 1898, the Puerto Rican people have waged revolutionary warfare upon the imperialist U.S. presence on the island. While the active nature of the struggle has, like all things, been subject to the processes of ebb and flow. The continuous revolutionary character of our struggle has never waned and it is this character which has given Puerto Rican Revolutionaries not the defensist ideology of a flame of resistance, but rather has found its ideology in the will to win. For true revolutionary character cannot allow for the slightest co-existence between bourgeois existence and revolutionary thought or practice.

In this, the era of "putting the state on trial," the Puerto Rican revolutionary movement has blazed a trail which only a coward afraid to think his or her thoughts to their logical conclusion could ever deny.

Consuelo Lee Corretjer stated that "One can be a Marxist and not a communist, but one cannot be a communist and not a Marxist," and it is true. For Marxism is a liberating ideology which ushers in a new humanity and finds its fullest expression in communist thought and relationships. Communist thought which is profoundly revolutionary is the thought of fully cognizant beings who are willing to accept the consequences of their actions in order to build a new, more humane society. Where there are neither exploited nor exploiters. Communist thought is the ideology of true lovers of democracy, and communist relationships create the morality and basis for a new society.

It is important to point out that what is required of a communist is not just courage, since that alone is an instinctual phenomena, while the merging of courage and political consciousness is a good starting point, a determining factor, we must remember the words of Puerto Rican Prisoner of War Elizam Escobar "Consciousness without true faith and love, is an ideal without emotion, a mind without a soul. As Corretjer has stated in the case of Puerto Rico "An independentist without true patriotism:" and in the case of the world communist conception: "a Marxist without revolutionary fervor."

In is with this understanding that we offer you this work, for we must be capable of a new vision if we are to enter the stage of true history.

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