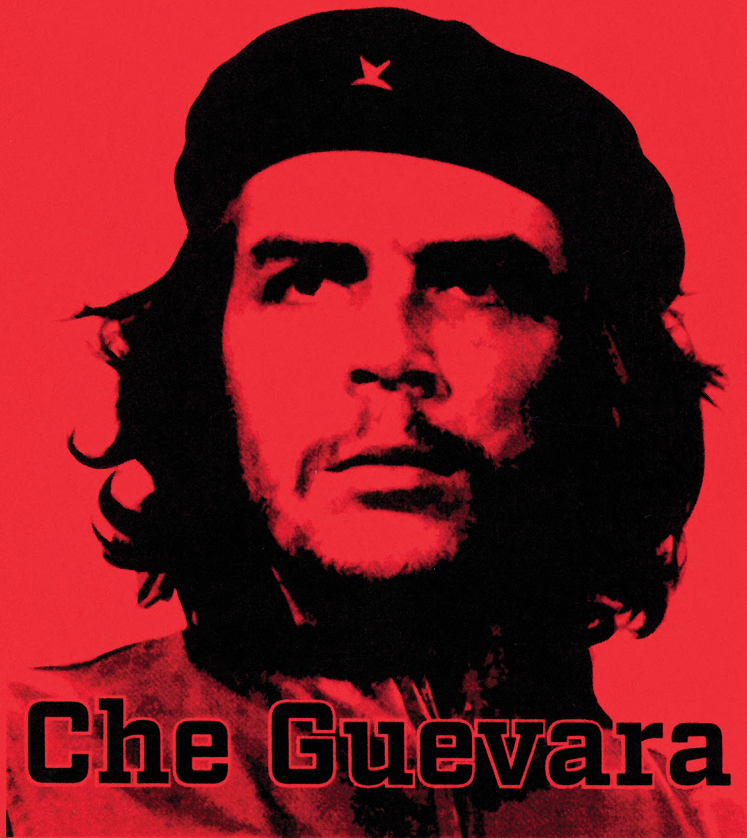


# Guerrilla Warfare



**Che Guevara**

# Guerrilla Warfare:

A Method

by

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Guerrilla warfare has been employed throughout history on innumerable occasions and in different circumstances to obtain different objectives. Lately it has been employed in various people's wars of liberation when the vanguard of a people have chosen the road of irregular armed struggle against enemies of superior military power. Asia, Africa and Latin America have been the scenes of such actions in attempts to obtain power in the struggle against feudal, neocolonial, or colonial exploitation. In Europe, guerrilla units have been used as supplements to native or allied regular armies.

Guerrilla warfare has been employed in the Americas on several occasions. We have had, as a case in point, the experience of César Augusto Sandino fighting against the Yankee expeditionary force on Nicaragua's Segovia. Recently we had Cuba's revolutionary war. In the Americas since then the problem of guerrilla war has been raised in theoretical discussions by the progressive parties of the continent with the question of whether its utilization is possible or convenient. This has become the topic of very controversial polemics.

This article will express our views on guerrilla warfare and its correct utilization. Above all, we must emphasize at the outset that this form of struggle is a means to an end. That end, essential and inevitable for any revolutionary, is the conquest of political power. In the analysis of specific situations in different countries of America, we must therefore use the concept of guerrilla warfare in the limited sense of a method of struggle in order to gain that end.

Almost immediately the questions arise: Is guerrilla warfare the only formula for seizing power in Latin America? Or, at any rate, will it be the predominant form? Or will it simply be one formula among many used during the struggle? And ultimately we may ask: Will Cuba's example be applicable to the present situation on the continent? In the course of polemics, those who want to undertake guerrilla warfare are criticized for forgetting mass struggle, implying that guerrilla warfare and mass struggle are opposed to each other. We reject this implication, for guerrilla warfare is a people's warfare; an attempt to carry out this type of war without the population's

support is a prelude to inevitable disaster. The guerrilla is the combat vanguard of the people, situated in a specified place in a certain region, armed and willing to carry out a series of warlike actions for the one possible strategic end — the seizure of power. The guerrilla is supported by the peasant and worker masses of the region and of the whole territory in which it acts. Without these prerequisites, guerrilla warfare is not possible.

We consider that the Cuban Revolution made three fundamental contributions to the laws of the revolutionary movement in the current situation in America. First, people's forces can win a war against the army. Second, it is not always necessary to wait for all conditions favorable to revolution to be present; the insurrection itself can create them. Third, in the underdeveloped parts of America, the battleground for armed struggle should in the main be the countryside.

Such are the contributions to the development of the revolutionary struggle in America, and they can be applied to any of the countries on our continent where guerrilla warfare may develop.

The Second Declaration of Havana points out:

*In our countries two circumstances are linked: underdeveloped industry and an agrarian system of feudal character so no matter how hard the living conditions of the urban workers are, the rural population lives under even worse conditions of oppression and exploitation. With few exceptions, the rural population also constitutes the absolute majority, comprising more than 70 percent of the Latin American populations.*

*Not counting the landowners who often live in the cities, this great mass earns its livelihood by working for miserable wages as peons on plantations. They till the soil under conditions of exploitation no different from those of the Middle Ages. These circumstances determine in Latin America that the poor rural population constitutes a tremendous potential revolutionary force.*

*The armies in Latin America are set up and equipped for conventional warfare. They are the force through which the power of the exploiting classes is maintained. When they are confronted*

with the irregular warfare of peasants based on their home ground, they become absolutely powerless; they lose 10 men for every revolutionary fighter who falls. Demoralization among them mounts rapidly when they are beset by an invisible and invincible army which provides them no chance to display their military academy tactics and their military fanfare, of which they boast so heavily, and which they use to repress the city workers and students.

The initial struggle of the small fighting units is constantly nurtured by new forces; the mass movement begins to grow bold, bit by bit the old order breaks into a thousand pieces, and that is when the working class and the urban masses decide the battle. What is it that from the very beginning of the fight makes these units invincible, regardless of the numbers, strengths and resources of their enemies? It is the people's support, and they can count on an ever-increasing mass support.

The peasantry, however, is a class that because of the ignorance in which it has been kept and the isolation in which it lives, requires the revolutionary and political leadership of the

working class and the revolutionary intellectuals. It cannot launch the struggle and achieve victory alone.

In the present historical conditions of Latin America, the national bourgeoisie cannot lead the ant feudal and anti-imperialist struggle. Experience demonstrates that in our nations this class - even when its interests clash with those of Yankee imperialism - has been incapable of confronting imperialism, paralyzed by fear of social revolution and frightened by the clamor of the exploited masses.

Completing the foresight of the preceding statements that constitute the essence of the revolutionary declaration of Latin America, the Second Declaration of Havana states:

The subjective conditions in each country, the factors of revolutionary consciousness, organization and leadership, can accelerate or delay revolution, depending on the state of their development. Sooner or later in each historic epoch objective conditions ripen, consciousness is acquired, organization is achieved, leadership arises, and revolution takes place.



Whether this takes place peacefully or comes into the world after painful labor does not depend on the revolutionaries; it depends on the reactionary forces of the old society, who resist the birth of the new society engendered by contradictions carried in the womb of the old. Revolution, in history, is like the doctor assisting at the birth of a new life, who will not use forceps unless necessary, but who will use them unhesitatingly every time labor requires them. It is a labor bringing the hope of a better life to the enslaved and exploited masses.

In many Latin American countries revolution is inevitable. This fact is not determined by the will of any person. It is determined by the horrifying conditions of exploitation under which the Latin American people live, the development of a revolutionary consciousness in the masses, the worldwide crisis of imperialism and the universal liberation movements of the subjugated nations. We shall begin from this basis to analyze the whole matter of guerrilla warfare in Latin America.

We have already established that it is a means

of struggle to attain an end. First, our concern is to analyze the end in order to determine whether the winning of power in Latin America can be achieved in ways other than armed struggle.

Peaceful struggle can be carried out through mass movements that compel – in special situations of crisis – governments to yield; thus, the popular forces would eventually take over and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat. Theoretically this is correct. When analyzing this in the Latin American context, we must reach the following conclusions: Generally on this continent objective conditions exist that propel the masses to violent action against their bourgeois and landholding governments. In many countries there are crises of power and also some subjective conditions necessary for revolution. It is clear, of course, that in those countries where all of these conditions are found, it would be criminal not to act to seize power. In other countries where these conditions do not occur, it is right those different alternatives will appear and out of theoretical discussions the tactic suitable to each country should emerge. The only thing

history does not allow is that the analysts and executors of proletarian politics be mistaken.

No-one can solicit the role of vanguard party as if it were a diploma given by a university. To be the vanguard party means to be at the forefront of the working class through the struggle for achieving power. It means to know how to guide this fight through shortcuts to victory. This is the mission of our revolutionary parties and the analysis must be profound and exhaustive so that there will be no mistakes.

At the present time we can observe in America an unstable balance between oligarchical dictatorship and popular pressure. We mean by "oligarchical" the reactionary alliance between the bourgeoisie and the landowning class of each country in which feudalism remains to a greater or lesser degree.

These dictatorships carry on within a certain "legal" framework adjudicated by themselves to facilitate their work throughout the unrestricted period of their class domination. Yet we are passing through a stage in which

pressure from the masses is very strong and is straining bourgeois legality so that its own authors must violate it in order to halt the impetus of the masses.

Barefaced violation of all legislation or of laws specifically instituted to sanction ruling class deeds only increases the pressure from the people's forces. The oligarchical dictatorships then attempt to use the old legal order to alter constitutionality and further oppress the proletariat without a frontal clash. At this point a contradiction arises. The people no longer support the old, and much less the new, coercive measures established by the dictatorship and try to smash them. We should never forget the class character, authoritarian and restrictive, that typifies the bourgeois state. Lenin refers to it in the following manner: *"The state is the product and the manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The state arises when, where, and to the extent that class antagonisms objectively cannot be reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the state proves that class antagonisms are irreconcilable."* In other words, we should not allow the word "democracy" to be

utilized apologetically to represent the dictatorship of the exploiting classes; to lose its deeper meaning and acquire that of granting the people certain liberties, more or less adequate. To struggle only to restore a certain degree of bourgeois legality without considering the question of revolutionary power is to struggle for the return of a dictatorial order established by the dominant social classes. In other words, it is to struggle for a lighter iron ball to be fixed to the prisoner's chain.

In these conditions of conflict, the oligarchy breaks its own contracts, its own mask of "democracy," and attacks the people, though it will always try to use the superstructure it has formed for oppression. We are faced once again with a dilemma: What must be done? Our reply is: Violence is not the monopoly of the exploiters and as such the exploited can use it too and, moreover, ought to use it when the moment arrives. José Martí said, *"He who wages war in a country when he can avoid it is a criminal, just as he who fails to promote war which cannot be avoided is a criminal."* Lenin said, *"Social democracy has never taken a sentimental view of war. It unreservedly condemns war as a*

bestial means of settling conflicts in human society. But social democracy knows that as long as society is divided into classes, as long as there is exploitation of human by human, wars are inevitable. In order to end this exploitation we cannot walk away from war, which is always and everywhere begun by the exploiters, by the ruling and oppressing classes." He said this in 1905. Later, in Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution , a far reaching analysis of the nature of class struggle, he affirmed: "Whoever recognizes the class struggle cannot fail to recognize civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions, inevitable continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. All the great revolutions prove this. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, would mean sinking into extreme opportunism and renouncing the socialist revolution." That is to say, we should not fear violence, the midwife of new societies, but violence should be unleashed at that precise moment in which the leaders have found the most favorable circumstances.

What will these be? Subjectively, they depend

on two factors that complement each other and which deepen during the struggle: consciousness of the necessity of change and confidence in the possibility of this revolutionary change. Both of these factors – combined with the objective conditions (favorable in all of Latin America for the development of the struggle) – and the firm will to achieve revolutionary change, as well as the new correlation of forces in the world, will determine the mode of action.

Regardless of how far away the socialist countries may be, their favorable influence will be felt by the people who struggle, just as their example will give the people further strength. Fidel Castro said on July 26 1963:

*“The duty of the revolutionaries, especially at this moment, is to know how to recognize and how to take advantage of the changes in the correlation of forces that have taken place in the world and to understand that these changes facilitate the people's struggle. The duty of revolutionaries, of Latin American revolutionaries, is not to wait for the change in the correlation of forces to produce a miracle of*

*social revolutions in Latin America, but to take full advantage of everything that is favorable to the revolutionary movement – and to make revolution!"*

There are some who say, "Let us admit that in certain specific cases revolutionary war is the best means to achieve political power; but where do we find the great leaders, the Fidel Castros, who will lead us to victory?" Fidel Castro, like any other human being, is the product of history. The political and military leaders who will lead the insurrectional uprisings in the Americas, merged if possible in one person, will learn the art of war during the course of war itself. There exists neither trade nor profession that can be learned from books alone. In this case, the struggle itself is the great teacher.

Of course, the task will not be easy and it is not exempt from grave dangers.

During the development of armed struggle, there are two moments of extreme danger for the future of the revolution. The first of these arises in the preparatory stage and the way it



is dealt with will give the measure of determination to struggle as well as clarity of purpose of the people's forces. When the bourgeois state advances against the people's positions, obviously there must arise a process of defense against the enemy who at this point, being superior, attacks. If the basic subjective and objective conditions are ripe, the defense must be armed so that the popular forces will not merely become recipients of the enemy's blows. Nor should the armed defense camp be allowed to be transformed into the refuge of the pursued. The guerrilla army, the defensive movement of the people, at a given moment carries within itself the capacity to attack the enemy and must develop this constantly. This capacity is what determines, with the passing of time, the catalytic character of the people's forces. That is, guerrilla warfare is not passive self-defense; it is defense with attack. From the moment we recognize it as such, it has as its final goal the conquest of political power.

This moment is important. In social processes the difference between violence and nonviolence cannot be measured by the number of shots exchanged; rather it lies in concrete and

fluctuating situations. We must be able to see the right moment in which the people's forces, conscious of their relative weakness and their strategic strength, must take the initiative against the enemy so the situation will not deteriorate. The equilibrium between oligarchic dictatorship and popular pressure must be changed. The dictatorship tries to function without resorting to force so we must try to oblige it to do so, thereby unmasking its true nature as the dictatorship of the reactionary social classes. This event will deepen the struggle to such an extent that there will be no retreat from it. The success of the people's forces depends on the task of forcing the dictatorship to a decision - to retreat, or to unleash the struggle - thus beginning the stage of long-range armed action. Skillful avoidance of the next dangerous moment depends on the growing power of the people's forces. Marx always recommended that once the revolutionary process has begun the proletariat should strike blows again and again without rest. A revolution that does not constantly expand is a revolution that regresses. The fighters, if weary, begin to lose faith; and at this point some of the bourgeois maneuvers may bear fruit - for

example, the holding of elections to turn a government over to another gentleman with a sweeter voice and a more angelic face than the outgoing tyrant, or the staging of a coup by reactionaries, generally led by the army, with the direct or indirect support of the progressive forces. There are others, but it is not our intention to analyze all such tactical stratagems.

Let us focus on the military coup mentioned previously. What can the military contribute to democracy? What kind of loyalty can be asked of them if they are merely an instrument of domination for the reactionary classes and imperialist monopolies and if, as a caste whose worth rests on the weapons in their hands, they aspire only to maintain their prerogatives? When, in difficult situations for the oppressors, the military establishment conspires to overthrow a dictator who in reality has already been defeated, it can be said that they do so because the dictator is unable to preserve their class prerogatives without extreme violence, a method that generally does not suit the interests of the oligarchies at that point. This statement does not mean to reject the

service of military men as individual fighters who, once separated from the society they served, have in fact now rebelled against it. They should be utilized in accordance with the revolutionary line they adopt as fighters and not as representatives of a caste.

A long time ago Engels, in the preface to the third edition of *Civil War in France*, wrote:

*"The workers were armed after every revolution; for this reason the disarming of the workers was the first commandment for the bourgeois at the helm of the state. Hence, after every revolution won by the workers there was a new struggle ending with the defeat of the workers."*

This play of continuous struggle, in which some change is obtained and then strategically withdrawn, has been repeated for many dozens of years in the capitalist world. Moreover, the permanent deception of the proletariat along these lines has been practiced for over a century.

There is danger also that progressive party leaders, wishing to maintain conditions more

favorable for revolutionary action through the use of certain aspects of bourgeois legality, will lose sight of their goal (which is common during the action), thus forgetting the primary strategic objective: the seizure of power.

These two difficult moments in the revolution, analyzed briefly here, become obvious when the leaders of Marxist-Leninist parties are capable of clearly perceiving the implications of the moments and of mobilizing the masses to the fullest, leading them on the correct path of resolving fundamental contradictions.

In developing the thesis, we have assumed that eventually the idea of armed struggle as well as guerrilla warfare as a method of struggle will be accepted. Why do we think that in the present situation in the Americas guerrilla warfare is the best method? There are fundamental arguments that in our opinion determine the necessity of guerrilla action as the central axis of struggle in the Americas.

First, accepting as true that the enemy will fight to maintain itself in power, one must think about destroying the oppressor army. To

do this, a people's army is necessary. Such an army is not born spontaneously; rather it must be armed from the enemy's arsenal and this requires a long and difficult struggle in which the people's forces and their leaders will always be exposed to attack from superior forces and will be without adequate defense and maneuverability.

On the other hand the guerrilla nucleus, established in terrain favorable for the struggle, ensures the security and continuity of the revolutionary command. The urban forces, led by the general staff of the people's army, can perform actions of the greatest importance. The eventual destruction of these groups, however, would not kill the soul of the revolution; its leadership would continue from its rural bastion to spark the revolutionary spirit of the masses and would continue to organize new forces for other battles. More importantly, in this region begins the construction of the future state apparatus entrusted to lead the class dictatorship efficiently during the transition period. The longer the struggle becomes, the larger and more complex the administrative problems; and in solving them, cadres will be

trained for the difficult task of consolidating power and, at a later stage, economic development. Second, there is the general situation of the Latin American peasantry and the ever more explosive character of the struggle against feudal structures within the framework of an alliance between local and foreign exploiters.

Returning to the Second Declaration of Havana:

*At the outset of the past century, the peoples of the Americas freed themselves from Spanish colonialism, but they did not free themselves from exploitation. The feudal landlords assumed the authority of the governing Spaniards, the Indians continued in their painful serfdom, the Latin American remained a slave one way or another, and the minimal hopes of the peoples died under the power of the oligarchies and the tyranny of foreign capital. This is the truth of the Americas, to one or another degree of variation. Latin America today is under a more ferocious imperialism that is more powerful and ruthless than the Spanish colonial empire.*

*What is Yankee imperialism's attitude toward confronting the objective and historically*

*inexorable reality of the Latin American revolution? To prepare to fight a colonial war against the peoples of Latin America; to create an apparatus of force establishing the political pretexts and the pseudo-legal instruments underwritten by the representatives of the reactionary oligarchies in order to curb, by blood and by iron, the struggle of the Latin American peoples.*

This objective situation shows the dormant force of our peasants and the need to utilize it for Latin America's liberation.

Third, there is the continental nature of the struggle. Could we imagine this stage of Latin American emancipation as the confrontation of two local forces struggling for power in a specific territory? Hardly. The struggle between the people's forces and the forces of repression will be to the death. This also is predicted within the paragraphs cited previously. The Yankees will intervene due to conjunction of interest and because the struggle in Latin America is decisive. As a matter of fact they are intervening already, preparing the forces of repression and the organization of a



continental apparatus of repression. But from now on they will do so with all their energies; they will punish the popular forces with all the destructive weapons at their disposal. They will not allow a revolutionary power to consolidate; and, if it ever happens, they will attack again, they will not recognize such a power, and will try to divide the revolutionary forces. They will infiltrate saboteurs, create border problems, force other reactionary states to oppose it and will impose economic sanctions attempting, in one word, to annihilate the new state. This being the panorama in Latin America, it is difficult to achieve and consolidate victory in an isolated country. The unity of the repressive forces must be confronted with the unity of the popular forces. In all countries where oppression reaches intolerable proportions, the banner of rebellion must be raised; and this banner of historical necessity will have a continental character.

As Fidel has said, the cordillera of the Andes will be the Sierra Maestra of Latin America; and the immense territories this continent encompasses will become the scene of a life or death struggle against imperialism. We cannot

predict when this struggle will reach a continental dimension or how long it will last. But we can predict its advent and triumph because it is the inevitable result of historical, economic and political conditions; and its direction cannot change.

The task of the revolutionary forces in each country is to initiate the struggle when the conditions are present there, regardless of the conditions in other countries. The development of the struggle will bring about the general strategy. The prediction of the continental character of the struggle is the outcome of the analysis of the strength of each contender but this does not exclude independent outbreaks. The beginning of the struggle in one area of a country is bound to cause its development throughout the region; the beginning of a revolutionary war contributes to the development of new conditions in the neighboring countries.

The development of revolution has usually produced high and low tides in inverse proportion. To the revolution's high tide corresponds the counterrevolutionary low tide and vice versa, as there is a counterrevolutionary ascendancy

in moments of revolutionary decline. In those moments, the situation of the people's forces becomes difficult and they should resort to the best means of defense in order to suffer the least damage. The enemy is extremely powerful and has continental scope. The relative weakness of the local bourgeoisie cannot therefore be analyzed with a view to making decisions within restricted boundaries. Still less can one think of an eventual alliance by these oligarchies with a people in arms. The Cuban Revolution sounded the bell that raised the alarm. The polarization of forces will become complete: exploiters on one side and exploited on the other. The mass of the petty bourgeoisie will lean to one side or the other according to their interests and the political skill with which they are handled. Neutrality will be an exception. This is how revolutionary war will be.

Let us think how a guerrilla foco can start. Nuclei with relatively few people choose places favorable for guerrilla warfare with the intention of either unleashing a counterattack or weathering the storm, and from there they start taking action. What follows, however, must be

very clear: At the beginning the relative weakness of the guerrilla is such that they should work only toward becoming acquainted with the terrain and its surroundings while establishing connections with the population and fortifying the places that will eventually be converted into bases. There are three conditions for survival that a guerrilla force must embrace if it is emerging subject to the premises described here: constant mobility, constant vigilance and constant distrust. Without these three elements of military tactics the guerrilla will find it hard to survive. We must remember that the heroism of the guerrilla fighter, at this moment, consists of the scope of the planned goal and the enormous number of sacrifices they must make in order to achieve it. These sacrifices are not made in daily combat or in face-to-face battle with the enemy; rather they will take subtler forms, more difficult for the guerrilla fighter to resist both physically and mentally.

Perhaps the guerrillas will be punished heavily by the enemy, divided at times into groups, while at other times those who are captured will be tortured. They will be pursued as hunted animals in the areas where they have

chosen to operate; the constant anxiety of having the enemy on their track will be with them. They must distrust everyone, for the terrorized peasants will in some cases give them away to the repressive troops in order to save themselves. Their only alternatives are life or death, at times when death is a concept a thousand times present and victory only a myth for a revolutionary to dream about.

This is the guerrilla's heroism. For this it is said that walking is a form of fighting and that avoiding combat at a given moment is another. Facing the general superiority of the enemy at a given place, one must find the tactics with which to gain relative superiority at that moment, either by being capable of concentrating more troops than the enemy or by using the terrain fully and well in order to secure advantages that unbalance the correlation of forces. In these conditions tactical victory is assured; if relative superiority is not clear, it is better not to act. As long as the guerrilla army is in the position of deciding the "how" and the "when," no combat should be fought that will not end in victory.

Within the framework of the great political-military action of which they are a part, the guerrilla army will grow and reach consolidation. Bases will continue to be formed, for they are essential to the success of the guerrilla army. These bases are points the enemy can enter only at the cost of heavy losses; they are the revolution's bastions, they are both refuge and starting point for the guerrilla army's more daring and distant raids.

This point is reached if difficulties of a tactical and political nature have been overcome. The guerrillas cannot forget their function as vanguard of the people — their mandate — and as such they must create the necessary political conditions for the establishment of a revolutionary power based on the support of the masses. The peasants' aspirations or demands must be satisfied to the degree and in the form that circumstances permit so as to bring about the decisive support and solidarity of the whole population. If the guerrillas' military situation is difficult from the very first moment, the political situation is just as delicate. If a single military error can liquidate the guerrilla, a political error can hold back

its development for long periods. The struggle is political-military and it must be developed and understood as such.

In the process of the guerrilla's growth, the fighting reaches a point where its capacity for action in a given region is so great there are too many fighters in too great a concentration. Then begins the "beehive action" in which one of the commanders, a distinguished guerrilla, moves to another region and repeats the chain of development of guerrilla warfare. That commander is nevertheless subject to a central command. It is imperative to point out that one cannot hope for victory without the formation of a popular army. The guerrilla forces can be expanded to a certain magnitude; the people's forces in the cities and in other areas can inflict losses; but the military potential of the reactionaries will still remain intact. One must always keep in mind the fact that the final objective is the enemy's annihilation. All these new zones that are being created, as well as the infiltrated zones behind enemy lines and the forces operating in the principal cities, should be unified under one command.

Guerrilla war or liberation war will generally have three stages. First is the strategic defensive stage when the small force nibbles at the enemy and runs. It is not sheltered to make a passive defense within a small circumference, but rather its defense consists of the limited attacks it can successfully strike. After this comes a state of equilibrium in which the possibilities of action on both sides – the enemy and the guerrillas – are established. Finally, the last stage consists of overrunning the repressive army leading to the capture of the big cities, large-scale decisive encounters, and ultimately the complete annihilation of the enemy.

After reaching a state of equilibrium, when both sides respect each other, the guerrilla war develops and acquires new characteristics. The concept of maneuver is introduced: large columns attacking strong points; mobile warfare with the shifting of forces and relatively potent means of attack. But due to the capacity for resistance and counterattack that the enemy still has, this war of maneuver does not replace guerrilla fighting; rather, it is only one form of action taken by the guerrillas



until that time when they crystallize into a people's army with an army corps. Even at this moment the guerrilla, marching ahead of the action of the main forces, will continue the tactics of the first stage, destroying communications and sabotaging the whole defensive apparatus of the enemy. We have predicted that the war will be continental. This means that it will be a protracted war, it will have many fronts and it will cost much blood and countless lives for a long period of time. Another phenomenon occurring in Latin America is the polarization of forces, that is, the clear division between exploiters and exploited. When the armed vanguard of the people achieves power both the imperialists and the national exploiting class will be liquidated at one stroke. The first stage of the socialist revolution will have crystallized and the people will be ready to heal their wounds and initiate the construction of socialism. Are there less bloody possibilities? A while ago the last dividing-up of the world took place and the United States took the lion's share of our continent. Today the imperialists of the Old World are developing again - and the strength of the European Common Market frightens the United States itself. All

this might lead to the belief that the possibility exists for us merely to observe as spectators, perhaps in alliance with the stronger national bourgeoisie, the struggle among the imperialists trying to make further advances. Yet a passive policy never brings good results in class struggle and alliances with the bourgeoisie, though they might appear to be revolutionary, have only a transitory character. The time factor will induce us to choose another ally. The sharpening of the most important contradiction in Latin America appears to be so rapid that it disturbs the "normal" development of the imperialist camp's contradiction in its struggle for markets.

The majority of national bourgeoisie have united with U.S. imperialism so their fate shall be the same. Even in the cases where pacts or common contradictions are shared between the national bourgeoisie and other imperialists, this occurs within the framework of a fundamental struggle which will sooner or later embrace all the exploited and all the exploiters. The polarization of antagonistic forces among class adversaries is up till now more rapid than the development of the contradiction

among exploiters over splitting the spoils. There are two camps. The alternative becomes clearer for each individual and for each specific stratum of the population. The Alliance for Progress attempts to slow that which cannot be stopped. But if the advance on the U.S. market by the European Common Market, or any other imperialist group, were more rapid than the development of the fundamental contradiction, the forces of the people would only have to penetrate into the open breach, carrying on the struggle and utilizing the new intruders whilst having a clear awareness of what their true intentions are.

Not a single position, weapon or secret should be given to the class enemy, under penalty of losing all. In fact, the eruption of the Latin American struggle has begun. Will its storm center be in Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia, Peru, Ecuador...? Are today's skirmishes only manifestations of a restlessness that has not come to fruition? The outcome of today's struggles does not matter. It does not matter in the final count that one or two movements were temporarily defeated, because what is definite is the decision to struggle which matures every

day, the consciousness of the need for revolutionary change, and the certainty that it is possible. This is a prediction. We make it with the conviction that history will prove us right. Analysis of the objective and subjective conditions of Latin America and the imperialist world indicates to us the certainty of these assertions based on the Second Declaration of Havana.