
Grupos de Resistencia Antifascista Primero de Octubre (GRAPO)

Interview with GRAPO

Published: *Area Critica*, July 1990

<https://armthespiritforrevolutionaryresistance.wordpress.com/2018/06/02/more-grapo/>

Transcription, Editing and Markup: Paul Saba and Sam Richards. Copyright: This work is in the Public Domain under the Creative Commons Common Deed. You can freely copy, distribute and display this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit the Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism On-Line as your source, include the url to this work, and note any of the transcribers, editors & proofreaders above.

An interview completely elaborated by GRAPO, with its own questions and answers, has reached various Basque media outlets. Its authenticity has been verified by various photographs which depict hooded persons carrying weapons habitually used by that organization. In the interview they set out various themes related to their political posture and diverse appraisals on their future intentions, as well as some comments on the general political situation.



The document has not been made public through the receiving political media means, but it can have a useful and interesting value to our readers which we want to leave to their discretion.

Why groups of resistance?

Because groups of resistance are necessary. The situation in the Spanish state makes the armed struggle necessary. You only need to look at our environment. The popular masses are oppressed by multiple problems. Each day unemployment, misery and corruption grows and nobody stops the abuse. On the other hand, the non-violent means of protest don't work for

anything, you are not allowed to organize to give a real solution to your problems, a little movement on your part and they put you in jail. What to do? The only avenue left is direct confrontation with the regime, and the armed struggle is the highest expression of this confrontation. That's the way it is. Our rulers only see the light when they are hit. That is why the resistance is necessary. We say resistance because, naturally, we aren't going to finish with them in a day. Our struggle is marked by a process of prolonged war. Which is defined by its offensive character, to resist the enemy's blows. If everything were going well our struggle wouldn't be justified, but unfortunately, it isn't that way. Naturally we talk about the problems of the workers, the students... which for the bourgeoisie aren't problems. What are we going to do?! Perhaps that's why they don't stop lamenting that there's a few crazies dedicated to souring their existence, returning the blows they unleash on the people.

It may be a common question but why are there so many reappearances of GRAPO?

Someone has compared you to the Guadiana River, you disappear and then reappear.

The comparison isn't bad. We, like that river, are a living force within our society. We are in permanent combat against the enemy and some-times they are able to hit us and reduce our armed activity. When this happens, we go back to our roots, that is to say, to the most combative men and women of our people, we regroup and...

Pretty poetic isn't it?

That's how it is. That could explain our history. Since 1975 until around 1978 we formed a new type of armed organization, without experience and few means. In combat we acquired both. We had surprise in our favour: the state's repressive forces knew nothing of our functioning and little about our militants. That made the organization's activity easier in actions like the kidnapping of Oriol and Villaescuela and other operations carried out during that time period. But even though their repression wasn't easy, the police relied extensively on their traditional methods: massive detentions, systematic torture... They accumulated information and little by little began detaining some combat groups and important leaders.

And that started the hardships of GRAPO?

We can't say that. Suffering and defeat temper and harden the combatants. But it's not about that. What happens is that around that time is when the regime's political manoeuvre began to take on a clear shape. The "reform" operation so that nothing would change you could say. In that situation there was a recession of the revolutionary movement. Certain expectations were created in the masses in the sense that perhaps with democracy they could solve their problems, perhaps with autonomy... It is not about a particular problem with our organization, but of the entire popular movement. That notwithstanding and despite the setbacks suffered, there were some initial successes on the military level and the attempt to mask a fascist regime failed.

But the reforms were consolidated.

A: The fact that some political reforms were imposed within the state apparatus does not imply its consolidation. The democratic mask has neither legitimized the regime nor taken it out of the isolation it suffered before the reform. But any ways following the thread of what we were saying earlier, it is in that situation when the repressive forces accumulate sufficient information on our movement, they go on the offensive and go on a real hunt against our combatants. It mattered little that the “democracy” would be forever stained with murder and torture, the important thing for them was to finish with our organization by any means. They murdered Collazo and Cerdan and other frontline combatants.

And then the PSOE arrives.

With the PSOE in government the state’s repressive machinery developed and perfected itself in the most beastly form. With this they took advantage of the confusion that their demagogic politics had created among the masses. Without the Felipistas in the government and the famous 10 million votes they got, the state powers would not have dared carry out the dirty war across the country. The PSOE gave them this option on a silver platter.

From another point of view, this assumes something very important: with the PSOE the regime was out of political responses. We don’t want to say that the dominant classes can’t stay in power much longer, what happens is that they no longer fool anyone and their room for manoeuvre is considerably reduced. They are on the defensive again. This is a favourable factor for the resistance and it will allow us to regroup our forces and develop our strategy.

What are GRAPO’s objectives? In one of your documents you set forth your theory of prolonged people’s war, but that doesn’t clarify anything. War is made for a purpose...

Evidently, war is made for a purpose. We make it to finish with the imperial political-economic system in Spain, to finish with all the yokes that this system generates. We know that this isn’t a one day thing. Our struggle, which is that of the working masses, for their liberation, will be long, and in the course of which we hope to convert ourselves into the people’s army. In the first phase of this war we defend ourselves, we resist the enemy’s blows, hitting them when it will benefit us the most politically and supporting the popular struggles. We consider this struggle to be essentially “defensive” which is to say that even though the state and Spanish dominant class present themselves as “victims of terrorist violence”, in reality, we are the victims along with the popular masses and they are the victimizers.

For our part, all we do is confront the diverse forms of violence which they exercise on the people. It is a resistance struggle and as such does not limit itself to stopping blows and returning them, but rather has as its main objective in this phase of the struggle to accumulate revolutionary forces to finish the system in the future. It is very clear that we by ourselves are not going to finish with it. From there, as we say in the Guerrilla’s Manual, which sums up

the experiences and political-military theories of organization, the strategy of GRAPO continues to be “free the workers revolutionary energies” who will, ultimately, be the ones who make the revolution.

But your strategy is based on the PCE(r)- GRAPO complex...

That story about the complex! What we don't have is any complex in showing our relationship with the PCE(r). We have stated many times that we are not the armed wing of any party nor of any force that is not that of the popular resistance movement, of all that movement of independent and radical struggle confronting the regime. Now too, we have always maintained that the PCE(r) is the party that expresses the best political strategy for the liberation of our people.



In Euskadi things appear in a different manner, because even if it's just to make an example, why don't you carry out any operations in their territory?

A: It is evident that Euskadi, Catalonia and Galicia have a very specific goal: gaining self-determination. We support the struggle for re-vindication without reservation. And those aren't just words. On various occasions our operational commandos have carried out actions in support of the struggle of the Basque people and other nationalities for their national rights. But we must also take into account that Euskadi is immersed in a more advanced process. They have developed a powerful national liberation movement and armed organization. How could we hope to substitute it?

Then, do you think the ETA's struggle is correct?

It's an inadequate term, one thing is the justness of a cause, of a struggle, and another is the political or military theory chosen for its execution. We differ on this point.

As to the strategy for national liberation, as it is carried out in the developed countries, is it correct?

This struggle has acquired a term which defines its situation. This term is “Ulsterization” . Or rather, a situation of strategic equilibrium: I can’t destroy you but you can’t destroy me either. Which results in the principal or dominant factor, which keeps this contradiction alive, will always dominate, regardless of the losses that it causes.

How do you break this equilibrium?

To finish with that situation, we believe that what is lacking is a unity of all the forces that oppose and resolutely struggle against the state, and in particular, the unity of the working class of all nationalities. Only the working class has within it the necessary strength to put an end to national oppression and to many other problems. Of course for that we would have to introduce other theories, a clear program of socialist resolution which would entail, as an essential point for the nationalities, the plain exercise of national rights.

Like in Lithuania more or less?

And why not like Lithuania? A referendum to decide union or separation sounds like a good solution to us, even though, naturally, there may be others. What happens first is that said referendum would be impossible in Spain as long as the state of the Spanish oligarchy is still standing. And secondly, well, in Lithuania the reactionary and pro-imperialist bourgeoisie is not interested in it because they know perfectly well it would lose. In other words, the Lithuania people would choose socialism and that’s why they don’t want it.

We’re going to talk about a subject that is very current: the hunger strike by the PCE(r) and GRAPO prisoners for reunification. Lately you have carried out actions in support of them, such as the case of the doctor in Zaragoza.

At the hour of carrying out specific operations, our central command analyses the situation in its entirety and chooses the most adequate objective for each moment. In the dynamic of the struggle against the oppressing state, people and classes take positions. Some are neutral, some oppose them and others put themselves at their service. We direct our arms against these latter. It is the real dynamic of the class struggle. Force feeding, torturing a person tied hand and foot like that, is to put yourself at the side of a government which has shown its executioners’ face. All the other discourses only try to justify the torturers. That’s our way of looking at things.

But that hunger-strike, doesn’t it look like an unequal struggle to you?

It is from a certain point of view. Evidently it is the prisoners who carry the suffering, the ones who undergo the turn screw torture, but they are not the only ones who struggle. In reality all the healthy forces of our society have risen up against the government’s barbarism

and intransigence. From corner to corner of our country voices have been raised seeking a just solution to the problem. As is well known, we have also supported them with our actions. But definitely, the most important thing is that this struggle which started with a handful of men and women has become a struggle that has moved the country and put the government against the ropes demonstrating weakness.

Its weakness?

Man, they've been left with their ass in the air. All of its miseries and with it their true character have been left uncovered. What better thing than to solve a problem with such an easy solution? Only their attitude has impeded resolution of these things before they reached the magnitude they have acquired. If we were really facing a politically strong government, sustained by an ample social base, it can be reasoned that a solution to this conflict would have been relatively easy. With that they would have avoided the political unmasking they are now suffering. But it is clear that without their thugs and dirty war they have nothing to rest on, which evidently greatly limits any political initiative they may wish to take, no matter how small it may be.

How do you explain the measures against the political prisoners?

A: The political prisoners have become true hostages in the hands of the state, into a ball to taunt the revolutionary movement. The forms this taunting can take are very diverse, but the main thing is they try to obligate you to make the struggle depend solely on the problems the prisoners may have, or rather, to make you intervene militarily each time they launch a provocation. If you fall for this you are forced to abandon other forms of struggle, to abandon support for other popular sectors and the combat against other objectives that are of vital importance for the interests of the bourgeoisie or the state apparatus, and finally, when you notice you have lost the initiative, they isolate you, corner you and BAMM!

Falling into the trap also supposes deauthorizing (? – trans.) the very prisoners. They are not in prison for defending their own personal or group interests, but for struggling for a cause which transcends all personal interest and individual attitude. On the street we continue this struggle and set ourselves another goal: their liberation. But we insist on not entering a dynamic of “immediate response” to the government’s provocations. As much in this case as in others, because that is where we will have already lost the match. We have our plans and we will accomplish them independently of what they do.

Are these plans secret?

Not really. They are very simple, support the struggle of the workers and all the other popular sectors that confront the state and, of course, hit the bourgeoisie when and where we can cause damage. These plans are nothing new. They serve the objectives we have fixed for the

actual stage: the accumulation of forces and the preparation of conditions which make possible the extension and strengthening of the organized revolutionary movement.

And if a possibility for negotiation comes up?

The questions of negotiation actually appears as an obligatory reference for every revolutionary movement. To put things like that, as if a solution to problems depends on a future negotiation is to choose a path that leads nowhere. But look, that doesn't mean we reject negotiation as a political weapon to be used at the given time. We'll see. We hope to finish with the reactionary state in the context of a prolonged struggle in which there can be complex situations which allow us to make propositions for a peaceful solution to determined problems. All wars have these situations. Now then, we look at that hypothetical negotiation in a manner which would serve the consolidation of our positions and favours the political education and organization of the masses. Never to get side-tracked from our final objective, which is to overthrow the regime. To do otherwise would leave the initiative in the enemy's hands.

We desire that problems be resolved in a peaceful or negotiated manner. We have always desired that. It is they who have no such interest. They only seek surrender with nothing more, and the delivery of our weapons and do nothing on their part to end the problems which are the origin of the struggle.

And why don't they want to solve the problem of violence?

A: In reality the crisis the system is going through impedes their taking any initiative in that direction. For that reason the struggle will continue. It is necessary and inevitable. But we don't discard the possibility that someday there could be a real negotiation. At the moment it is clear that conditions have not matured nor is there light on the horizon that could take us to a situation of that type. But our posture towards this subject is very clear and in it is the proposition we have made many times. We have said: free the prisoners, make a gesture of that type and we'll respond in kind.

From that point of view, how do you see the dynamic of the negotiations being planned in Euskadi between ETA and the government?

The government has never seen negotiation as the solution to the national problem in Euskadi. In every case all it has talked about is a solution to "the problem of violence", that is to say, to the problem of eliminating ETA and the popular Basque movement. For this all they have offered, with a thousand and one conditions, is the liberation of the patriotic prisoners. It has never been willing to do more. Now they aren't even willing to do that. Reinsertion, which has always come to be the rotten carrot that they offer, has come to land

in the garbage. Corcuera and the heads of the institutional parties are talking about ending that offer. What does that mean? It means that on the one hand the government's plans to plant some confusion and divide the Basque popular movement have failed, but it also supposes the breaking of the positions of those who bet on that route as a possible parting point for a solution to the national problem in Euskadi. Now there is no other alternative but to grab the revindications by force, arguing for the combative unity in all the popular movements in Spain. This is the only viable response to the state terrorism and dirty war. They want us to surrender? Well, we'll have to answer like Sandino told the Yankies in his day: "let your father surrender!"

And the near future, how do you see it?

As a future of resistance and struggle. It goes without saying that in good measure that future will be conditioned to the political prisoners' struggle, to the support movement they are generating and the government's attitude before it. For our part during this strike we have been very patient in waiting for a just solution that would end this painful conflict. But the whole world has been able to prove that good reasons mean nothing to this government. They are so closed and so fascist that only the guerrilla's blows can make them recant. But they can only continue their usual path, that of torture and state terrorism. But, in that case, let them take into account that the struggle will be long and even though they hide behind walls of uniforms and machineguns we will go for them, we will find them and we will do justice.

