Note from Serve The People (Brazil) Blog: Below we publish the masterful document *Long Live the Heroic and Glorious Araguaia Guerrilla*, written by the Revolutionary Front in Defense of the People's Rights (Brazil), which is the first Marxist-Leninist-Maoist assessment of the guerrilla in the history of our country's communist movement. This document, dated April 1999, was originally published on the internet in the mid-2000s, and we are delighted to republish it now.

Proletarians and oppressed peoples of the world, unite!

Long Live the Heroic and Glorious Araguaia Guerrilla

Comrade from the Revolutionary Front in Defense of the People's Rights (Brazil)

April 1999[1]

April 12th marks 27 years since the beginning of the Araguaia Guerrilla, led by the Communist Party of Brazil. The preparation of the guerrilla began in 1966, with the deployment of dozens of party cadres in the south of Pará, in the Araguaia River region. This corresponded to the decision of the Central Committee and the Military Commission, which defined that region as the main one for preparing and unleashing the armed struggle. The Araguaia Guerrilla is above all a product of the ideological-political struggle in the Brazilian communist movement, in its complex confrontation with revisionism and "left" opportunism. It is a milestone in the saga of our heroic proletariat and ample proof of the revolutionary role played by the peasantry in the country's history.

The Araguaia Guerrilla, despite its mistakes, was the struggle that raised the banner of people's war the highest in the country to this day. In it, over more than three years of fighting, dozens of selfless communists poured out their generous blood to pave the way for the Brazilian revolution, in a pioneering contribution to the application of the Maoist strategy of encircling the cities from the countryside. Against it, the ferocious fascist military regime, pro-Yankee imperialism, launched more than 30,000 troops, including armed forces and police. In three campaigns of siege and annihilation, the reactionary armed forces crushed the nascent Araguaia Guerrilla Forces, the embryo of a People's Army.

The audacity and heroism of the communist fighters have forever marked the lives of the poor people of southern Pará, Tocantins, and Maranhão. 27 years on, the peasants have not forgotten the guerrillas, whose devoted work planted deep roots of rebellion and revolution in the region. From town to town and from city to city, people tell

[1] https://serviraopovo.com.br/2024/08/06/viva-a-heroica-e-gloriosa-guerrilha-do-araguaia-frente-revolucionaria-de-defesa-dos-direitos-do-povo-frddp-1999/

stories about the feats of the communist fighters, even though the fascists made a point of displaying the mutilated bodies of the guerrillas to the population. For many, Osvaldão,[2] the black giant, has not died and is still out there helping the people. The guerrilla Dina inspires the best attitudes in the people. The bravery with which they confronted the reactionary military will forever honor the name of the communists in the eyes of Brazil's poor peasantry.

As comrade Pedro Pomar, the party leader, aptly put it in his assessment of that glorious battle: *"The Araguaia experience undeniably represented a heroic attempt to create a political base and continue the revolutionary process under the leadership of our Party. It aimed to form a solid base area in the countryside and develop the nucleus of a future powerful people's army, capable of defeating the armed forces at the service of the ruling classes and Yankee imperialism."*[3]

The Assessment of the Araguaia Guerrilla

1. Operation Capitulation

The tragic outcome of Araguaia will unequivocally expose the serious ideological problems affecting the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil, and of course the outcome of Araguaia itself, which resulted from them. More than that, these problems are manifested in the dogmatic, anti-Marxist stance of certain leaders in putting the brakes on discussions. The struggle over the Araguaia question was buried with the help of the reaction, which in December 1976 managed to surround and annihilate the main revolutionary cadres of the Central Committee who had survived up to that point. The episode known as the Lapa massacre (the São Paulo neighborhood where the apparatus in which the CC (Central Committee) met was located) definitively separates **the Communist Party of Brazil of armed struggle** from the **revisionist and rotten Communist Party of Brazil** that it became in the following years.

Between the Lapa massacre, in which comrades Pedro Pomar, Ângelo Arroyo, and João Batista Drummond were massacred by operatives of the reactionary armed forces, and the 1980s, there was a period of blows dealt by João Amazonas'[4] group, which, through the most treacherous means, led the party into successive processes of renegade, completely rotting it. First, it blocked discussions and the ideological-political struggle over the party's richest and costliest experience. Stifling its leadership, he persecuted,

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[2]Red Library: "Almost all the guerrillas of Araguaia fell in combat. Among them, the commander of detachment B, Osvaldo Orlando da Costa, 'Osvaldão," rose because of his qualities as a combatant, his firmness as a communist, and his indestructible bond with the peasant and riverside masses." –A Nova Democracia, April 11: 39 years since the beginning of the Araguaia Guerrilla – Osvaldão: the black commander of Araguaia [11 de abril: 39 anos do início da Guerrilha do Araguaia – Osvaldão: o comandante negro do Araguaia].

[3]Red Library: *On Araguaia*, Pedro Pomar, 1976.

[4]Red Library: João Amazonas (1912-2002), the chief liquidator of the Communist Party of Brazil, who, after the "Lapa massacre" in December 1976, steered the Communist Party of Brazil towards Hoxhaist revisionism.

expelled, and caused splits, and then, in the wake of the revisionist Enver Hoxha, he decreed that Chairman Mao had never been a Marxist. Later on, at the height of the general offensive of the world counter-revolution, with "*perestroika*" at its head, etc., he will deny Enver Hoxha himself and, like him, comrade Stalin, whom he had been using as a caricature for his irreversible revisionism.

The Araguaia Guerrilla, its results, such as the ideological-political struggle over its defeat and the "Lapa massacre," contain an important contradiction in our people's liberation struggle. It pits revolution against counter-revolution, Marxism against revisionism: on the one hand, the heroism of its fighters and on the other, the capitulation of those who survived and took over the leadership of the party to abandon the road of revolution. In this sense, the Araguaia Guerrilla is a phantom for the revisionists of the Amazonas clique, who use it in the most opportunist way to try to cover up their betrayal of the proletariat, by paying inconvincible tributes of a publicity nature that are becoming more and more forgotten. More than that, what the Amazonas clique, using the heroic name of the Communist Party of Brazil, is doing with its right opportunist politics and its "socialist program" to order, is trampling on the blood of the heroes of the Communist Party.

2. The Position of Comrade Pomar

In the struggle to analyze and synthesize the experience of the heroic Araguaia struggle, drawing correct lessons from it, comrade Pedro Pomar was the one who did the most to ensure the development of the ideological struggle. In fact, he was deeply convinced of and committed to Maoism. His intervention document in the debates that took place at the fateful December 1976 CC meeting is a precious analysis of this struggle. It recalls the value of the combatants, the determination of the party and all the positive points of the experience, and subjects its entire assessment document to rigorous criticism. Contrary to the report by comrade Ângelo Arroyo (a member of the Military Commission and the only surviving leader among those who were in the region), who concluded that the defeat was of a military and temporary nature, comrade Pedro Pomar pointed out that none of the party's objectives had been achieved. In essence, he points out that the mistake in Araguaia was one of conception. He said that the party had not applied the correct conception of people's war and proposed broadening the debate, deepening it in order to continue raising the banner of people's war and the strategy of encircling the cities from the countryside as the road to the Brazilian revolution. He was brutally murdered at the end of the meeting in which he had spoken, full of certainty and confidence: *"The debate, at CC level, on the experience of the Araguaia guerrilla struggle will, I think, produce the results that we all want."* he began, and concluded, *"The flag of armed struggle, which the comrades from Araguaia wielded so heroically and sacrificed themselves for, must be raised even higher. If we can really connect with the great masses of the countryside and the cities and win them over to the party's orientation, no matter how ferocious the enemy is, victory will certainly be ours."*

3. The Experience of the Araguaia Guerrilla Serves the Revolution

As a national historical fact and a milestone in the history of the proletariat, the popular masses, and the Communist Party of Brazil, the Araguaia Guerrilla has to be glorified and, above all, serve us in the resumption and continuation of the revolutionary cause. To this end, we must draw the most precise conclusion possible and start from the objective analysis of this social-ideological-political phenomenon.

In order to establish a correct analysis and synthesis that allows us to draw positive and negative lessons from the Araguaia Guerrilla, it is necessary to carry out a complete examination, taking into account three fundamental factors, taken as a unity: Firstly, we have to take the whole period leading up to the guerrilla, not just in itself, but taking into account the whole ideological-political struggle that has been going on within the party since the 1962 process that decided on it. Secondly, we have to take the situation of class struggle in the country at that time. And thirdly, we have to take into account the international conditions in which the period took place, both from the point of view of the struggle within the international communist movement–the fierce struggle against Soviet revisionism–and the struggle between revolution and counter-revolution in general.

In order to do this satisfactorily, it is necessary to carry out a more detailed analysis of the factors listed above, as well as a detailed analysis of the events of the guerrilla, which is extremely essential for the process of reconstituting the CPB[5] (Communist Party of Brazil) and unleashing and recapture the people's war. For the moment, we will content ourselves with establishing its general features in synthesis:

a) The Ideological-Political Struggle in the Party

The ideological-political struggle that defines the road and the struggle of Araguaia began exactly as a result of the 1962 reconstruction process. In other words, the 1962 process ushered in a new period of the party's history, a period that we have analyzed and affirmed that it continues to this day. This period has so far been the most important in the life of the party, because it began with the open struggle against the modern revisionism and reformism of Prestes" gang. This struggle began with the purging of the revisionists from the party. This struggle leads directly to the approach of Mao Zedong Thought (as Chairman Mao's contributions were conceived in that era), which represents a turning point in the party's formulations in its history, since for the first time the peasantry is effectively taken as a revolutionary force and not only that, but as the main force led by the proletariat. In practice, the strategy of encircling the cities from the countryside through protracted people's war was established for the first time as the road of the Brazilian revolution.

But, as we will show, this great leap forward in the party's history will have its development compromised. The internal struggle, precisely the struggle along two lines, the

[5]Red Library: The acronym "CPB" in Portuguese is "PCB" [*Partido Comunista do Brasil*].

Maoist conception of the development and forging of the party, will be incorrectly handled by blocking the struggle inside the party. A striking fact of this is the Sixth Conference of 1966, the first broader process after the Conference that gave organic beginnings to the Communist Party of Brazil (an acronym adopted to differentiate it from the one used by the revisionists). In it, the central document presented by the CC for the debates, *Brazilians Unite to Rid the Country of the Crisis, Dictatorship, and Neo-Colonialist Threat,* clearly reveals many misunderstandings of Maoism in the analysis of reality.

When defining social classes, it follows the mistaken definition of the previous period, which takes the bureaucratic bourgeoisie (the Brazilian big bourgeoisie) for the national bourgeoisie. They define the country's "principal contradictions" as *"contradictions between the people and the government"* and *"between the overwhelming majority of the nation and U.S. imperialism."* This does not allow for a dialectical materialist analysis, according to which in a process where multiple contradictions are linked, only one is the main one and determines the others, for specific periods. Therefore, the conception of the front that they are defending is far from the Maoist conception of the United Front of revolutionary classes, a front to sustain the armed struggle. They conceive of a *"patriotic front,"* a *"union of Brazilians."*

The country's fundamental contradictions continued to be: the contradiction between the nation/imperialism, the proletariat/bourgeoisie and the poor peasantry/landlord system, the latter being the main one and expressed, in those conditions of rising counter-revolution, in the contradiction between the masses and the pro-Yankee imperialist fascist military dictatorship. It was therefore necessary, as Chairman Mao taught us, to establish a united front of revolutionary classes, which in this case was the proletariat, the poor peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. The national bourgeoisie (middle bourgeoisie), in considerable part, had been dragged into the counter-revolution with the military coup, including a good part of the petty bourgeoisie, and only with the development of the counter-revolution will they, and in the case of the national bourgeoisie a part, detach themselves and move into opposition to the military regime. Thus, the policy of "patriotic union" revealed a right opportunist deviation, weakening the party's tactics for correctly preparing and unleashing the armed struggle.

Against the formulations of this document, a group of militant party comrades who had recently returned from China presented the document *Criticism of the Opportunism and Subjectivism of "Union of Brazilians for…"* [*Crítica ao oportunismo e subjetivismo de "União dos Brasileiros para…"*]. The treatment given by the party leadership was profoundly mistaken, not allowing the struggle around the two documents to be taken forward and to the whole party. This method, whatever the allegations, is a denial of a fundamental Marxist-Leninist principle, that of the internal ideological-political struggle within the revolutionary party of the proletariat, a principle developed with Maoism as a two-line struggle, decisive for the ideological forging of the party. This is the only correct and fair method of dealing with the contradictions within the party, of forging it as a true

communist party, in order to establish the proletarian line, maintain the party within it and combat the other non-proletarian lines, which inevitably arise as a reflection of the class contradictions of the society it belongs to. This sectarian and dogmatic practice led to the rupture that gave rise to the Communist Party of Brazil–Red Wing, without these contradictions developing.

Another episode that revealed that the party leadership was contaminated by non-Marxist conceptions, clearly reflected in its leadership methods, was the one that gave rise, prior to the Red Wing episode, to the RCP, the Revolutionary Communist Party.[6] This fraction also emerged in a struggle against the conceptions set out in the document of the Sixth Conference and with regard to the concrete definitions of the party's practice. In the document *12-Point Letter to the Revolutionary Communists,* comrade Manoel Lisboa establishes a correct and precious synthesis of both the class analysis of the country and the strategy and tactics of the Brazilian revolution. This document contrasts completely with the document of the Sixth Conference, both in the clarity and objectivity with which it addresses the set of problems of the revolution, and in the indication of the concrete road for its practice.

Comrade Manoel Lisboa clearly defines the strategic confrontation, explaining that the camp of the revolution is made up of the proletariat, the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, specifically its student and intellectual sectors. It points out the dual character of the national bourgeoisie, showing that it is the middle bourgeoisie and that it could only be incorporated into the united front, under certain conditions and relating to it with struggle and unity, after the party had developed forces: army and base areas. In other words, after the party had concretely established the basis of the united front, the worker-peasant alliance. He defines the north-eastern region of Brazil as the region where the principal contradiction concentrates and manifests itself most acutely, pointing out that the worker-peasant alliance can only be realized through armed struggle, in which the party of the proletariat organizes and directs the poor peasants" struggle for land, giving rise to the people's army through guerrilla warfare. In other words, people's war, applying the encirclement of the cities from the countryside as the only way for the proletariat to carry out revolution in countries dominated by imperialism. He brilliantly states that the unequal conditions of strength between counter-revolution and revolution can only be changed by making the revolution strong and the counter-revolution weaker through protracted people's war, which, through different and successive stages, incorporates the masses into the revolution. He pointed out that, taking the whole country, the northeast is the countryside and the southeast is the city, and that, from the point of view of the northeast, the interior of the northeastern states is the countryside and the rest is the city. This was in order to

[6]Red Library: RCP stands for Revolutionary Communist Party, whose acronym and name in Portuguese is PCR [*Partido Comunista Revolucionário*]. Red Wing refers to Communist Party of Brazil–Red Wing [*Partido Comunista do Brasil–Ala Vermelha*], both groups that broke with the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil in 1966.

clearly establish the main difference between the countryside and city and where the party would have to concentrate its main strength.

In addition to affirming that the peasantry is the main force of the revolution and the proletariat the leading force, he pointed out that the northeastern peasantry was, both historically and politically, the one with the most accumulated experience. As this is a key issue, you see, back in 1966, before the ideological-political struggle in the party over such huge issues had taken off, the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil had already decided that the Araguaia region was the main one. The proof of this is that comrade Osvaldão, in 1966, had already settled in the south of Pará. This definition revealed subjectivism in its two forms and in a combined way: a more fundamental, empiricist type, by defining a region with no tradition of struggle, where there was no peasant struggle, with a low and rare population, disregarding the northeast, the region where the principal contradiction manifested itself most acutely and with it all the historical richness of the resistance of the northeastern masses in general and their peasantry in particular. The other form is dogmatic, clearly inherited from the previous period of opportunist leadership, the method of dealing with contradictions in the party, of not seeing the ideological struggle as a furnace. This is also revealed in questions of strategic definitions.

The experience of popular struggles has shown that if a revolution cannot be hidden, neither can its preparation. Secret, airtight, compartmentalized work cannot be confused with hiding the party's political activities. Secret work is the party's network that directs a whole network towards open work, which uses all possible open forms to carry its banners, apply revolutionary tactics, slogans, and propaganda to the masses. In other words, we can only prepare the armed struggle, including the tasks of a conspiratorial nature, where there are objective conditions for it, and moreover, where there are more developed subjective conditions, and this can only happen where the masses, by determination of objective laws, are part of the principal contradiction and therefore, by direct consequence, have more experience of organization and struggle, even if this is only at the level of spontaneity.

But it must be clear that, although it suffered from serious deviations, the party's leadership in this period was ideologically defined by Mao Zedong Thought, although it was unable to assimilate it more deeply, which eventually lead to it moving away from it. Thus, it developed an important struggle, not only against revisionism, but also against the "left" opportunism that was deeply affecting the revolutionary movement of the entire Latin American continent and the country. The Cuban revolution had had a huge impact on the country and the entire region, and since it had developed in the field of revisionism, as a branch of armed struggle that served the game of Soviet social-imperialism, it was able to galvanize broad sectors of the left, particularly contingents of students, with its influence, through theses of a petty-bourgeois class character. In this way, a large number of revolutionaries were drawn towards militarist, foquist and other conceptions. Not only did the Communist Party of Brazil not allow itself to be

seduced by these theses, which had drawn in important cadres like Marighella,[7] but it fought them vigorously. The document *People's War: Road of Armed Struggle in Brazil* [*Guerra Popular Prolongada, caminho da luta armada no Brasil*] (1969) is a document that reflects the party's efforts and further development in the struggle against revisionism and "left" opportunism and in defense of the strategy of protracted people's war through the encirclement of the cities from the countryside.

However, we must take it as a given that the deviations suffered by the party leadership led to the manifestation of subjectivism in the two forms mentioned above. These were the main factors that largely determined the causes of the defeat of the Araguaia Guerrilla. In other words: empiricism and dogmatism as expressions of subjectivism. One as a result of the other, blocking the ideological struggle by preventing the party from forging itself, from harboring misconceptions, from openly combating them. Subjectivism that leads to the definition of the main area, not on the basis of the objective class struggle, but on the basis of criteria that best suits conspiratorial work and the best ground for military struggle. The party was wrong not to take the two-line struggle to heart in order to forge its ideology, its handling of Marxism, expressed in the revolutionary program and general political line, embodied in a hardened leadership.

b) The Situation of the Class Struggle in the Country in the 1960s

In terms of the conditions in which the class struggle was developing in the country, it is not difficult to understand that there was a counter-revolution on the rise. Since the 1964 military coup, in which the mass movement at its peak under the hegemony of national reformism was severely beaten, the counter-revolution has become a counter-revolution that applies state terrorism year after year. In these conditions, it was necessary to establish a correct analysis of the correlation of forces, in order to clearly define the party's main tasks in preparing itself and the fundamental masses for the armed struggle. In other words, it was necessary to organize the resistance in such a way as to preserve forces, to act on the defensive, from a strategic point of view, and in preparation, focusing forces and correct methods of resistance where the conditions are most propitious, that is, where the principal contradiction was most acute. The leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil made the fewest mistakes on this issue. It didn't get carried away by the temptation and even by a certain "fad" of immediate armed struggle that took over revolutionary circles in that period.

And this wasn't simple, because the history of reformism and pacifism in the life of the party generated a very strong feeling of repulsion at the blatant revisionism pushing revolutionaries into the arms of petty-bourgeois conceptions. This situation led to obfuscation and immediacy. It created an illusion. The armed road pointed out by Castroism and Guevarism did not correspond to the military theory of the proletariat, people's war, but rather clashed head-on against it. It was a petty-bourgeois,

[7]Red Library: Referring to Carlos Marighella, leader of National Liberation Action from its founding in 1964 to his assassination in 1969.

anti-Marxist theory that despised the Communist Party as the absolute necessity and direction of the revolutionary process and the armed struggle, it despised the scientific analysis of reality generalized in a vulgar formula, according to which, the revolution *"was either socialist or it was a caricature of a revolution."* Thus, the processes influenced by this conception failed completely, led the revolutionary movement to a profound defeat and where, due to certain particularities, it continued, it only survived sustained and financed by Soviet social-imperialism through Cuba, until, finally, they shamefully capitulated. There are the revolutions in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and the current negotiating guerrillas like the FARC-EP, ELN, MRTA, and EZLN, to name the main ones.

There was also another revisionist conception that was and still is very crystallized today: that armed struggle is only justified if there are no minimum democratic freedoms. Therefore, if there is a fascist dictatorship, you either have to fight back or you're not a revolutionary. Wrong, this isn't Marxism, it's revisionism. Armed struggle is the highest form of struggle that a true Communist Party organizes according to the objective conditions and particularities of each country. Exactly contrary to this reasoning, which the opportunists use today to deny the armed struggle by claiming that we are in a democracy, we must use the democratic victories, however narrow they may be, to carry out our revolutionary propaganda and preparations for unleashing the armed struggle as widely as possible. When the counter-revolution goes on the offensive, it means that the correlation of forces has changed, even momentarily, in its favor. Then we must adopt appropriate forms and methods of resistance in order to only move forward at the first sign that its offensive is running out of steam.

However, despite waging this struggle, realizing more clearly the correlation of forces that was developing in the country, that the counter-revolution could not continue to rise for long and that when it began to exhaust its rise, the conditions to advance would be in place, the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil fell into subjectivism by defining the Araguaia region as the main area. This mistake canceled out the success it had achieved in understanding the correlation of forces. And this mistake was determined by dogmatism, because it wasn't enough to assume Mao Zedong Thought, that was essential, but it was necessary to take the two-line struggle deeply in order to assimilate it more and more, to understand reality more, so as not to fall into subjectivism. On the contrary, what we saw was a regression as early as 1970, when, in opposition to the great leap forward that the Ninth Congress of the CPC[8] was shaping up to be, the party leadership, through the document *The Actuality of Lenin's Ideas* [*A atualidade das ideias de Lenin*], broke off its development along the road of Maoism, moving more and more towards the revisionism of the Albanian type of Enver Hoxha.

[8]Red Library: Communist Party of China.

c) The Struggle against Modern Revisionism at the International Level and the Struggle for the Unity of the Peoples to Combat Yankee Imperialism and Soviet Social-Imperialism

The 1960s were marked by three major events in the ideological struggle within the international communist movement, events that took place in the People's Republic of China and were led by Chairman Mao. The Chinese Letter of June 14, 1963,[9] the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966 and the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party of China in 1969. This process, from an international point of view, has its origins in the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU (1956), where Nikita Khrushchev's traitorous gang, by throwing a bucket of mud on comrade Stalin, laid the groundwork for their banners of capitalist restoration to be raised. He gave the watchword for betrayal and brought the international communist movement to the brink of complete capitulation. Several Communist Parties rose up against this betrayal, led by the Communist Party of China and the party of Labor of Albania.

Applying the just method of a two-line struggle, Chairman Mao, who had already been fighting hard against the rightist tendencies within the CPC, harshly attacked Khrushchev's positions and made the most uncompromising defense of Marxism-Leninism. This struggle continues exclusively within the parties in confrontation. At the meetings of representatives of the Communist and Workers" Parties of 1957 and 1960, Chairman Mao defended the principles of Marxism-Leninism, forcing Khrushchevite opportunism to back down, but the declarations of these conferences were ambiguous. The Chinese communists, ahead of those in other countries, tried to lead the struggle in such a way as to encourage the revolutionary camp within the CPSU, which had already been crushed at that point, to make a U-turn, which failed. After several attacks on the Chinese and Albanian communists by Khrushchev on different occasions and the impossibility of continuing the struggle only within the framework of the Parties in confrontation, the Communist Party of China, headed by Chairman Mao, published *A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement* on June 23, 1963, a document known as the *Chinese Letter* or *25-Point Letter*, which defended Marxism-Leninism and unmasked the new revisionism that was emerging, raising high the banner of the world proletarian revolution and its continuity.

Subsequently, the *9 Comments* will be disseminated in response to the Soviet revisionists" attacks. Chairman Mao summarizes the positions of Khrushchev's modern revisionism in what he calls the "two entires" and the "three peacefuls," that is: "state of the whole people" and "party of the whole people," where Khrushchev replaces the conceptions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the party of the proletariat with bourgeois concepts of the state and party. As for the "three peacefuls," it unmasks the

[9]Red Library: Referring to *The Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in Reply to the Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of March 30, 1963*, published in *A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement*.

revisionist theses of "peaceful transition," "peaceful coexistence," and "peaceful competition," where Khrushchev replaced the just Leninist thesis of peaceful coexistence to base relations between states of different social orders, with peaceful coexistence to govern relations that take place within the state, that is, between antagonistic classes. Peaceful coexistence, transition, and competition to negate the class struggle and economic competition to define which system was best. In other words, proving that *"real socialism"* was superior to capitalism would lead everyone in the world to become supporters of socialism.

Chairman Mao is elevated to the head of the world proletarian revolution and sets out the line to unite the people to fight against the fierce enemies of proletarian revolution and national liberation: U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, the fascist state that emerged from the assault on the proletarian state, promoted by the new type of bourgeoisie expressed in the Soviet state and party bureaucracy. These are two superpowers that start to rival, fight, and collude in the dispute for control and influence over the countries and peoples of the world. Raising the Leninist banner of "Proletarians, and oppressed nations and peoples of the world, unite!," Chairman Mao called for a struggle to continue the revolution, to avert the danger of a new world war and to unleash world people's war if the imperialists carried out their plans of aggression. With the loss of power by the Soviet proletariat after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU (1956), the correlation of power at world level between revolution and counter-revolution had changed, resulting in numerous coups in the mid-1960s in countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America, such as the 1964 coup in Brazil.

In 1966, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution led by Chairman Mao was unleashed, in which millions and millions of popular masses mobilized to secure proletarian power, defend the dictatorship of the proletariat, overthrow the defenders of the capitalist road, and carry out the ideological transformation of society. The GPCR is the masterful development of Marxism-Leninism by Chairman Mao, the materialization of the continuation of class struggle and the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, to develop and consolidate socialism and prepare society for the transition to communism. The GPCR is the most gigantic mass mobilization in history, where millions have thrown themselves into the struggle, not for food or any other immediate material good, but to maintain proletarian power and for the complete ideological transformation of society. The Ninth Congress of the CPC will enshrine Mao Zedong Thought as the guide of the world revolution in the new party leadership that emerged in the midst of the GPCR. The leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil failed to understand this process and sank further and further down the revisionist road of Enver Hoxha.

In the great struggle, social-imperialism is plotting with U.S. imperialism to erode the People's Republic of China and drown in blood the revolutionary processes underway in different countries. U.S. imperialism is bombing North Vietnam and Soviet social-imperialism is pushing India against People's China, as well as manoeuvring and

manipulating different organizations, parties and processes of struggle in Africa and Latin America in order to extend its tentacles. In the second half of the 1960s, the whole world, including the imperialist powers, would be shaken by gigantic mass movements. Yankee imperialism's aggression against Vietnam began to suffer heavy defeats, pointing to the victory of the people's war. Throughout this stormy process in which revolution and counter-revolution clashed, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which had blocked capitalist restoration in China since 1966, failed to hold and fell after the death of Chairman Mao in 1976, ending a long revolutionary cycle, the first great wave of the world proletarian revolution, which began with the 1848 release of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Marx and Engels, and the Paris Commune in 1871.

The understanding of these three factors, analyzed and taken as a unity, unequivocally explains to us the basis on which the Araguaia defeat took place. More than that, it explains why, with this defeat and the "Lapa massacre," the party underwent a profound ideological conversion that would lead it from the capitulation of the armed struggle gradually to complete rot in the swamp of revisionism.

4. The Araguaia Guerrilla and the Communist Party of Brazil

The Communist Party of Brazil, like no other political organization, was not immune to this giant ideological furnace and the stormy confrontation of revolution and counter-revolution that took place worldwide in the 1960s and 1970s. It was in the midst of these clashes that the events in Araguaia took place in 1974, starting with the attack by the reactionary armed forces on the three areas of the three detachments, when the third campaign of encirclement and annihilation by the reactionary military flattened the guerrillas. The Communist Party of Brazil prepared and led the guerrillas under the influence of all this strife in the international communist movement. All of this had a fundamental impact on how it faced defeat and how it sought to move forward. Comrade Pomar's detailed analysis of the events in Araguaia, presented in the CC debates, is undoubtedly the most correct. In it, he identifies, after highlighting the positive points, the main errors and the fundamental one that he blames on the conception that presided over the party's intervention in that struggle.

Mistakes, such as countering the attack by the reactionary armed forces when they discovered that the party was preparing when they should have withdrawn; mistakes of only starting political mass work once the military struggle had begun; mistakes of concentrating forces after the first enemy campaigns when they should have dispersed. All this, combined with the errors of preparation, which practically treated the problem of war by defining it as a task for "specialists," as well as the error of not establishing party organizations on the perimeter of guerrilla activity and not conceiving of people's war–in our particular case–as necessary in the countryside and the city, are clear violations of the principles and concepts of people's war in general and guerrilla war in particular. The comrade's conclusion, reached at the time he was assassinated, is

therefore the most correct, but insufficient. Why? When he points out that the error was one of conception, he draws a correct conclusion, but he doesn't ask the obvious question that his conclusion raises. In other words, what led to the prevalence of such a conception and not the correct conception of people's war? Answering this question correctly, for us, concludes the analysis of the just experience of the Araguaia Guerrilla.

For us, an analysis of the three factors involved in the development of the Communist Party of Brazil serves precisely to give a clear answer to this question. What led the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil to decide, back in 1966, on the Araguaia region as the main area for establishing, deploying, preparing and unleashing the armed struggle is no mystery. Comrade Pomar himself, who made the harshest criticism of the "people's war" conception that prevailed in Araguaia, made the following statement when highlighting the positive aspects of the guerrilla war: *"I would also like to highlight the choice of the area, which in the country's current conditions proved to be favorable to our strategy. Despite its very low demographic density and the fact that it has no political or mass organizational tradition, it offered an excellent position for defense."* This is confirmation that the leadership had a misconception about fundamental issues, not only relating to people's war, but also of a general political nature, determined by subjectivism, as well as a certain "militarist" deviation.

Firstly, subjectivism leads them to establish as their main area a region which, as comrade Pomar himself is aware, has a very low demographic density and no political or mass organizational tradition, disregarding the northeast region and the experience of its peasantry. Secondly, a certain "militarism" manifested with considering the terrain as a factor that defines the armed struggle. This could be correct in other conditions, such as in the midst of armed struggle, but never as what defines the main area. For this, the determining factor is always the political one, which was almost non-existent in the Araguaia region. We can see, then, that comrade Pomar himself, who clearly sees the mistakes made in the course of the struggle, even correctly concluding that these mistakes were the result of a mistaken conception of people's war, also makes mistakes and continues, in his critical assessment, to hold the choice of the Araguaia region as the main area for preparing and initiating the armed struggle to be correct.

In response to the question of what led the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil to adopt this definition back in 1966, we conclude, as we did above when dealing with the first factor: By not carrying out two-line struggle, the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil blocked its own assimilation of Mao Zedong Thought and with it the necessary understanding in the analysis of our reality and other central questions, such as the very integral and just conception of the people's war. It is clear that the leadership has inherited a dogmatic and anti-democratic conception of the party and the methods of leadership, of dealing with contradictions within the party from the previous process of the old party, from reformism, *mandonismo*,[10] revisionism

[10]Red Library: *Mandonismo* roughly translates to despotism.

and opportunism for years on end. This legacy will predominate and lead the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil to decide on strategic issues, such as the main area for unleashing the armed struggle, treating them as mere conspiratorial questions.

As early as 1966, before a profound two-line struggle had been waged about ideology, revisionism, the historical and international experience of the revolutionary proletariat, as well as the origins of reformism in the party's history, a rigorous and systematized assessment of the party's history, decisions on this scale were made in a small circle of the CC or, perhaps, in a narrower executive or military commission. In the assessment that the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil makes of the party's history, set out both in the *Declaration of Reconstruction* and in the most elaborate article of 1972, *Fifty Years of Struggle*, it makes serious mistakes. Errors such as generically considering that up to and including its Fourth Congress (December 1954 to January 1955), the party's congresses were all revolutionary congresses and, furthermore, adopting the same opportunist assessment as Prestes, regarding the "ultra-left" character of the Fourth Congress. To this day, the party has not held a single revolutionary congress in its history and the Fourth Congress, in essence, is far from expressing "left" opportunism; on the contrary, it is a manifestation of right opportunism. Just take its definition of the creation of popular armed forces from the reactionary armed forces, "purging them of their fascist elements." What's more, the whole right opportunist conception of the democratic revolution, with its Browderist influence, is at the basis of the Fourth Congress" class analysis of Brazilian reality.

In concrete terms, determined by subjectivism, mainly in the form of dogmatism, the leadership of the Communist Party of Brazil formally dealt with the ideological struggle, enclosing a formal unity based on ideological eclecticism within the CC, which harbored anti-Maoist positions within it. This was a clear symptom of the fact that the ideological question had not been resolved, but instead had been dealt with dogmatically. If we make a comparison with processes in other countries, we can understand the seriousness of this problem. Take the Peruvian process, which is the richest and most important revolutionary process in Latin America. The organizational break with revisionism in Peru dates from the same period as in Brazil, precisely one year after ours (1964). In fact, unlike here, in Peru the revisionists remained in the minority and were expelled from the PCP. The bases united and expelled the revisionist leadership at the Fourth Conference in January 1964, adhering to Mao Zedong Thought, with all the definitions that entailed. However, the armed struggle was only initiated in 1980.

Seventeen years of hard two-line struggles saw the formation of the Red Fraction led by comrade Abimael Guzmán, to carry out the reconstitution of the PCP, establishing an effectively Maoist leadership. Even more so, this process has led to a great leap forward, which is the masterful understanding of Chairman Mao's contributions by comrade Abimael, Chairman Gonzalo, which establishes that Maoism, and not just Mao Zedong Thought, is a new, third, and higher stage of Marxism.

In his monumental interview with The Daily [*El Diario*] (1988), Chairman Gonzalo, answering what important lessons he drew from the PCP's process, said:

> The process of reconstitution continues to unfold in the party until 1978-1979, when it ends and a third period begins, the period of leading the people's war, which is the one we are living in now.
>
> What lessons can we draw from this? The first lesson is the importance of the basis of party unity, and its relation to the two-line struggle. Without this basis and its three elements, there would be no basis for building the party ideologically and politically. But without two-line struggle there would be no basis for party unity. Without a firm and thorough two-line struggle in the party, there is no way to firmly grasp the ideology, nor establish the Program, nor the General Political Line, much less defend, apply and develop them. For us the two-line struggle is fundamental, and that has to do with our view of the party as a contradiction, in accordance with the universal law of contradiction. A second lesson is the importance of people's war. A Communist Party's central task is the seizure of power for the proletariat and the people. Once constituted, and basing itself on the concrete conditions, the party must strive to carry out the seizure of power, which it can only do through people's war. The third important lesson is the need to forge leadership. Leadership is key, and it does not develop spontaneously but must be forged over a long period of intense and arduous struggle, particularly in order to provide leadership for a people's war.

The process called the 1962 Reorganization (Communist Party of Brazil–PCdoB) is in fact the beginning of the period of struggle to establish the CPB–Communist Party of Brazil, as a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Communist Party (Mao Zedong Thought at the time). This process suffered from major shortcomings, but it was the most advanced step the communists in Brazil had ever taken in the struggle for a real party and opened up a new and more advanced stage in the party's history. It made mistakes that prevented it from forging itself ideologically to correctly solve the fundamental and central tasks of the revolution. The dispersion of forces (RCP and Red Wing) and the Araguaia Guerrilla were the result of these decisions and mistakes. Therein lies the fundamental cause of the defeat of the Araguaia Guerrilla. The Araguaia Guerrilla, in the harsh lessons it teaches us, is eternally glorious, unforgettable and as such its fighters are heroic. In the struggle to complete the reconstitution of the party and unleash the people's war, as continuators of the Araguaia guerrillas, let us be infinitely proud of their devotion and pioneering spirit. Let's keep the glorious banner of Araguaia high and proud!

Long live the heroic and glorious Araguaia Guerrilla!

Down with the revisionist and traitorous road of Amazonas and Rabelo![11]

Long live the reconstitution of the CPB–Communist Party of Brazil!

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Long live protracted people's war!

[11]Red Library: Renato Rabelo (born 1942), leader of the revisionist so-called "Communist Party of Brazil," and national chairman from 2001 to 2015, taking over after Amazonas lost his status of chairman in 2001.