

DIALOGUE WITH M.S.P. part 2

OEM: What is the MSP view on the Cuban Revolution?

MSP-UJS: I am glad that this question has been posed, since for our movement, the position in respect to the Cuban Revolution is important to our view of the international situation, i.e., our politics on the international level. It seems to me that as much as I would like to be brief, this will not be possible, especially when there has been so much written and discussed about the Cuban Revolution, ranging from the first extremely important observations made by Che Guevara, to Regis Debray, Charles Bettelheim (in his famous polemic with Che regarding the productive forces and the applicability of the law of value to Cuba) and Michael Lowy, just to mention a few, as well as, the many articles and so-called "analysis" which we will not attempt to discuss. In this context, diverse interpretations have been developed regarding the revolutionary process in Cuba. I stated that I will not be able to be brief because it is not enough to say that our position is one of support to the socialist character of the Cuban Revolution and to its consistent application, in real terms, of the principles of Proletarian Internationalism. However, to remain here would be extremely superficial. Our position is placed within the significance of the triumph and consolidation of socialism in Cuba for the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

In the first place, we understand that the development, triumph and consolidation of the Cuban Revolution has been neither a "historical exception" nor an "only model" for Latin America. To pose the first is to say that developments in Cuba were experiences that could not be applied to other countries. We oppose this interpretation, and history itself has proven this not to be the case. On the other hand, to hold up and convert the Cuban experience as an "only Model" is to fall prey to that which we have criticized in others, i.e., not recognizing the dialectical character of every historical process. We shall be more precise.

We understand that the triumph of the Cuban Revolution constitutes a severe blow to the traditional communist and socialist parties in Latin America. As you know, the history of those parties has been one of continuous failures. From the decade of the 30's to the beginning of the 60's and even today, these parties saw the development of the revolution in the Americas as part of the process where the fundamental contradiction was between the nation and foreign capital. This interpretation led them to pose the possibility of a class alliance between the peasantry, the working class, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie (interested in the industrial development of Latin America) against imperialism and its allies, the big landowners and the agricultural oligarchy. This was the basis on which these parties posed that the general organizational objective was the construction of a patriotic national front of a democratic character with the strategic objective not of the socialist revolution but of a bourgeois democratic revolution and the establishment of a national government led by the bourgeoisie and supported by the popular sectors. Within this conception it was possible and even necessary to support the bourgeoisie and to even look with favor upon a seizure of the state by nationalist militarists. In viewing the present stage as being one of the bourgeois democratic revolution, it is then impossible for these parties to speak of socialist revolution until this stage was completed, and even less to speak of the fundamental contradiction as being between

the proletariat and dispossessed masses against the bourgeoisie. Armed struggle? This was out of the question! Those who posed the need for it were quickly branded as illusionists or adventurists.

In opposition to this mechanistic interpretation, alien to the actual reality of Latin America, and as a rallying call to



the consciousness of revolutionaries to develop the socialist revolution, stands the triumph of the July 26th Movement. To illustrate what we mean, let us examine the lessons that have been bequeathed to us by the Cuban Revolution—lessons which Che Guevara, true scientist of revolutionary theory and action, pointed out these are fundamentally five, because what might well be considered the sixth we understand to be non-applicable (I refer to the struggle fundamentally being one in the rural areas).

I. The Character of the Bourgeoisie in Latin America

The experience of the first years of the Cuban Revolution, similar to the experience of all the Portuguese-Hispanic Americas (to include Brazil), showed that the so-called National Bourgeoisies do not possess the revolutionary potential that many so-called Marxists presume to vest upon them. What happened in Cuba? If it is indeed a certainty that sectors of the bourgeoisie initially supported the July 26th Movement, it is even more a certainty that once the revolution had acquired an irreversible character—as it began to move toward agrarian reform, toward nationalizing and socializing important sectors of the economy and toward expropriation of the monopolies—that the same bourgeoisie passed to being counter-revolutionary. They proved that they were not willing to relinquish their interests, their class interests, let alone confront imperialism, because they were totally dependent upon vast northamerican finance capital. It is for this reason that when Che pointed out that a "revolution which is not taken to its ultimate conclusion is lost" he meant simply and clearly that it is not enough to seize power but that the class struggle must be taken to its final consequences; to wage war against imperialism, as well as, against the bourgeoisie. What occurred in Guatemala under the populist regime of Arbenz, in Argentina under

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"TRUE LIBERATION OF PEOPLES...WILL HAVE IN THE AMERICAS THE POTENTIAL TO TRANSFORM ITSELF INTO SOCIALIST REVOLUTION "

Domingo Peron, in Brazil with Goulart in 1964, and even in the Dominican Republic? The national bourgeoisie is incapable of and can never lead a revolution in Latin America. This is a lesson, which seems to us, the revolutionaries of Latin America have learned all too well; this is placing in proper perspective the role of the bourgeoisie in the era of socialist revolution.

II. The revolution in Latin America will be national in form but essentially socialist in content.

Without resorting to a mere sollogism I will state that the second great lesson of the Cuban Revolution is intimately linked to what has been posed regarding the national bourgeoisies in Latin America. If this class is totally dependent on imperialism, if it is in open contradiction with the proletariat and furthermore will never struggle for socialist revolution (particularly given the experience of Cuba and recently Chile) then where is the basis for a bourgeois-democratic revolution? It seems to us, as some say in Puerto Rico, that it has been "historically proven and dialectically substantiated," that socialist revolution is possible in Latin America. It is true that during the first years following the triumph of the Cuban Revolution the immediate tasks were those of meeting the democratic aspirations of the workers and peasants. It is just as true that these tasks could very well be developed in the initial stages of the socialist revolution. At the same time, another extremely important aspect must be considered: the role of the vanguard, which in Cuba, was able without a doubt, to push forward the march of those events within the context of what was objectively possible. What for many was merely a bourgeois democratic revolution, was transformed into a socialist revolution. If the Socialist revolution triumphed in Cuba, then can't similar developments occur in Africa, Asia, and Latin America? We think it can. Not only has Cuba proven this to be true but so has Vietnam and Angola. What I am posing here and which our organization accepts as valid, is clearly expressed in the message to the Tricontinental: "The true liberation of



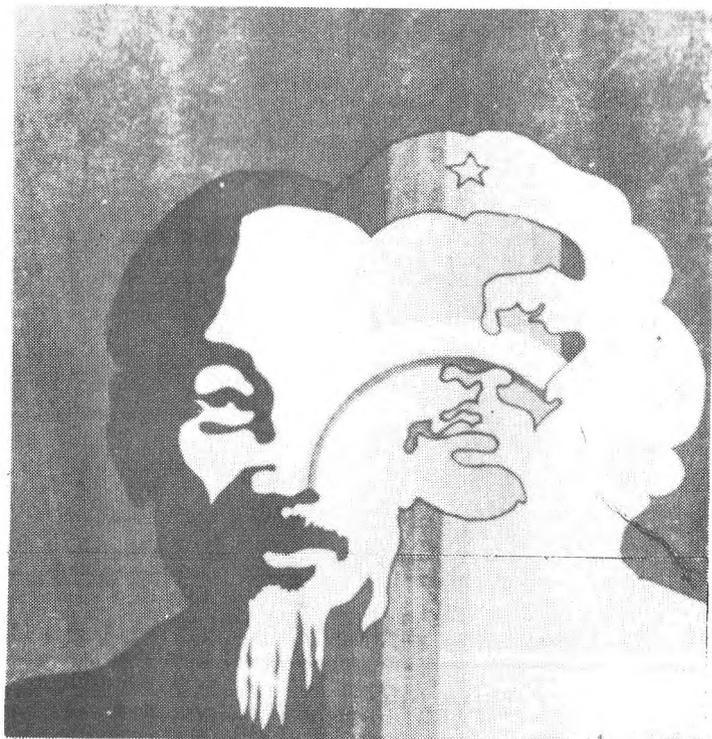
"Without Revolution There Can Be No True Independence."
(Greats of Cuban Independence: Martí, Maceo, and Gomez)

peoples... will have in the Americas almost unflinching, the potential to transform itself into socialist revolution... the national bourgeoisies have lost all their ability to oppose imperialism. There are not more changes to be made; it's either a socialist revolution or a caricature of a revolution"

III. The Necessity of the Armed Struggle as the Fundamental Method of Struggle.

One of the key lessons of the Cuban Revolution, which is at the same time the central question of every revolution—the question of power and of how to destroy the bureaucratic-military apparatus of the bourgeois state—is without a doubt the guerrilla warfare experience in the Sierra itself as well as in the plains. This lesson we can summarize in the following way: The Cuban Revolution showed in practice that Marxists must be consistent with the Leninist position expounded in the State and Revolution. That is to say, the way in which the socialist revolution can be achieved is by counterposing revolutionary violence to reactionary violence. If we truly seek to be victorious in this struggle we must destroy the bourgeois state and therefore the oppressor's army. It was clearly proven in Cuba, that the popular forces can defeat an oppressor army no matter how powerful it may be, in order to achieve this it is necessary to construct the peoples army, or what we can call the Revolutionary Army of the Workers.

It must be a war and a revolutionary army that cannot be one of a conventional character but on the contrary: a mobile force. The important thing will not be to seize territory in order to establish liberated zones but to win the people over. The political military actions of the army



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DIALOGUE cont.

or of the revolutionary units in conjunction with the consistent political actions of its vanguard will allow the development of a protracted war of liberation. A war that will attack, harass, disorient and demoralize the reactionary forces to the point of achieving their complete destruction. A revolutionary war which will allow the synthesis of "Organization, the People, consciousness, and arms!" This means that the role of the vanguard is not to sit and wait until all the objective and subjective historical conditions coincide in order to then pose for themselves the seizure of political power. The role which must be assumed by the vanguard must stem from the objective conditions of economic crisis and the orientation of the events unfolding toward the initiation of the revolutionary struggle.

This is what occurred in Cuba and we understand that it has been a lesson which is applicable and that has been concretely taken up in the Americas where at the same time, there have existed other experiences that have enriched the former one, as is the case with the Tupamaros of Uruguay, the PRT-ERP in Argentina, etc.

The other contributions of the Cuban revolution have been their real and sincere gestures of Proletarian Internationalism within which they have spared no efforts in aiding the revolutionary organizations and peoples in struggle for their national liberation. In Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, and in many countries in Latin America these have been in places where the revolutionary people of Cuba have shown their commitment to the principle of internationalism in theory as well as in practice. A further contribution, and as expounded by Che Guevara, has been the strategic conception regarding the struggle on a continental scale. If Cuba confronted imperialism, then the peoples of Latin America can do the same but this time in united form.

This, in general terms is our position regarding the Cuban Revolution, and as I stated from the beginning, for these and other reasons we support the Cuban Revolution as a Socialist revolution and one which has contributed much to the International Revolutionary Struggle.

OEM: What is your view regarding the Northamerican left?

UJS-MSP: The question which you pose to us might very well be the most difficult one to answer. At the same time, its response might also be ill-advised, particularly if we were to limit our opinion based on the period of this visit. In any case, and given the contacts which we have maintained with various organizations in the United States, as well as the fact that we are up to date in terms of the situation here, it seems possible to respond around this matter.

Firstly, we believe that as is the case in all societies (ours for example) there exist in the U.S. as many organizations as there are ideological positions in regard to the development of the revolutionary struggle in the United States and externally. There are organizations which seem more concerned with events in the countries of the Socialist camp than with what is taking place here in the United States. Within this variation (if it can be called that) are on the one hand, the so-called "maoists" who are more concerned with the sino-soviet split and in addition, many if not all their publications are geared around what they define as "soviet social-imperialism" or the "myth of the cuban revolution." These are concepts (if they can be categorized as such) that to our understanding do not correspond to the genuine scientific concepts of marxism, particularly those which are utilized in analyzing any socio-historical formation. In essence they

constitute attempts at analyzing reality as they would wish it to be and not as it really is. One cannot just categorize the Soviet Union as social imperialist (as most who think along these lines do) on the basis that "capitalism has been restored in the Soviet Union," nor can one view revolutionary Cuba as a Myth. History has already proven that this is not the case. In posing this, we do not pretend to make an absolute defense of the Soviet Union particularly when there are innumerable criticisms of it.

On the other hand, there exist other organizations, Trotskyites, and as an example the Socialist Workers Party (S.W.P.), whose positions regarding Puerto Rico, Latin America and the countries of the Socialist Camp are incorrect. From their criticism of the form in which armed struggle has developed in Latin America to their attempt to raise to the level of an absurdity the Marxist position regarding mass struggles this is manifested, particularly when they pose that if there are no mass struggles then there can be no armed struggle. In this way they negate the true role of the political and military vanguard of the workers. In posing this we are not negating the practice which any of these organizations may have developed. Nor do we want to negate the right that organizations have to pose their positions, criticisms, and analysis regarding every process and organization. Nevertheless, the ability and right to pose these is not and cannot become an obstacle to the development of analysis and positions which are responsible and scientific. At the same time, there also exist a series of political organizations whose theory and practice correspond with the need of effectively taking up and developing to politically more advanced levels the revolutionary struggle toward the seizure of political power by the working class in the United States. That revolutionary struggle is one which is complex and difficult but is one which can never be said to be impossible. It is a revolutionary struggle in which the workers of hispanic background (Puerto Ricans, Chicanos, Dominicans, Panamanians, etc.) have an integral part, as do Black and White workers. It is our understanding that the Northamerican Left, speaking in both general and particular terms, have a great historical responsibility toward themselves, toward the working class in the United States, and toward the oppressed peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America that struggle for independence and socialism. A vivid example of this reality was the effect on the imperialist ruling class of the consistent mobilizations against the economic and military intervention by yanqui imperialism in South East Asia and Vietnam in particular. We understand that it is necessary to also point out that there are various organizations whose political practice, serious and scientific analysis around the northamerican reality, as well as the manner in which they have been implementing the necessity for principled unity among the various political forces on the Left, have served as a revolutionary example to the northamerican left in general. In concrete terms we refer to El Comité-M.I.N.P. This organization to our understanding has carefully guarded themselves from falling prey to opportunist positions and practices. At the same time, their political positions regarding the revolutionary struggle in the United States, the Puerto Ricans in the U.S. and the struggle in Puerto Rico and other parts of Latin America is extremely serious, and politically clear from a marxist standpoint. Finally we would also point out that we have become more aware of the absence of information regarding the situation in Puerto Rico. In some cases the information available has been incomplete. At the same time, the interest which we have been able to observe about our struggle is very heartening.