ROBERTO REGALADO

latin america at the crossroads

DOMINATION, CRISIS, POPULAR MOVEMENTS, & POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES

LATIN AMERICA AT THE CROSSROADS

DOMINATION, CRISIS, POPULAR MOVEMENTS, AND POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES

To the memory of my father

Roberto Regalado was born in Havana in 1953 and studied at the University of Havana and the Maxim Gorky Language Institute. He has worked in the Americas Department of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party (PCC) since 1971, and served as a diplomat in the United States and Nicaragua. He is currently the section chief in the PCC Department of International Relations.

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Glossary

AFL-CIO American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (USA)

ALDHU Latin American Human Rights Association

Causa R Radical Cause (Venezuela)

CIA Central Intelligence Agency (USA)

COPEI Social Christian Party of Venezuela

COPPPAL Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean

CPSU Soviet Communist Party

ECLAC Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

ELN National Liberation Army (Bolivia)

EPL People's Liberation Army (Colombia)

EZLN Zapatista National Liberation Army (Mexico)

FA Broad Front (Uruguay)

FARC Colombian Armed Revolutionary Forces

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation (USA)

FDN National Democratic Front (Mexico)

FMLN Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (El Salvador)

FREPASO Front for a Solidarity-Oriented Country (Argentina)

FSLN Sandinista National Liberation Front (Nicaragua)

FSP São Paulo Forum

FTAA Free Trade Area of the Americas

IMF International Monetary Fund
M-19 April 19 Movement (Colombia)
MAS Movement to Socialism (Bolivia)
MAS Movement to Socialism (Venezuela)
MBL Free Bolivia Movement
Mercosur Southern Common Market
MIR Revolutionary Left Movement (Bolivia)
MNR Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (Bolivia)
MRTA Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (Peru)
MST Landless Rural Workers Movement (Brazil)
NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OAS Organization of American States
OPEC Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAN National Action Party (Mexico)
PDA Alternative Democratic Pole (Colombia)
PDC Christian Democratic Party (Chile)
PPD Party for Democracy (Chile)
PRD Democratic Revolutionary Party (Panama)
PRD Party of the Democratic Revolution (Mexico)
PRI Institutional Revolutionary Party (Mexico)
PRSD Radical Social Democratic Party (Chile)
PSCh Socialist Party of Chile
PSOE Spanish Socialist Workers Party
PT Workers Party (Brazil)
SALT Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty
UC-ELN Camilista Union National Liberation Army (Colombia)
UCR Radical Civil Union (Argentina)
URNG Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity

Preface to the English Edition

It is a challenge to write a book that deals with current-day events. The first version of this work was presented to Ocean Press in February 2005, when George W. Bush's first term in office as president of the United States had just concluded; this appeared to be a reasonable cut-off date. While the text was being edited and translated into English, protest movements emerged that led to the resignation of presidents Lucio Gutiérrez in Ecuador and Carlos Mesa in Bolivia. The author and the publishing house agreed that these developments justified postponing the publication of the book in order to include them in our analysis, and with this in mind, the closing date for the first edition in Spanish was extended to June 2005.

Although the leading role played by Evo Morales in the social and political struggles in Bolivia is well known, and even though in June 2005 his campaign for the presidential elections of December of that year was fully underway, at that time it was impossible to foresee if Morales would be able to overcome the obstacles that US imperialism and Bolivian right-wing forces would place in his path. Fortunately, Evo overcame all obstacles, and his election as president of Bolivia posed the need to rewrite for the second time — in this case for the edition of this book in English — the two final chapters. This was due not only to the significance of these developments, but also because they contributed new elements to the general analysis.

Until Evo's victory, the Bolivarian revolution appeared as a kind of historical accident, attributable to the exceptional intensification of the political and social crisis in Venezuela. This not only prevented imperialism and its local allies from blocking Hugo Chávez's victory in the 1998 elections, but also from thwarting the approval of a new constitution, the reform of the country's political and electoral system, the development of the social missions, and other structural transformations that have broken with the status quo of the system of continental domination. Until that moment, the efforts of Lula [in Brazil] and Tabaré [in Uruguay] to expand their respective governmental coalitions with center parties and their adherence to the policy of "democratic governance," gave the impression that this is what could be expected as the left political alternative in Latin America in the short and medium term. But, without resorting to generalizations, it is obvious that Evo's election more closely resembles the experience of Chávez than that of Lula and Tabaré, in the sense that it represents a break with the canons of "democratic governance." This development demonstrated that the Venezuelan experience was not exceptional, and that the differences between the governments of Chávez and Evo on the one hand and those of Lula and Tabaré on the other, correspond to the degree of intensification of the political, economic, and social crisis in which those electoral victories took place, a crisis which is much greater in the Andean region than in the Southern Cone.

In paying more attention to the sub-regional scenarios, not only do the features of the capitalist crisis in each of them stand out, but also the differentiated response of US imperialism, which has openly interfered in the electoral processes to try to prevent the victories of the left presidential candidates in the Andean sub-region, as well as in Central America, but has adopted a tolerant attitude in the Southern Cone. It should also be noted that it is not possible to speak only of a Central American sub-regional

scenario, but of a panorama for the entire Caribbean basin. Indeed, although this book does not include an analysis of the English, French, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries, it is impossible not to mention the most flagrant violation of the sovereignty of a nation in the hemisphere since the US invasion of Panama in 1989, namely, the forced resignation of Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his dispatch to Africa, carried out by Washington's military forces in February 2004.

Barely a month after Evo Morales's victory at the polls new developments arose. These events involved the attempt to rob René Preval of his victory in the Haitian presidential election held on February 7, 2006, and the popular protests that frustrated this maneuver. This action by the Bush administration allows us to speak not only of differentiated sub-regional scenarios, in which imperialism more nakedly violates its own policy of the "defense of democracy," but also of the failure of the attempt to reform the system of continental domination initiated by President George H. Bush (from 1989 to 1993).

Historically, US imperialism has employed a supposed code of ethics, based on the "defense of democracy," to cover up or justify its interference and intervention in Latin America and the Caribbean. In accordance with that code, the US rulers classify as democratic the political forces that represent or bend to their interests, and brand as antidemocratic those they consider their adversaries. This double standard reached a new level during the Cold War, when "the threat of communism" was invoked as a pretext to impose the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (the Río Treaty) in 1947; a year later, the creation of the Organization of American States (OAS) was accompanied by the promotion of military dictatorships that served Washington and the US monopolies. The "defense of democracy" was also the argument used to justify the US invasion that overthrew Jacobo Árbenz's government in Guatemala (1954), and which, in turn,

served to secure the right of the White House to interfere in the inter-American system.

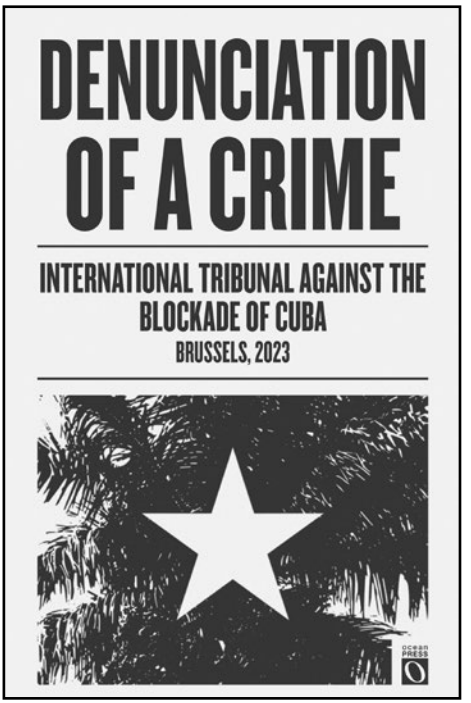
Following the victory of the Cuban revolution (1959) and the subsequent rise of nationalist, democratic, popular, and revolutionary struggles in Latin America and the Caribbean, US imperialism reaffirmed the right to interfere in the region through the sanctions adopted against Cuba in the eighth Consultative Meeting of Foreign Ministers of the OAS held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in 1962. However, given that the policy of aggression, blockade, and isolation against Cuba did not destroy the revolution or eliminate its example, US President Lyndon Johnson felt obliged to renounce, publicly and formally, the "defense of democracy" policy. The Johnson Doctrine proclaimed that the United States preferred to have secure allies rather than democratic neighbors. This policy was implemented in 1964, when the US government supported the coup d'état that overthrew Brazilian president Joao Goulart and created the prototype of military dictatorship based on "national security" considerations that devastated Latin America from that time up until 1989. During the intervening 25 years, military dictatorships imprisoned, murdered, "disappeared," tortured, and sent into exile tens of thousands of Latin American men and women. It was not until imperialism had accomplished its objective of annihilating an entire generation of left-wing activists in order to establish the basis for neoliberal reform that Washington decided to renounce its tyrants, denying all responsibility for their crimes, and resuming its hypocritical stance of support for democracy and human rights, with a view to using it against the left and restricting its activity.

Amid the terminal crisis of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European socialist bloc, US imperialism, through the military invasion of Panama in December 1989 and the dirty war that led to the "electoral defeat" of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in February 1990, liquidated the last supposed threats to its "national

security" in continental Latin America. It also accelerated the agreed-upon dismantling of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship, the last remaining military dictatorship in the region, in order to give the Chilean "neoliberal miracle" a democratic face to make it an attractive model for the rest of the Latin American and Caribbean bourgeoisies. It was in this context that in 1991 George H. Bush imposed the defense of representative democracy as the political pillar of the reform of the inter-American system, which had fallen apart as a result of Reagan's strong-arm policy.

Under the conditions of the then burgeoning "New World Order," US imperialism thought it could impose a system of transnational domination on Latin America and the Caribbean based on the schema of "democratic governance," which would allow it to expand and deepen its control over the region without utilizing the historical mechanisms of interference and intervention — such as military invasions, coups d'état, fraud, military dictatorships, murder, torture, etc. — which were so abused and so expensive for the United States in terms of international public opinion. Nevertheless, as we argue in this book, the domination intensified the crisis; the crisis stimulated the rise of popular struggles; and the popular struggles led to the search for left political alternatives. And this chain reaction, which occurred over and over again, forced imperialism to remove the kid gloves of "democratic governance" and resort again (or continue resorting) to the same open interference and intervention that it has practiced since time immemorial. This is the essential core of the failure of the current system of domination, and something that is much clearer today than when the first Spanish-language edition of this book was published.

Roberto Regalado Álvarez
February 2006



DENUNCIATION OF A CRIME. INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL AGAINST THE BLOCKADE OF CUBA

Ocean Press, Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP)

On November 16 and 17, 2023, the International Tribunal against the Blockade of Cuba was held in Brussels, Belgium. The impacts of the application of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and the inclusion of Cuba on the list of State Sponsors of Terrorism were denounced. Irrefutable evidence demonstrated that the blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba is not a bilateral issue between two countries, but violates international law and is an attack on democratic values and the peoples of the world.

2024, ISBN 978-1-923074-32-3

Author's Note

Latin America is a key piece in the puzzle of transformation, crises, conflicts, social struggles, and political confrontations that have so deeply affected humanity in the transition from the 20th to the 21st century. If the study of capitalist development in the advanced nations of 19th century Europe was considered at the time to be sufficient for understanding the world and drafting strategies to transform it, tasks of a similar scope today cannot be limited to the study of the development and the economic, political, and social contradictions of the major imperialist powers.

Through a masterful dissection of the British economy, Marx was able to trace what, in contemporary terminology, we could call the genome map of capitalism. These investigations allowed Marx to discover the general laws that govern the movement of capital, which will always be the necessary starting point for understanding their development and later metamorphosis. The relationship between the economic base and the social superstructure in Britain, France, Germany, and other European countries was another of Marx and Engels' main objects of study. It was not that the founders of Marxism ignored or underestimated the global character of capitalism. They were the first to analyze the fundamental role played by the colonial exploitation of Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the establishment of capitalist production, the formation of the world market, and the birth of modern industry. In essence, it was Marx and Engels who dis-

covered that capitalism had given rise to a universal history, which would progressively integrate all the world's peoples and nations into a single organic unit. But the study of emerging capitalist society had to be focused on its points of maximum development, which were confined to Western Europe and North America in the 19th century; it was precisely in those regions that the economy and the class structure of capitalism were clearly established and where the center of the class struggle was to be found. These days, however, a similar focus would be fragmentary and myopic.

In the course of the 20th century, capitalist development transcended national borders. After World War II, the concentration of property, production, and political power experienced a qualitative leap. The participation of the United States in the postwar reconstruction of Western Europe accelerated the merger of the economies of the major imperialist powers and the interpenetration of their respective capital investments. Thus was born a transnational space for capital accumulation, which is often called globalization or *mundialización,*[*] and a new subject that exercises economic domination within and outside that space — the transnational monopoly (usually called a transnational company). Complementing this process, the political and military alliance established during the Cold War against the Soviet Union and the newly arisen socialist bloc laid the foundation for a new relationship based on peaceful coexistence and cooperation between the imperialist nations that had previously confronted each other in numerous wars. The economic crisis of 1974, the first capitalist economic crisis that simultaneously affected the United States, Western Europe, and Japan, was also the first perceptible indication

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* There is no real English equivalent for the French *mondialization*, which expresses the concept of the increasing global integration of states and institutions, distinct from the more all-embracing concept of "globalization" —Translator's note.

that a transnational economy had emerged which interconnected the economies of the capitalist powers and deprived the economies of the rest of the world of their national character. The borders that for centuries had supported property and capitalist production had become obstacles for their subsequent concentration and development.

The transnationalization and denationalization process in the final decades of the 20th century transformed capitalism into a genuine universal organic whole. The North and the South are, at the present time, two sides of the same coin: it is impossible to consider the situation of one without the other because the development and contradictions of capitalism are projected, as never before, on a universal scale. Only those who feel competent to put into practice the biblical experience of Noah's Ark can conceive that there are regions of the world and social classes that are untouched by the comprehensive capitalist crisis that threatens the very existence of humanity.

Latin America is today a laboratory for the social sciences and politics. José Carlos Mariátegui (Peru, 1894–1930) was the first great thinker who employed a Marxist analysis to develop revolutionary theory from the starting point of Latin American reality. This was necessary because colonial and neocolonial dependence, underdevelopment, and the existence of large indigenous communities and slaves of African origin, among other factors, shaped social structures in this region and generated economic, political, and social contradictions different from those studied by Marx and Engels in 19th century Europe, conditions also unlike those analyzed by Lenin and other protagonists in the October 1917 revolution. Julio Antonio Mella (Cuba, 1903–29), Rodney Arismendi (Uruguay, 1913–90), Ernesto Che Guevara (Argentina, 1928–67), and Fidel Castro (Cuba, 1926–) stand out among the political leaders who have most contributed to the development of Latin American Marxist thought. This study is

even more necessary today because it is no longer just a matter of understanding and transforming Latin America, but also of contributing to the knowledge and transformation of the world.

One of the fields in which the Latin American left is opening its own paths, and in doing so is helping to open the way for the left in other regions of the world, is in the debate concerning the transformations that have occurred during the past few decades in terms of the conditions, scenarios, and social actors of the popular struggles, and on the strategic and tactical readjustment that flows from this. As a result, the historical polemic that prompted Rosa Luxemburg to publish *Reform or Revolution* in 1899 has been raised once again in Latin America. Of course, this is not an issue exclusive to Latin America, but it is in this region where it has the greatest intensity. This is because in the North the different sectors of the left consider the issue to be obsolete, resolved, or superseded, while in other areas of the South, the scope of the conflicts and the economic, political, social, and environmental crisis forces people to concentrate their attention on the most immediate threats to their survival.

The fact that in Latin America the debate between left currents advocating progressive social reform and those supporting the revolutionary transformation of society continues to be alive does not mean that the two positions confront each other on a level playing field. Following the implosion of the Soviet model of the socialist state and the intensification of imperialist intervention on a universal scale, today the idea prevails that the road to revolution has been closed forever, and that, in fact, it never existed. The notion of "viability" tends to favor the concept of social reform, given that imperialism adopts an attitude that appears to be tolerant — although not neutral, indifferent, or passive — with regard to the space conquered by different left-wing political parties and movements in local and state governments, in national legislatures, and even in the governments of some countries. So as

not to delude ourselves, it is necessary to contrast this attitude to the aggression waged against Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq; the threats against North Korea, Iran, and Syria; the worsening of the hostility and the blockade against Cuba; the destabilization campaign against President Hugo Chávez's government in Venezuela; and US interference in electoral campaigns in other countries where the left has the possibility of winning government, such as Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Those in Latin America today who advocate limiting the strategic horizon of the left's struggle within the confines of capitalism forget that the historical conditions which allowed progressive social reforms in the North to be carried out — some of which were extended to the upper and middle classes of certain countries of the South — have definitively disappeared. The social democratic road is exhausted. The model of senile capitalist accumulation that regulates humanity's destiny is only — and only will be — compatible with governments of those political forces that guarantee the continuity of the process of the transnational concentration of wealth and political power. This does not imply that the left should abstain from participating in the electoral struggle or reject the institutional positions obtained through such electoral participation, including running national governments; but it does require an awareness that, sooner or later, those who take this road will face the alternative of clinging to such positions as ends in themselves — thereby giving up the identity and the historical objectives of the left — or conceiving their use as a means of political accumulation with an eye toward the future revolutionary transformation of society. The first of these roads leads to the left "administering the capitalist crisis"; the second leads to a confrontation with imperialism and its allies. In both cases, it is necessary to pay the costs — of course, of a very different character — that are derived from having chosen one or the other path.

In a world in which the possibilities for progressive social reform are denied and the perspective of socialist revolution also appears to be blocked, the difficulties in "seeing the light at the end of the tunnel" lead to the polemic on objectives, strategy, and tactics of the left being imprecisely considered. Today, there is no talk of reform and revolution. Both concepts implicitly suggest antagonistic poles in the debate on the "search for alternatives," a phrase coined in the past few years that reveals the existing uncertainties and divergences on how to approach the future. This polemic is even more complex, due to the influence exercised in the debate by concepts and values assimilated from neoliberal doctrine and the platform of contemporary European social democracy.

The Marxist thesis that the dominant ideas are the ideas of the ruling class allows us to understand why neoliberalism, a doctrine that has saturated the mass media and universal theoretical production for 25 years, not only influences the social consciousness of the population in different countries but also conditions the vantage point from which part of the left undertakes its analysis and elaborates its strategies and tactics. This has especially been the case following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which provoked a crisis of credibility in revolutionary and socialist ideas, and left the terrain open to consolidate the fallacy that capitalism is omnipotent, eternal, and democratic.

To the extent that the global crisis of capitalism reveals the results of neoliberal doctrine, European social democracy rushes to the defense of imperialism and, as in previous stages of its history, offers its services in exchange for a position within the emerging system of world domination. One of those services is the re-codification of neoliberal ideas and policies with a "humanist" face that permeates the debate, theoretical production, and political practice of a section of the left with an entire mythology on the "regenerative capacity" of capitalism and the consummation

of a "civilizing change" — a mythology that does not allow us to understand the world, much less transform it. This book was conceived in order to refute these myths.

Latin America at the Crossroads offers a panoramic and synthesized inventory of the main elements of analysis that will enable us to place in a historical perspective those issues currently the subject of debate in the parties and political movements of the Latin American left. The first part of the book discusses some elements that, although they do not directly refer to Latin America, are indispensable to the author's argument on the situation facing the region. This involves some aspects of the political economy of capitalism, the history of bourgeois democracy, and the experience and evolution of the reformist and revolutionary currents of the international left. In the second part of the text, we offer an overview of some aspects of the colonial and neocolonial domination of Latin America, and the struggle for the emancipation of the region that spans the period of the conquest and colonization, from 1492 to the 1980s. The essence of this work is found in the two final chapters:

- "Latin America in the New World Order" presents an overview of US policy toward the region and the key political events that occurred from 1989 to 2005, a period that encompasses the administrations of US presidents George H. Bush (1989–93) and Bill Clinton (1993–97 and 1997–2001), and the first five years of George W. Bush's presidency (2001–05).
- "Latin America Between the Centuries" analyzes the relationship between the four processes that, in our opinion, characterize the Latin American political situation: its subordination to a model of global and continental domination that is qualitatively superior to what existed in the postwar period; the worsening of the global crisis, caused by the inability of the nation-state to fulfill the functions of such domination; the

growth achieved by the social movements struggling against neoliberalism; and the strategic and tactical elaboration of the political parties and movements of the left that are attempting to adapt to the new conditions in which they are developing.

Latin America at the Crossroads is based on the results of a collective research project — published in 2000 under the title *Transnacionalización y desnacionalización: Ensayos sobre el capitalismo contemporáneo*.[1] Without that common effort, in which I had the satisfaction of participating together with Rafael Cervantes, Felipe Gil, and Rubén Zardoya, this book would not have been possible.

Finally, it should be mentioned that this analysis is limited to the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries of Latin America. There would have been more than enough reasons to include the English, French, and Dutch-speaking countries of the Caribbean. Much of the analyses undertaken here would be applicable to these countries, either fully or partially. On issues such as the history and the functioning of the inter-American system, their omission detracts from the analysis. However, the study of Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole will have to remain as a pending task. The exclusion of this sub-region from this book does not mean we are discounting these countries, but on the contrary, indicates our conviction that it is impossible to mechanically apply the conclusions of a study of Latin American capitalism to the Caribbean.

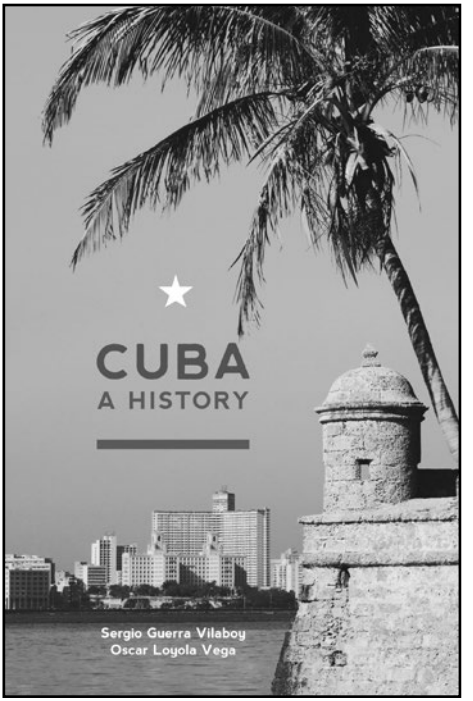
Roberto Regalado Álvarez
June 2005

Legal reform and revolution are not different methods of historical progress that can be picked out at pleasure from the counter of history, but rather are different moments in the development of class society which condition and complement each other, and at the same time reciprocally exclude each other.

Rosa Luxemburg

PART ONE

REFORM OR REVOLUTION?



CUBA: A HISTORY
Sergio Guerra Vilaboy y Oscar Loyola Vega

A concise, readable history of Cuba beyond the images of salsa, cigars and classic cars. Beginning with the pre-Hispanic period, through to Cuba's struggle to maintain the revolution in the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and finally ending with Fidel Castro's decision to step down in 2008, this slim volume provides the reader with an overview of the history and politics of the tiny Caribbean island that so often has been at the center of world events.

2017, ISBN 978-0-9804292-4-4

The Cycles of Capitalist Development

Concentration of property, production, population, and political power

The polemic on whether the strategic objective of the left should be the progressive reform of capitalism or socialist revolution is inevitably determined by the evaluation that those supporting one or the other position make of the current social system. Based on the notion that the scientific technological revolution represents a type of fountain of youth that allows capitalism to conjure or defer indefinitely the explosion of its antagonistic contradictions, the idea currently prevails that capitalist society will be eternal.

Everything is born, develops or grows, ages, and dies. This law of nature also governs the course of history. The cycle that begins with birth and concludes with death occurs in all socioeconomic formations. It occurred in primitive society, under slavery, and feudalism,[1] and it will inexorably occur in capitalism and in any other type of economy and society that may follow, both in the foreseeable future as well as in a future that we cannot even try to fathom. Of course, it is impossible to specify when and how capitalism will die, but it is clearly in the stage of advanced senility and if its death does not occur as a result of a revolutionary social

transformation, its life cycle will conclude with the extinction of humanity.

The history of capitalism is, above all, the history of the concentration and development of property and production. Capitalism was born in the 16th century based on a process known as primitive capital accumulation, which removed the means of production from small-scale producers — peasants in agriculture and artisans in urban occupations — and transformed them into salaried workers.[2] After reaching its peak between the 11th and 13th centuries, feudalism entered a prolonged phase of decline. Serfdom became unproductive; hunger stalked Europe's rural regions; the growth of the cities eroded the privileged position of the countryside; manufacturing ruined artisans' workshops; the accumulation of money in the hands of merchants and bankers clashed with the feudal division of society; and the expansion of commerce spurred the creation of a political and economic space that transcended the feudal estates and led to the need to form what would become the bourgeois nation-states. This was coupled with the conquest and colonization of the "New World" and advances in navigation that by the 16th century made possible the import of large quantities of gold and silver from the colonies.

When this expropriation of the individual producer was consummated, the concentration of property and production continued through the expropriation of weaker capital by stronger capital.[3] The concentration and development of property and production began with simple cooperation, continued with manufacturing, and reached maturity with large-scale industry.[4] In turn, the development of large-scale industry continued toward a higher phase, in which monopolies arose that established their control over entire branches of the economy. The two major phases of the development of capitalist production are thus the pre-monopolist stage of capitalism marked by free competition and free trade and monopoly capitalism or imperialism.

Imperialism has passed through three stages. The first stage spans the period from the final decades of the 19th century until the early 20th century. This is a period during which monopolies blocked free enterprise in the market in a growing number of branches of the national economy, but had still not fused with the state. During this stage, imperialism is monopoly capitalism "without adjectives."

The second stage was conceptualized by Lenin following the destruction wrought in Europe by World War I (1914–18), which acted as a catalyst for interconnection between the economic power of the monopolies and the political power of the state, and as a result of which, monopoly capitalism became state monopoly capitalism.[5] From then on, the state ceased to represent the interests of the entire bourgeois class and represented only the interest of the monopolist elite that manipulated economic power and state policy, both to avoid the effects of the crises and wars and to impose favorable conditions for the growth of monopoly capital. This trend was reinforced during the Great Depression (1929–33) and World War II (1939–45).

The third stage is the result of the leap from the national concentration to the transnational concentration of property, production, and political power. Following a maturation process that began toward the end of World War II, this trend has grown markedly since the 1970s. From that time it is possible to conceptualize the metamorphosis of state monopoly capitalism into transnational monopoly capitalism.[6]

The birth of transnational monopoly capitalism responded to the monopolies' need to expand, encouraged by the unprecedented development of productive forces that occurred during the postwar period as a result of the reconstruction of Western Europe and the arms race. Such an expansion led to the interpenetration of the capital of the large imperialist powers and the merger of the national cycles into a single transnational cycle of capital

flow and accumulation. A decisive factor in this process was the need to place inter-imperialist rivalries on a secondary level, for the purpose of cementing a strategic alliance between the United States, Western Europe, and Japan, in response to the emergence of the socialist bloc (bipolarity).

Transnationalization imposed a metamorphosis of the capitalist state, in particular, of the US imperialist state, a metamorphosis that is not only functional, but also structural. Given the expansionary nature of capital, its irresistible drive toward permanent growth, and the desire to conquer new markets to fulfill the increasingly difficult task of accumulating capital — in summary, as a result of the need to become a universal, organic whole in the more than five centuries since it was first incubated in the entrails of feudalism — capitalism today represents a transnational space for capital accumulation and requires a transnational political power to impose uniform conditions for the reproduction of capital in every part of the planet. With large doses of protectionism — and always with a balance favorable to US imperialism — the major powers established among themselves more flexible regulations to facilitate the flow of capital, goods, services, and migrants, while they impose on the South a one-way flow of capital, goods, and services, and the airtight closing of borders as a first containment barrier against emigration to the North.

The concept of transnational monopoly capitalism does not presuppose that the monopolies have broken their virtual merger with the imperialist state, nor — as many authors argue — that the monopolies have "globalized" their functioning while the state is "anchored" within national borders. It is a process in which both, acting in unison, project their respective political and economic power on a transnational scale.

Under the hegemony of US imperialism, which draws together and subordinates all other centers of imperialist power, the state and monopolies jointly direct the process of the transnational

concentration of property, production, and political power. The other side of the process is the denationalization of the weakest imperialist states and, in even sharper fashion, of the underdeveloped and dependent countries. This involves a downgrading of these states and their institutions, a weakening of their national functions, and the assignment of subordinate transnational functions. As part of this process, the imperialist powers assume the authority to adopt decisions that have effects on, and even within, other nations, which are unable to adopt their own policies. This transnational domination is complemented by the revamping of the functions of international institutions, such as the UN Security Council, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).[7]

In essence, the transnational concentration of political power corresponds to imperialism's need to have a world state that determines the destiny of humanity. A particularly important example of this trend is the European Union, a genuine regional proto-state in the advanced phase of development. However, the formation of a world state is impossible, both due to the existence of irresolvable inter-imperialist contradictions as well as various countertrends that undermine such a project, among the most important of which are the growth of the popular resistance, currently represented symbolically by what is known as the anti-globalization movement.

The aging of capitalism

The "law of the jungle" that compels stronger capital to seek the spiral of concentration and which currently governs the universal depredatory activity of the transnational monopolies, results in an intensification of one of the antagonistic contradictions that accelerates the senility — which, at some point, will lead to the

death — of capitalism, namely, the contradiction between the social character of production — in which an incalculable number of human beings participate — and the capitalist nature of the appropriation of wealth.

One of the manifestations of the contradiction between the social character of production and the capitalist form of appropriation, is the contradiction between production and consumption. This contradiction occurs because the motor force behind capitalist production is not the satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of the population, but the profit motive of a minority, sustained by the exploitation of the majority. As a result, the goods and services produced are not distributed to those who need them, but only to that part of humanity that has access to money to buy them. The other side of this limit based on solvent capacity (society's purchasing power) is the struggle of each individual against everyone else, a struggle in which each capitalist devours the other to avoid, in turn, being devoured; this imposes a growing competition that, even though it might be regulated by monopolist alliances and the oligopolies, results in an over-saturation of the market.

As a result of the development of large-scale industry, which occurred during the first quarter of the 19th century, the capacity to produce more goods than can be sold began to lead to crises of overproduction or crises of under-consumption. Such crises are characterized by "overproduction" based on the criteria that the goods and services produced surpass the existing demand in the market; but they can also be considered crises of "under-consumption" since what is involved is a "surplus" in the sense that part of society does not have money to buy the goods, and not because their human needs are already satisfied. The crises of overproduction of commodities, in general, are at the same time crises of overproduction of capital that cannot find a place where its value can be reproduced, and also crises of overpopulation

with regard to the demand for labor power on the part of capital.

According to Engels, the first capitalist economic crisis occurred in 1825 and, from that moment, crises reoccurred approximately every 10 years, until the end of the 19th century.[8] In the second decade of the 20th century, in addition to the economic crises, another mechanism of destruction of such surpluses began to emerge — world war. Three massive destructions of productive forces were registered between 1914 and 1945, corresponding to World War I, the 1929–33 economic crisis, and World War II (1939–45). In addition to the role played by the two world wars in concentrating and valorizing capital, these conflagrations functioned as catalysts for another process that had a decisive impact on history. As a result of World War I, the Soviet Union was born, and following World War II, socialism became a system operating in various countries.

The devastation caused by World War I was followed by a brief period of relative economic stabilization, from 1924 to 1929, the year in which the Great Depression began. The threat that the greatest economic crisis in the history of capitalism represented for the very existence of that social system grudgingly forced the British Liberal and Labour parties to accept the doctrines of English liberal politician and economist John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946), who urged the adoption of policies to stimulate investment through increasing employment and the implementation of state social development programs. Such ideas, in turn, were based on the theory of under-consumption formulated by economist and sociologist John Atkinson Hobson (1858–1940).[9]

Keynes argued that the greatest economic development in capitalism had occurred with the major construction projects of the industrial revolution, such as the expansion of railroads throughout Europe and the main colonial regions of Asia. But at that point in history, durable projects were built that did not require replacing in the short or medium term; therefore, once

they were completed, economic activity and the demand for labor declined. According to this analysis, the automotive era opened up new possibilities for capitalist development because a new generation of products entered the market, consumption of which could be on a mass scale and had to be periodically renewed, and therefore it was possible to lay the basis for stimulating production through an increase in demand. World War II came to the aid of Keynesianism.

The destruction of productive forces in World War II opened the space for two decades of expansive economic growth for the imperialist powers, without the danger that a major crisis in overproduction would erupt. The postwar period was the period of the greatest capitalist economic boom in the 20th century, spurred by the arms race against the Soviet Union and the reconstruction of Western Europe, and based on these factors, demand for goods, services, capital, and labor power posted continual growth. However, by the end of the 1950s, economic crises once again began to arise, aggravated by the contradiction between the development of the productive forces which took place in this period in the North, and the limited growth of the markets in the South.

Once the US, Western European, and Japanese markets were saturated, with the exception of the "Asian tigers," the attempts to export surpluses of capital and goods to Asia, Africa, and Latin America failed, because these regions were unable to absorb them and, of course, to pay for them, resulting in the foreign debt crisis. Under these conditions, to avoid the explosion of further crises in overproduction, the capitalist economy entered a voluntary and permanent semi-recession, and capital accumulation occurred through financial speculation on an unprecedented scale. While allowing for the accumulation of capital without immediately unleashing a crisis of overproduction of goods, this only led to a different problem: financial crisis.

Financial speculation has become the main mechanism through which the most powerful monopolies absorb or force their weaker competitors into bankruptcy. The victims are not just the "weaker" non-monopoly companies — small, medium, or large — but also those big transnational monopolies that cannot survive the intensity of the competition. In a general sense, the current world economic growth alluded to by official sources is based on transnationals devouring other capitalists to occupy their place, and not on good investment that expands the historic boundaries of capitalism. This process, characterized by economic, human, and environmental depredation, reflects the levels of inner rot, parasitism, and decomposition to which capitalist society has descended.[10]

The spiraling increase in financial speculation, coupled with the rising public and private debt and purchases on credit — which vastly exceed the income that the buyers will receive for years and even decades — are manifestations of the extreme intensification of the contradiction between production and consumption. The life cycle of capital depends on its expanded reproduction, its constant growth, and its continuous accumulation. Marx discovered that to fulfill this vital function, capital appropriates part of the value of each worker's labor (surplus value). But, given the worsening of its antagonistic contradictions, today capital is required to appropriate virtually all surplus value on a world scale and even this is insufficient. This insatiable appetite violates any rational relation between the value of the goods and services produced and society's solvent capacity. Therefore, capital must resort to suicidal financial speculation.[11] From this flows the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of the appropriation of wealth, which threatens the very survival of capitalism.

No one doubts that capitalist society has mechanisms to prolong its existence. However, the dangers engendered by each

and every one of those mechanisms are increasing, while their palliative effectiveness is declining. The hypothetical road for postponing the explosion of the antagonistic contradictions of capitalism would be the expansion of development from the North to the South, something that is impossible given the laws that regulate the flow of capital, such as the law of unequal economic and political development.

The State, Political Power, and Capitalist Accumulation Between the 16th and 19th Centuries

As part of the process of concentration of property and production that led to the primitive accumulation of capital, bourgeois society also concentrates population and political power.[1] Since its initial stages, the system of capitalist production needed a territorial space within which to create uniform and stable conditions for capital accumulation, and political power capable of defending such objectives. This territory is the nation, unified and centralized, and political power is exercised by the bourgeois state, a state that is national in form and capitalist in essence.

The bourgeois state fulfills its functions through means and methods that vary in accordance with concrete historical conditions. Among such variations might be the degree of coercion and violence used to guarantee the value of capital. The need for such force declines to the extent that capitalist economic, political, and social development not only allows, but indeed requires, the bourgeoisie to resort to indirect, measured, and less overt forms of exercising their domination over the subordinate classes. Specifically, the industrialized capitalist nations are characterized

by historical variations in the forms of political domination, which began with the naked use of force, from the period of the primitive accumulation of capital until around the sixth decade of the 19th century.

From that point on, violence was progressively replaced (albeit unevenly) with more measured forms of domination in some developed nations, while in others, such as Germany and Italy, violence intensified, resulting in fascism.

The more subtle forms of domination reached their ultimate development during the post-World War II period in the countries of Western Europe where the "welfare state" was introduced. Without abandoning the more measured forms of domination, the use of coercion and violence began once again to increase, starting with the rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s.

"Capital," Marx said, "comes into the world dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."[2] Although primitive accumulation "assumes different features and runs through its various phases in different orders of succession, and in different periods,"[3] the case of Britain, which Marx characterized as classic, serves to illustrate the blood and dirt that flowed with the birth of capital.

In England, primitive accumulation began with the disbanding of the feudal estates and continued with the eviction of the small agricultural producers (owners, renters, and sharecroppers) from their land by the large feudal lords, who also forcibly appropriated communal lands, in both cases, with the objective of increasing sheep grazing areas in order to provide the raw material for the production of wool. As a result of this process, the bulk of the displaced rural population became concentrated in the cities, where they fulfilled the double function of providing wage labor for manufacturing and establishing themselves as a market for the products of industry. Given that incipient capitalist production was unable to absorb all those who had

been displaced from the countryside, a mass of vagrants emerged, who were repressed with extreme violence.[4] The eviction of the rural population was marked by a new wave in the 16th century, through the expropriation of Catholic Church land during the Reformation, a process that proletarianized the mass of poor farmers who until then had cultivated church land. "The property of the church," Marx wrote, "formed the religious bulwark of the traditional conditions of landed property. With its fall, these were no longer tenable."[5] The expropriation and appropriation of land began to openly challenge the existing political power; the feudal political class fruitlessly tried to stop the concentration of rural property, until it was itself absorbed into the capitalist system. The appropriation of communal lands, carried out in violation of the law during the 16th and 17th centuries, became legalized and reached unprecedented proportions in the 18th century.[6]

The transition from feudalism to capitalism took 150 years (between the 16th and 18th centuries) during which the state exercised political power to promote the concentration of land ownership. However, from the middle of the 14th century the state was used to impose harsh conditions for the exploitation of wage labor. The first English legislation aimed at regulating wage labor was the Statute of Labourers, drafted by Edward III in 1349. Soon afterward, the Ordinance of 1350 was approved in France. Both fixed maximum limits on wages for all urban and rural salaried activities, and established jail sentences for those who paid and for those who received wages higher than the set amount. It should be pointed out that the sanctions were more severe for those receiving the wage than for those paying it.

Even though in the course of the 16th century there was a nominal rise in wages, the increase was very much below the depreciation of the currency and the rise in prices. Therefore, in reality, a reduction in real wages took place that severely worsened workers' living standards. Nevertheless, labor laws remained in

effect, including legislation mandating such sanctions as cutting off an ear or branding alleged violators with a burning iron. In England, these laws were expanded, stiffened, and extended, as capitalist development advanced and new labor sectors opened up.

Although in what Marx called the manufacturing phase capitalist production no longer needed, nor could it force compliance with these antilabor laws, such legislation remained in effect for a long period. The repeal of such laws took place in stages: in 1813, salary restrictions were eliminated; in 1825, the ban on organizing trade unions was repealed; in 1859, what Marx called "some beautiful vestiges of these old statutes" were removed; and, in 1871, the British parliament agreed to recognize labor unions, but another law reasserted the prohibition in a different fashion.[7]

It is no accident that the change in the means and methods used by the authorities, including moderation and fluctuations in the use of force, occurred in the 1860s, which Lenin characterized as being the greatest boom period in pre-monopoly capitalism. In the foreword to the 1892 edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Engels explained that the larger the scale on which capitalist production is carried out, "the less can it support the petty devices of swindling and pilfering which characterize its early stages," and therefore it adopts the appearance of "a certain standard of commercial morality."[8]

The progressive expansion of political rights to society as a whole was the result of two parallel processes, one objective and the other subjective, which reached maturity in the 1860s. The objective process was the economic development registered by the capitalist powers — first of all, by England — as a result of the advances in the system of capitalist production and the exploitation of the colonial world; while the subjective process was the increase in the organization and militancy of workers and socialist movements, which were able to take advantage of

elements of bourgeois democracy and the system of political parties that the bourgeoisie had introduced for the exclusive defense of its interests.

Antonio Gramsci helped us to understand the redistribution of wealth by the capitalist state when he stated that "it should be a maxim of government to try to raise the level of material living standards of the entire people," without such a stance corresponding to a particular "humanitarian'' situation or even a "democratic" trend, but in order to guarantee a sufficient decent zone so that the people's "biological" and therefore, psychological resistance is not crushed in the case of war or economic crisis.[9]

Bourgeois Democracy and Political Parties

Bourgeois democracy is an indirect form of the rule of capital that becomes entrenched to the extent that the economic, political, and social development, and in particular, the struggles of the workers', socialist, and women's movements force the bourgeoisie of the most industrialized capitalist nations to diminish the level of coercion and violence and resort to the use of other mechanisms of social control. It was Gramsci who developed the concept of hegemony in a society divided into classes, to explain how domination is exercised based on the consent of those being dominated.

The establishment of hegemony is a process through which the oppressed classes assimilate the ideology of the ruling class. In capitalist society, hegemony is based on society as a whole adopting the morals, values, customs, laws, and respect for bourgeois institutions that are inculcated in the population through mass culture, education, the media, and other mechanisms. This includes the participation and representation of the oppressed classes in the bourgeois democratic political system, by means of elections, political parties, the trade unions, government, parliament, the system of justice, local administrations and their components. Although such participation and representation is formal in terms of the class character of the type of domination, it

represents an arena of social confrontation and political struggle, in which the oppressed classes can conquer certain "positions." Gramsci conferred a major importance to the analysis of how the ruling class is able to impose a consensus on the oppressed classes, not just in general terms of the capitalist system, but in the concrete case of each country and each historical moment. His purpose was to draw conclusions about how the consensus and the construction of a popular hegemony was achieved, which would lead to the seizure of power by the oppressed classes.

History shows how and why capitalist society created bourgeois democracy. Originally, the objective was to impose limits on absolutism through the creation of a parliament to approve the funds required by the crown, and later, depending on the circumstances, to suppress the monarchy or to strip it of any real power. Real power would be exercised by executive, legislative, and judicial institutions, formed and elected only by male citizens who were property owners (in other words, the bourgeoisie). The limits to this democratizing process are clear. It displaced the feudal aristocracy from power and constructed a neutral state with regard to the conflicting interests within the bourgeoisie, but it resorted to repression when the working class, which supported the bourgeois revolutions, sought to improve its own situation. Nevertheless, reviewing the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, Engels explained, "exceptional periods occur when the warring classes are so nearly equal in force that the state power, as apparent mediator, acquires for the moment a certain independence in relation to both."[1]

The first political parties arose in France and Britain: in France as a result of the evolution of the political clubs formed by groups that fought each other as part of the political and social turmoil that led to the French revolution of 1789; and in Britain as the result of economic and political struggles between the upper bourgeoisie and the monarchy, which took the form of a religious conflict.

Only under the conditions of capitalism do political parties emerge as organizations capable of expressing the objective interests of the social classes. In the political system of slave and feudal societies, only professional political groups existed — that is, comprised of individuals with the same legal status — that expressed the interests of different layers within the ruling classes. Generally, the aristocracy and the upper bourgeoisie opposed the formation of parties as instruments that might be used by popular sectors to pressure the state in pursuit of their interests. This opposition was greater and more doctrinaire in Britain, and due to its influence, in the United States as well.

The struggles of the labor, socialist, and women's movements, which began in the 19th century, played a key role in the formation of the model of bourgeois democracy we have today. During its first few years, the labor and socialist movements fought for freedom of speech and assembly, for political pluralism, and for the extension of the right to vote, so as to legally consolidate their status, generate more favorable conditions for their development, and force capital to concede the right to trade union organization and the right to strike. From then on, these movements used their political conquests to promote the reduction of the work day, an increase in workers' wages, the adoption of protective labor legislation, and opposition to imperialist war. The struggle for women's suffrage was not a priority for the labor and socialist movements, although they sometimes tried to argue this was just a tactical consideration. The women's movement fought alone, specifically in the period between the revolutions of 1848 — the year in which the *Communist Manifesto* and the *Declaration of Sentiments*[2] were published — and the first decades of the 20th century, when universal suffrage was finally adopted in most European countries.

The bourgeois democratic parliamentary system reached its greatest development with the victory of the Russian revolution

in October 1917, and later with the emergence of the socialist bloc soon after the end of World War II. These events marked a qualitative change, given that the balance of forces between the classes, as Engels said, would no longer be a relative balance of forces within capitalist society, restricted to the national setting, and with a bourgeois state as "apparent mediator" — as existed, for example, in Germany at the end of the 19th century. Now the balance reflected the birth and expansion of a socialist pole capable of exercising influence on a world scale, which forced capitalism to undertake progressive social reform in order to remove the danger of socialist revolution.

As a result of the economic growth registered by the imperialist powers following World War II, within these countries a direct relationship emerged between the rise in employment, wages, and capitalist profits. Under such conditions, an action and reaction effect took place. Social policies raised the demand for goods and services and, therefore, contributed to the accumulation of capital. It was logical that the monopolies would exercise their control over the state, with a view to developing social programs that guaranteed the reproduction of the labor force (training, health, and housing for the working class). This was not a philanthropic policy, but a way to reduce production costs and boost profitability. In other words, the improvement in wages, public policies, and other mechanisms for the social redistribution of wealth during this period can be attributed to their use as instruments for increasing capital accumulation.

The extension of socialism to the countries of Eastern Europe liberated from the Nazi occupation by the Red Army pushed capitalist social policies in the same direction that the economic conditions of the postwar period did. In response to the emergence of a bloc of socialist countries in Europe, the imperialist powers proclaimed their intention to "contain communism" and unleashed the Cold War, one of whose pillars was the "welfare

state," heavily mythologized in bourgeois propaganda and the political sciences. The "threat of communism" forced capitalism into a political and ideological competition, in which it needed to present a "democratic" and "redistributive" face. However, the welfare state was not to be eternal. In the 1970s, the exhaustion of the economic conditions and some of the political conditions that sustained the welfare state became evident. If employment, wages, and social programs had been motors of economic development during the postwar period, from this time they became victims of the growing difficulty to maintain or increase capital accumulation. The main centers of world power, led by the United States, now faced the need to design and implement a strategy to respond to the problems raised by the development of transnational monopoly capitalism. This strategy was based on the concentration of wealth and, therefore, involved the decline in living standards of most of the world's population.

The Origins of the Socialist Movement

Home of the Enlightenment, of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, and of the 1789 revolution, France was the cradle of almost all the initial socialist currents. In the words of George Douglas Howard Cole:

> Although socialism, in one sense, began much earlier, and in another sense, a few decades after the great French revolution, there are… sufficient reasons for using the year 1789 as a starting point for a study of the development of modern socialist ideas. This is the point from which it is possible to follow, not only a continuous development on the level of theory, but also a growing connection between the theory and the movements that try to provide it with a practical expression.[1]

During the French revolution there was no expression whatsoever of socialist thinking, nor did it flow directly from this event. The proponents of the French Enlightenment of the 18th century, whose ideas inspired the revolution, believed that reason should be the principle guiding force of a political, economic, and social order based on equality, fraternity, and liberty. In reality, this reason "was nothing but the idealized understanding of the 18th century citizen, just then evolving into the bourgeoisie."[2] This explains why the results of the revolution bore no relationship to

Rousseau's *Social Contract*. On the contrary, the destruction of the feudal order put an end to the church's charity programs and the protection offered by the guilds to artisans, which aggravated the economic and social situation of the lower and middle classes of society. Its effect was greater in the cities, in particular, in Paris. By freeing property from the old feudal encumbrances, what the French revolution did was to underscore — and put on the agenda — the contradiction between rich and poor that until then had been subsumed in the confrontation between the privileged and non-privileged classes. As Engels said: "All that was wanting was the men to formulate this disappointment…"[3]

Cole attributes the ferment of "permanent revolution," characteristic of French society after 1789, to the social contradictions derived from Paris's dual status as the seat of a centralized absolutist state and as the industrial city with the largest concentration of the national proletariat. It was natural that Paris would become the main center for the frustration of the urban poor after the French revolution, a laboratory of ideas on how to complement the political revolution with a socioeconomic revolution and how to forge movements designed to put them into practice.

Although socialism had still not been conceptualized, the *Manifesto of the Equals*, the basis for the conspiracy of the same name headed by Gracchus Babeuf — which in 1793 called for deepening the French revolution in terms of the socioeconomic equality demanded by the workers and other dispossessed sectors of Paris — represented the first socialist declaration in history, a pioneer of a tradition from which would flow the doctrine of class struggle and the notion of the proletariat as a revolutionary force. The socialist movement began in the first years of the 19th century, with Henri Saint-Simon's *Geneva Letters* (1802), the publication of Charles Fourier's first work (1808), and the beginning of Robert Owen's efforts with the New Lanark textile company (1800), where

he developed the first cooperative management experience.

The terms "socialism" and "socialist" emerged between the second and the third decades of the 19th century, when the need arose for a term that would encompass the different schools of thought that, despite the differences and rivalries existing among them, promoted some type of social focus for the solution of society's problems, as opposed to the individual (that is, individualist) approach recommended by laissez-faire liberal capitalism. The word "communism" began to be used in France after the 1830 revolution to designate the theories of Étienne Cabet, associated with the notions of "commune" and "community."[4]

The most important original socialist currents were the conspiratorial tradition, initiated by Babeuf and continued by Jérome Blanqui, based on the idea of a revolutionary elite that would organize popular insurrections; the construction of producer-consumer communities, popularized by Robert Owen and Charles Fourier, that due to the similarity of their views was subsequently joined by Étienne Cabet, whose *Voyage to Icaria* was based on a broader and more equitable communist conception; the school of designers and planners of development projects, begun by Henri Saint-Simon; the ideas on the "right to work" and state intervention in the economy for the development of productive projects directed by the workers, originally advanced by Louis Blanc and later taken up in Germany by Ferdinand Lassalle; and the rejection of the state, put forward by Pierre Joseph Proudhon and Mikhail Bakunin, whose anarchist ideologies were completely different from the others.[5]

During the first half of the 19th century, socialist thought was dominated by the utopian thinkers. This was because capitalist development, the formation of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the antagonism between these two classes were incipient, and therefore the conditions still did not exist that would allow for a conceptualization of the nature of the emerging social

contradictions, nor of the means to confront them. The revolution of 1848 was the decisive event for the utopian currents of the socialist movement. The catalyst was the emergence of Marxism, which in 1848 contributed the *Communist Manifesto* to the working class struggle. Marxism was the first doctrine that proclaimed the need for the workers to seize the means of production.[6]

As a result of the repression that rocked Europe after the failure of the 1848 revolution, the socialist movement took until the 1860s to recover. Given the economic and social development experienced by capitalism in that period — reflected in the greater concentration of property and production, the construction of large-scale industrial centers, and the polarization of society between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat — the rebirth of socialism, no longer just in England, but also on the European continent, took place under conditions that for the first time not only facilitated, but, in fact, demanded an indissoluble relation between theory, organization, and the daily economic and political struggle of the working class. Under these conditions, the socialist movement sprang back to life under the influence of the International Workingmen's Association (the First International), which was founded in 1864 by Marx and Engels.

The centrality of the political struggle as a weapon of the proletariat spurred division, first, between those engaged in political struggle and those who rejected it; and second, within the former group, between those who saw the general objective as either reform or revolution.

In the history of the labor and socialist movement there has not been a single reformist position or a single revolutionary position, but axes of variable convergence, generically classifiable within one or other of these two general concepts. Cole argued that "this dilemma, reform versus revolution, was not the object of a definitive struggle until a later period… but in the 1860s it had already appeared both in Britain as well as in the United States and

Switzerland, although this was barely the case in France, Belgium, and Germany, even less so in Italy, and not at all in Spain."[7]

With the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, the possibility of a European revolution that the leaders of the International had expected since 1848 faded. Even in France, the terms of the capitulation to Germany changed the character of the revolution in that country. As a reaction to the deepening of the socioeconomic crisis caused by the war and the terms of the French government's capitulation, it was once again the workers of Paris who were the key players in a popular insurrection that established the Paris Commune.[8] However, the Commune could not resist the attacks from the reactionary forces organized at Versailles.[9] Soon after its defeat in 1871, the center of the labor and socialist movement moved from France to Germany, which led to a change in the general orientation of the revolutionary struggle — characterized until then by an emphasis on insurrection, which had repeatedly occurred in Paris — in favor of the parliamentary struggle that the German Social Democratic Party, headed by the followers of the now deceased Ferdinand Lassalle, had successfully undertaken since universal suffrage was introduced in that country in 1866.

German social democracy and the strategy of parliamentary struggle reached the height of its influence in the world labor and socialist movement after 1875, the year of the unification of the Lassallean party and the Marxist party (which was founded in Eisenach, in 1869). Although the Gotha Program that served as the basis for the unification resulted in protests from Marx (from exile), contained in his *Critique of the Gotha Program* — which was published years later — the new party assumed, in a general sense, an orientation that was considered Marxist.[10]

The change in the arena of the struggles of the labor and socialist movement was the result of the continuity of the economic and social development of capitalism, which between the 1860s and 1870s reached the high point of its pre-monopolistic phase.

This development facilitated a decrease in the use of coercion and violence, and the strengthening of bourgeois hegemony. The opening up of a "contested space" into which the stronger trade unions and workers' parties could force their presence, created the conditions for the division between the currents of the labor and socialist movement that availed themselves of such space to promote reforms in the current economic and political system, and those that did so with the purpose of struggling for the revolutionary transformation of society.

Reform and Revolution to the 1970s

Social reform in Western Europe

In politics, progressive social reform is a strategy that offers the transformation of one or another aspect of the current social order or the social order in general, without destroying or revolutionizing its foundations, in particular, without undermining the existing relations of power. In the case of the labor and socialist movement, reformism is expressed as the negation of the class struggle and social revolution, supporting class collaboration for the sake of transforming capitalist society into one of well-being and social justice. Rosa Luxemburg argued that:

> Whoever chooses the road of legal reform to transform society, instead of and in opposition to the seizure of power, does not undertake, in reality, a more relaxed, safer, albeit longer road that leads to the same end, but rather, selects a different goal: that is, instead of the creation of a new order social, seeks simple nonessential changes in the already existing society.[1]

The doctrinaire and organizational structuring of the reformist currents within the labor and socialist movement began with the appearance of the French possibilist current in 1881, and British Fabianism in 1884. This trend continued at the end of the 1890s,

when reformism emerged in the German Social Democratic Party (SDP) itself, an organization that at the time was the main standard-bearer of Marxism in the world. A few years later revisionism also appeared in the ranks of the German social democracy.

Given the dynamism, heterogeneity, and complexity of the labor and socialist movement in France, the possibilist current emerged there, in the very cradle of social revolution. Possibilism arose in 1881, as an internal current headed by Dr. Paul Brousse within the Socialist Workers Federation of France, whose leader was the Marxist Jules Guesde.[2] The possibilist strategy took advantage of the existing space in the bourgeois democratic system, mainly in local governments, to struggle for improvements in workplace conditions and workers' living standards, while the official line of Guesde's Federation was not to negotiate with the liberals and other bourgeois currents. In 1882, a split took place between the two currents, as a result of which Brousse, with the support of the majority, created the French Socialist Workers Party. Meanwhile, with the minority, Guesde founded the French Workers Federation.

Unlike in France, where the labor and socialist movements were comprised of different conflicting currents that encompassed the entire spectrum of conceivable positions between reform and revolution, in Britain, reformism was always the dominant tendency. As the pioneer of economic development and beneficiary of the trade monopoly in the world during the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, Britain was where Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels first used the term "labor aristocracy." The peculiarities of Britain's economic development and capitalist policy were reflected in the prevalence of reformist tendencies that found ideological and organizational expression in the Fabian Society and in the consolidation of Labourism as the main political expression of that country's workers' movement, as opposed to the attempts to establish a socialist force similar to the German

Social Democratic Party. Although British reformism was in no way limited to the small group of middle-class intellectuals that converged in the Fabian Society, Fabianism was the most well-known and influential reformist doctrine in Britain, although it only took root in the city of London.

Created in 1884, the Fabian Society achieved fame in 1889 with the publication of the *Fabian Essays*, in which it was proclaimed that capitalist economic and social development would lead to the democratization and socialization of wealth, until reaching the point in which the system would become its opposite, that is, socialism. Based on this premise, the Fabians developed the strategy of "impregnating" the radical sector of liberalism with their ideas. Their activity consisted of publishing documents, presenting conferences, and work developed by two of their more prominent members, the husband and wife team of Sidney and Beatrice Webb in the London County Council. These two pioneered the promotion of a program of social services and welfare, financed and administered by this government body, in which they were a minority in relation to the Liberals — who were, in fact, responsible for adopting these decisions. Although the Fabians developed a long and intensive campaign to publicize their views within the British trade union movement they were not responsible for introducing reformism into the workers' organizations, which were already under its influence. The collaboration with liberal radicalism was one of the common points between the Fabians and the right wing of the incipient labor movement, the Liberal Labourites (Lib-Labs), who for a period of time established electoral alliances with the Liberals for the parliamentary elections in districts in which they deemed such efforts to be mutually advantageous.

Of even greater importance than possibilism in France and Fabianism in Britain were reformism and revisionism in Germany, trends that emerged inside the German SDP, which at the time

was the bulwark of Marxism and the undisputed leader of the world socialist movement. Reformism appeared in Germany in the early 1890s, represented by Georg von Vollmar in Bavaria, where a political situation existed that, unlike in Prussia, favored the establishment of alliances with the bourgeois parties to approve laws that benefited workers. Meanwhile, revisionism emerged in the writings and speeches of Eduard Bernstein at the end of the 1890s. Bernstein asserted that Marx had made theoretical errors that invalidated his activity in the German SDP.

Due to their common stance in accepting bourgeois democracy as a strategic horizon, based on which all existing programmatic differences between them would become secondary and non-antagonistic, possibilism, Fabianism, and German reformism and revisionism formed a single bloc within the Second International.[3] This bloc relegated the question of the ownership of the means of production to a secondary plane, reducing class differences to occupational differences, denying the antagonism between the classes and the class struggle, and affirming that class contradictions could be resolved within capitalist society.[4]

Although the polemic sparked by Bernstein led to his position being condemned at a party congress, he was never expelled from the organization. Instead, Karl Kautsky, who became the main defender of Marx's ideas following Engels' death, ended up in the reformist camp together with Bernstein, as a result of his stance on the outbreak of World War I (1914) and the victory of the October revolution (1917). This convergence is understandable because, until the division into reformist and revolutionary camps, the notion of revolution was interpreted by a good number of its defenders as the eventual result of an electoral struggle that would provide the workers' party with a parliamentary majority, with which it could "legally" approve the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of socialism. According to this perspective, revolutionary activity, consisting of replacing one social system

with another, would be achieved through a legal and peaceful process, unless the bourgeoisie refused to accept its defeat at the ballot box. Although this focus is very different from what we would consider revolutionary today, at the time it was viewed as the antithesis of reformism, because it rejected political and electoral alliances with liberal radicalism, so as to prevent these currents from diverting the working class away from the "seizure of political power," understood as obtaining a parliamentary majority.

The ambiguity in the concept of revolution was assisted by the fact that from the defeat of the Paris Commune (1871) until World War I, no new revolutionary situation arose that delineated the two positions. It is worth quoting the Leninist definition of a revolutionary situation:

> To the Marxist it is indisputable that a revolution is impossible without a revolutionary situation; furthermore, it is not every revolutionary situation that leads to revolution. What, generally speaking, are the features of a revolutionary situation? We shall certainly not be mistaken if we indicate the following three major features: (1) When it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule without any change; when there is a crisis, in one form or another, among the "upper classes," a crisis in the policy of the ruling class, leading to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes burst forth. For a revolution to take place, it is usually insufficient for "the lower classes not to want" to live in the old way; it is also necessary that "the upper classes should be unable" to live in the old way; (2) When the suffering and needs of the oppressed classes have grown more acute than usual; (3) When, as a consequence of the above causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time," but, in turbulent times, are drawn both

> by all the circumstances of the crisis *and by the "upper classes" themselves* into independent historic action. Without these objective changes, which are independent of the will, not only of individual groups and parties but even of individual classes, a revolution, as a general rule, is impossible. The totality of all these objective changes is called a revolutionary situation.[5]

This definition does not describe the situation in Western Europe between 1871 and 1914. On the contrary, during these four decades, the increase in the redistribution of wealth in the most industrialized countries — sustained by the development of the capitalist system of production and the exploitation of the colonial world — and the strengthening of hegemonic domination through bourgeois democracy, led the reformist wing of the labor and socialist movement not only to limit their historical horizon to capitalist society, but also to accept colonialism.[6]

The increased economic, political, and social development registered by the most industrialized capitalist nations between 1860 and 1870 had repercussions, in general, in terms of a favorable trend in the redistribution of wealth, the establishment of hegemony as the main mechanism of domination (instead of the use of coercion and violence), and in the flowering of different currents adhering to social reformism. Although this tendency had its fluctuations, differences, and exceptions, it has had a decisive impact in the history of the Western European workers' and socialist movements. It is significant that in this period, World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II all occurred — three events that not only caused tremendous economic destruction, but also the extreme aggravation of social antagonisms, to the point that from the revolutionary situation generated by the first worldwide conflagration, the October 1917 revolution was victorious in Russia, while following World War II, the Eastern European countries formed the socialist bloc.

The victory of the October revolution, which inaugurated the era of competition between the capitalist and socialist systems, was the first "opportunity" that social democracy took advantage of to make common cause with the bourgeois parties. Until that time, the confrontation between the reformist and revolutionary currents of the socialist movement was expressed in a theoretical debate of a general character, concerned with, among other issues, whether the dictatorship of the proletariat was still a valid concept. The emergence of the Soviet Union brought this confrontation from the level of theory to that of practice, from the general to the specific. Social democracy supported the imperialist powers' policy of condemnation, blockade, isolation, and aggression against the Soviet state.

Although the Second International, in which the reformist and revolutionary currents of the socialist movement coexisted, ceased to exist after the outbreak of war in 1914 — because of the alignment of the main social democratic parties of Western Europe with their respective governments — it was the October revolution that determined the irreversible break, which occurred with the emergence of the Third International (the Communist International) and the failure of the so-called Second-and-a-Half International (the Berne International) that attempted to bring together social democrats and communists in a single organization again.[7]

In the period between the two world wars, social democracy offered a theoretical outlook that combined revised Marxism, neo-Kantism, Fabianism, and positivism. Despite their heterogeneity, these social democratic doctrines agreed on the possibility of superseding capitalism through a process of reforms that led to a society in which social property and the socially oriented perspective of the economy and politics replaced the primacy of private property and the individualistic focus. Despite this rhetoric, in reality social democracy leans toward collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Social democracy contains currents of the labor and socialist movement that share with liberalism the conception that the state is a neutral institution above society that functions as a mechanism for reconciliation of the existing contradictions between the classes, and that it is able to represent the interests of political parties by means of elections, independently of the classes that they might represent. Because the proletariat and other oppressed social sectors represent the majority of society, those supporting this thesis concluded that universal suffrage, adopted in the developed capitalist countries in the 1920s, would gradually lead to democratization. This concept was complemented by the thesis that the concentration of capital in the long term would lead to the socialization of the means of production, a point of convergence with the theories of "inter-imperialism" advanced by Hobson, Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism," and Hilferding's "organized capitalism."

World War I was followed by a brief period of economic growth (1924–29) in which social democratic parties, particularly in Britain and the Scandinavian countries, ran the government or participated in government coalitions which facilitated a greater convergence between liberal reformism and social democracy. The conditions for such a phenomenon had been created by the collaboration of social democracy with the bourgeoisie during the war and in the confrontation with the Soviet Union, thus demonstrating that its aim was to preserve the stability of capitalism in order to achieve positions within the system. No social democratic party attempted to fulfill their programmatic commitment to the socialization of the means of production. On the contrary, it is curious that in the origins of Keynesianism, that is, before the first waves of the 1929–33 crisis, the first Labour head of state in history, British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, stood to the right of the liberal Keynes, with a conservative policy that had terrible results on the level of employment, wages, and the British economy in general. It was the Great Depression that

forced the British Labour Party and the Liberal Party to accept Keynesianism.

The post-World War II era was the period of definitive convergence, not only on the practical level, but also in terms of ideology, between social democratic reformism and bourgeois reformism. The ideologue of the "Third Way," Anthony Giddens, argued that "the welfare state was a creation of both the right and the left, but in the postwar period, the socialists claimed it as their own."[8] It is no accident that the system of bourgeois democracy, combined with McCarthyism and the Cold War, reached its ultimate expression in this period in North America (the United States and Canada) and the Western European countries in which the welfare state operated. In this period, most of the social democratic parties that had maintained their adherence to the thesis of transforming capitalism into socialism took the step of abandoning such a reference in their programs. The socialization of the means of production was replaced with the defense of social democracy. In these years, the "labor aristocracy" spread to all the developed capitalist countries. As part of that process, in the United States, the merger of the trade union bureaucracy of the AFL-CIO with the sector of the bourgeoisie belonging to the Democratic Party was consolidated, while in Western Europe there was a change in the social composition and the ideology of social democracy, with a decrease in worker membership and trade union influence, in contrast to an increase in white-collar membership and the emergence of a party technocracy whose priority was to expand and consolidate their positions in parliament and government.

In accordance with the multi-class orientation that was consolidated at the "renewal" congress held in Frankfurt in 1951, the Labor and Socialist International changed its name to the Socialist International, eliminating the word "labor." Nevertheless, a subsequent attempt was made in the Scandinavian countries

to progressively socialize the means of production. By the mid-1970s, the Swedish, Danish, and Dutch trade unions and social democratic parties put forward proposals aimed at achieving the gradual socialization of the ownership of the means of production, through the purchase of equity designed to transfer minority control — and eventually absolute control — of private companies to the trade unions. This policy was rejected and prevented from implementation by the bourgeoisie of these countries. As a result, these parties had to recognize the insurmountable character of the barrier protecting private property in capitalist society.

In the postwar period, the high level of satisfaction of the material needs of the population in the imperialist nations meant that other contradictions inherent in bourgeois society came to the fore, with the result that most of the protest movements that erupted in the United States and Western Europe during the 1960s and 1970s did not directly arise from the conflict between capital and labor. But all these movements, without exception, resulted from and were conditioned by the contradictions derived from the development of capitalist society.

The Civil Rights movement in the United States not only awoke the antiracist conscience of the African American community — together with that of other national minorities, such as Native Americans, Asian Americans, and the Hispanic community — but also that of many young white middle-class students of both sexes who went to the southern states to support the "freedom riders."

The movement against the war in Vietnam, originally sparked by opposition to military conscription and the death of US soldiers in that conflict, went on to reject the imperialist character of that war, and to become a school for solidarity with the revolutionary and national liberation struggles in the South.

The student movement and the countercultural currents, which joined together in rejecting the alienation created by individualism, consumerism, intolerance, and other wrongs inherent to the capi-

talist system, reached unprecedented levels of mobilization. The feminist movement, with historical roots that go back as far as those of the labor and socialist movements, acquired a new dimension with the incorporation of the struggle against sexism and other forms of oppression and sexual discrimination. These struggles were coupled with the emerging movement in defense of the environment. The class dimension of these movements is clear, given that the composition and demands of the Civil Rights movement and the struggles of other ethnic minorities bear a direct relation to poverty levels, while movements such as the feminist or environmentalist struggles are largely middle-class.

The protests of the 1960s and 1970s represented a starting point — a new starting point in some cases — of the social and popular movements oriented toward struggles involving gender issues, indigenous, cultural, and age-related issues, issues of sexual orientation, environmental and human rights issues, and other issues whose influence extended to upper- and middle-class urban sectors of Latin America. Many of these movements left the seed planted for the growth of a link between the popular struggles in the North and in the South.

Perhaps not enough time has transpired to determine if it was an irony of life or an advanced warning of sharpening contradictions that led to the explosion of the protest movements in the United States and Western Europe in the 1960s and the early 1970s — as a result of which pseudo-theories came into vogue on the obsolescence of the class struggle and the advent of the era of "post-materialist" struggles. In fact, these movements arose precisely as the preamble to an unprecedented rise in class conflicts.

With the eruption of the capitalist structural crisis at the end of the 1960s, the social democratic parties that controlled governments or participated in government coalitions in Western Europe began to reverse the policies of income redistribution

that sustained the welfare state. Under the new conditions, social democracy, which in previous years had claimed the welfare state as its own, also assumed the latter's dismantling as its own project. Specifically, the British Labour government, elected in 1969, replaced the welfare state with a program of "protected capitalism" based on labor regulations and a regressive fiscal policy, aimed at subsidizing industrial renewal. Such policies were unpopular and resulted in voters returning the Conservatives to government in 1970. The attempt by the Conservatives to approve a industrial relations law, containing a clear anti-worker content, sparked a protest movement not seen in Britain since 1926, facilitating the return of the Labour Party to power in 1974. The new Labour government's policy was based on a "social contract" that established a five percent ceiling on salary increases.[9] When unemployment and inflation led the trade unions to break with the social contract in 1978, the government confronted them and encouraged anti-union sentiment, an approach that aided Margaret Thatcher's victory in the May 1979 elections.[10] Thus, the worldwide avalanche of neoliberalism began and the seeds of the Third Way were planted.

In line with the need to expand monopoly control to the natural resources and markets of the South (convulsed since the mid-1970s by revolutionary and national liberation struggles), the Socialist International concentrated on increasing its membership in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, with the purpose of promoting the social democratic road as a political option in these regions. In this context, Latin America received priority attention, because in that region military dictatorships were at their high point, and the flame of social revolution was spreading in Central America. Through the mediation of the Socialist International, European monopoly capitalism not only proposed preventing the spread of the socialist system, but also of taking advantage of the inter-imperialist competition between the United States and Japan. In

this struggle, the old colonialist metropolises of Europe offered the young, friendly, and "democratic" face of social democracy to those anti-imperialist forces struggling for true independence, sovereignty, and self-determination. In this way, the Socialist International's 13th congress (Geneva, 1976), 14th congress (Vancouver, 1978), and 15th congress (Madrid, 1980), went on record supporting détente, peaceful coexistence, the new international economic order, respect for human rights (aimed against the socialist countries, the military dictatorships, and the apartheid regime in South Africa), and attending to the political, economic, and social problems of the South.

To sum up, it is undeniable that during the first six decades of the 20th century, and especially during the period following World War II, an interaction took place between developed capitalism and social democracy; but with hindsight, we can see it was not social democracy that reformed capitalism, but capitalism that reformed social democracy. This is clear, since by the end of the 1970s, social democracy was participating in dismantling the welfare state and functioning as the spearhead of European imperialism in the South.

Socialist revolutions and national liberation movements

Based on an analysis of the world situation in the mid-19th century, Marx and Engels anticipated that the communist revolution would be led by the proletariat of the most industrialized nations in Europe. The experience of the Paris Commune enabled them to develop the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat, understood as dictatorship of the majority over the former exploiters. The dictatorship of the proletariat would be the incarnation of democracy for the majority, the true government of

the people, for the people, and by the people, because the transition from capitalism to communism would take place under the leadership of the proletariat, which not only had class consciousness in relation to itself but would also be able to assimilate, and satisfy, the demands of the other classes until then dominated and exploited by the bourgeoisie.

Communist society would be established on a solid material base, because the expropriation of accumulated wealth, including the socialization of the means of production created by capital over four centuries, would allow distribution to be carried out on the basis of the principle to each according to their needs. A process of indefinite duration would begin, in which social classes would disappear. As a result, after an initial period of construction and strengthening, the proletarian state itself would become unnecessary, and therefore would cease to exist; it would be replaced by a non-coercive mechanism, which would organize society. Although this was the original concept of communist revolution, Marxism itself offers us the theoretical tools to understand the reasons why the original idea was not fulfilled in practice.

In their studies on England, Marx and Engels identified the labor aristocracy as "content to forge for itself the golden chains by which the bourgeoisie drags it in its train"[11] — as a social product of capitalist development, sustained by the advances of industry and the exploitation of the colonial, semicolonial, and neocolonial world, which conspires against the unity and militancy of the working class. In his "Introduction to the 1895 edition" of *The Class Struggles in France 1848–50*, Engels analyzed how the economic, political, and social development registered during the 19th century by the most industrialized countries in Europe had resulted in a change in the general orientation of the labor and socialist movement. This change involved a decrease in emphasis on violent struggles, to the extent that space opened up for the parliamentary struggle, a new form of struggle that he conceived

as a means for the accumulation of forces for the revolutionary transformation of society.[12] On this point, Engels argued that universal suffrage opens up possibilities for taking advantage of the "state institutions, in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is organized" to "fight these very state institutions."[13]

Both Marx and Engels predicted the possibility of a social revolution under the conditions existing at the time in Russia. In a letter to Vera Zasulich, Marx wrote that the Russian rural commune could gradually rid itself of its primitive characteristics and develop directly into a form of collective production because, given that it existed alongside capitalist production, it could appropriate the latter's positive accomplishments without experiencing "all its frightful misfortunes."[14] Engels expressed a similar opinion in the "Foreword to the Second Russian Edition" (of 1882) of the *Communist Manifesto*, when he pointed out that in Russia, the "*obshchina*, though greatly undermined, yet a form of primeval common ownership of land, could pass directly to becoming communist property… If the Russian revolution becomes the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that both complement each other, the present Russian common ownership of land may serve as the starting point for communist development."[15]

In similar circumstances to those discussed by Marx and Engels, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party broke the weakest link in the chain in 1917, convinced that the Russian revolution would be the opening shot in the world revolution that would have its epicenter in Germany. We now know the outcome of those events: the revolutionary situation generated by the war only crystallized in a triumphant revolution in Russia, but not in any Western European capitalist nerve center. In particular, the German revolution was defeated, the vacillations of the leadership of that country's Social Democratic Party playing a decisive role in this defeat.[16]

Whatever might have been the causes of the defeat of the

European revolution, the result was that for more than a quarter of a century the newly emerged Soviet Union had to limit itself to the construction of socialism in a single country.

The fact that the socialist revolution did not have a worldwide character, and triumphed not in the most industrialized nations in Europe, but rather in Russia, meant that the social protagonist of the revolution was not the proletariat of the most industrialized capitalist countries. Nor did its interests and attitudes have the homogeneity that could be expected from the working class under the conditions prevailing in 1848, when Marx and Engels argued that "of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a genuinely revolutionary class."[17] In the Russia of 1917, Lenin understood the need to call for a worker-peasant alliance and to introduce the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasantry, in order to resist the combined aggression of the imperialist nations and the internal counterrevolutionary war that threatened the existence of the young revolutionary power.

The workers' and poor peasants' state did not have a sufficient mass of accumulated wealth to expropriate and socialize in the short or medium term to undertake the construction of socialism. It was not enough to expropriate capital, it would also be necessary to create, through the exercise of political power, the material basis for the construction of socialism. This was a reality that was not anticipated: that the revolution itself would be the motor of the country's economic, social, and cultural development.

Lenin's theory had elements of a universal character, applicable to all experiences of socialist construction, as well as elements of a specific character, which could not be generalized. As universal elements of Leninism, the following points are important: the creative development of the universal principles of Marxism, in order to apply them to the specific conditions of Russia and its colonies; the analysis of imperialism, without which it would be

impossible to understand the metamorphosis of contemporary capitalism; and the interpretation and development of Marxist conceptions of the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the party of the working class, and the socialist revolution, in which Lenin insisted that the concrete forms of the political struggle and its instruments should be recreated in each country and in each historical moment. This creativity was what got lost in many theoretical constructions, with a vulgarization and dogmatization of Lenin's ideas occurring through the search for common features that supposedly had to be present in each concrete experience. According to this reasoning, all revolutions had to follow the model of the assault on the Winter Palace, the class structure that sustained the alliance between the workers and poor peasants, dual power, and the Bolshevik Party.

In the circumstances in which the revolution of October 1917 took place, the universal problem posed by Marx and Engels in relation to the replacement of the bourgeois state with a socialist state and the substitution of private property with social ownership of the means of production — whose solution they had conceived for the specific scenario of 19th century Western Europe — had to be reconsidered and resolved in another concrete historical situation. This represents one of the greatest historical achievements of Lenin, among whose first major works was *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*.[18] Based on this study of the economic, political, social, cultural, and ideological characteristics and conditions of Russia, Lenin elaborated the strategy and tactics of the Bolshevik revolution, arguing it was necessary to forge political and ideological unity, to sustain the unity in action needed to undertake the tasks of defense and development, and to take control of the national government and the governments of vast territories without having sufficient capable and dependable cadre. The soviets were organs of popular power that initially arose in the 1905 revolution, but it was necessary to establish

a centralized political power that would be above them. The Bolshevik Party was built as a single party, fused with the Soviet state, and the existence of groups or fractions within it was banned. Thus the survival of the revolution demanded political and ideological unity, which jeopardized socialist democracy, as ultimately occurred.

Based on the consideration that the poor peasantry represented the immense majority of the population in Russia, Lenin argued that the dictatorship emerging from the worker-peasant alliance would be more democratic than the most advanced expression of bourgeois democracy: "Dictatorship," Lenin explained, "does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises the dictatorship over other classes; but it does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised."[19] In this sense, Lenin argued: "Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, i.e., exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people — this is the modification of democracy during the *transition* from capitalism to communism."[20]

The Leninist conception of democratic centralism included safeguards against bureaucratic deformations. Lenin affirmed "the possibility (of wiping out bureaucratism) is guaranteed by the fact that socialism will shorten the working day, will raise the people to a new standard of living, will create such conditions for the majority of the population as to enable everybody, without exception, to perform 'state functions,' and this will lead to the complete withering away of every form of state in general."[21] However, the balance between the two components of democratic centralism depended on factors that did not help the process, such as the lack of an economic base that would allow "for shortening the working day" and raising "the people to a new standard of living," continual aggressions and external threats,

and the extraordinary discretionary powers that the leadership of the party had at its disposal. Due to these and other reasons that would be too long to enumerate here, after Lenin's death, the element that concentrated power, centralism, was imposed over the most abstract element, democracy. Instead of expanding and extending the "exercise of state functions" to "everybody without exception," power was concentrated in an elite, and even further, in Stalin's autocratic leadership, which invoked socialism, but in practice negated socialist democracy.

The departure from the objectives proclaimed by the October revolution rekindled the polemic initiated decades earlier among partisans and critics of the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat; in the case of its supporters, another debate arose on whether such a deviation was the result of the way in which Lenin applied the concept and developed democratic centralism, or if it was a consequence of the abandonment of Leninism and a manipulation of Lenin's authority after his death in 1924. Part of this great historical debate on objectives, means, methods, and results of the Soviet socialist experience also involve the arguments in favor and against war communism, the mandatory collectivization of agriculture, state control of industry, and other aspects of the centralized economic model, implemented in the first years of the revolution to guarantee growth.

Another question to analyze is the extension of socialism to the Eastern European countries liberated from Nazi Germany at the end of World War II by the Red Army. It should be noted that the construction of the so-called European peoples' democracies was not the result of national struggles for socialism. The victorious military power in that part of Europe imposed its social system there, just like the triumphant armies in the West did in the countries where communists had played a leading role in the antifascist struggle. Following the war, the development of the productive forces and the policy of "containing communism,"

based on Cold War ideology and the welfare state, closed off the possibility that a new revolutionary situation would emerge in Europe.

In the postwar period it was logical that the "weakest link of the chain" would shift toward the underdeveloped world. In China, Korea, and Vietnam, the anticolonial revolution also assumed a socialist character. Meanwhile, in Cuba, soon after its victory in 1959, the revolution assumed a socialist identity and objective. As was the case with the October revolution, these four national processes not only had socialist objectives, but also found it necessary to concentrate political power in a single party and state, capable of guaranteeing the country's defense and economic and social development. Both in the socialist states of Eastern Europe and in China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba, the general criteria of organization and the political and economic functioning of the Soviet Union were applied, without questioning at the time — nor did the parameters exist to evaluate — to what extent Soviet experiences were being applied with a universal, specific, or singular validity, and to what degree a substantial part of those experiences might have had negative results in the Soviet Union itself. Thus emerged what today is known as the "Soviet model."

In the second half of the 1950s, in the most frigid period of the Cold War, the fragmentation of the communist movement deepened, a process that had begun at the end of the 1920s with the purge of Leon Trotsky. This was due, among other factors, to public criticism of Stalinism, the invasion of Hungary (1956), and the Sino-Soviet dispute, which in the 1960s were coupled with the leap in capitalist economic and social development, the "showcase effect" of the Western European welfare state, and opposition to the invasion of Czechoslovakia (1968).

In most cases, the "weakest links in the chain" in the South were not broken with a socialist revolution. As Asia and Africa

were decolonized, many states arose with a capitalist identity, and these comprised the bulk of the Movement of Non-Aligned Nations. Nevertheless, independently of whether these nations joined the socialist camp, their national liberation struggles — both the nonviolent struggle that led to the independence of India and the armed struggles in Algeria and the Portuguese colonies of Africa — were historic social revolutions signifying a rupture in the system of imperialist domination.

The national liberation struggles in the South reached their highest expression in the 1970s and the early 1980s. In Asia, it was the era of the defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam, a development that had repercussions throughout Southeast Asia. In Africa, the independence of the Portuguese colonies was particularly important, especially the fight against the South African invasion — with the help of Cuba — of the nascent People's Republic of Angola,[22] which created a favorable correlation of forces in Southern Africa. This aided the liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia, together with the dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa itself. In Latin America, in 1979, the Sandinista revolution triumphed in Nicaragua and the New Jewel Movement came to power in Grenada. At that time, the armed struggle grew in El Salvador and Guatemala. All these events reflected the extent to which world imperialist hegemony had been eroded.

US Imperialism's Counteroffensive

In the 1970s, US imperialism faced the alternative of accepting the erosion of the supremacy it had exercised since World War II, or attempting to reassert it. This latter option implied determining to what extent it should use the "stick" and to what extent it should use the "carrot" to guarantee four basic requirements: first, to "discipline" the lower and middle layers of society and to limit the expectations in terms of redistribution of wealth that had developed in the postwar period; second, to reaffirm the subordination of Washington's Western European and Japanese allies; third, to tilt the world correlation of forces in favor of capitalism and against socialism; and fourth, to reinforce the domination of the South, which was threatened by the decolonization of Asia, the national liberation struggles in Africa, and the revolutionary insurgency in Latin America. In response to these challenges, during the presidential administrations of Richard Nixon (1969–74), Gerald Ford (1974–77), and Jimmy Carter (1977–81), the conflicts within the ruling circles of the United States became exacerbated.

After the launching of *Sputnik* (1957) and the orbital space flight of the world's first cosmonaut, the Soviet Yuri Gagarin (1961), US society had become immersed in a feeling of vulnerability; the advances of the Soviet Union in the aerospace industry had demonstrated Moscow's capacity to build intercontinental aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Thus began a new

phase of the Cold War, characterized by war hysteria that served as a backdrop to the rise of the Civil Rights, countercultural, student, and antiwar movements, whose mass character and militancy reflected the social contradictions that had arisen during the McCarthy period. Although the main factor behind the mobilization of hundred of thousands of middle-class, white youths who participated in the protests that rocked the large cities and the elite universities of the United States was the alienation caused by the "affluent society," their social activism included the claim that about 30 million poor lived within the richest and most powerful nation in the world, the majority of them black, Hispanic, or members of other national minorities. This charge was of particular concern to the US ruling class, because it was raised at the precise moment in which imperialism was compelled to reverse the trend of the postwar period toward increasing the social redistribution of wealth, something that had been considered eternal and natural.

At a historical moment when the big imperialist powers needed to expand their sources of external accumulation, the clamor for the establishment of a new world economic order embodied the demand of the countries of the South to obtain greater benefits from the sale of their primary resources in the world market. This aspiration was reflected in the formation of a new international movement, whose ranks during the 1950s and 1960s were joined by the republics that emerged as independent players following the decolonization of Asia and the Middle East, and later, in the 1970s, by the national liberation struggles in Africa as well. High points in this Third World rebellion were the role achieved by the Non-Aligned Nations and the creation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), whose decision to regulate oil production and increase energy prices shook the North and affected the emergence of other (less fortunate) associations of Southern countries that exported primary resources.

The erosion of US imperialism's power reached its greatest expression with Washington's defeat in the Vietnam War (1975), which not only demonstrated its weakness, but also generated a strong domestic social opposition due to the use of US soldiers outside the country's borders. This sentiment became known as the "Vietnam Syndrome." The defeat in Vietnam was coupled with three earlier developments that damaged the credibility of the US government and limited its room to maneuver in foreign policy: the publication of the Pentagon Papers (1971), which revealed that the "Gulf of Tonkin incident" (August 2–4, 1964) used by President Lyndon Johnson to justify the escalation of US participation in the Southeast Asian war (Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) had been a provocation engineered by Washington's own special services[1]; the Watergate scandal (1972), which resulted from the detection of an espionage team that penetrated the offices of the Democratic Party National Committee, exposing the corruption of the US political and electoral system; and the revelation of the involvement of the Nixon administration in the September 11, 1973, coup d'état against the constitutionally elected president of Chile, Salvador Allende, which provided proof of the complicity of the US government in the atrocities committed by the Augusto Pinochet dictatorship,[2] and by extension, with the crimes committed by all the Latin American dictatorships.

The need to define US imperialism's strategic response to these contradictions sparked an intense political and ideological struggle — specifically, on whether Washington should adopt a conciliatory or an aggressive stance in order to reassert its world hegemony and to neutralize the demands of the oppressed social groups within the United States itself. The conservatives in Richard Nixon's administration clung to a protectionist policy with regard to its allies, while adopting a conciliatory approach to the Soviet Union and China.

Through Nixon's shock policies — including the unilateral

cancellation of the dollar-gold parity established at Bretton Woods, a 10 percent increase in import duties, the pressures applied against Asian textile producers to limit their exports to the United States, and the devaluation of the dollar carried out in 1971 and 1973 — the Nixon White House dug in its heels to defend the domestic market and accepted as inevitable the weakening of US imperialism's world supremacy. Washington tried to reverse this through the establishment of a new relationship of forces that allowed the United States to maintain its hegemony in a more balanced international context. The architect of this policy was Henry Kissinger, secretary of state under presidents Nixon and Ford.

Kissinger proposed reaching an accord with the Western European countries and Japan for a new distribution of the costs and benefits of world imperialist domination. With the Soviet Union, he proposed an agreement recognizing their respective spheres of influence and establishing a system of incentives and disincentives for Moscow "to moderate" its foreign policy. In the case of China, Kissinger proposed exacerbating the conflict between that nation and the Soviet Union. Finally, he recommended adopting a privileged relationship with the regional subimperialist allies, such as Iran governed by the Shah in the Persian Gulf, and the Brazilian military dictatorship in South America, so that they would exercise police functions and implement interventionist policy in regional conflicts. US relations with the Soviet Union combined the incentive of favorable concessions, such as the limiting of strategic weapons and loosening of some trade restrictions, with disincentives such as a tougher stance on these same questions.

Relations cemented during the postwar period with Western Europe and Japan[3] were weakened by Nixon's protectionist policies, especially the decision to break the Bretton Woods accord, a unilateral move that in the final analysis revealed the

weakness of the United States with regard to the economic crises that had reappeared in 1969, with the new modality of stagflation, the result of the combination of the recession with unemployment and inflation.[4] This weakening of relations with Washington's allies affected sectors of US financial capital that had achieved a high level of transnationalization during the postwar period. Such sectors were interested in avoiding an economic war against their main trade partners and in jointly establishing new means and methods to combat the mass movements in the industrialized societies and to reaffirm imperialist domination over a defiant South. The advocates for this position were the Brookings Institution and the Foreign Relations Council of New York, joined by the Trilateral Commission. It was these groups that launched the strongest and most systematic attacks on Nixon until the latter's resignation and replacement by Gerald Ford in August 1974, after a partial manipulation of the Watergate scandal, moderated during the final stretch of the presidential campaign to avoid a victory at the polls by liberal democrat George McGovern.

The Democratic Party candidate who contested the presidency against Gerald Ford in November 1976, former Georgia governor Jimmy Carter, was not well known as a member of the Trilateral Commission. Founded in 1973 by banker David Rockefeller, and including around 300 businesspeople, politicians, and intellectuals from the United States, Western Europe, and Japan, the Trilateral Commission represented the transnational monopolies' need to elaborate theory and formulate policy in response to the contradictions resulting from the process of the transnational concentration of property and production. Two decades before the term globalization was coined, the Trilateral Commission assumed the role of standard-bearer for the ideology and project of world domination by the "global corporation," which was contained in its study *The Crisis of Democracy: Report on the governability of democracies to the Trilateral Commission*, published in 1975.

The Trilateral Commission has been the promoter of the doctrine of governance, a schema of social control established in the mechanisms of bourgeois democracy which consists of removing the space for social confrontation in which political parties, trade unions, and other organizations that represent the popular classes can struggle for the satisfaction of their political, economic, and social demands. In the opinion of Samuel Huntington, author of the chapter on the United States in the commission's report, the 1960s explosion of "democratic egalitarianism," embodied in multiple "interest groups" that overwhelmed the state with demands that were beyond its possibilities to satisfy, a situation that resulted in an onerous tax burden with negative effects for the accumulation of capital. The solution proposed by Huntington was to encourage government by the elites, promote the apathy of the majority, limit the expectations of the lower and middle social layers, increase presidential power, strengthen state support to the private sector, and repress the radicalized sectors of the trade union movement. In Huntington's words:

> The effective operation of a democratic political system usually requires some measure of apathy and noninvolvement by some individuals and groups. In the past, every democratic society has had a marginal population, of greater or lesser size, which has not actively participated in politics. In itself, this marginality on the part of some groups is inherently undemocratic, but it has also been one of the factors which has enabled democracy to function effectively.[5]

Based on this social diagnosis, the Trilateral Commission recommended: promoting self-censorship, censorship, and the manipulation of the message transmitted by the media to strengthen the authority of the state and to promote the interests of capital; neutralizing intellectual production that is adverse to the interests of capital and promoting a technocratic intellectual

layer; restricting and filtering admissions to higher education and reorienting the great mass of youth toward middle-level technical studies; moving away from collective bargaining agreements — compliance with which is obligatory for management — to the less compromising concept of "achieving a consensus" between capitalists and workers; co-opting the trade union leadership; deregulating wage policies; strengthening presidential authority; deactivating citizen opposition to overseas military aggression; guaranteeing minimum levels of subsistence for the vulnerable popular sectors; and increasing the scope of the illusion of consumer society.[6]

These measures involve a combination of the traditional elements of the "carrot" and the "stick," in this case, the carrot of the selective co-optation of leaders and popular and middle-class groups. According to Holly Sklar: "Noam Chomsky is who best summarizes the approach: 'the response of the Trilateral to the crisis: governance yes, democracy no.'"[7] In addition to laying the basis for reversing the progressive reform initiated in the United States with Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal, the Trilateral Commission designed the conceptual platform of a new system of world domination, based on the creation of a "global" policy with supranational authorities in charge of carrying it out.[8]

Gregorio Selser argued that President Jimmy Carter was assigned the mission of fulfilling two incompatible tasks: on the one hand, "at the end of 1976 there was a need to bathe in cleansing waters, which would purify one of both proven and not so well documented sins"[9] — that is, it was necessary to restore the credibility of the US political system — and, on the other hand, it was necessary to resort to force to reaffirm the supremacy of US imperialism. This need to project an image of a "dove" while implementing the policy of a "hawk" is what motivated Selser to say that "Carter's foreign policy will look like a two-faced Janus, with Brzezinski officiating as the hawk and Secretary of State

Cyrus Vance as the sweet dove."[10] This duality made Carter appear weak and indecisive in light of the chauvinist campaign launched by the "New Right" that resulted in Ronald Reagan's candidacy in the 1976 presidential elections, in which he was defeated by Carter, and in the 1980 race, in which he defeated Carter.

If the aggressive policies and support for dictatorial regimes throughout the world by Johnson and Nixon had generated a wave of moral revulsion in opposition to US interference and intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, the New Right took responsibility for swinging the pendulum in the opposite direction. It did so through a campaign of fear, based on the supposed weakness and vulnerability of US imperialism flowing from the policy of détente with the Soviet Union and the restrictions imposed by Carter — in word, but not in deed — on relations with the military dictatorships.

It was up to the Reagan administration to resolve the dispute on which strategic direction US imperialism would adopt during the final decades of the 20th century and beyond, that is, to impose the so-called bipartisan consensus that has since prevailed on key issues facing the country. In terms of the advisability of adopting a conciliatory or aggressive domestic and foreign policy, both as a presidential candidate in 1976 and 1980 and as head of state during the 1981–89 period, Reagan maintained an ironclad approach supporting the use of force and repression. With Reagan, there would be no "international balance of power," as Kissinger had proposed only a few years earlier. The allies would have to share the costs — more than the benefits — of world domination, while the Soviet Union would not only be denied the recognition of its "spheres of influence," but its very right to exist. The doctrine of containment would be replaced with the call for rolling back communism.

Following Reagan's election, the United States launched a "holy war" against the "evil empire." The new US president renounced

the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties (SALT I and II) signed with the Soviet Union by the Nixon administration. With the Star Wars program — an allusion to George Lucas's well known movie that had recently debuted — Reagan provided a new boost to the arms race. In particular, his administration ignored the SALT II Treaty, which prohibited the production of defensive nuclear weapons, with the aim of avoiding a situation in which one of the two superpowers would feel sufficiently protected to launch the "first strike." The White House also stepped up the development and production of conventional weapons — including the expansion of its fleet of aircraft carriers and the introduction of so-called intelligent weapons — a massive and costly effort that would be difficult for the Soviet Union to emulate. Another element in Washington's policy was a differentiated combination of the carrot and the stick, aimed at splitting away other member nations of the European socialist bloc.

Reagan's strategy of weakening the Soviet Union was wagered on Washington's technological superiority through the arms race. While the arms industry was, for decades, the motor of US imperialism's economic, scientific, and technological development, for the Soviet Union, the industry diverted resources from the country's economic and social development, and as a result, exacerbated the contradictions in Soviet society. This policy of economically and socially wearing down the Soviet Union was complemented by a series of intrigues from British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, following the appointment of Mikhail Gorbachev as head of state of the Soviet Union, who began to dismantle socialism through a process that came to be known as perestroika. Reagan's carrot and stick policy bore fruit soon after he left office. During the presidency of his successor, George H. Bush, in December 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall took place — which opened the way to the restoration of capitalism in Eastern Europe — and, in December 1991, the Soviet Union itself collapsed.

Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union

With the crisis of leadership that took place in the Soviet Union due to the senility and death of the remaining leaders of the generation forged during World War II, in 1985 the political bureau of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) appointed a relatively young leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, to the post of general secretary. This generational change occurred amid the deepening of the ideological, political, economic, and social contradictions that Soviet socialism had been dragging in its wake over the course of the country's history.

Based on a critique supposedly aimed at correcting the errors, deviations, and inadequacies that hindered the process of socialist construction in the Soviet Union — and, by extension, the rest of the countries where that social system was in power — Gorbachev took advantage of the verticality and dogmatism of Soviet socialism in order to dismantle it from the very heights of political power, a process that culminated in December 1991. No matter how effective the policies of the Reagan administration had been against the socialist states, it is impossible to accept that they were the fundamental cause of its destruction. Similarly, regardless of how sophisticated Gorbachev's palace conspiracy had been, it is also impossible to imagine that it would have been sufficient to

destroy an entire social system historically expected to supersede capitalism. It is clear that Reagan and Gorbachev's actions accelerated a process of self-destruction, based on the structural and functional contradictions of Soviet socialism.

This is not the time and place to analyze the causes of the collapse of Eastern European socialism, but rather some of its consequences. It is clear that an indissoluble relationship exists between the two, but a consideration of the causes would require us to delve into the polemic on the history of the October revolution, socialist construction in the Soviet Union, and the introduction of that social system in Eastern Europe.[1] It is not necessary to enter into this polemic to identify those elements that, in our opinion, represent the main theoretical and practical problems posed for the left as a result of the collapse of the Soviet system, specifically, the strengthening of imperialist power, interference, and intervention on a world scale, and the erosion of the credibility of the ideas of revolution and socialism. This latter point, in turn, leads to a reconsideration of the debate on the relationship between political power and socialist democracy.

The notion that prevails today in the debate on strategy and tactics of the Latin American left is that the Soviet model did not resolve the theoretical and practical problems of the viability of revolutionary power in its two main dimensions, political power and economic power.

- On the economic front, the most common opinion is that the Soviet model was structurally and functionally unable to move from the extensive to the intensive phase of economic and social development. Nils Castro synthesizes a very widely accepted conclusion in the contemporary debate in the Latin American left when he argues that:

  > The Soviet system ignored Karl Marx's thesis that he summarized in the well-known fourth paragraph of the foreword

to his *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. Due to the effects of Stalinist rigidity and the frustration over the thaw proposed by the 20th and 22nd congresses of the CPSU, the priorities of bureaucratic political control and the perpetuation of the régime resulting from the dictatorship of the proletariat prevailed over those of the scientific and technological revolution. To an increasing extent, this undermined the efficiency, competitiveness, and sustainability of the Soviet system, and in the end, the productive relations created in the Soviet Union ceased to be "forms of development of the productive forces," and wound up becoming obstacles to their development, a contradiction that by not being resolved, finally shook the entire "immense superstructure" erected upon it.[2]

- On the political level, even in sectors of the Latin American left that support the ideas of revolution and socialism, the judgment prevails that the Soviet Union was not able to combine centralism with democracy, that is, to build a political system sufficiently centralized to successfully face the tasks of defense and development, but also sufficiently democratic for reciprocal feedback with genuine popular participation and representation. In more than eight decades of Soviet socialism, the party and the workers' and peasants' state never managed to trust those workers and peasants enough to allow them to exercise the democratic rights that Marx, Engels, and Lenin dreamt for them. To their discredit, the perpetuation of power became the objective of this elite, based on which it placed on the people the entire weight of a contradictory process that was increasingly removed from the socialist ideal, in both the spiritual realm and the material level. In this regard, it is felt that, to the degree that the Soviet Union resolved major problems such as health, education, culture, employment, and housing, new needs, interests, and expectations arose or

became pressing that the Soviet state could not satisfy. These dimensions of the problem were also graphically described by Nils Castro, who commented:

> What happened in Soviet Russia and its enormous periphery demonstrated, if it were necessary to do so, that no revolution is irreversible, and that the revolutionary regime can even die without having lost control of the government — like a tree that dies while still standing — if it underestimates the indispensable human motivations for reinvigorating the revolution and renewing its solutions for re-adaptation, reproduction, change, and continuity in its bases and sociocultural, economic and political expectations.[3]

Instead of responding to the need for permanent renewal, which for a true socialist democracy was indispensable, Soviet power ended up being so centralist, vertical, and dogmatic that it was dismantled from the highest echelons of the state apparatus itself, when those who practiced the double moral standard in the highest spheres of the party and government were able to enthrone a new dogma: perestroika.

The main consequence of the collapse of the Soviet Union is the change that it has produced in the universal system of human relations, which affects both the countries that maintain their socialist identity as well as the peoples who are suffering the effects of neoliberal capitalism. The balance sheet of the actions undertaken by the wing of the labor and socialist movement that, since World War I, has followed the road of revolution, shows the derailment of the locomotive that headed the train, with five boxcars continuing to travel on the rails, and in a hostile environment, developing their own respective forms of self-propulsion.

The essential core of the construction of Soviet socialism continues to be vindicated in China, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos,

and Cuba, providing a genetic code on which these remaining socialist states can correct errors and reorient themselves; but to abandon it would imply a change in essence. Therefore, each of these nations should decide what they consider to be the universal contributions of the Soviet experience, and what specific and singular aspects should be subjected to their own reevaluation or reinvention.

Another range of problems is posed for the great majority of humankind. From now on, both those who seek to break with capitalist domination through socialist revolution, and those who attempt to undertake progressive social reform, will have to consider a new historical reality. The end of the international bipolarity established after World War II leaves the field open to imperialism to impose its New World Order, based on the transnational concentration of political and economic power — the purpose of which is to preserve neoliberalism, at all costs.

At a time when imperialism boasts the greatest political, economic, and military power in history, resulting in a spiral of human, economic, and environmental degradation, the failure of the Soviet experience raises, on the one hand, the question of the need and viability of the socialization of the means of production — without which it is impossible to reorient the world economy in order to guarantee the survival of humanity — and, on the other, denial of the need and the advisability of building instruments of political power — such as a revolutionary party and state — capable of concentrating and channeling the strength of the people to successfully challenge the destructive tendencies of imperialism.

Neoliberalism in the United States and Western Europe

Critical analyses of neoliberalism are frequently marred by the error of asserting that this doctrine is the fundamental cause of the ills that have plagued humankind since the end of the 1970s. If the problem were only that of "bad policy," it would be enough to change it for "good policy." However, the real cause of the deterioration in the living conditions of an increasing part of humanity is the worsening of the global crisis of capitalism, derived from the exhaustion and outdated nature of the capitalist mode of production, which faces growing difficulties to fulfill its raison d'etre: capital accumulation. This growing difficulty is what forces the ruling monopoly elite to exercise all the means of political, economic, and military power at its disposal, including ideological and cultural domination, to reverse the current trend in the postwar period that favored the social redistribution of wealth. Here neoliberalism enters the picture: to play its role as the doctrine responsible for leading the process of the concentration of wealth and legitimizing the unprecedented increase in inequality, polarization, and social exclusion. From this flows the conclusion that although the struggle against neoliberalism is unquestionably a formidable rallying point — with an ability to spur social mobilizations — it can only be effective if it is combined with the struggle against capitalism.

Neoliberalism was conceived during World War II by the Austrian-British philosopher and economist Friedrich Hayek, as a doctrine that would legitimize extreme social inequality, which it was thought would be inflicted on Europe in the reconstruction following the end of the conflagration. His master study, *The Road to Serfdom*, was published in 1944. However, neoliberalism was not applied in the circumstances and the moment foreseen by Hayek. On the contrary, given the economic growth stimulated by the need to restore the productive forces destroyed by the war and the political incentive generated by the Cold War, imperialism chose to introduce the welfare state in Western Europe. Its facade of democracy and redistribution was appropriate to bolster the doctrine of "containing communism." Nevertheless, neoliberal doctrine continued to be cultivated by small nuclei of economists, philosophers, and ultra-right politicians, sheltered in universities, research centers, and institutions such as the Mount Pelerin Society. The most renowned of such institutions would be the Chicago School, headed by Milton Friedman.

Argentine historian Tulio Halperin Donghi argued that South America is the region of the world where the first frustrated attempt to apply economic neoliberalism took place, after it failed to be imposed in postwar Western Europe. According to Halperin, in response to the fall in demand for its primary exports — which had been at a high level during World War II and the immediate postwar period — several Latin American countries introduced a neoliberal model, which consisted of expanding and diversifying their exportable products at the expense of the domestic market. However, the application of this schema was halted because it became clear that the accompanying reduction of the population's living standards that this economic policy provoked required a level of coercion and repression that was not yet possible.[1] This would be the role played by the military dictatorships that flourished in the region in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

Although the term was no longer in vogue, neoliberalism re-emerged in the early 1970s, as part of the same quest for palliative solutions to the crisis that led to the creation of the Trilateral Commission. Considering capitalism's need to reverse the previous trend toward the redistribution of wealth, after three decades, Hayek finally encountered the motive and the favorable conditions to expand and deepen his theory, which up until that time had remained largely an ideological position against socialization. The "father of neoliberalism" considered his initial theory to be an insufficient basis for an economic program, and filled the gaps in the first half of the 1970s with the publication of the three volumes of Law, Legislation, and Liberty, for which he was granted the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1974. In essence, neoliberalism is not a new form of liberalism, but its diametric opposite. While liberalism calls on the state not to intervene in the economy, neoliberalism urges such an intervention and assigns to the state the mission of doing so as long as it establishes rules favorable to competition — understood as the accumulation of wealth — but never to help disadvantaged social groups or individuals.[2]

Again, it was in South America where the practical application of neoliberalism began, notably in Chile in 1976 after three years of dictatorship following the September 11, 1973, coup in which the left and popular movements that were capable of resisting neoliberalism were beheaded and destroyed.[3] The international avalanche of neoliberalism really began with the electoral victories of Margaret Thatcher in Britain (1979), and Ronald Reagan in the United States (1980); from that point on, a systematic process took place involving the transformation of the international capitalist superstructure, aimed at making it compatible with the transnationalization of its economic base. This transformation would encompass economic, political, juridical, and social restructuring within the large imperialist powers, as well as the introduction of a new system of world domination, in both cases

with the aim of accelerating and deepening the concentration of property ownership and production.

The main contribution of the Reagan administration to determining the strategic direction of US imperialism was to incorporate the schema of global domination devised by the Trilateral Commission — but not the evenhanded treatment that it provided to Washington's European and Japanese allies in the process of elaborating policies — and to use it as a universal bearer of neoliberal doctrine. This merger of "globalism" — in this case, not so much "trilateral" as unilateral — with neoliberalism represents the essence of the new system of world domination by US imperialism. The introduction of this system received a decisive boost in the South, in particular in Latin America, after the eruption of the foreign debt crisis in 1982. In fact, the periodic renegotiation of Latin America's foreign debt became a means of imposing the IMF's structural adjustment programs. However, it was not until the collapse of the Soviet Union that, with the end of global bipolarity, the new system of imperialist domination had free rein to advance its institutionalization.

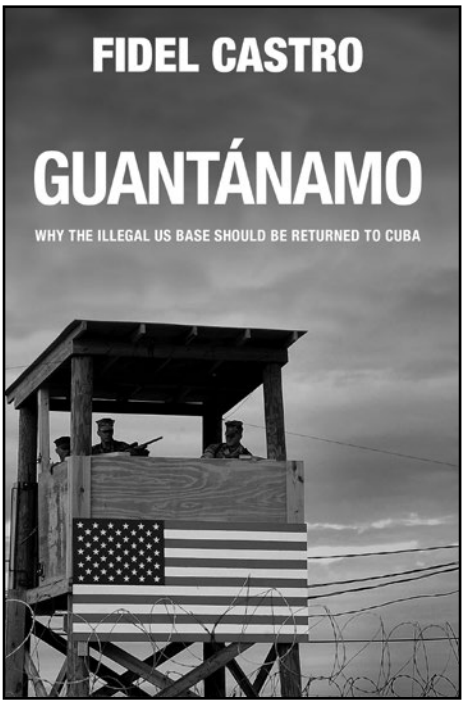
Although Britain and the United States jointly assumed the leading role in imposing neoliberalism on a universal scale, there were differences between Thatcher and Reagan on the way in which this doctrine was to be applied. British neoliberalism was more "pure" and "orthodox," emphasizing a contraction in the monetary supply, higher interest rates, tax reductions for the higher income strata of the population, abolition of controls on the movement of capital, promotion of mass unemployment, repression of strikes, approval of anti-union laws, and cutbacks in social spending. All these measures were to be subsequently complemented by an extensive privatization program, which began with public housing and continued with steel, electricity, oil, gas, and water.[4] Meanwhile, in the United States — where there was no welfare state to dismantle — the central element in

Reagan's policy was an increase in the arms race, sustained by the highest fiscal deficits ever registered in the United States to that time — a policy that Perry Anderson characterized as "disguised military Keynesianism." Except for this break with neoliberal orthodoxy in relation to the fiscal balance — a luxury that only US imperialism could afford given its preponderant role in the world economy — Reagan applied the doctrine by reducing taxes for the wealthy, increasing interest rates, and using repression against the air traffic controllers strike of 1981, which set the tone for his antilabor policies.

The neoliberal avalanche extended through Western Europe. In 1982 the Christian Democrat Helmut Kohl was elected chancellor of West Germany. In 1983, Denmark, the model Scandinavian welfare state, would now be governed by a right-wing coalition. The same fate followed in the rest of the central and northern European countries, except for Sweden and Austria. The right-wing governments in continental Europe applied less drastic variants of neoliberalism than Britain and the United States, with more attention placed on the fiscal balance and fiscal reforms than on cutbacks in social spending or the deliberate repression of the trade unions. Nevertheless, there were significant differences with regard to the welfare state policies of the postwar period. Meanwhile, in the southern European countries, in nations that up until then had been governed by the right, such as France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece, for the first time voters elected social democratic governments.

The social democratic governments elected in Europe in the 1980s projected a progressive image, in contrast to that of the Thatcher and Reagan administrations. Indeed, the governments of François Mitterrand in France and Andreas Papandreou in Greece at least tried to develop an economic and social policy that Perry Anderson characterized as "an attempt to create in Southern Europe what postwar social democracy had been in the north of

the continent during its golden years."[5] However, these belated attempts at pursuing a welfare state policy went against the tide of the increased concentration of wealth demanded by monopoly capital; as a result, both governments were forced to change course. Meanwhile, in Spain, Felipe González applied neoliberal-type policies from the start.[6] Years after leaving office, González embarked on a crusade supposedly aimed at finding a "midway point" in restructuring the state and reducing the scope of its economic and social policies.



GUANTÁNAMO: WHY THE ILLEGAL US BASE SHOULD BE RETURNED TO CUBA
Fidel Castro

Fidel Castro puts the case to close the illegal base remaining on Cuban territory, not just the prison. This book also features a comprehensive chronology of the base's history and extensive appendices, including key historical and recently declassified documents through which Washington has justified its continued occupation of the territory.

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"Post-Neoliberal" Social Democracy and the Doctrines of the Third Way and Global Progress

The notion of the "third way" has been used throughout history with different meanings. During the postwar period, social democracy appropriated this concept in order to place itself in a supposed intermediate position between US capitalism and Soviet communism. Since the early 1990s, British Labour Party leader and Prime Minister Tony Blair and his co-thinker, the economist Anthony Giddens, used the term Third Way to express a position that also seeks to be intermediate, no longer between the capitalist and communist poles of the postwar period, but rather between the welfare state and orthodox neoliberalism.[1] For Giddens, the Third Way is "the contemporary version of the periodic reformation that social democrats have had to so frequently undertake during the past century."[2] According to Giddens, this reformulation is necessary to dissolve the consensus on the welfare state, which began to occur after Margaret Thatcher's and Ronald Reagan's electoral victories, in 1979 and 1980 respectively, and was reinforced in the early 1990s by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the European socialist bloc. In the new conditions, social democracy's ability to survive and prosper "is only possible

if… it is willing to revise its preexisting points of view in a more complete fashion than most have done thus far."[3]

Blair and Giddens' texts and speeches offer diverse scenarios and parameters, placing "old style social democracy" at one pole and "neoliberalism" at the other, with the deliberate aim of situating themselves at the center. No pretension is made, however, of being equidistant between the welfare state and orthodox neoliberalism, but rather there is a quite explicit recognition of recycling the latter concept. Blair himself speaks of the union of the Third Way with liberalism, one of the political-ideological currents that the founders of socialist thought were most determined to fight against:

> The Third Way is not an attempt to split the difference between right and left. It is about traditional values in a changed world. And it draws vitality from uniting the two great streams of left-of-center thought, democratic socialism and liberalism, whose divorce this century did so much to weaken progressive politics across the West. Liberals asserted the primacy of individual liberty in the market economy; social democrats promoted social justice with the state as its main agent. There is no necessary conflict between the two, accepting as we now do that state power is one means to achieve our goals, but not the only one and emphatically not an end in itself.[4]

With this definition, Blair falsifies history. In speaking of "uniting the two great streams of left-of-center thought," the British prime minister mentions social liberalism, which, in stages of capitalist development that have already been surpassed, played a progressive role. What Blair does not say is that this left-of-center liberalism is the twin sibling of "old-style social democracy," whose funeral he heralds. Therefore, the "union" of the Third Way is not with that style of liberalism — whose reincarnation, in any event, would be incompatible with the conditions in which capital

accumulation occurs — but with neoliberalism, which is the most backward and antidemocratic variant of this ideological current.

The Third Way seeks to face what Blair and Giddens define as the "five dilemmas" of today's world: globalization, the new individualism, the blurring of differences between the right and the left, changes in the content and forms of political agency, and destruction of the environment.

According to the ideologues of the Third Way, globalization is a process outside of the control of individuals that removes powers from the nation-state, including those on which Keynesian intervention in the economy were based; pushes downward through the generation of new demands and possibilities for regenerating local identity; and pushes sideways through the creation of economic and cultural regions that supersede national borders. Thus, with the term globalization, the predatory activities of the transnational monopolies are obscured, and with these three arguments the supposed inability of the state to act against such predatory activities is justified, when, in fact, what is occurring is that that state is indeed acting, directly and intensely, in favor of the transnational monopolies.

In opposition to the "old individualism," characterized by the quest for the accumulation of wealth in an environment of exploitation and competition with other individuals, an attitude that they consider to have been overcome through satisfying the material needs of British society, Blair and Giddens speak of a "new individualism." This concept is based on the diversity of lifestyles and the struggle against discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age or youth, religion, culture, or sexual orientation. Although the struggle against all types of discrimination and supporting the free development of the personality of each individual are real and valid considerations, an attempt is made to use these elements in this dichotomy in order to try to do away with class contradictions. Blair and Giddens forget that it was the Labour

governments' antilabor policies that brought about the reduction of the population's living standards and created the conditions for the victory of Margaret Thatcher in the 1979 elections. Her election opened the road to the introduction of neoliberalism in Britain.

When speaking of the relationship between left and right ("left" understood as social democracy), Giddens does not try to hide the convergence of the Third Way with neoliberalism, but presents two arguments. The first is borrowed from Norberto Bobbio,[5] who argued that when the competition between the left and the right is balanced, no one is interested in questioning the difference existing between them, but when one of the two gives the impression of being "the only viable one," both currents, each for its own reasons, question that difference. The dominant current argues that "there is no alternative" to its policies, while the weaker tries to make a "synthesis of opposing positions with the intention of saving in practice whatever can be saved of one's own position by drawing in the opposing position and thus neutralizing it."[6] Giddens explains:

> The political right dressed itself up in new clothing, for example, in the period after World War II, following the fall of fascism. To survive, right-wing parties had to adopt some of the values of the left, and accept the basic framework of the welfare state. Since the early 1980s, things have been the other way around, because of the ideological ascendancy of neoliberalism and the collapse of communism. The claim that Tony Blair has taken over most of the views of Thatcherism and recycled them as something new is readily comprehensible from such a standpoint.[7]

After appealing to Bobbio to explain the reasons why "Blair has made most of the Thatcherite views his own," Giddens questions the validity of his thesis for the present and the future by suggesting that there can be new conjunctional "divergences"

and "rapprochements" between "right" and "left," because the content and scope of the differences existing between the two are changing. On the one hand, the identity and agenda of "old-style social democracy" are obsolete, because "no one now has an alternative to capitalism" and "the questions that continue to be current are those relative to how far, and by which roads, capitalism can be governed and regulated." On the other hand, other issues have arisen, such as "ecological questions, but also topics that concern the changing nature of the family, work, and cultural and personal identity," that, according to Giddens, do not fit into the differentiation between left and right. "The left-right distinction survives, but a fundamental question for social democracy is whether the division covers as much political terrain as it did previously." In relation to this point, there is no value in commenting on statements that make no sense; it is enough to say that only those who do not blush at agreeing with neoliberalism can assert that there is no longer any difference between the left and the right.

Another of these "five dilemmas" involves the changes in the content and forms of political action that are the result of, on the one hand, the social democratic parties being overtaken by new social movements and by other political organizations that challenge them — such as the Greens and the right populists — and, on the other hand, the decline in the role of the national government and the corresponding vacuum of power. Finally, the damage to the environment forces decisions on the application of science and technology to industrial innovation to be incorporated into the political process and democratized, with a view to guaranteeing their sustainability.

After reading such grandiose pronouncements with pretensions of universality, it is surprising to note that the program of the Third Way is nothing more than an electoral platform conceived for the specific situation of Britain. The four political objectives

of the Third Way are: a dynamic economy, based on knowledge, built on individual strength and opportunities, in which the government facilitates, instead of imposes, and in which the power of the market serves the public interest; a strong civil society that assumes rights and duties, in which the government and the citizens closely collaborate; a modern government based on collaboration and decentralization, which deepens democracy to adapt it to current times; and a foreign policy based on international cooperation.

Blair proclaimed a new relationship between the government and civil society, in which the government acts in association with voluntary agencies to promote community development and renewal, on the basis of a "new mixed economy," characterized by synergy between the public and the private spheres, a decrease in state property, and the financing of private companies dedicated to marketing social services; a democratization of democracy, understood as an effort aimed at preventing the disincentive resulting from the end of competition with the socialist bloc from continuing to erode the assimilation of citizens' demands, channeled through the system of political parties; fighting crime and promoting security in the community, and the creation of the "democratic family."

The British prime minister called for replacing the concept of the welfare state with welfare society, implying that the state should not assume the functions of social assistance and development, but rather should create an associative relationship between the state, private enterprise, and voluntary organizations for such purposes. In this context, redistribution would change from meaning the redistribution of wealth to meaning the redistribution of possibilities for participating in its production and appropriation, specifically, through education and the right to work. At the same time, Blair defined equality as inclusion and inequality as exclusion. This latter concept has now been extended to encompass

involuntary exclusion — which is what the lower strata of society suffer — and voluntary exclusion — which is what is practiced by the "isolated" elites in exclusive institutions and neighborhoods. According to Blair, retirement benefits should be replaced by a fund which the individual can freely access not only after retiring from the active labor force, but before if he or she so chooses, without a predetermined age of retirement, but again, leaving it up to each person's free will.

Although the rush to the right by the Third Way positions that social democracy maintained during the postwar period represents a general process, in which all the European labor, social democratic, and socialist parties participated, the explicit manner in which the Third Way proponents recognize their convergence with neoliberalism has caused a difference in the rhetoric of the British Labour Party — historically located to the right of the European labor and socialist movement — and that of the other social democratic and socialist parties of Europe. In Giddens own words:

> The most recent appropriation of the "Third Way" by Bill Clinton and Tony Blair has met a lukewarm reception from most continental social democrats, as well as from old left-wing critics in their respective countries. The critics see the Third Way in this guise as a warmed-over neoliberalism. They look at the US and see a highly dynamic economy, but also a society with the most extreme levels of inequality in the developed world. Clinton promised to "end welfare as we know it," seeming to echo some of the attitudes of the neoliberal conservatives. On coming to power, his critics say, Blair and the New Labour have persisted with the economic policy of Margaret Thatcher.[8]

The Global Progress Foundation

The 20th congress of the Socialist International, held in New York in September 1996, created the Global Progress Foundation, headed by the former chairman of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) and former head of state of that country, Felipe González, with the task of "preparing a new platform of ideas to renew social democratic thinking in response to the new challenges of globalization, the new frontier of the 21st century."[9] With the participation of leaders of the parties affiliated to the Socialist International, representatives of their women's and youth organizations, and professionals and intellectuals from different fields, the commission debated seven issues that its organizers considered to be decisive in heralding the "new era" of globalization; the international movement of capital; the technological revolution; healthy macroeconomic policies; reforming the state and its role; the international financial system; and international governance, coupled with what are seen as problems of our time: women's participation, the environment, cultural identity, skill shortages, and international solidarity.

The discussions of the Global Progress Foundation were divided into nine seminars: economy, market, state; globalization and identity; innovating the welfare state; education, education, education; technological change, employment, global progress; globalization and economic and financial governance; women in the new millennium; a rejuvenated socialism for a global world; our history; and a new international for a new century. In addition, it was proposed that the functioning of the international be reviewed in light of the growth experienced by the organization, with regional meetings to be held in Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. During the four years in which it has held its sessions (between the 20th and 21th congresses of the Socialist International), the Global Progress Foundation has

debated more than 130 reports, declarations, and resolutions.

The doctrines of the Third Way and the Global Progress Foundation share a common objective of projecting an image and legitimizing a policy, aimed at neutralizing the destabilization, protests, and social struggles arising in response to the process of concentration of wealth. However, two key differences exist between them.

The first concerns their respective posturing. Despite the general platitudes about old-style social democracy and other pronouncements with which they declare a new political era, in point of fact, neither Blair nor Giddens made an effort to hide the reality that the Third Way was just an electoral platform conceived for Britain, whereas the Global Progress Foundation did strive to project the image of a major effort aimed at political and theoretical elaboration with a universal scope. The second difference is obvious. While the Third Way not only assumed the discourse with which the ideologues of monopoly capitalism try to hide the worsening of the system's global crisis, but even explicitly incorporated elements from the neoliberal doctrine, the Global Progress Foundation pretended to distinguish itself from neoliberalism.

Like an actor repeating his lines in each performance, in all the seminars held by the Global Progress Foundation, González expounded, over and over again, on the ideas he wanted to push:

- Globalization is a process of recent origin that strengthens interdependence among nations.
- Although this process benefits some nations more than others, in a general sense, the greater degree of interdependence the less the exploitation.
- One of the features of globalization is the increase in the movement of capital, which punishes nations that interfere with companies obtaining profits, that is, those countries that

regulate the operation of the economy and charge taxes on capital investments to finance social programs.

- At the same time, the technological revolution dismantles the large factories and the productive relations of the past, on which social solidarity, trade union organization, and the political action of the working class were based, and which reached their highest expression in the welfare state.
- Under the new conditions, it is necessary to maintain healthy macroeconomic policies, that is, to preserve the balance between fiscal income (reduced by the inadvisability of taxing capital investments) and social expenditures. Therefore, it is necessary to carry out a reform of the state, which is being torn apart by a process of "supranationality" and another of "intranationality." The former involves the state's loss of sovereignty, independence, and the capacity to exercise self-determination as a result of globalization, and the latter, regional and local pressures for political and administrative decentralization.

According to González, the world situation has become more complicated because the ease and intensity of the movement of capital has made nations more vulnerable to the effects of financial crises. Therefore, he advised restructuring the international financial system, with a view to the creation of some mechanism for the prediction and early detection of outbreaks of such crises. González also advocated global governance, based on the right to intervene (including "humanitarian interventions"), but with mechanisms and safeguards so that such interventions would be exercised only for "noble" and "humanitarian" ends.

Under the new conditions, the former Spanish head of state felt it was necessary to find answers to the problems posed by the incorporation of women into the economy; the deterioration of the environment, caused by industrial development; the threat to national cultural identity posed by the unilateral character of the

communications revolution; lack of skills (inadequate education, vocational training, and development of human capital); and the demand for international solidarity, resulting from the disparities that exist between rich and poor countries.

As we can see, far more than the Third Way, the Global Progress Foundation was an exercise aimed at fulfilling what, under current conditions, Lenin identified as the historic role of social democracy: the attempt to reconcile the interests of capital with those of labor. To the extent that these interests are incompatible, in all situations in which class antagonisms arise, social democracy takes the side of capital. This is what the Global Progress Foundation did, on the one hand, with its appeal to "realism" in the face of the "uncontrollable" economic forces that reduce the nation-state's capacity for action, and on the other hand, through the (unkeepable) promise of preserving part of the social welfare programs, without opposing the transnational concentration of property and production.

Instead of offering the range of analyses on world problems and guidelines for political action to face them promised by González, what the Global Progress Foundation did was to offer a eulogy for a funeral that occurred a quarter of a century ago, when the social democratic parties, both those in government as well as in opposition, helped to bury the welfare state. The parties of European social democracy, which renounced the possibility of social transformation during the postwar period in order to administer the bourgeois project of the welfare state — and subsequently assumed its dismantling, as soon as it ceased to be a necessity in the ideological confrontation with socialism as well as a functional schema for the reproduction of capital — now justify their convergence with neoliberalism with platitudes on the need to reconcile social and individual interests. This latter issue is not under discussion, although social democracy makes the additional point that contemporary capitalism creates the material and

spiritual conditions to achieve such a reconciliation of interests, as if the concentration of wealth and the massive growth in poverty that have reached unprecedented levels were not obstacles to doing so.

Despite the specific differences existing between them, the method used by Blair and González to reposition themselves within the political spectrum is the same. They both emphasize the extreme, antisocial, and inhuman character of neoliberalism; they explain that, nevertheless, the neoliberals are correct in speaking of objective conditions that lead toward a reduction in the social functions of the state and the redistribution of wealth; and they defend an "intermediate" position that promotes the population's understanding of and support for such reductions, in exchange for their more gradual implementation. This policy, which satisfies the interests of capital with a lower social cost, allows social democracy to move to the right in absolute terms and remain on the left in relative terms.

In response to the famous rhetorical question, "What does it mean to be left today?" European social democracy contends that it involves rejecting the excesses of extreme neoliberalism; in other words, not completely eliminating public health services and education, not totally abandoning the unemployed and pensioners to their fate, not closing one's eyes to worsening social conditions, but rather maintaining a minimum level of social policy — with broad participation by the private sector — as long as this does not interfere with the fundamental trend toward the transnational concentration of wealth and political power.

Social democracy and neoliberalism share the defense of a "democratic" status quo in which citizens' representation and participation has an increasingly marginal impact on the exercise of real power. They also share, among other points, support for openly imperialist practices, such as the bombing of Iraq, the aggression against Yugoslavia, the hostility to the Cuban

revolution, and the policies of institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank.

The convergence with neoliberalism is the only road available to social democracy. After having wagered everything on the welfare state, the bankruptcy of that ideological construction today places it in the public pillory. Therefore, social democracy can either recognize its historical error and once again accept the need for superseding capitalism — a position that it will never adopt — or do what it does, which is to pretend that "phenomena" beyond human control have changed the world suddenly and radically.

In conclusion, the final outcome of the history of social democracy is a total surrender to capitalism, the radical abandonment of its basic postulates, in particular, of the socialist ideal that at one time it proclaimed, and the denial of everything that, even if formally, could make it an opposition force, or at least a force for reform. The social democrats are no longer even reformists, unless providing cover to neoliberalism with social democratic speeches can be considered reformist.

Final comments on the question of reform or revolution

Almost a century after the definitive break between the reformist and revolutionary currents in the labor and socialist movement, three factors seem to endorse the thesis that capitalism represents the "end of history": the capacity for domination, interference, and intervention developed by imperialism poses, with greater intensity than ever, the problem of whether revolution is possible; the mythology constructed around globalization and the "scientific technological revolution" raises doubts about whether revolution is necessary; and the collapse of the Soviet Union poses the question of whether revolution is indeed desirable. So today,

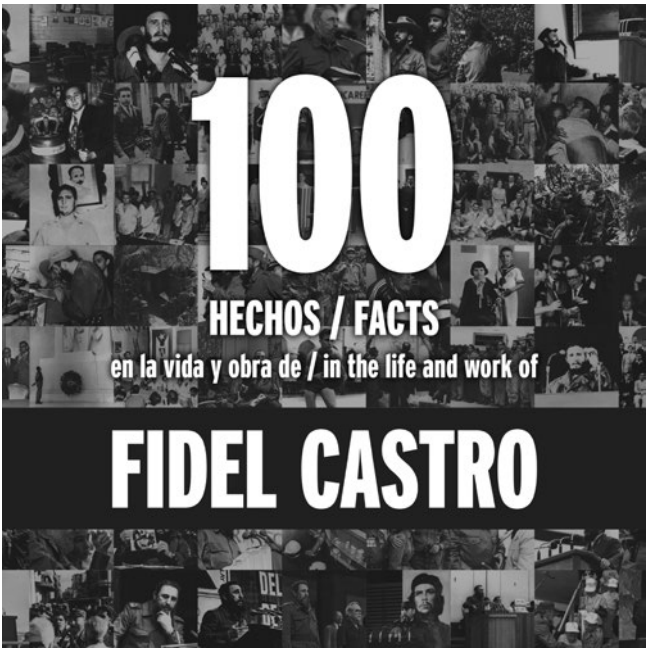
we are faced with a situation that apparently has no solution. On the one hand, the conditions do not exist in the short or medium term for the victory of new revolutions; on the other hand, the system of world domination only allows access to government for the political forces willing to participate in, or at least respect, the accumulated results of the neoliberal counterreform. Nevertheless, it is impossible for imperialism to maintain its control over humanity's destiny.

There can be no doubt that imperialism will do everything within its power to create a system of domination in order to prevent not only revolution, but even progressive social reform in any part of the planet. The question is how long it will be able to maintain this system, because contrary to the image that it seeks to present, capitalism has not found — nor will it ever be able to find — a magic formula to avoid an increase in the antagonistic contradictions that reflect its senility and lead to its certain death. No matter how numerous and serious the errors made in the name of revolution and socialism, these concepts are acquiring a renewed validity.

Rosa Luxemburg posed the problem in terms of "socialism or barbarism." Slightly more than seven decades after Luxemburg's death, barbarism threatens humanity's very existence.

PART TWO

DOMINATION, CRISIS, AND POPULAR RESISTANCE IN LATIN AMERICA



100 FACTS IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF FIDEL CASTRO

Rodolfo Romero Reyes y Elier Ramírez Cañedo

Fidel Castro is one of the most universal figures of Cuba and Latin America. This book synthesizes, in a brief chronology, 100 significant facts of his life, accompanied by many rarely seen photos. The moments narrated here offer the reader a comprehensive overview of the personality and the historical significance of the principal leader of the Cuban Revolution. Facts and photographs from his childhood and youth, the guerrilla struggle in the Sierra Maestra, his decades as Cuba's head of state and leader of the Revolutionary Government until his last days are the features of this book.

2021, 208 pages + images, ISBN: 978-1-922501-12-7

The Rise of Capitalism in Latin America

The European invasion of the Americas,[1] which began with the so-called discovery of the hemisphere and continued through conquest and colonization, led to the incorporation of the continent into capitalist development as a colonial appendage. This process took place with the voyages of exploration that were undertaken between 1492 and 1519, the conquest of the Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations between 1519 and 1535, and the establishment of control over what were then considered marginal territories, imposed between 1535 and 1580.

The extraction of precious metals at the lowest possible cost for the metropolis was the fundamental goal behind the exploitation of the Spanish colonies in the Americas in the 16th, 17th, and the beginning of the 18th centuries. So as to guarantee the highest profits in this monopoly, the Spanish crown established a bureau of commerce, the Casa de Contratación in Seville (1503), the Council of the Indies (1542), and the fleet system (1561). To satisfy the demands of mining production, an almost demonetized support economy arose, which supplied food, fabrics, and pack animals to the mines and the cities by means of barter. This colonial economy was based on the exploitation of the native population and slaves brought in from other continents.

After a period of indiscriminate enslavement of the native

population, new laws decreed in 1542 by King Carlos III prohibited indigenous slavery and stipulated that the only authorized way to exploit the indigenous population was through the system of allotments of forced labor, known as *encomiendas*.* Previously, the *encomienda* system had been applied to indigenous communities that, for various reasons, the experts in canon law and theology advised should not be enslaved. The *encomiendas* differ from slavery in that they were not permanent (there were no inheritance or hereditary rights) and the Spanish *conquistador* was required to "civilize" and "Christianize" the native population, whose labor they exploited. Although up to 1679 it continued to be legal to enslave "rebellious" indians — those actively opposed to the colonization — and up to 1810, the "barbarian natives" — accused of attacking Spanish border settlements — these new laws affirmed the temporary character of the *encomienda*, suppressed personal services, ratified the obligation of the indigenous population to pay tribute, and preserved the coexistence of several forms of land ownership in the area occupied by those living under the system.

In contrast to the American colonies of Britain, Portugal, and France, in Spain's new world colonies the exploitation of the native population prevailed over the import of slaves from other continents. The main reason is that until the second half of the 18th century, the Spanish crown did not promote a plantation-based economy, which was tied to African slavery elsewhere in the region. Although from that time on Spain expanded its slave trade, in total, the crown's American lands received around 1.5 million slaves during the entire colonial period (1492–1810), which represented barely 12 percent of the African slaves brought to the continent.[2]

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* *Encomiendas* were Spanish colonial grants giving the right to appropriate the labor of natives in specified areas in return for Christianizing them —Translator's note.

Nevertheless, from the beginning of the conquest and colonization, importing slaves was part of the process. When the Spanish invasion of the Americas took place, the metropolis was home to slaves of diverse origins, including white Europeans, Arabs, Asians, and Africans. Some of them were taken to the Americas after 1493. It is estimated that at the end of the 16th century, Spain was home to around 44,000 slaves, which represented one percent of the country's population.[3] Also from the beginning of the conquest and colonization, the Spanish crown regulated the slave trade by prohibiting entry into the Americas by "unfaithful" slaves, those from rebellious ethnic groups, or others who represented a threat to their domination. Finally, in 1542, King Carlos III decreed that only black slaves of African origin who did not come from certain "warrior" ethnic tribes could be introduced into the Americas.

Less intense than in the Spanish colonies were the first years of conquest and colonization in Brazil, the country named for the precious wood known as *palo brasil* that was traded on a large scale during the 16th century. The dispute for control of the Brazilian coast by French navigators stimulated the Portuguese colonization, which began through two punitive expeditions sent in 1526 and 1531. In 1532, the Royal Decree of King Joao III stipulated the division of Brazilian territory into 15 hereditary captaincies, of which only eight were established. With the failure of the system of captaincies, the Portuguese crown claimed its right over the entire territory of the colony, and designated a governor general as ruler.

The center of the Brazilian economy shifted during the 17th century toward the sugar plantations of the north, supplied with livestock and men by the rest of the colony. This sugar economy fell into crisis after the defeat of the Dutch occupation of Pernambuco (1630–54), which led the Netherlands to undertake sugarcane cultivation in its Caribbean possessions, something Britain and

France also did in theirs. Given that it was impossible for Brazil to compete in this product with the Antilles, the marginal areas of the Portuguese colony that had depended on the sugar industry in the north now had to survive through the trade in wood, gold, and precious stones obtained by barter exchange with the indigenous population, together with the development of cattle raising and the enslavement of indians captured in the border territories, which was more economical than importing African slaves, who were increasingly inaccessible for sugar mill owners.

Five forms of production coexisted in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the Americas: the natural peasant and communal economy; simple commodity production; slavery (patriarchal and plantation); feudal or semi-feudal agrarian production through latifundia, or large land estates; and the embryonic pre-capitalist forms of production.[4] The colonial domination imposed by Spain led to the transfiguration of existing class relations in pre-Columbian America, backed by the "right of conquest." Thus emerged a heterogeneous social order, in which supremacy was held by the treasury agents, businessmen, and merchants from the home country, in charge of maximizing the transfer of wealth to the crown, while the landlords and mine owners were outside the domain of monetary circulation. The main subjects of colonialist exploitation were, of course, the Africans and indigenous peoples, subjected to crushing ethnic oppression and transformed into specific classes in colonial society through varied and singular forms of exploitation. In addition, social differences were established between them, among other reasons, to prevent their unity. African slaves represented the lowest rung in colonial society, with indigenous people a step above.

The economic relationship between Spain and its colonies in the Americas was transformed in the course of the 18th century, as a result of the prosperity enjoyed by the economic sectors that provided support to the mining industry, comprised of agriculture

and cattle production. This led to the proclamation of the Bourbon reforms of 1778 and 1782. These reforms legalized exports to the Spanish markets of other colonial products — in addition to precious metals — such as sugar and tobacco from Cuba; cocoa from Venezuela and Quito; and leather from Río de la Plata. They also formalized the exploitation of the colonies as consumer markets, which led to Spain's promotion of the plantation economy when it was already declining elsewhere in the world. Meanwhile, in Brazil, the discovery of gold and diamond deposits in Minas Gerais at the end of the 18th century resulted in the displacement of the economic center from the plantations of the northeast to the mines in the southern central areas of the country. It also stimulated the emergence of a range of economic activities in support of the mining sector that reached their peak between 1721 and 1870. This process went hand in hand with Lisbon's decision to reduce the relative administrative autonomy and commercial freedom that the colony had enjoyed.

In both the Spanish colonies and in Brazil, native European, or Creole, sectors emerged during the 18th century. They were in the process of become bourgeoisified and were interested in obtaining direct access to the European market. Among the most important Creole sectors were the planters, farmers, small and medium-size producers, merchants, intellectuals, and artisans. This process planted the seeds of pro-independence ideas and a national American consciousness, under the influence of the Enlightenment, the independence of the 13 British colonies of North America (1775–83), the French revolution (1789), the Haitian revolution (1790–1804), and the European wars, in particular the occupation of Portugal (1807) and Spain (1808) by Napoleon's armies, which removed both monarchies from their respective thrones and left the Iberian colonial empires without a crown.

The changes that took place in the Spanish trade system, formalized through the Bourbon reforms, altered the status quo

in the metropolis as well as in the colonies. In Europe, Spain was relegated to the onerous role of intermediary between its American possessions and the industrial nations, in particular Britain. In Spain's American colonies, Madrid's trade monopoly was cracked open because the metropolis, unable to fulfill the terms of the new commercial relationship, acted as a parasitic intermediary that drove up the cost of importing manufactured goods.

To the extent that the Bourbon reforms favored Spain and Spaniards resident in the colonies, they eroded the position of all strata of the Creole pyramid. The new restrictions conflicted with the transformation underway in the social structure of Spain's American colonies, until then dominated by those from the home country (officials, merchants, and wealthy businessmen), the clergy, and the Creole landowners, who were asphyxiating the emerging proto-bourgeois sectors linked to foreign trade, and the rural sectors that arose as a result of the diversification of the agrarian structure. In the case of the castes — which limited the mobility of the ethnic-social groups dedicated to artisan activities and the diverse occupations and jobs undertaken by poor whites, mestizos, mulattos, and free blacks — the reforms not only created a situation that made it impossible to advance, but even prevented children from rising to the status of their parents. All of this became a breeding ground for the wars of independence.

The formation of an American national consciousness and the development of a nationalist ideology, which reflected the culture and the political, economic, and social aspirations of those who subscribed to it, intensified with the independence struggles that led to the formation of the Latin American nations. This was a very complex process because, together with the existing contradictions between the Iberian metropolises and their respective colonies — which were reflected in the antagonism between native-born Spaniards and Portuguese in charge of maintaining the trade monopoly, and the upper and middle layers of Creole society

interested in opening their economy to free trade — another contradiction existed, between the elites — natives of the Iberian peninsula and Creoles — that held economic power, and the black slaves, the indigenous and mestizo population, and the other productive sectors on whose shoulders rested the weight of the colonial economy. Therefore, what was involved was not just a crisis in the relations of political domination and economic exploitation existing between the metropolises and the colonies, but also a crisis of the colonial socioeconomic structures based on social polarization and racial stratification.

It would be impossible here to even attempt an overview of the wars of independence in Spain's American colonies. Let us simply point out that the wars can be divided into two stages — those that spanned the period 1808–15 and those that took place from 1816 to 1825 — and that the struggles had different characteristics in Mexico, Central America, and the colonial territories that are today Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Bolivia — in which Simón Bolívar is the leading figure — and those of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay — where the main hero of independence was José de San Martín. In essence, while in Mexico the rebellion led by Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos began as a genuine popular movement, in the rest of Spanish America the struggles were initiated by Creole elites who were just as interested in maintaining the socioeconomic status quo as obtaining independence. Venezuela and New Granada were examples of this phenomenon until the second stage of the war of independence, when the popular sectors joined the liberation army and Bolívar himself imposed a programmatic turn to incorporate anti-slavery demands and measures in favor of the poor sectors of society. The confrontation between the two poles — the oligarchic and the progressive tendencies — was to characterize the independence movements in Río de la Plata, while in Central America, the Creole elites had a dominant position and

clung to the metropolitan power, fearing a popular insurrection as had occurred in Mexico. In the final stage of the independence struggles, these Mexican and Central American elites joined the battle, once its outcome was clear and inevitable.

The independence of Brazil was closely tied to the French invasion of Portugal, because the colony was where King Joao VI's court sought refuge, which led to the establishment of a virtual autonomy favorable to the interests of the Creole aristocracy. With the return of the imperial court to Lisbon and the attempts of Portuguese liberals to reactivate the colonial relationship with Brazil, Don Pedro de Braganza, the emperor's son, with the support of the Brazilian aristocracy, broke off ties with the metropolis on September 7, 1822, and proclaimed himself emperor of Brazil. The new Brazilian empire was consolidated in 1824, following the final defeat of the Portuguese colonialist forces as well as the republican rebellion, which took place in Pernambuco.

With the independence of Latin America,[5] this region composed of old Spanish colonies and Brazil was transformed from a colonial appendage to a neocolonial appendage of capitalism. This transformation was assisted by the failure of the ideals nurtured by so many patriots that independence and integration were indissoluble elements of the region's emancipation. These ideals found expression in the ideas of Bolívar, who identified South American unity as an indispensable condition to defeat "Monroe-ist" Pan-Americanism — America for the (North) Americans — promoted by the US rulers.

The republics born of the end of the Spanish colonial empire in the Americas lacked a level of capitalist economic development and social structure that could serve as a basis for their integration and the construction of national unity encompassing such extensive and diverse regions. Not only was it impossible to create a Hispanoamerican nation, but attempts even failed to establish partial state units, such as "greater" Colombia (incorporating

Venezuela, New Granada, and Ecuador), the Bolivian-Peruvian confederation, and the Central American Federation (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica). The old Río de la Plata Viceroyalty (Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay) also fragmented. Developments took a different turn in Brazil, where the aristocracy's interest in preserving slavery led it to offer decisive support to the military forces of the Braganza empire (1822–89), which consolidated national unity in 1848 after putting down the civil wars launched by several secessionist and regional movements, among the most important of which was the Farrapos war (1835–45), fought in Río Grande do Sul.

Independence brought division into separate republics and conflicts between the territories and peoples with whom Bolívar dreamed of building Latin American unity. These republics were born underdeveloped, tied to neocolonialist metropolises by economic dependence, unequal trade, and external indebtedness. Under such conditions, the state assumed a particular importance: participating in the economy as the only entity capable of attracting credits and moving capital; using political power to allocate property and wealth; and utilizing violence and militarism — in the form of either military dictatorship or civil authoritarianism — as indispensable means to contain and repress the explosion of contradictions arising from social inequality.

The destruction wrought by the wars and the replacement of the Spanish colonial system with — depending on the case — the US or British neocolonial system, resulted in an economic crisis that exacerbated the contradictions inherent in the abolition of the old order and birth of the new, independent societies, which saw the persecution of the officials, military officers, and clergymen of the old regime. The widespread violence and the structural weakness of the new republics found expression in continued militarization, which became, on the one hand, a democratizing element that allowed for the social mobility of indigenous

people, blacks, mestizos, and poor whites, who were able to become officials in the insurgent armies, and on the other, an obstacle preventing this democratization from extending further than necessary. In such circumstances, a balance of power was established that was unfavorable to the cities and favorable to the countryside, as a result of the importance acquired by the rural masses in the formation of the armies.

Instead of occupying the privileged position that the natives of Spain and Portugal monopolized in the colony, the urban Creole elites became impoverished due to the destruction of their property and their inability to prevent the British from taking control of foreign trade. This resulted in the loss of their political power and a decrease in their social status. Those who had earlier been at the top of the Creole social pyramid became employees of the political-administrative structures, the army, and the landowners. On the other side of the ledger, the main winners were the landowners transformed into generals and the generals transformed into landowners, whose main asset — their land — was not destroyed in the conflict and who, in the new circumstances, exercised control over the rural masses who depended on military authorities, and therefore, on the government. In this context, a transformation took place in the socioeconomic role of the church, as a result of its impoverishment, the replacement of bishops and priests loyal to the crown with patriots, and their subordination to civil authorities. This metamorphosis was complemented by the limited upward social mobility of free workers from the lower layers of urban society and the countryside, the obsolescence of slavery, and the subjugation of the black population through new forms of discrimination and subordination.

From Colonialism to Neocolonialism

The expulsion of Spain and Portugal from their colonial empires opened the field to the introduction in Latin America of a new form of domination and exploitation — neocolonialism — which corresponded to developments achieved by the system of capitalist production. In the same way that throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, colonialism had propped up the process of primitive capital accumulation, manufacturing, and the initial growth in capitalist industry, in the 19th century, neocolonialism emerged as the new form of domination and exploitation in the stage of the industrial revolution, and simultaneously the transformation from pre-monopoly to monopoly capitalism was consolidated. In essence, neocolonialism was a prop for the metamorphosis of capitalism from the free market to monopoly capitalism, and consequently, for the birth and development of imperialism.

Neocolonialism was characterized by the formal institutional independence of the neocolony that masked the political subordination and economic dependence in relation to the metropolis. The great power that established its neocolonial domination over the majority of the old Portuguese and Spanish empires in the Americas, especially in South America, was Britain. Nevertheless, to the extent that its emerging strength allowed it to do so, the

United States imposed its neocolonial domination in Mexico and Central America. The strengthening of neocolonial domination in Latin America did not occur immediately after the end of the independence struggles (1825), but began about two-and-a-half decades later. This delay was one of the factors that determined the differences that existed between colonial and neocolonial domination. After a long process of the formation of a national consciousness, 15 years of war against colonialism in Spanish America, and more than 25 years of existence as independent republics, it was impossible that Latin America would reproduce the same relationship that it had had before with the Iberian metropolises, only this time with Britain and the United States.

Britain's delay in asserting its neocolonial domination over Latin America can be attributed to the industrial revolution having swallowed up almost all available capital investment in that country until the 1870s. What the British economy needed at that moment was to "move relatively constant quantities of industrial products" into the markets of its trade partners, while Latin America turned out to be "a market with a very variable consumption capacity."[1] In the case of the United States, the delay can be attributed to the country being immersed in its own territorial expansion up to 1853, when neocolonialism became the mechanism used by the emerging power to impose its domination in the territories of the Caribbean Basin, which could not be annexed given both the resistance of these nations and British opposition.

British neocolonial domination in South America was strengthened between 1850 and 1873. During this stage, European demand for traditional Latin American products expanded and its markets opened up to the region's non-traditional products. At the same time, the movement of capital began, which included European investments in trade and transportation — and later extended to other sectors — and credits to Latin American

governments. Although the economic crisis of 1873 led to a decline in European imports and interrupted the flow of credits, on which Latin American governments depended in order to function and pay off previous debts, the neocolonial economic relation was able to overcome this obstacle and reached maturity after 1880, a stage that corresponded to the transformation of free enterprise capitalism into monopoly capitalism, one of whose features is, in fact, the export of capital.

The neocolonial relation that was consolidated after 1880 was based on a division of labor, under which Latin America exported raw materials and foodstuffs and imported industrial products. The percentage of foodstuffs in these imports declined, in favor of purchases of capital goods, new metal products, and fuels. As neocolonialism matured, the division of labor was modified in favor of the industrial powers. Even where the Creole elites retained control over primary production, dependence became accentuated as a result of financial, commercial, and technological monopolization, at the same time that the demand for capital in the primary sector stimulated foreign penetration. The same phenomenon occurred in the construction of railroads, refrigeration units, silos, and sugar mills. The large landowners, who had enhanced their fortunes soon after the war of independence, saw their economic power eroded due to the predominant role acquired by overseas investors and businessmen. With different rhythms in each country, urban middle classes arose that increasingly raised their own demands, and working class sectors emerged that began to play an active social role.

Although with the maturity of neocolonialism, European export markets tended to become diversified, Britain became the main supplier of commodities for South America and retained control of the banking and financial sectors on which the region's trade with third countries was sustained. Thus, Britain was the main neocolonial metropolis in Latin America in 1889–90, when

the International American Conference was held in Washington, representing the first attempt by US imperialism aimed at creating a system of continental domination.

Since the United States gained its independence (1776), the founding fathers laid the basis for the territorial expansion and the colonial and neocolonial domination that would characterize US imperialism's relations with the rest of the continent. In 1777, then ambassador Benjamin Franklin sent colonists to live in Louisiana for the purpose of annexation. When, in 1809, the first cry of independence in Spain's American colonies arose in Quito, the United States had already invaded eastern Florida (1795), purchased Louisiana from France (1803), made a first attempt to annex Cuba (1803), attacked Spanish positions in the Río Grande and western Louisiana for years, sent expeditions against Texas and California, and robbed Native Americans of 20 million hectares of land. By the time the independence struggles culminated in South America (1825), Washington had made its second attempt at the annexation of Cuba and its first to annex Puerto Rico (1811), Spain had given up eastern and western Florida (1819), Mexico (independent since 1821) was suffering under the "shifting border" policy, John Quincy Adams had promoted a pact with Britain and France to avoid the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and the Monroe Doctrine had been proclaimed (1823).

Until 1825, the United States maintained an apparent policy of neutrality with regard to the wars of independence in Spain's American colonies, which, however, did not prevent it from selling weapons and ammunition to Madrid. Following Latin American independence, the Texas rebellion took place (1832), and the US government recognized its independence in 1837; the idea of Manifest Destiny — expansion to the Pacific Ocean — was raised and legitimized in 1848, and Mexico gave up Texas, New Mexico, and California with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Finally, after the failed attempt of William Walker to grab additional

territory from Mexico, the US government imposed the Gadsden Purchase (1853), on which the current borders between the two countries were established.

Although some "pioneers" dreamed of expanding the territory of the United States, not only from the Atlantic to the Pacific but also from the coast of the Arctic Ocean to Cape Horn in Chile, after seven decades of conquest, pillaging, purchases, and annexations, in 1853, the continental borders of the emerging power had basically been determined. The dispute for colonial and neocolonial dominance by Spain, Britain, and other European metropolises in the rest of the hemisphere now moved to the fore. The territorial expansion of the United States was subsequently completed with the incorporation of the states of Alaska (purchased from Russia in 1867) and Hawaii (annexed in 1898 and declared part of the United States in 1900). However, since the 1850s, the resistance of the Mexican and Central American peoples and British opposition to the occupation and annexation of new territories forced Washington to limit itself to the expansion of its domination mainly through neocolonialism. This expansion through military interventions, the imposition of rulers and submissive repressive bodies, and all types of political and economic pressures was first applied in the Caribbean Basin and was then extended to South America, to the extent that the increasing power of US imperialism allowed it to challenge British imperialism's control over the region.[2]

The US government's first interference in Latin America and the Caribbean was the assistance offered in 1791 by President George Washington to France to counter the insurrectionary upsurge of the Haitian revolution. Although Haiti achieved its independence in 1804, US authorities did not recognize the new republic until 1862. For over a century, from the proclamation of Haitian independence to the Spanish-American War, numerous acts of US interference and intervention occurred in the inde-

pendence struggles in Spain's American colonies, in the disputes that took place between the nascent Latin American republics, and in the latter's internal affairs. Among such examples of meddling were the abuses committed by William Walker in Central America between 1855 and 1860. Washington often resorted to the argument that it was defending the lives and property of US citizens to justify its military intervention in the region.

The main expansionist move by US imperialism in the transition from the 19th to the 20th century was the intervention in Cuba's war of independence against Spain (1898). The Spanish-American War was characterized by Lenin as the first imperialist war, given that the United States robbed the liberation army of the defeat that it was about to inflict on the metropolis, occupied Cuba, and established its colonial domination over Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam.[3] Another significant event in this period was the signing of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty between the United States and Britain, which annulled previous agreements and authorized Washington to build a canal across the Central American isthmus. This treaty represented the implicit recognition of the division of the spheres of influence of British and US imperialism in the continent. Britain and other European powers accepted US domination over the Latin American nations located to the north of the Amazon River, while Washington consented — for the time being — to respect the status quo of the European colonies of the Caribbean and the British neocolonial empire in the rest of South America.[4]

In the first decade of the 20th century, President Theodore Roosevelt (1901–09), architect of the "Big Stick" policy, proposed his Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine between 1903 and 1906,[5] which affirmed the exclusive right of US imperialism to force the Latin American republics to liquidate their international debts. During Roosevelt's term in office, Washington sponsored the forcible secession of Panama (1903), enabling it to refuse to

recognize the Colombian Congress's rejection of the proposal to construct the Panama Canal; intervened militarily in the Dominican Republic (1904), which led to control over that country's customs policy (1905–12); occupied Cuba for the second time (1906–09); sent in the marines in order to obtain political dividends in the wars that broke out between Guatemala and El Salvador (1906) and between Honduras and Nicaragua (1907); and applied interventionist policies that led to the resignation of President Santos Zelaya in Nicaragua (1909). Roosevelt's successor, William Taft (1909–13), ordered the military intervention in Honduras to overthrow President Miguel Dávila (1911); military intervention in Nicaragua to frustrate the rebellion headed by Benjamin Zeledón, (1912); and initiated a policy of threats, pressures, and aggressions aimed at hindering the Mexican revolution (1910–17).

Between 1913 and 1921, the period of Woodrow Wilson's "missionary diplomacy," under the pretext of "promoting democracy" and "stopping German penetration," the US government increased its interference in Mexican internal affairs, occupied Haiti militarily and controlled its customs (1915–34), occupied the Dominican Republic (1916–24), intervened in Panama (1918), supported coups d'état and military and civilian dictatorships in Central and South American countries, and took advantage of World War I to consolidate its political, economic, and military domination in the Caribbean Basin and to displace capital from Germany and the latter's allies in South America.

Following the impasse resulting from World War I, and with the fig leaf of the supposed abandonment of interventionism and greater respect for the sovereignty of Latin American nations during what was known as the Republican revival (1921–23), the policies of presidents Warren Harding (1921–23), Calvin Coolidge (1923–29), and Herbert Hoover (1929–33) were notable for their support to the military dictatorships that were established to contain the popular struggles unleashed by the crisis, and by

policies aimed at taking advantage of the conflicts that arose between and within nations. During these years, Washington launched a military intervention in Panama aimed at repressing popular protests (1921), two in Honduras to intercede in the war waged by antagonistic local political forces (1923 and 1924), and an invasion of Nicaragua (1926), which became an intervention against General Augusto C. Sandino's "Crazy Little Army."

In conclusion, US imperialism concentrated on securing its political, economic, and military domination of Mexico, Central America, the northern part of South America, and the independent nations in the Caribbean Sea, until the 1920–33 crisis led to the collapse of the British neocolonial system in the region and left the road open to the rest of Latin America. Although the Great Depression affected both the United States and Britain, its effect on the relations of the two powers with Latin America was different. This is because US domination was based more on geographical proximity and military force — elements that were not affected by the crisis — while British dominance depended on its capacity to maintain commercial and financial supremacy.

During the period between the Great Depression and the end of World War II, Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to office (1933–45), applying his "Good Neighbor" policy, under which no US military interventions took place in Latin America and the Caribbean. Roosevelt interacted both with military and civilian dictatorships as well as with liberal constitutionalist governments of a progressive orientation. The Good Neighbor policy proclaimed that the US government was renouncing the use of armed intervention against the Latin American republics. This policy was applied after US imperialism had installed dictators and docile national guard officials in the governments of the Caribbean Basin countries that it had invaded earlier, such as Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua and Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. This formal modification of its neocolonial policy did not include

abandoning economic and political sanctions. Nevertheless, although the Roosevelt administration applied many pressures in reprisal against the nationalization of the Mexican oil industry decreed by Lázaro Cárdenas, the international situation prevented it from resorting to the customary use of military aggression employed by its predecessors.

Depending on the situation of each country, in the face mounting popular struggles and demands for greater democratization, the dominant classes attempted to establish a balance of social forces, either by means of constitutional liberalism or through a military or civilian dictatorship, in all cases with a base of political support sustained by the convergence of interests of the urban social sectors at the cost of the rural layers of the population. Constitutional liberalism was the response in countries with greater relative political, economic, and social development, such as Argentina and Chile, where it was possible to selectively incorporate certain demands of the middle layers and the working class. Conspiring against liberalism, however, was the almost nonexistent participation of the countryside in national political and economic life, in which the conservative landowner oligarchy exercised control over the impoverished rural masses.

The most important experiences in liberalism before and during World War II were in Colombia, with the governments of Enrique Olaya (1930–34) and Alfonso López Pumarejo (1934–38 and 1942–46); in Mexico, with the six-year presidential administrations of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–40) — during which the country's revolutionary nationalist policies reached their greatest expression — and Miguel Ávila Camacho (1941–46); in Chile, with the Popular Front government, headed by Pedro Aguirre (1938–42), and the Democratic Alliance, led by Juan Antonio Ríos (1942–46); and in Costa Rica, with the governments of Ángel Calderón (1940–44) and Teodoro Picado (1944–48), in whose alliance the communist Popular Vanguard Party participated. Meanwhile, the

most important experiences in populist projects occurred in Brazil with the government of Getúlio Vargas (1930–45), in particular after 1937 when he broke his alliance with the fascist Integrist Party; and in Argentina with the coup d'état of 1943, following which Juan Domingo Perón became an important figure and was elected to the presidency in 1946. It is impossible to ignore the case of Guatemala, where in 1944, Juan José Ubico's dictatorship was overthrown, and soon after, two anti-imperialist governments held office, headed, respectively, by Juan José Arévalo (1945–50) and Jacobo Árbenz (1951–54). Finally, among the dictatorships subsequent to the 1929 crisis were Rafael Leónidas Trujillo in the Dominican Republic (1930–61), and Anastasio Somoza García's dynasty in Nicaragua (1936–79).[6]

US imperialism took advantage of the international climate existing before and during World War II to halt and reverse the penetration of European capital — especially German and Italian — in Latin America and to appropriate the region's mining industry. The same process did not occur, however, with the industrial sector, which remained under the control of the developmentalist bourgeoisies. Up to this point the political, economic, and military domination of US imperialism over Latin America had advanced, at a time when the aftermath of World War II and the beginning of the Cold War led to radical changes in the international situation.

World War II modified the configuration of international relations that had resulted from the 1914–18 conflagration and the 1929–33 crisis. Among the most important effects of the war were the destruction of Europe, the ascendancy of the United States to the status of the leading global imperialist power, and the emergence of a bipolar world following the extension of socialism to the nations of Eastern Europe. This combination of elements led to the Cold War (1946–89), a universal offensive — ideological, political, economic, diplomatic, and military — headed by US

imperialism, dedicated to achieving the "containment of communism," especially in Western Europe, cradle of the ideas of socialism and communism, whose devastation threatened to provide a stimulus to the popular struggle.

The expression "Cold War" was used for the first time by Bernard Baruch, advisor to US President Harry Truman, in a speech delivered on April 16, 1946, in Columbia, South Carolina, and was subsequently used as the title of a book by journalist Walter Lippman, as well as in a famous speech by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. In that same year, President Truman drafted the National Security Act — which mandated the creation of the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) — and announced the launching of the European Recovery Program or Marshall Plan. From that point on, the concept of "national security" became a not-to-be-questioned dogma, which could be used to justify the use of all types of internal and external force.

The Cold War was the main instrument used by US imperialism to extend and deepen its domination over Latin America, a process that advanced more rapidly in the political and military fields than on an economic level. This was because Washington's economic priority was the reconstruction of Western Europe. The bulk of US capital exports were earmarked for Western Europe, both to reestablish the productive capacity of Washington's main economic and commercial counterpart and to transform it into a "bastion against communism." In other words, even though the United States took advantage of its world supremacy to expand monopoly economic penetration in Latin America, the available capital for such an enterprise was limited.

The Truman Doctrine was the incarnation of Cold War policies in Latin America. Under the pretext of combating the "threat of communism" during his presidency (1945–53), Truman launched an offensive to destroy all the Latin American political forces

that were considered obstacles to the expansion and deepening of Washington's continental domain. This policy was applied especially against the communist parties and other socialist, progressive, and democratic organizations that participated in what were known as antifascist popular fronts, promoted by the Soviet Union.

Various governments acted in accord with the Truman Doctrine: in Colombia, Mariano Ospina (1946–50) and Roberto Urdaneta (1951–53); in Brazil, Gaspar Enrico Dutra (1946–51); in Chile, Gabriel González Videla (1946–52); in Mexico, Miguel Alemán (1946–52); in Ecuador, Galo Plaza (1948–52); in Costa Rica, José Figueres (1948–49) and Otilio Ulate (1949–53); in Peru, the dictatorship of Manuel Odría (1948–56); and in Venezuela, the dictatorship of Marcos Pérez Jiménez.

In Latin America the Cold War was perpetuated by US President Dwight Eisenhower's "Good Partner" policy, whose main intervention in the region was the overthrow of Jacobo Árbenz's government in Guatemala in 1954. In addition to the overthrow of Árbenz and his replacement with the Carlos Castillo Armas dictatorship (1954–57), the Good Partner policy also stimulated the fall of the governments of Getúlio Vargas in Brazil (1954); Juan Domingo Perón in Argentina (1955); and Federico Chaves in Paraguay, which led to Alfredo Stroessner's dictatorship (1956–89). At the same time, Eisenhower's policies contributed to undermining the thrust of the Bolivian revolution in the governments of Víctor Paz Estenssoro (1952–56) and Hernán Siles Zuazo (1956–60). Jean-Claude Duvalier's dictatorship in Haiti also arose in this period. Finally, following the victory of the Cuban revolution in January 1959, Eisenhower ordered a plan of aggression similar to that employed against the Árbenz government. The implementation of that plan led to the US defeat under his successor, President John F. Kennedy, at the Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961.

Pan-Americanism

In the final years of the 19th century, during Benjamin Harrison's presidency (1889–93), Secretary of State James Blaine proposed that the military interventionist policy with which US imperialism imposed its neocolonial domination on Latin America be complemented by a "Pan-American system." It was the start of a long-term strategy to convert the Latin American governments and peoples into co-participants in the domination exercised over them. This was the aim of the first International American Conference, held in 1889–90 at a time when the United States was still unable to successfully challenge British control over South America.

In the early years of the 20th century, even those Latin American nations closest to Britain, including Argentina, accepted Pan-Americanism in the hope that it would serve as a brake on US aggression. This trend was undermined insofar as Latin American governments put their faith in the protection offered by the newly emerging system of international institutions, such as the International Court of The Hague. Nevertheless, as the situation in Europe deteriorated prior to World War I, they once again moved toward the Pan-American schema.

The growth of Pan-Americanism did not keep pace with the tempo of aggressive actions by the US government:

- In 1889–90, the first International American Conference was held in Washington, DC, as a result of which the International Union of American Republics was created, originally designed to gather economic information.
- In 1901–02, the Mexico conference created a governing body for the International Union of American Republics, comprised of all the Latin American ambassadors accredited in Washington, DC, and presided over by the US secretary of state.
- In 1905, the Río de Janeiro conference proposed strengthening the recently created embryo of the inter-American system.
- In 1910, the Buenos Aires conference, for the first time, sought to transform the International Union of American Republics into the Pan-American Union, with the (frustrated) aim of consolidating a multilateral regional mechanism.

At this point, the development of Pan-Americanism was interrupted until the end of World War I. After this conflagration:

- In 1923, the Santiago de Chile conference failed in the attempt to build a regional organization, because of the refusal of the US government to accept a "multilateral guarantee" of the independence and integrity of the states of the American continent.
- In 1928, the Havana conference rejected the proposal to institutionalize the right to intervention and customs protectionism.

The developments in the Pan-American movement during this period reflected the obstacles faced by the United States in its zeal to strengthen its political domination in South America. The Good Neighbor policy, on the basis of which Roosevelt interacted with military and civilian dictatorships as well as liberal governments of progressive orientation, allowed Washington to promote the

Pan-American movement. However, only when World War II turned in the allies' favor, and in the specific case of Argentina, only when the defeat of Germany became evident, could US imperialism take advantage of the conflagration to get the Latin American republics to agree to establish what is today known as the inter-American system. These difficulties were reflected in the Pan-American conferences held between 1933 and 1945:

- In 1933, the Pan-American Conference held in Montevideo signed a non-aggression and dispute settlement treaty, proposed by Argentina and accepted by the US government in exchange for not being condemned for its protectionist policies.
- In 1936, the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, meeting in Buenos Aires, failed in an attempt to increase the powers of the Pan-American organization and to improve its ability to represent its international members.
- In 1938, the Pan-American Conference held in Lima established a consultative procedure to maintain peace — as an alternative to the US proposal of creating an Inter-American Consultative Committee — which represented an advance, albeit modest, in promoting Pan-Americanism.
- In 1939, the first Consultative Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Pan-American Union, held in Panama, created an Inter-American Financial and Economic Advisory Committee to deal with the possible consequences that the war might cause in these fields. It also established a zone around the American continent, within which the belligerent countries were asked to refrain from carrying out military actions, which the powers participating in the war ignored. Although neither the commitment nor the capacity to force compliance with this agreement existed, its importance resides in that it was the first time that the Pan-American movement adopted a unanimous

position in relation to an important international development.

- In 1940, the Second Consultative Meeting of the Pan-American Union met in Havana, influenced by the prospect of a possible German victory in Europe, the firm resistance offered by Britain, and the growing US backing for London. Latin America preferred to remain cautious given this uncertain scenario. With this in mind, the meeting only called for transferring colonial territories located in the Americas to other European powers, and voted to authorize member states to act in urgent cases, without having to submit to the consultation process. This represented a license granted to the US government so that, if it were to become involved in the war, such a decision would not commit the rest of the Western Hemisphere republics.
- In 1942, in the third Consultative Meeting held in Río de Janeiro, the US government was able to overcome the existing hesitations in this regard and impose an Emergency Advisory Committee for Political Defense and the Inter-American Defense Board. However, as a result of the refusal of the Argentine and Chilean governments to accept more far-reaching agreements with regard to World War II, the meeting limited itself to recommending the breaking of relations with Germany, Italy, and Japan. Chile delayed one year and Argentina two years in complying with this agreement. Argentina only broke relations with Germany due to increased pressures from the United States, which included a diplomatic quarantine and a naval blockade of the port of Buenos Aires.
- In 1945, at the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace held in Mexico, the Latin American countries — with the exception of Argentina, which was not invited — supported the United States in its efforts to build the postwar world order. In this meeting, steps were taken toward the institutionalization of the inter-American system, such as expanding the powers of the governing board of the Pan-American Union and

> establishing a schedule of holding International Conferences of American States every four years, with a yearly frequency for Consultative Meetings of the Foreign Ministers.

Almost 60 years after the first International American Conference in Washington, US imperialism was able to overcome the resistance to the institutionalization of the schema of continental domination known as the inter-American system. In accordance with the Chapultepec Agreements, in 1947 the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security was held in Río de Janeiro, approving the Río Treaty, and in 1948 the ninth International Conference of American States took place in Bogotá, creating the OAS. These agreements and institutions were born as instruments of the Cold War, with the objective of completing US political and military domination of Latin America.

In 1954, the Eisenhower administration took advantage of its own aggression against Guatemala to replace the principle of nonintervention with the right to intervene in the protocols of the inter-American system. In the 10th International Conference of American States, held in Caracas in that year, the OAS declared that communist activity constitutes an intervention in the internal affairs of the Americas and affirmed that the installation of a communist regime in any state in the Western Hemisphere would imply a threat to the system, which would require an advisory meeting to adopt measures. Halperin explained that at the time when this occurred:

> The possibility of socialist experiences in the Western Hemisphere still seemed remote. The organization of an anticommunist apparatus was generally judged to be the fruit of the persecution mania that afflicted the hegemonic power at the time or — according to more malicious observers — the deliberate use of this mania to construct an instrument of

> political hegemony that could possibly lend itself to more immediate gains than those of an anticommunist barrier. On the contrary, the main political alternatives at the time seemed to continue to be between political democracy and dictatorship. The latter's advances after 1948 were for many the key to the US's real Latin American policies (which intensified with the return of the Republican Party to office in 1952) that the anticommunist crusade had an increasingly hard time of hiding.[1]

Claude Heller, meanwhile, pointed out that:

> Since 1945, the concept of hemispheric security was oriented toward a possible Soviet aggression in the region… Washington's hemispheric security doctrine was accompanied from the political point of view by a favorable attitude toward the military regimes in Latin America. Thus, after World War II, the Truman and Eisenhower administrations called for a policy of stability in the continent in which coups d'état and dictatorships were the norm. The two US administrations recognized and gave their support to de facto governments without any consideration of a moral or juridical nature. The only conditions that were demanded, and imposed by the Cold War, were a militant anticommunism and opposition to any transformation of the status quo.[2]

The first of these two quotes describes the role of the Cold War as a legitimizing mechanism for a higher degree of domination by US imperialism in Latin America in the 1950s; the second reveals the role of dictatorship in the affirmation of this domination at a time when economic decline once again aggravated the political and social crisis in the region.

Developmentalism and its Consequences

World War I and the consolidation of US control over the Caribbean Basin were the developments that had the most impact on the Latin American economies and societies during the first decades of the 20th century. The construction and opening of the Panama Canal stimulated the export of primary resources that has characterized Latin America's relationship with the imperialist metropolises since the mid-19th century. World War I, meanwhile, had a dual effect, favoring Latin American exports of primary resources, but interrupting imports of industrial products and European capital that represented the second basic element of the neocolonial system of the time.

World War I was the catalyst for the metamorphosis of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism, a process that was consolidated during the postwar reconstruction of Europe and the Great Depression. The depression not only secured the position of state monopoly capitalism, but also interrupted movement of capital from the metropolises to the colonies, semicolonies, and neocolonies. This change can be attributed to the crisis having opened new space for the growth of capital within the imperialist nations, and in a general sense, this relegated the rest of the world to an even more peripheral role. This dashed the hopes harbored by the Creole elites after the wars of independence that at some

point the "definitive" stabilization of capitalism would bring Latin America's economic development in line with that of Europe.

The interruption of the movement of capital affected, above all, the relationship between Britain and Latin America, because it was London that granted most of the credits and carried out most of the investments in the region. The 1929–33 crisis, therefore, wreaked havoc on the British neocolonial empire in Latin America, at a time when US imperialism was still unable to extend its economic domination beyond the Caribbean Basin. Nevertheless, this development was of great importance, because the non-hemispheric force that put obstacles in the way of the expansion of US political and military domination ceased to be present. Even so, until the end of World War II, Anglophile currents that resisted the penetration of the emerging power persisted in the Southern Cone, especially in Argentina.

The most important consequences of the Great Depression in Latin America included the weakening of the terms of trade, caused by the massive reduction of primary sector prices and of production in the secondary sector; the decline in primary production aimed at counteracting the fall in prices; the collapse of the world financial system, credits which the countries of the region were used to accessing; and the decrease in import capacity due to the decline in exports and the lack of profitability of single crop harvests earmarked for export. In response to the interruption in the trade of Latin American primary resources for European industrial products and capital, the Latin American countries that were able to do so — among them, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile — concentrated their efforts on developing their respective domestic markets, a road already undertaken in previous periods in which the relationship with Europe had weakened. Indeed, certain progress had been registered in this regard since World War I. Meanwhile, the weakest countries, in particular those of Central America and the Caribbean, were defenseless in the face of

the onslaught of the crisis. Venezuela weathered the storm thanks to its oil exports.

The schema of accumulation embraced by the strongest Latin American nations in the face of the breakup of the neocolonial system after the 1870s is known as *developmentalism*, based on industrialization through import substitution. Developmentalism is a modality of state capitalism, dedicated to mobilizing the economic and natural resources of the nation — both state and private — to create a national industry and a domestic market.[1] The developmentalist state assumes the main role in determining the direction and control of the economy, including the use of fiscal policy as a protectionist and regulatory element and to obtain revenue, and the establishment of a new monetary and foreign exchange policy in order to subsidize the primary sector. Import substitution began with light industry, but was crippled by the technological obsolescence and unevenness with which the new factories were constructed, the inadequate railway infrastructure, the lack of heavy industry, and the limited solvent capacity of the domestic market, in which the rural population did not participate, a factor that conspired against an accumulation of surpluses that could contribute sufficient capital.

During the war and the first years of the postwar period, demand and prices for the primary resources that Latin America began to export again in large quantities remained high, but this was not the case with the industrial products that the region needed to import. This resulted in a mushrooming of Latin American accounts held in US banks. With this money, the developmentalist bourgeoisie purchased US industrial plant, which had become obsolete due to the need to intensify production to satisfy, first, the requirements imposed by the war and, later, the necessities generated by European reconstruction and the arms race against the Soviet Union. The lack of a market from which to import, as well as technological renewal, provided a second boost

to industrialization via import substitution, but also deepened its negative consequences, such as technological dependence and the proliferation of marginal populations on the outskirts of the main cities that industry could not absorb. Furthermore, the export boom ended considerably earlier than anticipated, which caused a political, economic, and social crisis.

Crippled by dependence on the international economic system and unable to assimilate the homogenization of world levels of political and economic development, developmentalist accumulation had run its course by the early 1950s, as soon as the decline in international demand for primary resources once again put Latin America's trade balance and balance of payments in the red, with the added difficulty that the region's imports now included machinery, spare parts, fuel, and other inputs that substitute industrialization had made indispensable.

The doctrine of developmentalist accumulation was formulated in its terminal phase and was offered — albeit belatedly — by the UN sponsored Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Unaware of the growing signs of the disappearance of the conditions that led to and facilitated the emergence of developmentalism, the ECLAC initiated a retrospective analysis of the transformations that had taken place in the Latin American economies during the 1930s and 1940s. Based on this analysis, it placed the problem of regional development in a global perspective (center-periphery relations) and raised a series of proposals to promote the balanced and complementary development of the industrial and agricultural sectors. However, the ECLAC not only ignored the relations of domination and subordination existing between the centers of imperialist power and Latin America — including the effect of the law of uneven economic and political development — but did so at the precise moment when their consequences were becoming more drastic. In this period, bourgeois theories of "modernization" — which

emphasized cultural elements and argued that the evolution that took place during the 19th century in Europe and the United States would be repeated in Latin America — became popular and there was a rebirth in Marxist analyses on the transition between feudalism and capitalism in Latin America.

The crisis of developmentalism can be attributed to the evolution, at the time just beginning, of the capitalist system toward the transnational concentration of wealth, property, and production, based on the expropriation of the weakest capital on a global scale, including the capital of the Latin American bourgeoisies and national states. This crisis was the result of objective causes — derived from the transformation of the capitalist system of production — and not from a simple "failure" or "exhaustion" of a "development policy." It is important to clarify the cause-effect relation existing between the impact of the metamorphosis of the capitalist system in Latin America and the exhaustion of developmentalism as a model of capital accumulation, because it is this latter consideration that would be used to justify the process of neoliberal deregulation and economic opening.

If we accept Halperin's argument that what occurred in South America during the second half of the 1950s represented a premature attempt to introduce neoliberalism, today we could conclude that this effort demonstrated that neoliberalism could not only be an economic policy, but would have to be imposed as a totalitarian creed to guide the economy, politics, and society. A look at the past shows that US imperialism would first have to destroy the left-wing organizations capable of leading the resistance to the new monopoly penetration; dismantle the social alliances and policies established during the period of developmentalist accumulation; and transform the Latin American state — until then dedicated to the protection and development of the domestic market — into the main agent of transnationalization and denationalization.

Although it can be debated whether at the time there was such a level of conceptualization — independently of whether or not the term neoliberal was used — this was the role of the "national security" inspired military dictatorships that emerged in Latin America in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

Social struggles and political ideology in the developmentalist stage

During the first half of the 20th century, developmentalism modified the structure and hierarchical position of the social classes in Latin America. A developmentalist national bourgeoisie arose that appropriated political power through the merger of its growing economic power with the coercive power of the state. This was coupled with the formation of an urban middle class, composed of public sector employees, small and middle-level businessmen, professionals, and intellectuals, which developed considerable political and social activity. The base of this pyramid was the proletariat, which in countries such as Argentina, Chile, and Mexico reached a considerable size by regional standards. The main social and political alliances of the period were established between these three classes, of course, in a hierarchical order, with unequal quotas of power and benefits for each participant.

The rural sectors, landowners, and mine owners who had prospered in the stage of neocolonialism based on primary exports were displaced from their old political, economic, and social status. Those who were most marginalized in this model were the rural population, the great mass of poor peasant farmers and the landless agricultural workers, who depended on seasonal employment at low wages or who were almost totally excluded from the domestic market. These are the residents of the shanty towns that have sprouted up on the periphery of Latin American cities.

The overpopulation and super-exploitation of the cities' infrastructure affected all the urban sectors, including the bourgeoisie, but with greater intensity for the middle class and the working class, who experienced inadequate housing; poor public transportation, hospital services, electric power distribution, and drinking water; and other social ills. Overpopulation intensified the socioeconomic problems of the middle class and the proletariat, whose struggles in favor of the democratization of education, access to employment, salary increases, improvement in working conditions, greater political participation, and other demands, reached a high point during what is known as the decade of the frustrated revolutions (1929–39). This term refers to a series of events that included the uprising of the Salvadoran peasants, led by Farabundo Martí and the Salvadoran Communist Party (1932); the ephemeral "Socialist Republic" installed in Chile by Colonel Marmaduke Grove; the revolution of the students and sergeants which occurred in Cuba following the overthrow of President Gerardo Machado (1933); the movement of the Crazy Little Army in Nicaragua, which ended with the assassination of Augusto C. Sandino (1934); the independence struggle in Puerto Rico led by Pedro Albizu Campos; and the armed insurgency of the National Liberation Alliance of Brazil (1935), organized by Luiz Carlos Prestes and the Communist Party.[2]

"A combination of nationalism, anti-imperialism, and populism," Francisco Zapata argued, "will be the project that will animate Latin American politics in the 1930s."[3] The imperialist penetration and the social transformation that occurred in the final decades of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th century had repercussions in the evolution of nationalism, the emergence of anti-imperialism, the fusion of the two in revolutionary nationalism, and in the root of socialist and communists ideas born in Europe.

Nationalism dates from the period of formation of Spanish-

American and Portuguese-American national consciousness that began during the 18th century and was consolidated with the struggles that concluded in the third decade of the 19th century with the independence of Spain's colonies in the Americas and Brazil. The result was the creation of Latin American nations based on the social classes that benefited from independence. Nationalist ideology not only affirmed the unity of the nation on the basis of a cultural identity, but also through the formulation of objectives shared by the components of a heterogeneous social structure. This national project brought together and benefited diverse classes and social groups, without altering the hierarchical differences existing among them. For this reason, nationalist ideology embraces the concept of class conciliation and rejects the existence of any antagonistic relations between classes.[4]

With the birth of imperialism during the final decades of the 19th century, monopoly penetration joined the list of antagonistic contradictions — derived from the class character and the pre-capitalist stage of society — that frustrated the nationalist projects. Anti-imperialism then arose, fighting the penetration of foreign monopolies and the political domination of Britain and the United States as well as supporting the development of Latin American cultures on the basis of their pre-Hispanic heritage. Responding to increasing foreign domination, particularly in mining and agricultural areas linked to the metropolises, anti-imperialism brought together broad popular movements in defense of national sovereignty, independence, and economic assets.

One of the main precursors of anti-imperialist ideas was José Martí, who conceived the independence of Cuba not just in terms of freeing it from its status as a colony of Spain, but also of preventing US imperialism from taking possession of the country. This was a key element of the Cuban Revolutionary Party's program, founded by Martí to lead Cuba's second war of independence and to assist Puerto Rico's struggle. As an inseparable

part of the project of independence, sovereignty, and national self-determination, Martí defended the equality and the social, educational, and cultural development of all people.

A third current arose from the fusion of nationalism and anti-imperialism: revolutionary nationalism. Even though revolutionary nationalism subsequently bowed to the interests of US imperialism, during its first years of theoretical elaboration and political action, one of the most outstanding exponent of this current was Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre (Peru, 1895–1979). The recovery of the wealth of the nation's subsoil, universal education, and public investment were the pillars of this anti-imperialist and anti-oligarchical ideology that conceived the state as an axis of a national project of conciliating the demands of the large majorities — including those of the indigenous population — with the creation of conditions for the development of the national bourgeoisie. Although the Mexican revolution (1910–17) was not based during its first phases on a clear ideology, the process became the foremost example of revolutionary nationalism, characterized in Mexico by agrarianism, the subordination of the trade union movement to the state, and the development of a broad national educational project.

With the emergence of the Latin American working class and trade unions — the result of modernization in mining, advances in agro-industry, and the first attempts at light industry production earmarked for the domestic market — socialist thought began to take root and develop in the region. After World War I and the creation of the Soviet Union it split into two currents, social democracy and communism. Both currents of socialist thought were based on the concept of the class struggle — although social democracy would later discard it — a factor that represented a fundamental difference with nationalism, anti-imperialism, and revolutionary nationalism, whose main guiding principle was multi-class national unity.

Luis Emilio Recabarren (Chile, 1876–1924), Julio Antonio Mella (Cuba, 1903–29), and José Carlos Mariátegui (Peru, 1894–1930) were outstanding figures in Latin American socialist thought of this period. Nationalism, anti-imperialism, revolutionary nationalism, social democracy, and communism were the main ideological currents that coexisted on the left — in many cases, with nebulous boundaries within the social sectors in which they exercised their influence — as currents opposed to traditional liberalism and conservatism, at a time when the Great Depression was causing a political, economic, and social regression throughout Latin America.

As a result of the mixture of nationalism, anti-imperialism, and revolutionary nationalism, and due to the manipulation of such ideologies by the developmentalist bourgeoisies, the social and political alliances of the developmentalist period were based on populism. This means that the governmental policies and measures in relation to the redistribution of wealth directed toward the middle class, the working class, and other downtrodden sectors of the population, were not of a universal character — not benefiting all members of these classes and sectors — but were based on what is known as *clientelismo,* a pork-barrel type practice that consists of granting privileges and perks to pro-government labor unions and business, professional, and social organizations in exchange for their members' support for one or another bourgeois party.

What is the point of this historical overview that spans the timeframe from the Spanish invasion of the Americas to the developmentalist period?

Representatives of the crown, ecclesiastical authorities, agents of the metropolitan treasury, commercial establishments in charge of the trade monopoly, and *encomenderos* whose power the king sought to limit; colonial authorities, Spanish-born merchants, and large landowners allied with the clergy and Creole landowners; landowners who had become generals and generals transformed

into landowners by the wars of independence, who established their power over the armies of peons that they commanded; national-developmentalist bourgeoisies, urban middle classes and workers co-opted through *clientelista* practices — all these had something in common.

Whenever it was possible, the colonial powers — Spain and Portugal — as well as the neocolonial powers — Britain and the United States — and the ruling classes of Latin America — wherever they effectively exercised political power — made an effort to establish a system of social and political alliances within the colonies or republics (depending on the period in question) on which to base their domination and exploitation of the popular classes. This was not, of course, a homogeneous and lineal process. The periods of despotism and dictatorship were long, and in fact, were never superseded in the most backward countries of the subcontinent, such as the Central American nations. However, even despotism and dictatorship were based on social and political alliances, no matter how elitist they were, and how limited their support was. As will be seen in the following chapters, this situation changed with the transnational concentration of wealth and political power, imposed in the region by the 1970s. Through this process, imperialism not only destroyed in Latin America the policies and social alliances on which the previous domination was based, but also the underlying economic and social framework. This is one of the reasons why the political, economic, and social crisis exploded everywhere in Latin America in the transition from the 20th to 21st centuries. In fact, the national socioeconomic base on which capitalist domination was originally established began to be undermined in the 1960s with the installation of the military dictatorships created in the name of "national security."

Revolution and Counterrevolution in the 1960s

The victory of the Cuban revolution on January 1, 1959, marked the beginning of a new period in the contemporary history of Latin America. The 1960s were characterized by the offensive of US imperialism aimed at destroying the first socialist state in the hemisphere, and by the use of military dictatorships, in the name of national security, for the purpose of containing the popular struggle in the rest of the region and imposing a new system of continental domination. The imperialist aggression increased as the victory of the Cuban revolution inspired other guerrilla movements in Peru, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Venezuela, Guatemala, and Argentina — none of which, however, were able to survive.

During the early years, the US government's anti-Cuba policy included the Bay of Pigs invasion (1961),[1] the sanctions imposed by the OAS at its Punta del Este meeting (1962), bringing the world to the brink of nuclear war during the October missile crisis (1962), the terrorist attacks launched by air and sea from US territory and third countries, together with the organization, financing, and leadership of urban and rural counterrevolutionary movements. The failure of these efforts since the end of the 1960s has led to Washington maintaining elements of this policy over the long

term, specifically, the economic blockade, international isolation, and the threat of military aggression, periodically renewed and intensified.

Amid the rise in popular struggles in Latin America inspired by the victory of the Cuban revolution, US imperialism decided to get rid of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo's dictatorship in the Dominican Republic, whose anachronistic regime was not compatible with the "friendly" face that Washington sought to obscure its counterinsurgency policy during John F. Kennedy's presidency, nor the schema of a "new type" of military dictatorship that was covertly applied following Kennedy's assassination and the beginning of Lyndon B. Johnson's mandate.

The hostility against Cuba and the need to get rid of the tyrant Trujillo were used by US imperialism to secure the role of the inter-American system as a mechanism for interference and intervention, through the affirmation of collective support for representative democracy, the creation of a Consultative Committee on Security, and the facade facilitated by the OAS for transforming the unilateral invasion by the United States of the Dominican Republic (1965) into a military occupation and a "Pan-American" effort.

Cuba's break with the system of continental domination, which in April 1961 proved to be a break with the capitalist system, forced the US government to promote the reaffirmation of "collective" support for representative democracy in the Consultative Meetings of Foreign Ministers of the OAS, held in Santiago, Chile (1959), and San José, Costa Rica (1960). The new definition contradicted the principle of nonintervention even more sharply than the formulations used in 1954 against the Árbenz government. To impose its will, Washington opportunistically used the rejection of Trujillo's discredited dictatorship. However, not even Kennedy's administration adhered to the policy that the US government itself proclaimed, that is, of breaking diplomatic relations and

suspending economic and military assistance to governments established through coups d'état. Instead, Washington chose to make a casuistic analysis of the military moves that occurred after the victory of the Cuban revolution, applying a differentiated policy that led to sanctions against Peru (1962), Guatemala (1963), the Dominican Republic (1963), and Honduras (1963), but not against Argentina (1962) or Ecuador (1963), since in the latter two cases, coups d'état overthrew civilian governments that had abstained from voting on the measures against Cuba, approved by the OAS in the Punta del Este conclave (1962).

Despite the real — but still incipient and limited — advances in the use of the OAS as a mechanism of domination, the inter-American system did not play the main role in the "pacification" of Latin America. Several proposals were raised for the OAS to be the promoter of a Latin American development model adjusted to the general guidelines established by the ECLAC; but when President John F. Kennedy adopted these proposals as part of the Alliance for Progress, it was on the basis of Washington's own counterinsurgency plans. Although this program doubled US public credit to the region, it was unable to stimulate foreign investment or domestic savings.

The counterinsurgency strategy depended on the military dictatorships, supported through training, advice, and equipment provided by the armed forces of the United States, and implemented through the Military Assistance Program. This program included the donation of military equipment, the sale of arms at a low cost, the training of officials, and undercover leadership for the counterinsurgency operations developed by US military missions. Such measures were coupled with courses taught in the International Police Academy and the control of local security agencies by the CIA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), all of which were tied to the use of paramilitary groups.

Following John F. Kennedy's assassination, the US presidency

was assumed by Lyndon B. Johnson (1963–69). The "Johnson Doctrine" proclaimed the US government's right to intervene in the internal affairs of any Latin American country when it felt that its "national interests" were threatened. Among its main applications were the use of force in Panama in January 1964 to repress a demonstration calling for the establishment of national sovereignty in the Canal Zone; the interference in the Chilean elections of 1964 to promote the victory of Christian Democratic candidate Eduardo Frei Montalva against socialist candidate Salvador Allende; the April 1965 military intervention in the Dominican Republic; and the support for coups d'état that took place in Brazil against President Joao Goulart (1964), in Bolivia against President Víctor Paz Estenssoro (1964), and in Argentina against President Arturo Illia (1966). During this period, counterinsurgency governments operated in Venezuela headed by Raúl Leoni (1963–67); in Peru under Fernando Belaúnde Terry (1963–68); in Colombia with León Valencia (1962–66) and Carlos Lleras Restrepo (1966–70); in El Salvador led by Julio Rivera (1962–67) and Fidel Sánchez Hernández (1967–72); and in Uruguay headed by Alberto Heber Usher (1966–67) and Jorge Pacheco Areco (1968–71).

Of particular importance was the Brazilian military dictatorship imposed in 1964 after the coup d'état against President Joao Goulart, which became the prototype of "third generation" dictatorships that proliferated in Latin America during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. It involved a schema different from that of the strong-arm or *caudillista* dictatorships that arose from the weakness of the recently emerged Latin American republics following independence from Spain and Portugal; it was also dissimilar from the dictatorships created by US imperialism in Central America and the Caribbean in the first decades of the 20th century. The new type of military dictatorship that reigned in the region in the 1970s and 1980s had an institutional character and was conceived to exercise power based on military might

as the only way to impose the political, economic, and social restructuring that US imperialism needed to secure its system of continental domination.

The repression unleashed by these dictatorships was not limited to the annihilation of revolutionary organizations that developed armed struggle, but in fact extended to the destruction of left-wing political parties and social organizations, and in many cases, also center and right-wing formations. This is understandable because the aim was not only to banish the "threat of communism," but also to use such dictatorships to wipe out the remains of developmentalism and its political expression, populism. Of course, we are aware that not all the countries of Latin America were governed by military dictatorships in this period, but they undoubtedly established the basis for the neoliberal restructuring applied from the end of the 1970s.

In the second half of the 1960s, as a reaction against the military dictatorships and authoritarian civilian governments, the revolutionary armed struggle reemerged. This is the period during which, in Bolivia between April and October 1967, the National Liberation Army (ELN) headed by Ernesto Che Guevara operated, some of whose survivors attempted to repeat their experience between 1968 and 1970. This was also the period marked by the birth, resurgence, or growth of several revolutionary movements: in Nicaragua, the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN); in Argentina, the Montoneros, the Peronist Armed Forces, the Revolutionary Armed Forces, the Revolutionary Workers Party, and the People's Revolutionary Army; in Uruguay, the National Liberation Movement, known as the Tupamaros; in Brazil, the October 8 Revolutionary Movement, Popular Revolutionary Vanguard, and National Liberation Action, the latter headed by Carlos Marighella; in Colombia, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), and the Popular Liberation Army; in Mexico, the Revolutionary

Action Movement and the Zapatista Urban Front; and in Puerto Rico, the Armed Liberation Commandos and the Revolutionary Independence Movement. Nationalist and progressive coups also took place during these years, such as actions led by Juan Velasco Alvarado in Peru (October 3, 1968), and Omar Torrijos Herrera in Panama (October 11, 1968). Amid this generalized rise in popular struggles, the Tricontinental Conference was held in Cuba (1966), followed by the first Conference in Solidarity with the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America (1967).[2]

When he took office as president of the United States on January 20, 1969, Richard M. Nixon was convinced of the need to review the means and methods of imperialist domination in Latin America. He entrusted New York State Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller with the task of leading a tour of the region by a commission mandated to prepare information and draft proposals. On August 30, 1969, that commission issued a report entitled *The Quality of Life in the Americas*, also known as the Rockefeller Report.[3] The Rockefeller commission called for establishing a "relationship of authentic association," in which "the United States should determine its attitude toward internal political events in a more pragmatic fashion" and "transfer growing responsibility for the process of development to other American nations (through multilateral channels," which should "decide in what way their interests are affected by the insurgency and subversion from other parts of the hemisphere and the degree to which their programs can and should help satisfy the security requirements of their neighbors."[4] With regard to the OAS, the Rockefeller Report does not indicate that the intention was to restructure and revitalize that organization.

The Impact of the Nixon Government and the Vacillations of the Carter Administration

The anti-imperialist feeling that shook the world during the 1970s had a strong impact in Latin America. In some countries, this impact was reflected in progressive, nationalist, and even left-wing forces being elected to government, while elsewhere it was displayed through the increase in the revolutionary armed struggle.

Despite the efforts of the Nixon administration, on November 3, 1970, Dr. Salvador Allende took office as president of Chile, at the head of the Popular Unity government. Just a few weeks earlier, in October, General Juan José Torres had won office in Bolivia maintaining, until his overthrow in August 1971, a nationalist and progressive policy similar to that of Juan Velasco Alvarado in Peru and Omar Torrijos in Panama. The same road was taken in February 1972 in Ecuador by General Guillermo Rodríguez Lara, with an emphasis on the defense of the country's patrimony and national wealth. Meanwhile, in May 1973, the personal representative of Juan Domingo Perón, Héctor Cámpora, won the Argentine elections. He resigned soon afterwards to open the way for Perón's election, in September of the same year.

In this context, Latin American and international support grew for Panama's demand to place the Canal Zone under its national sovereignty. In addition, as a result of the correlation of forces favorable to the progressive and democratic currents in the region, a movement was initiated in support of reestablishing relations with Cuba, the reinstatement of Cuba to the OAS, and the reform of that organization. This movement was led in Latin America by Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Mexico, and in the Caribbean by Jamaica, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago. Meanwhile, revolutionary armed struggles intensified in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Peru, Argentina, and Uruguay.

In response to the rise in nationalist and revolutionary currents in Latin America, the policy of the Nixon administration was to destabilize and overthrow governments that it considered a threat to the "national interest" of the United States, and to install new dictatorships, such as the government resulting from the coup d'état that overthrew General Juan José Torres in Bolivia (August 1971); the in-house coup of Juan María Bordaberry in Uruguay (June 1973); and, in particular, the coup d'état in Chile on September 11, 1973, against Salvador Allende's constitutional government. After Richard Nixon's replacement by Gerald Ford as a result of the Watergate scandal, this policy remained in effect, as was seen in the coup d'état in Argentina in March 1976, after which the military governments in Buenos Aires dedicated efforts to exporting the model of dictatorships based on "national security" considerations. Peruvian General Juan Velasco Alvarado's illness was used to replace him in August 1975 with General Francisco Morales Bermúdez, who took the government toward the right. Repression, now at an unprecedented scope and brutality, succeeded in beheading and disrupting the left and popular movements in every country in which it was applied. It also contributed to intensifying the moral crisis and international rejection of US policy.

The 1970s came to an end during Jimmy Carter's presidential mandate (1977–80). Influenced by the brief wave of morality sparked by the publication of *The Pentagon Papers*, the Watergate scandal, and the revelation of the role of the Nixon administration in the September 1973 coup d'état in Chile, Carter's Latin America policy was based on the reports of the Linowitz Commission, issued in 1974 and 1976. The most important recommendations contained in the report *The Americas in a Changing World,* also known as the Linowitz Report,[1] were to recognize the erosion of the world power of the United States; to abandon the "special" relationship with Latin America; to adhere to the doctrine of nonintervention; and to adopt a "global" focus in relations with the countries of the region. The Linowitz Report suggested that Washington take advantage of the institutional framework of the OAS to promote respect for human rights and to prevent interregional conflicts or to mediate them when they arose. This report even said that "in relation to the future of the OAS — including its structure, leadership, and location — the United States should mainly be guided by Latin American initiatives and desires."[2]

Drafted at the explicit request of President-elect Jimmy Carter, the second report entitled *The United States and Latin America: Next Steps*, better known as the Linowitz II Report,[3] called for the urgent conclusion of negotiations over the Panama Canal treaties, issued several recommendations in relation to human rights, invited the Carter administration "to reopen a process of normalization of relations with Cuba,"[4] urged a reduction in arms transfers and called for avoiding nuclear proliferation in the region; advocated an "understanding of the Latin American situation and demands," and proposed closer cultural exchanges between the United States and Latin America. Of this entire agenda, Carter only achieved the signing of the Panama Canal treaties, and even that with great difficulty.

As a result of the offensive waged by the New Right against the Carter administration, the Panama Canal treaties were signed on September 7, 1977, after a long delay and with onerous impositions placed on the Panamanian side. At the same time, the process of normalization of relations with Cuba was completely reversed in 1979. Contrary to the steps taken during the first two years of his administration, including the signing of a fishing accord and the mutual identification of commercial possibilities, Presidential Directive No. 52, issued by Carter, ordered all US government agencies to conduct an exhaustive analysis of relations with Havana in order to close any loopholes in the blockade that the Cuban government could use for its own economic benefit. This directive should be considered an antecedent of the Torricelli and Helms-Burton acts.

From 1979, nonintervention became the main target of Republican presidential hopeful Ronald Reagan's attacks on Carter, especially following the seizure of power by the revolutionary forces in Grenada (March 13) and Nicaragua (July 19), together with the intensification of the popular struggle in El Salvador, which took place after the oligarchy and the army were able to neutralize the progressive coup d'état of October 15 that attempted to interrupt the continuity of dictatorial rule imposed in 1931.

Even before abandoning the Latin American policy recommended by the Linowitz Commission, the Carter administration lacked the commitment to promote the defense of "human rights" and "democratization" in Central America, where the repression practiced by military dictatorships in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras aggravated the political, economic, and social crisis. Carter's paralysis in this regard meant he never withdrew support from the Somoza tyranny even when its terminal crisis was already clear.[5] In this context, another milestone occurred in the history of inter-American relations with the defeat

of the proposal at the 17th Consultative Meeting of the OAS, held in June 1978, to create an inter-American peace force to intervene in Nicaragua. Thus developed "the Central American conflict," a term used by US imperialism to describe the explosion of the social revolution in one of the most backward, poorest, and polarized sub-regions of Latin America. This explosion occurred when the ebb in the revolutionary armed struggle in South America was already irreversible, except in Colombia, where it continues to this day.

With the support of Carter's predecessors Johnson and Nixon, and the continued backing they obtained from the New Right, the private banking sector, and even from Washington itself, the Latin American dictatorships remained unassailable. At the beginning of Carter's presidency, in January 1977, Latin America (including Haiti) had 11 military dictatorships and two dictatorships headed by civilians. Military dictatorships were in power in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, El Salvador and Peru (where the progressive government of General Juan Velasco Alvarado had given way to a regime headed by right-wing general Francisco Morales Bermúdez). At the same time, civilian presidents led dictatorial governments in the Dominican Republic and Haiti.[6] In these 13 countries, the Carter administration applied pressure to prevent the electoral victories of Antonio Guzmán (Dominican Republic, 1978), Jaime Roldós (Ecuador, 1979), and Hernán Siles Zuazo (Bolivia, 1978, 1979, and 1980). In this last case, after two consecutive victories at the polls by Siles, frustrated by the military in 1978 and 1979, the coup d'état led by General Luis García Meza against provisional president Lidia Gueiler for the third time prevented the long-standing *caudillo* of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) from taking office. This was the "straw that broke the camel's back" and which led to the terminal crisis of the doctrine of "viable democracy" promoted by Carter,

which consisted of replacing military dictatorships with civilian governments responsive to the interests of US imperialism. This doctrine was only applied in nations where the electoral results, were favorable to "reliable" political forces.

After the failed attempt to apply a neoliberal economic policy in several South American countries in the 1950s, this doctrine reappeared in Latin America via the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in Chile (1973–90), which in 1976 initiated a program of economic restructuring and state reform prescribed by the "Chicago School." This experiment in the application of neoliberal doctrine under the "privileged" conditions of repression prevailing in Chile, took place at a time when US imperialism — in transition from the presidential administration of Gerald Ford to that of Jimmy Carter — still seemed to acknowledge the limits of its global power. The Chilean experience was a kind of trial run for the doctrine that, a few years later, would be imposed as a universal panacea.

Viewed retrospectively, the four years of Carter's presidential mandate represented a period used by US ruling circles to "exorcize" the demon of Richard Nixon, after which they facilitated the arrival of an even greater demon, Ronald Reagan. In fact, the Carter administration's first two years in office proved to be sufficient to complete the exorcism that, in any event, was far from complete.

Ronald Reagan's Strategy of Force

In November 1980, Ronald Reagan, candidate of the New Right, was elected president of the United States. The Santa Fe Committee's document[1] served as the basis of Reagan's Latin American policy and was the ultra-right counterpart to the Linowitz I and Linowitz II reports, which had established the unfulfilled basis for the Carter administration's policy toward Latin America. The committee called for destroying the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Grenadian revolutions; intensifying the counterinsurgency wars in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia; using the fight against drug trafficking as the pretext to increase the US military presence in Latin America; criminalizing the left; and employing all types of pressures to impose neoliberal restructuring.

The 1980s saw the intensification of the contradictions between US imperialism and the Latin American governments. This regression in inter-American relations was due to a combination of factors, including renewed US support to Latin American military dictatorships, Washington's alignment with Britain in the Malvinas (Falklands) War (which began with the military occupation of these British colonial possessions by the Argentine armed forces on April 2, 1982), the military invasion of Grenada (1984), the threat of direct intervention in the Central American conflict, and the explosion of the foreign debt crisis (1982).

Once the military dictatorships extinguished the revolutionary wave of the 1960s and 1970s, the continuation of military governments generated contradictions. Even the bourgeois and middle class sectors that originally had supported them were not able to escape the effects of the political, economic, and social restructuring imposed by these dictatorships, and they too clamored for a gradual, controlled, and restricted "democratization." Meanwhile, in the nations ruled by civilian governments, these sectors expressed solidarity with their counterparts under the dictatorships as well as their concern about a possible increase in popular resistance. An expression of these concerns was the founding, in 1979, of the Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPPAL) and the Latin American Human Rights Association (ALDHU). The first of these organizations had a political character, and its purpose at the time was to promote the reestablishment of bourgeois democratic institutions in the countries governed by dictatorships; while the ALDHU was a "non-political" organization that carried out efforts on behalf of political figures imprisoned or threatened with repression.

The alignment of US imperialism with the British government in the Malvinas War, while all of Latin America supported Argentina,[2] revealed that the Río Treaty only functioned in support of imperialist interests and within the logic of the Cold War.[3] As a result of this situation, there were increasing calls by Latin American and Caribbean political and government leaders for the creation of an organization that would be exclusively composed of the nations of the region. They also called for a reform of the inter-American system in order to break Washington's hegemony.

The invasion of Grenada demonstrated US imperialism's willingness to reinstate military intervention in its inventory of international policy options, which it had abandoned slightly less than a decade earlier because of the "Vietnam syndrome." The errors committed by the leadership of the New Jewel Movement,

which extended to the assassination of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, provided the Reagan administration with the justification to invade that island nation. In addition to reestablishing imperialist domination, the intervention in Grenada was used as the model for controlling and manipulating the mass media, which would later be used in all imperialist military actions. However, of even greater concern was the use of the military victory against that tiny country to exacerbate the chauvinism of the conservative sectors of the US population.

With the intervention in Grenada concluded, Reagan focused his attention on destroying the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, and preventing the victory of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) in El Salvador and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG). The Central American conflict represented the main focus of attention in the continent during the 1980s. In the first years of his presidency, Reagan imposed the "bipartisan consensus" concerning the revitalization of the country's foreign policy, based on the threat and use of force. In doing so, he developed the two-track approach with regard to Nicaragua, which combined the war he had recommended with the dialogue called for by sectors opposed to a military intervention.

Placing the elements of war and dialogue on an equal footing in the two-track policy was a mere formality. They were the components of Low Intensity Warfare, a strategy conceived to systematically wear down the country under attack, forcing it to consent to a negotiated "political solution," which, in reality, meant accepting the terms imposed by the aggressor. As part of this strategy, Reagan utilized the credible threat of a direct military intervention in Central America, in contrast to which the low intensity warfare option appeared as a "tolerable" alternative for US and international public opinion, and even for the victims of such a policy, who would try to avoid at all cost an escalation

of military aggression, while the "low intensity" destruction was consummated.

The defeat inflicted by the pro-war neoconservative sectors on the liberals who called for nonintervention in Central America had strategic implications. Much more than legitimizing the use of force in a local conflict, as important as that was, Reagan used this debate in the United States to impose, in a general sense and for an indefinite period of time, neoconservative hegemony over the foreign policy of US imperialism, which has remained to this day. It is this hegemony that is frequently referred to as the "bipartisan consensus." A fundamental role was played in this process by the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, also known as the Kissinger Commission, whose report was published in January 1984.[4] This commission incorporated sectors of both the Democratic and Republican parties opposed to the aggressive policy into the "bipartisan consensus," including them in drafting the policies while tying them to a policy basis established by the Reagan administration.

In its policy on Central America, the Reagan administration constructed and reconstructed "negotiating symmetries" at whim; for example, forcing international public opinion and the Sandinista government itself to recognize the "right" of US imperialism to attack a sovereign state, Nicaragua, to compel it to modify its political system. Another whimsical parallelism was the comparison of the irregular war in Nicaragua to the conflict in El Salvador and Guatemala, so that the terms of the negotiations imposed on the FSLN in favor of the Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries did not benefit the FMLN or the URNG. At the same time, conditions established to support the right-wing governments of El Salvador and Guatemala were not applied to the Nicaraguan [Sandinista] government.

As part of this regional security policy, Reagan proposed the Caribbean Basin Initiative, whose $355 million allocation was as

follows: $100 million was provided to El Salvador, $70 million to Costa Rica, $50 million to Jamaica, $40 million to the Dominican Republic, $40 million to Honduras, $11 million to Guatemala, $10 million to Haiti, $10 million to Belize, and $20 million to the eastern Caribbean. This meant $221 million was earmarked to create a counterinsurgency noose in Central America around Nicaragua.[5]

The threat of military intervention by US imperialism in Central America sparked fear among the Latin American bourgeoisies, in particular, in those nations in transition from dictatorship to bourgeois democracy, that such a move could unleash a wave of protests with destabilizing effects on the entire continent. This concern intensified in 1982 when imperialism responded to the foreign debt crisis by suspending credits and increasing interest rates, which resulted in a worsening of the socioeconomic situation and frustrated the illusions generated by the democratization process.

The Malvinas War, the invasion of Grenada, strong-arm policy in Central America, and the foreign debt crisis negated the effectiveness of the inter-American system during the 1980s and led to the creation of the Contadora Group and the Contadora Support Group, which later merged into the Group of Eight, the embryo of the current Río Group. This step represented the creation of a mechanism for reaching consensus agreements on Latin American political issues independently of the OAS. The crisis of the inter-American system placed reforming the OAS charter on the agenda, conceived initially as a democratizing process. The call by many Latin American and Caribbean political leaders supporting Cuba's return to the OAS went in the same direction. The intention was to increase the weight of the Latin American bloc within the OAS. However, this situation changed at the end of the decade.

After assuming the post of general secretary of the CPSU, Mikhail Gorbachev began to dismantle the "bipolar world." In Central America, this dismantling was reflected in the weakening

of (and conditions being placed on) Soviet economic and military support to the Sandinista revolution. After eight years of systematic weakening inflicted by US imperialism through low intensify warfare, exacerbated by errors inherent in the revolutionary process and the threat of an interruption in the foreign material support necessary to face the aggression, in 1987 the Sandinista government signed the Esquipulas Accords.

The Esquipulas Accords committed the FSLN to hold general elections under conditions imposed by the US government, in exchange for an end to the aggression. The "democratization" demand put forward by imperialism to justify the aggression against Nicaragua had its own history. The US government had applied all types of pressures to prevent an opposition candidate from running in the elections called by the revolutionary government of Nicaragua in November 1984. It was clear that the result of these elections — with which the FSLN expected to fulfill the conditions that would leave the Reagan administration without a justification to continue the covert war — would be the reelection of President Daniel Ortega. The opposition candidate Arturo Cruz resisted the pressure of the US government to abandon his campaign, but he finally succumbed one week out from the election.

It took imperialism five years to create a new international, regional, and internal situation in Nicaragua. As a result of exhaustion caused by the low intensity war, Washington managed to compel the FSLN to participate in an election under conditions in which it faced a certain defeat, although this was not foreseen by the Sandinista leadership.

Following the Esquipulas Accords, US imperialism stepped up its demands for unilateral concessions from the Sandinistas, without interrupting the low intensity war. To justify this approach, Reagan argued that Washington was not a signatory to the agreements. Indeed, at every step, the US government rejected

being a formal part of the Central American peace talks. These negotiations were held on parallel levels, between the Nicaraguan government and the counterrevolutionary bands, and between the Nicaraguan government and the other Central American governments. This meant that the Sandinistas were committed to the terms of the Esquipulas Accords, but the United States was not. Thus, the military aggression continued, while the FSLN was under the obligation to continue taking steps that weakened the foundations of revolutionary power. This situation was aggravated with the second round of negotiations, known as Esquipulas II.

The Central American conflict neutralized the Latin American bourgeoisies' differences with imperialist policy. By being forced to recognize the effectiveness of the two-track policy, the Group of Eight also acknowledged the limits to which the governments of the region were willing to take their disagreements with the United States. This mechanism for consensus agreements adopted the name Río Group, to provide space for new members, and it was suggested that the group should take advantage of the experience in the Central American negotiations to use it to defend the interests of the Latin American bourgeoisies, besieged by monopoly penetration. However, the Río Group was born on the eve of global unipolarity. Although it was created to defend common positions on questions such as the foreign debt and the negotiation of trade agreements, in fact its members functioned separately and each government acted in competition with the rest.

Latin America in the New World Order

This period (1989–2005) saw the transition from postwar bipolarity to the New World Order. Although this transition began in 1985 — from Mikhail Gorbachev's election as general secretary of the CPSU and the launching of perestroika and glasnost — its conclusion, the collapse of the Eastern European socialist states, which spanned the period from the fall of the Berlin Wall (December 1989) to the implosion of the Soviet Union (December 1991), occurred during George H. Bush's presidency. Bush took advantage of the change in the international situation to launch the invasion of Panama (1989) and the Gulf War (1991). In 1991, US imperialism also began the restructuring of the continental system of domination created at the end of World War II.[1]

The reform of the inter-American system was preceded by three decades during which, through dictatorships or authoritarian civilian governments, a large part of the Latin American left and the popular movements were destroyed, the system of social alliances and policies established during the national developmentalist period were disrupted, and the Latin American state — until then dedicated to the protection and development of the domestic market — was transformed into the main agent of denationalization. To achieve this, in 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson abandoned the traditional North American platitudes

about "representative democracy" and proclaimed that he preferred to have "sure allies" in Latin America. Twenty-five years later, at a human cost of more than 100,000 people dead, tortured, imprisoned, or exiled, it was George H. Bush's turn to once again proclaim the cult of "democracy" and "human rights," with a view to institutionalizing them as a political and ideological pillar of a qualitatively higher degree of Latin American subordination to imperialism's dictates. Since the common thread of this analysis is the policy of the past three US presidents, this book is organized in four periods that correspond to the George H. Bush presidency (1989–93), Bill Clinton's first term in office (1993–97), Clinton's second mandate (1997–2001), and the first five years of George W. Bush's presidency (2001–05).

The beginning of the restructuring of the inter-American system during George H. Bush's presidency (1989–93)

After being Ronald Reagan's vice-president during two terms in office (1981–89), when he was sworn in as head of state on January 10, 1989, George Herbert Bush was in a position to harvest the fruits of the strong-arm policy of his predecessor. Reagan completed the "pacification" of Latin America begun by Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964, but he did so at the price of an unprecedented increase in conflicts with the region's elites. So serious was the weakening of the relations with the Latin American governments that it prevented Reagan from moving on to the phase of negotiation (or imposition) of an institutional cover to legitimize the changes forcibly imposed through the system of domination. That mission fell to Bush.

During the first years in which George H. Bush occupied the White House, his administration eliminated the last obstacles

preventing the standardization of neoliberal democracy as a political pillar of the system of continental domination by US imperialism. Those obstacles were, on the one hand, the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua and the remnants of the nationalist and popular process launched in 1968 by Omar Torrijos in Panama, and on the other, the military dictatorships that remained in Paraguay and Chile. There was a direct interrelation in imperialist policy toward these four countries: the invasion of Panama and the electoral defeat of the FSLN in Nicaragua allowed Washington to consider the "pacification" initiated in 1964, whose axis had been the military dictatorships, to have been completed. In contrast, the imposition of neoliberal democracy in Paraguay and Chile allowed the White House to tighten the noose on the two "nondemocratic" governments in continental America, Panama and Nicaragua. Once Panama, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Chile were "democratized," US imperialism could begin the construction of a system of continental domination, among whose functions would be the isolation of the Cuban revolution.

Days after Bush took office in February 1989, Paraguayan General Andrés Rodríguez overthrew his father-in-law Alfredo Stroessner in a coup d'état. Months later, Rodríguez "legitimized" his presidency through an electoral process in which he ran as a candidate of the pro-government Colorado Party. Meanwhile, in Chile, following the referendum called in 1988 in which the "alternatives" were to prolong the dictatorship or to replace it with a restricted democracy[2] designed by Pinochet himself, in October 1989 the Coalition of Parties for Democracy headed by Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin won the elections, with its leader taking office in March 1990.

The so-called transition to democracy in Chile played an important role in restructuring the system of continental domination. Since its inception in 1976, Chilean neoliberalism had been presented as the prototype of the "economic miracle" to be

emulated by the rest of the countries in the region. However, the restructuring in Chile was preceded, accompanied, and followed by such a high level of violence that copying the "economic experience" was not particularly attractive. To persuade the rest of Latin America that it should accept the Chilean model, it was necessary to bestow it with a "democratic face," to justify its social costs and to hide the pillaging of the country's economy, natural wealth, and environment.[3]

The conditions imposed by Pinochet in exchange for his acceptance of "democratization" in Chile included his remaining as head of the armed forces, an amnesty for those charged with human rights violations committed under the dictatorship, and the approval of a constitution drafted by his collaborators. Among other elements, this constitution granted privileges and veto powers to military institutions, assigned the position of senators-for-life to the main retired military officials, and imposed an electoral system conceived to discriminate against the left-wing parties. The amnesty for the Chilean coup plotters was a variant of the amnesty laws approved in 1986 by the governments of Julio María Sanguinetti in Uruguay (Ley de Caducidad), and Raúl Alfonsín in Argentina (Ley de Punto Final).

The "return to the barracks" of the armed forces was thus perceived as a maneuver to improve the image of the countries governed by dictatorships, in which the military would function as the "power behind the throne." The conditions of the "democratic transition" in Chile seemed to corroborate this perception. Pinochet used the threat of an eventual return to the dictatorship — an option that, in fact, was no longer consistent with US policy — to pressure the population to accept neoliberal democracy as a lesser evil. This popular fear of a return to dictatorship can explain the defeat in Uruguay in 1989 of the referendum called by the Broad Front (FA) and other progressive forces with the aim of revoking the amnesty law. At the same time, imperialism created

the transnational mechanisms that, from this point on, would take charge of the repressive functions previously exercised through coup d'états. Following the imposition of neoliberal democracy in Paraguay and Chile, imperialism concentrated its attacks against the "nondemocratic" governments of Panama and Nicaragua.

On December 20, 1989, US imperialism invaded Panama from its military bases located in the Canal Zone. The invasion took place amid the international climate created by the fall of the Berlin Wall, which occurred on December 9. This military action was preceded by a campaign to destabilize and undermine the legitimacy of the local government, based on the accusation that Panama's "strongman," General Manuel Antonio Noriega, maintained ties with drug trafficking. The pretext for the invasion was facilitated by the Panamanian authorities themselves. Based on the illusion that it could free itself from the destabilization campaign directed against it, the Panamanian government — in which Noriega exercised the real power — called elections in 1989 subject to "international verification." In these elections, the right-wing political forces triumphed, unified around the candidacy of Guillermo Endara. However, accusing Endara of fraud, Noriega ignored the electoral results — a move that placed him at odds with the "democratic climate" imposed on the continent.

It is worthwhile pointing out a detail concerning the 1989 Panamanian elections: confident that it could take advantage of this mechanism to validate its victory and thus ward off the US destabilization campaign, the Panamanian government promoted the presence of international observer missions, a new modality to "combat electoral fraud" that was promoted at the time by the US government through the OAS. This was the first opportunity in which this modality of "electoral observers" was practiced. We can therefore conclude that this election established the precedent of this form of imperialist interference in the internal affairs of Latin American nations. At present, it is the OAS and the Carter

Center, more than the electoral authorities of any nation, or other international observers, that issue judgments or rulings on all elections held in Latin America.

In accordance with the pattern of subordination to imperialism imposed in these years, the Latin American governments — with the exception of Cuba — became accomplices in the aggression against Panama. In particular, the Río Group helped to create the conditions for the military intervention by suspending the Panamanian government's membership of that group. After the invasion, the Río Group limited itself to calling for a "rapid reestablishment of institutionality," and lifted the sanctions on Panama as soon as Endara assumed the presidency in a US military base in the Canal Zone. This attitude represented an abandonment of the concept of Latin American solidarity in the face of external aggression, which had reached its ultimate expression during the Malvinas War.

Less than two months after the intervention in Panama, the electoral defeat of the Sandinista revolution occurred in Nicaragua. In this case as well, a government under imperialist siege thought that it could benefit from the presence of international observers, and again the result strengthened this modality of imperialist interference. The FSLN's setback in the February 1990 elections was the result of the two-track policy implemented by the Reagan administration, the pressure applied since 1985 by the Gorbachev government to accept a "negotiated solution" at any price, and the errors of the FSLN itself, in particular the adoption of the Patriotic Military Service Law, which made military service obligatory, sparking opposition in broad sectors of the population.

The Sandinistas' electoral setback led to a change in the correlation of forces in Central America. The negotiations between the FMLN and the Salvadoran government, conceived until then as a tactical move to support the armed struggle, became the only option for that left-wing coalition. The new situation forced the

URNG in Guatemala to travel a similar road. Thus the last embers in Central America of the revolutionary fire that swept through Latin America following the victory of the Cuban revolution were extinguished. This also removed the final conflictive issues that clouded inter-American relationships during the Reagan presidency.

Venezuela was the first Latin American country to show signs of an institutional crisis. The *caracazo*, which took place in 1989, barely a few weeks after Carlos Andrés Pérez began his second presidential term, revealed the degeneration of the political system based on the "Fixed Point Pact." This was the name of the 1959 agreement under which the Democratic Action party (social democrats) and COPEI (Christian democrats) took turns in power as a supposed alternative to the Cuban revolution. Pérez's term in office concluded with his removal and house arrest under charges of corruption. This outcome was preceded by several attempts at coups d'état, including one in 1992 led by Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chávez, at the head of the Bolivarian Revolutionary Movement 200.

The appearance of a "neo-populist" strongman or caudillo was a common response to the frustration characteristic of the times. By criticizing politics and politicians, the caudillo could take advantage of popular desperation in order to recycle the model of domination. For example, in 1989, in Brazil and Argentina respectively, Fernando Collor de Mello and Carlos Saúl Menem encouraged and manipulated in their favor the popular vote, aiming to punish the political system of which they were a part. Although Alberto Fujimori had no previous political history, unlike Collor and Menem, a similar phenomenon occurred in the 1990 Peruvian election, when Fujimori buried the traditional political parties of both the right and the left with an avalanche of votes. Another way of alleviating the intensified structural crisis was through the formation of alliances between forces with very

diverse political histories and ideological identities — in some cases involving currents that had been historic opponents — aimed at counteracting the poor reputation of the political and electoral system. This practice began in 1989 with the Patriotic Accord in Bolivia, which facilitated the victory of presidential candidate and social democrat Jaime Paz on the ticket of the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR), with the support of former dictator Hugo Banzer.[4]

Once the "pacification" of Latin America was accomplished and the subordination of the bourgeoisies of the subcontinent reaffirmed, the phase of institutionalizing the new system of continental domination by US imperialism began. The three key pillars of this new model were the affirmation of representative democracy as the only legitimate form of government in the American continent (political pillar); the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas or FTAA (economic pillar); and the increase in the direct military presence of the United States in Latin America, and in its control over the region's armed forces (military pillar).

As soon as imperialism was able to overcome the crisis of the international financial system, Bush's administration institutionalized the use of the foreign debt as a mechanism of domination and penetration. Through the Brady Plan, Bush obscured this process with the appearance of a certain flexibility and moderation in regard to the policy imposed by Reagan of raising interest rates, restricting credits, and demanding payments. In this context, the launching in December 1989 of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative, also known as the Bush Initiative, which for the first time raised the idea of creating the FTAA, became the catalyst for a 180-degree turn in the attitude of the Latin American governments. The illusions generated by supposed free access to the US market not only led the bourgeoisies of the region to bury their differences with Washington, but also overcame their resistance to paying the costs of the neoliberal restructuring. These costs consisted of facing

the economic, political, and social crisis of the region, including the collapse of an important part of their own capital investments, the disruption of the political-electoral system, and the repression of the popular movements of protest and resistance.

Amid the expectations generated by the FTAA, slightly more than one year after the electoral defeat of the FSLN in Nicaragua and the establishment of neoliberal democracy in Chile, in June 1991, the US government managed to convince the General Assembly of the OAS, meeting in Santiago, Chile, to approve the "Santiago Commitment to Democracy and the Renewal of the Inter-American System." Based on the adoption of this resolution, reforms to the OAS charter originally conceived to promote the democratization of that organization turned into their opposite. The Santiago Commitment not only nullified the concept of pluralism in inter-American relations — the road to which had been opened in the 1970s — but also served as a basis for the institutionalization of transnational mechanisms of interference, control, and sanctions that increasingly diminished the sovereignty of the Latin American nations.

The legitimization of interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states was reflected in the 16th Special Session of the General Assembly of the OAS — held in Washington, DC, in December 1992 — in which the Washington Protocol was approved. This protocol stipulated that a member state "whose democratically constituted government has been overthrown by force may be suspended from the exercise of the right to participate" in all bodies of the inter-American system. The new measures represented a step up from the Santiago Commitment, because they established concrete sanctions against those who, in keeping with the principle of nonintervention, violated the compulsory commitment to the defense and promotion of representative democracy and human rights in the region; and they eliminated the condition that the defense of representative democracy be

maintained "within the framework of respect for the principles of self-determination and nonintervention." As part of this process, all the Latin American forums, agreements, and regional and sub-regional mechanisms accepted the democratic clause, which prohibited the membership of countries where "representative democracy" did not prevail, and mandated the suspension — together with other threats, pressures, and reprisals — of those nations where the "democratic order" had been interrupted. This clause was adopted by the Río Group, Mercosur, and the Andean Community. The main objectives were, first of all, to tighten the blockade and isolate the Cuban revolution; second, to establish a transnational pact among the region's elites aimed at preventing new revolutions or popular political processes; and third, to introduce a mechanism to establish institutional channels for inter-bourgeois conflicts that might lead to coups d'état or other processes that could put the new system of domination at risk.

The coup d'état in 1990 against Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and Alberto Fujimori's in-house institutional coup to remain in power in 1992, both of which occurred before the signing of the Washington Protocol, served as practical exercises for the OAS's new powers. The procedure for dealing with such developments consisted of designating a commission to negotiate a formula based on a "political solution" with the parties involved, with the greatest possible legal overtones, always trying to prevent the situation from spilling over into popular struggle. In the case of Haiti, President Aristide was sent to Governor's Island in New York, where he participated in negotiations in which he agreed to neutralize the social radicalism of his Lavalas movement. Aristide was then returned to government office, when his mandate was about to expire. In the case of Peru, the OAS granted Fujimori several months in which to call a Constituent Assembly, which legitimized his continuation in power.

The change in the world correlation of forces, the steamrolling

effect of neoliberal doctrine, and the perception that the Cuban revolution's days were numbered led to a change in the attitude of the Latin American governments toward Cuba. Until that time, the main members of the Río Group called for lifting the sanctions against Cuba in the OAS and for Cuba's readmittance to that organization. These positions had been adopted during the previous decade, in the heat of their disagreements with the Reagan administration. However, as an expression of the new situation, in the Cartagena Summit (1991), that same group for the first time issued a critical declaration on "democracy" and "human rights" in Cuba. This criticism was subsequently restated on several occasions and also expressed in meetings of the heads of state and governments of the European Union and Latin America.

Amid contradictory signals, in September 1991, the first Ibero-American Summit was held in Guadalajara, Mexico. Despite the pressures applied on the Mexican government by the United States and some Latin American rulers, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari invited Cuban President Fidel Castro to the summit. From the outset, US imperialism and its allies tried to create an uncomfortable situation at the summit, so that Cuba would be forced to quit the sessions.

The first contemporary call to create an Ibero-American forum for reaching common political positions dates from 1982,[5] the year in which the United States and Latin America were on opposite sides of the Malvinas War. It was one of the initiatives of that decade aimed at strengthening Latin America's capacity to confront imperialism, and among the proposals were the creation of an association of Latin American states and the readmission of Cuba into the OAS. However, the shift in the position of the governments of the region had already taken place. One of the objectives of the US government in promoting the adoption of the Santiago Commitment was, in fact, to close the debate on the readmission of Cuba to the inter-American system. As part of the

tightening of the blockade, at the end of 1992 the US Congress approved the Torricelli Bill, which added to existing restrictions by prohibiting commercial ships that transported goods to or from Cuba from entering US ports for a period of six months.

Under the influence of the Soviet experiences with perestroika and glasnost, at the end of the 1980s a process began involving the restructuring and programmatic redefinition of the alliances of the political parties and movements of the Latin American left. Between 1985 and 1990, perestroika and glasnost projected the image of a plan to "perfect socialism," albeit with a sinister emphasis on rooting out the symbols of Soviet power. However, the fall of the Berlin Wall in December 1989, symbolic of the dismantling of the socialist system in the countries of Eastern Europe, left no room for doubt about their real objectives. The fulfillment of these objectives was accomplished in December 1991, with the collapse of the Soviet Union itself. The impact of this development was very different in the diverse sectors of the Latin American left. In a general sense, initially there was sympathy with the proclaimed objective of "perfecting socialism." Nevertheless, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, and especially with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the ideas of socialism were generally discredited.

Although the collapse of the Soviet Union acted as a catalyst for the transformation of the Latin American left, this was not its only cause. The terminal crisis of Eastern European socialism coincided with the end of the counterinsurgency and counterrevolutionary offensive unleashed in 1964. This meant that, for their own reasons, the parties and political movements of the region were faced with the need to seek ways to recover from the blows received during the three previous decades, to adapt their means and methods of struggle to a social structure in transformation, and to redefine their attitude toward a state that had lost sovereignty. The collapse of the Soviet Union aggravated this situation, in at least

two senses: first, it caused the political and ideological traumas discussed in previous chapters; and second, with the end of global bipolarity, the imperialists' capacity for interference and intervention increased.

The unipolar world put an end to the stage of the armed struggle that had begun with the victory of the Cuban revolution. Although the armed road did not disappear as a form of struggle in Latin America with the electoral defeat of the FSLN, from this time it was clear that seizing power by means of a revolution was not achievable, at least in the short and medium terms, without a change in the international and regional situation. Under the new conditions, a triumphant revolution could not count on the external political, economic, and military support necessary to survive imperialist encirclement and aggression. In this context, in Colombia a negotiated demobilization took place with the April 19 Movement (M-19), the indigenous guerrilla organization Quintín Lame, and the majority faction of the People's Liberation Army (EPL). In contrast, the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC), the Camilista Union National Liberation Army (UC-ELN), and the minority faction of the EPL did not propose suspending guerrilla activity. In Peru, there was an increase in the armed actions of Shining Path and the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA). However, the event that symbolized the transition from the armed struggle to the institutional political struggle was the signing of the Chapultepec Accords in January 1992 in Mexico, which opened the way to the transformation of the FMLN of El Salvador into a political party.

Along with the downturn in the armed struggle, the negotiated transition from military dictatorship to bourgeois democracy opened up or reopened space for the left to engage in the electoral struggle, with unprecedented results in countries such as Brazil and Uruguay. The crisis of the power structure in Mexico also created a more favorable scenario. As a result of the role of

bourgeois democracy as the pillar of the system of continental domination — which meant that for the first time in history imperialism was not hindered by the need to coexist with military and civilian dictatorships — the Creole elites had to respect the formal rules of representative democracy. This did not mean that they would cease trying to block the electoral victories of the progressive forces and the left, but rather that they could not openly use force or violate the law. This problem was resolved through the imposition of neoliberal democracy, a political system that does not allow the adoption of measures that place obstacles in the way of capital accumulation. In these circumstances, the left might even govern, when there was no alternative.

In the July 1988 Mexican presidential elections, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, at the head of an alliance of ex-members of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and almost the entire spectrum of the country's left, organized in the National Democratic Front (FDN), scored an unprecedented vote for an opposition candidate in that country. With this demonstration of force, a majority of the FDN decided to create the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). Just over one year later, in November 1989, in the first direct presidential election held in Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, leader of the Workers Party (PT), went through to the second round. Although he was defeated by Fernando Collor de Mello in the subsequent vote of December that year, his performance was notable. The PT was able to form a parliamentary faction in the federal Congress and assumed control of many local governments, including the mayor's position in the city of São Paulo. That same month and year, retired general Liber Seregni, candidate of the Broad Front (FA), a political alliance founded in 1971, ran for the presidency of Uruguay, while its candidate Tabaré Vázquez was elected mayor of Montevideo, capital city and home to 50 percent of the country's population. Then, in 1992, the FA scored a new victory, when a referendum on the public companies law,

which the Sanguinetti government hoped would open the road to further privatizations, was defeated by 71 percent of the votes. This represented the first defeat inflicted by the people of a Latin American country against neoliberal restructuring.

Challenging the concept of "the end of history" advanced by the ultraconservative philosopher Francis Fukuyama, according to which capitalism is the highest stage of social development, the entire spectrum of the Latin American left met, for the first time, in São Paulo, Brazil, in July 1990. There, the participants declared that the crisis of capitalism represented the crux of the region's problems. The event was organized as the Conference of Left Parties and Organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean and one year later adopted the name of the São Paulo Forum (FSP).[6]

The FSP was not the result of a conscious effort aimed at creating a regional political organization, but the spontaneous response to the situation that arose in Latin America due to the restructuring of the system of continental domination by US imperialism and the collapse of Eastern European socialism. At the initiative of the Brazilian PT, this conference of the Latin American left was held in order to exchange opinions on the impact on the region of the changes that took place in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries. Of the many such events held at the time with similar objectives, the FSP was the one that most prospered due to the recognition and interest sparked by the good results obtained by the PT in the 1989 Brazilian elections, in which Lula lost the race for the presidency, but only by a narrow margin in the second round.

The distinctive feature of the July 1990 São Paulo conference was that, for the first time, representatives converged from almost all currents of the Latin American left. Three factors explain this new phenomenon: the impact of the fall of Eastern European socialism forced the entire left to reconsider its previous differences; the PT's character as a multi-tendency party, which

meant that each internal current invited their counterparts from other countries to the meetings; and the fact that the FSP was originally conceived as a conference that would be a one-off event, and as a result, the problems of identity, composition, and the internal correlation of forces were not anticipated, although they did, in fact, appear as soon as it was decided to transform the FSP into a permanent arena.

The July 1990 conference of the Latin American left issued the São Paulo Declaration. This document affirmed that the problems of Latin America were unrelated to the crisis of socialism and that the Latin American left would maintain the struggle against all forms of domination and exploitation in the region. From the organizational point of view, the main agreement adopted was to continue the debate in another conference to be held the following year in Mexico City. The Mexico conference was more complex, because although in São Paulo all the participants agreed that the fall of the Soviet Union did not imply the end of the struggle of the left in Latin America, this did not mean that there was a consensus on the objectives and forms of struggle.

The space conquered by left-wing political parties and movements in national legislatures and state and local governments of several Latin American countries seemed to endorse the thesis of the victory of "democracy without adjectives." This phrase negated the class character of bourgeois democracy. There was confusion between the defense of representative democracy — praised by imperialism as the pillar of the new system of domination — and the defense of the institutional space conquered by the left, undoubtedly on its own merits. In a reconsideration of the old debate on reform or revolution, those supporting each of these positions ignored the new limitations imposed on their respective forms of struggle.

The very name São Paulo Forum was the result of the political and ideological contradictions existing within the group. During

the Mexico conference, when it became clear that it was not a one-off meeting, but rather represented the formation of a permanent political space, attacks began against the original name "Conference of Left Parties and Organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean." Some argued that being left wing was not compatible with pursuing the electoral road to power. The name São Paulo Forum was proposed as an intermediate solution between those who defended and those who rejected the definition "the left." It was even difficult to overcome resistance to the name FSP because it contained an implicit reference to the São Paulo Declaration, which called for socialism. The conflict over its identity brought the São Paulo Forum to the verge of its first possible split at its third conference, held in Nicaragua in July 1992. Nevertheless, this stumbling block was overcome through the reaffirmation of the method of reaching a consensus in adopting agreements.

The worsening of the Latin American crisis during Bill Clinton's first presidential term (1993–97)

After using the "threat of communism" for decades as a centerpiece of its policy — for multiple ends, including electoral propaganda — the fall of the Soviet Union led to a change in priorities for US policy. With these changes, it did not matter that George H. Bush was US president at the moment in which Washington harvested the greatest geopolitical success in all its history, with the defeat of the "Soviet threat." Neither did it help that he inaugurated the New World Order through the Gulf War, the invasion of Panama, and the "humanitarian intervention" in Somalia. After three consecutive Republican administrations, the voters weighed in for a change at the helm with the Democratic Party. In the November 1992 elections, the victor was Bill Clinton.

As is usual in the United States, in assuming the presidency in January 1993, the new head of state maintained the general political line of his predecessor, continuing with the adjustments that had been introduced during Bush's second term in office. These adjustments gave greater attention to domestic affairs and strengthening the country's competitiveness in relation to the European Union and Japan. With Clinton, the "liberals" who had previously set the foreign policy guidelines of the Carter administration returned to government. However, this recycling of Democratic Party officials did not interrupt the restructuring of inter-American relations, because during the presidential terms of Reagan and Bush a bipartisan conservative consensus had been forged, which even Carter's "doves" adopted as their own.

The period of Clinton's presidency was characterized by a display of docility on the part of Latin American governments. Although the strengthening of continental domination was key in Bush's four years in office, what stood out in Clinton's term was the political, economic, and social crisis. Clinton initiated his Latin American policy with greater demands on Mexico to approve the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In addition, at the urging of the US government, the 23rd General Assembly of the OAS held in 1993 assumed greater authority in the "promotion and defense of representative democracy," beginning a re-evaluation of its ties with the Inter-American Defense Board with a view to transforming it into a mechanism for direct intervention. Nevertheless, the ultimate plan of the US government, creating an inter-American military force similar to the UN's peacekeepers, was rejected by several countries, led by Mexico. In a similar way to what occurred in Haiti and Peru, in 1993 US imperialism took advantage of the attempted in-house coup led by Guatemalan President Jorge Serrano Elías to grease the machinery for "protecting OAS democracy." In this case, the OAS promoted Serrano's replacement with Ramiro de León

Carpio, who was elected by the national Congress.

Based on the expectations generated by the imposition of NAFTA on January 1, 1994, and by the start of negotiations to establish a similar free trade treaty with Chile, the United States issued a call for the Summit of the Americas to take place in Miami in December of that same year. Having established the basis for the new system of continental domination by reforming the OAS charter, the Miami Summit took a greater step toward its institutionalization. The leaders of the 34 countries of the Western Hemisphere — not including Cuba — adopted more than 120 agreements and commitments that represented a genuine code of conduct with a transnational touch. Those agreements and commitments — subject to mechanisms of control and the imposition of sanctions — dictated the rules of performance for the Latin American and Caribbean countries in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields, and launched negotiating processes by sectors, including the talks on the FTAA. However, this process was blocked by the worsening of the regional crisis.

It was after the Miami Summit that it became clear that obstacles existed that could almost paralyze the restructuring of the inter-American system during Clinton's presidency. The intensification of the crisis of Latin American capitalism after 1994 sparked fear in the circles of US political and economic power that the free trade treaties would spread regional instability into the United States. That fear explained the refusal of the US Congress to guarantee Clinton the fast-track approval of the free trade agreements. Thus, negotiation of the free trade agreement with Chile became bogged down and the FTAA process was born amid uncertainty.

It was the Mexican crisis that most concerned US imperialism, since Mexico is its immediate neighbor sharing a common border spanning thousands of kilometers. In 1993, the assassinations of Luis Donaldo Colosio and José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, respectively presidential candidate and general assistant secretary

of the PRI, revealed the degree of degeneration of the Mexican political system. Colosio's assassination forced the PRI to choose the head of his campaign, Ernesto Zedillo, as the substitute presidential candidate. In 1994, Zedillo began the final six-year presidential term of a seven-decades-long merger between the PRI and the state.

The armed propaganda action of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in Chiapas, launched on January 1, 1994, the day that Mexico "entered the First World" through the "door" of NAFTA, symbolized the relationship between the new system of imperialist domination and the worsening of the crisis of Latin American capitalism. In December of that same year, the explosion of the Mexican financial crisis represented the first real demonstration of the falsehood of the neoliberal theory of the "spillover effect," according to which the concentration of wealth results in an increase in investment, employment, income, and the living standards of society as a whole.

The collapse of the Mexican economy revealed the vicious cycle of foreign appropriation and draining of the national wealth, the increase in external debt, marginalization of the economy, loss of employment, reduction of incomes and public services, and economic, political, and social polarization. In what would be a pattern followed by other governments of the region, the Mexican authorities reacted to the crisis with a hardening of the same economic policies that had caused it in the first place. This suicidal attitude revealed the degree to which Latin American elites were subjected to the transnational centers of political and economic power. Zedillo's government opened a higher stage of subordination to US finance capital, by using Mexico's oil as a guarantee of payment for loans received and establishing a secret commitment to privatize hydrocarbons and energy resources.

The Tequila Effect of the Mexican crisis had its repercussions in Argentina in the bankruptcy of the Cavallo Plan, a key pillar of

President Carlos Saúl Menem's economic policies. This plan was a model for attracting speculative capital, based on the artificial maintenance of exchange rate parity between the peso and the dollar. However, the failure of the Cavallo Plan had the apparently contradictory effect of favoring Menem's presidential reelection. This can be attributed to fear, encouraged by the government itself, that an opposition victory would lead to a devaluation of the national currency, resulting in a reduction of real wages and an increase in the value of popular debt.

The reelection of the Argentine president in 1993 was possible thanks to the Olivos Pact, signed that same year between Menem and opposition leader Raúl Alfonsín, of the Radical Civil Union (UCR). The Olivos Pact reflected one of the characteristic trends of the period. In most Latin American nations, reelecting the president for consecutive terms was forbidden, some countries even prohibited it for non-consecutive periods. Nevertheless, neoliberal restructuring demanded greater continuity in the executive branch of government, which took on greater powers at the expense of the legislature. For this reason, in one country after other, the right to consecutive reelection was established.

Just like in Mexico with the Salinas and Zedillo governments, Menem's administration in Argentina represented an example of how neoliberal restructuring disrupts the national political system and even affects the sectors of the bourgeoisie in charge of applying its dictates. Menem's offensive in 1996 to impose flexibility in labor legislation and to turn over pension funds to speculative capital not only betrayed the Peronist trade union movement that supported his election, but also broke with the system of social alliances built up by Juan Domingo Perón between 1946 and 1955.

The Mexican tradition of authoritarianism and the trauma caused by Argentina's dictatorial past prevented the socioeconomic crisis in those countries from spilling over into an uncontrollable political crisis. However, in Venezuela, the same "safeguards"

did not exist. The removal of President Carlos Andrés Pérez in 1993, more than just a rejection of a corrupt ruler, represented the collapse of the current institutional system. The election of Rafael Caldera as president of Venezuela in December 1993, at the head of a coalition composed of dissidents from COPEI and the Movement to Socialism (MAS), was the last attempt at avoiding the explosion of an overall crisis in that nation. The eventual detonator was the bankruptcy of Banco Latino, which occurred in 1994. Through the fraudulent offer of high interest rates, the bank executives attracted considerable funds, which they transferred overseas with the purpose of appropriating the money. This embezzlement led to the downfall of numerous companies and the loss of many individuals' personal savings. Not only did it expose the corruption of the Venezuelan banking system, but also of the entire economic, political, and social superstructure.

The rise in popular protests against neoliberalism, the decline in armed struggle, and the dashed presidential aspirations of left-wing candidates characterized the activity of the left and the popular movements between 1993 and 1997. The Mexican crisis discredited the idea that neoliberal doctrine was a model for development that required an initial period of "sacrifice" by the neocolonial countries. On the contrary, it was demonstrated that neoliberalism is a schema for the concentration and overseas transfer of a country's wealth, in which each cycle of subordination to foreign capital and impoverishment of the neocolonial nation leads to another, higher stage. The Mexican financial crisis practically coincided with the high point of the conflicts over land ownership in Brazil, as a result of which the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) forced Fernando Henrique Cardoso's government to apply a type of land reform in the unproductive estates of landlords with fiscal debts.

Two developments in 1996 confirmed the trend toward decline in the armed struggle. One was the signing of the Guatemala

Peace Accords and the other was the capture of 486 hostages in the residency of the Japanese ambassador in Peru by MRTA commandos. This latter action was an attempt to obtain freedom for MRTA leader Víctor Polay and other imprisoned activists, with the aim of relaunching the revolutionary war. After several months of simulated negotiations on the part of the Fujimori government, this episode concluded with a commando operation by the Peruvian armed forces in which all the members of the MRTA present were killed, even though they had not tried to execute the hostages.

During this period, the combined effect of the "fall of communism," the introduction of the neoliberal democratic system throughout Latin America — except Cuba — and the ebb in the armed struggle, led a group of political parties and movements that at the end of the 1980s began to harvest electoral successes to call themselves the "New Left." This group was convinced that in the 1990s, a democratic and redistributive capitalism would emerge in Latin America, similar to the welfare state in postwar Europe, in which the task of running the government would fall into their hands. In short, there was the expectation that in the 1993–94 electoral period — in which a large number of Latin American elections were held — all or almost all the presidential candidates of the New Left would be swept to victory. In this climate, in July 1993, the fourth FSP conference was held in Havana, Cuba.

The main topics debated in the fourth conference of the FSP were whether or not democratization was occurring in Latin America, if the left should embrace bourgeois democracy as a strategic horizon, if US imperialism would respect the left entering governments, and in that case, if such acceptance would include noninterference in its political, economic, and social program. Of course, this polemic remains open. Nevertheless, the debate was eased slightly because the results of the electoral biennium were not favorable for most of the New Left presidential candidates.

The first defeat was suffered by Andrés Velásquez, the candi-

date of Radical Cause (Causa R) in Venezuela who, in December 1993, lost to Rafael Caldera in elections widely viewed as fraudulent. In July 1994, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, leader of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in Mexico, lost his second presidential bid, this time to Ernesto Zedillo. Toward the end of that year, Lula, founder of the PT in Brazil, experienced his second setback, this time in a race against a right-wing coalition organized around the figure of one of the creators of dependence theory, the finance minister in the outgoing government, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. In Uruguay, Julio María Sanguinetti won at the polls, although he did so with only a two percent advantage over Tabaré, presidential hopeful for the FA. This development led to an alliance between the traditional parties (Colorado and Blanco) to neutralize the legislative caucus elected by the left. The only presidential hopeful of a party belonging to the FSP who won an election in 1994 was Ernesto Pérez Balladares, of the Democratic Revolutionary Party of Panama (PRD). The significance of this victory, however, was relative, because Pérez Balladares formed his government with figures from the anti-Torrijos right.

The 1994 elections in Uruguay, the country that was to host the fifth conference of the FSP, made it necessary to postpone the event until 1995. That meeting was characterized by a new explosion of conflicts between divergent ideological currents. On this occasion, the debate focused on two specific topics: the presence of an invited delegation from the PRI of Mexico — questioned by the PRD of that country — and the criticism directed at the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL) — then a member of the FSP Working Group — for remaining in the government coalition headed by President Gonzalo Sánchez de Losada at a time when it was repressing a teachers' strike. These tensions were under control one year later. Under the auspices of the FMLN, in 1996 the sixth conference of the FSP was held in San Salvador, and its distinguishing feature was the good organizational work carried out by the hosts of the

event. After this conference, the member organizations decided to adopt the method of holding seminar-workshops prior to the forums, with the participation of the different sectors of the popular movements.

The outcome of the presidential elections held in the 1993–94 period and in the four years from 1993 to 1996 was negative for almost all of the left-wing presidential candidates; but nevertheless the trend favoring electoral struggle was strengthened. This was the result of several political parties and movements having increased their national legislative caucuses as well as their control of local governments, in such countries as Mexico, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Panama, Brazil, Uruguay, Venezuela, Bolivia, Argentina, Ecuador, and Peru. Of particular importance was the election for the second consecutive period of an FA candidate for mayor of Montevideo, in this case, Mariano Arana. The Brazilian PT also retained control of the mayor's office in Porto Alegre, which became a worldwide symbol of local left-wing governments.

The rise in popular struggles in Latin America during Bill Clinton's second presidential term (1997–2001)

Clinton's second term in office saw few initiatives in his Latin American policy. The agenda of meetings set by the Miami Summit was fulfilled, but the sword of Damocles was ever present because the US Congress never guaranteed Clinton fast-track approval of the free trade treaties. Despite the intensification of the political, economic, and social crisis in the region, the visit by the US president in 1997 to Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean confirmed that he was not inclined to make concessions. The more thorny issues were the hardening of the imperialist certification

policies,[7] the reduced access to the North American market, and the beginning of the practice of mandatory repatriation of undocumented immigrants. The reluctance of the political and economic rulers of the United States to establish free trade treaties was motivated, in 1998, by the crisis of the Asian stock exchanges, which aggravated the economic, political, and social situation in Latin America.

Just a few years after the eruption of the Mexican financial crisis, the impact on Brazil of the Dragon Effect — sparked by the stock market crash in several Asian countries — became cause for concern, not only just for Latin America, but also for the United States. The speculative attack against the South American giant forced Fernando Henrique Cardoso's government to abandon the Real Plan, based on the parity of the Brazilian currency with the US dollar, to contract onerous loans with international banks and to expand the scope of privatizations. US imperialism was the temporary beneficiary of the Brazilian destabilization, which became a source of tension within Mercosur and the reason for the temporary weakening of Brazilian opposition to the US plan for the FTAA.

In order to prevent the interruption of speculative capital investment, the Latin American governments postponed recognition of the recession as long as possible and issued false or premature announcements of an economic recovery. This attitude can be understood because, given the economic opening and neoliberal deregulation, this speculative movement of capital was what maintained an equilibrium in the region's balance of payments. For example, in 1999, Chilean President Eduardo Frei waited a full six months before recognizing that his country had entered into a recession. During this period, Frei had allowed $2 billion in capital flight and the crash of Santiago's stock exchange. When he could no longer ignore the crisis, Frei's reaction was to eliminate the safeguards against speculative capital, which had

been in effect since the Pinochet dictatorship. These safeguards specified that all foreign investment must remain in the country for a minimum period of time determined by the law.

With the collapse of bourgeois-democratic institutionality in Ecuador and Venezuela in 1997 and 1998, the Andean region became the epicenter of the Latin American political crisis. In 1997, Ecuadorean President Abdalá Bucaram was deposed as a result of the popular protests against neoliberal policies, corruption, favoritism, and the idiosyncracies of his government. However, the social explosion that overthrew Bucaram revealed not only the strengths, but also the weaknesses of a popular movement that lacked political leadership capable of breaking with the status quo and organizing the masses around its own project of social transformation. Therefore, the outcome was the renewal of neoliberal domination. Due to these limitations, the drafting of a new Ecuadorean constitution, which arose in response to a popular demand for an anti-neoliberal Magna Carta, took the opposite direction when the bourgeoisie swamped the Constituent Assembly, from where they laid the basis for the maintenance of neoliberalism and the "dollarization" of the economy.

The Venezuelan crisis had the opposite result to that in Ecuador. In Venezuela, the crumbling of the political institutions prevented US imperialism and the local oligarchy from being able to use them to prevent Hugo Chávez's election as president in 1998, at the head of a coalition of nationalist military officials and different political currents including the main parties of the left. Unlike in Ecuador, where a popular leader capable of heading up an alternative project did not emerge, Chávez capitalized on the power vacuum existing in Venezuela. Although his victory was interpreted by imperialism as a threat to the new system of continental domination, with the right-wing forces in disarray; the breadth of the popular support Chávez received at the ballot box meant that imperialism and Creole reaction had to resign

themselves to articulating a medium-term destabilization plan. At the same time, Chávez began a process of transformation of the country's legal system that included the approval in December 1999 of the constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the revalidation of his presidential mandate, and the election of a new legislature in which pro-government forces held a majority.

In Colombia, with the 1988 election of conservative presidential candidate Andrés Pastrana, the new government reinstituted the two-track political policy (war and negotiations) that had been employed years before in Central America. As the first step, during his electoral campaign, Pastrana openly met with Commander Manuel Marulanda, chief leader of the FARC. Soon it was clear that what both sides were seeking was national and international legitimacy, since their positions were irreconcilable. Even more difficult was the beginning of peace talks with the UC-ELN; the differences in the format of the process and the characteristics of the rebel army's zones of operation, together with Pastrana's declining fortunes due to the complete failure of negotiations with the FARC, hardened the government's position regarding the demilitarization of parts of the country.

Pastrana's true intention was made clear when Plan Colombia was announced in 2000. Nominally a fight against drug trafficking, this plan, approved by the US Congress for a five-year period, represented a counterinsurgency and interventionist model on a continental scale. This schema included strengthening the Colombian armed forces by increasing troop numbers, training, and equipment, coupled with a policy of mandatory eradication of coca cultivation. In addition, it included the installation of US radar and military bases in different parts of Latin America and the Caribbean in order to monitor and intercept air traffic.

In 1997, former dictator Hugo Banzer won the Bolivian presidency, at the head of a "mega-coalition" known as Commitment to Bolivia, whose work in office would be characterized by the

mandatory eradication of coca cultivation, as directed by the US government. This led to a worsening of the balance of payments and sparked a rise in rural and indigenous protests, which reached their high point years later with the overthrow of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada. During the Banzer government, Bolivia became an example of the contradictions inherent in the antidrug-trafficking programs imposed by US imperialism.

Now without natural resources or assets that could be privatized to attract transnational capital, Banzer clung to aid granted by the US government in payment for the program of coca eradication. However, this resulted in a pyrrhic victory, due to the incapacity of the Bolivian economy to fill the vacuum caused by the elimination of illicit activities, income which compensated for the deficit in the formal economy.

One of the most significant developments in this period was the end of the political era that had begun with the Mexican revolution of 1910–17. As the country in which for seven decades a unique mechanism of government had functioned, based on the symbiosis of the PRI and state machinery, Mexico provided the clearest example of the impact of transnationalization in the dismantling of a political system responsive to a national economy. The electoral victory of Vicente Fox of the National Action Party (PAN) and the defeat of the PRI candidate in the July 2, 2000, presidential elections, represented a factor of both change and continuity in Mexican politics: the change from an official government party responded, in a dialectical sense, to the need for a continuation of the displacement from power of the remnants of the Mexican system of social and political alliances that prevailed in Mexico during the developmentalist stage.

The year 2000 marked the end of Alberto Fujimori's 10 years as president of Peru. The despotic *caudillismo* he had exercised since 1990, based on the image of the "strong man" capable of combating the widespread violence that plagued the country — including the

terrorist activities of Shining Path — was the main manifestation of the Peruvian political crisis. Fujimori's domination of Peruvian politics reached such a point that, despite his abuses, he won the 2000 presidential elections by a wide margin over opposition candidate Alejandro Toledo. Soon afterward, however, Fujimori fled the country and resigned his post, after a scandal sparked by the television broadcast of a videotape in which presidential advisor Vladimiro Montesinos was caught bribing an opposition legislator. The video showed what had previously been an open secret, namely, the corruption, bribery, espionage, blackmail, and repression characteristic of Fujimori's entire term in office.

Lula's third consecutive defeat in Brazil in the 1998 elections, in which Cardoso was reelected, buried the expectations generated by the supposed trend toward the democratization of Latin American capitalism. The thesis of an "alliance of the left with the center" moved to center stage. Mexican intellectual Jorge G. Castañeda had been promoting this thesis for several years in a discussion group financed by the United Nations Development Program and composed of Latin American politicians and intellectuals. According to this thesis, the government would not "fall into the arms" of the left, but rather, to achieve government, the left would have to obscure its ideas, forget its identity, objectives, and methods of struggle, and melt into an amorphous and de-ideologized mass with the "center." The expression "alliance with the center" was a euphemism to refer to the same convergence with neoliberalism actively undertaken by European social democracy. That was what Castañeda himself did, hopping on the neoliberal bandwagon when he joined the electoral campaign and government of Vicente Fox.

The experience of the Socialist Party of Chile (PSCh), the Party for Democracy (PPD), and the Radical Social Democratic Party (PRSD) in their alliance with the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) in the Coalition, established in 1989 to defeat presidential

candidate Augusto Pinochet, was the model used to advance the thesis of the "alliance of the left with the center." Inspired by this experience, the alliance of the UCR with the Front for a Solidarity-Oriented Country (FREPASO) — the UCR-FREPASO alliance — was created in Argentina. In both Chile and Argentina, this thesis was put to the test.

In the Chilean Coalition, after two presidential periods headed by the Christian Democrats Patricio Aylwin and Eduardo Frei, for the first time a leader of the PSCh, Ricardo Lagos, was elected president in 2000. However, Lagos frustrated expectations that he would move "to the left" of his predecessors in the PDC. Although his electoral promises had not faced the open attack of the oligarchy — because the right-wing candidate, Joaquín Lavín, defended a similar platform — as soon as he took office the opposition sabotaged the fiscal and labor legislation reform proposals submitted to Congress. Reality exposed the myth of a "third way" that was supposed to make economic denationalization compatible with a minimum redistribution of wealth. At the same time relations with the military became tense when Pinochet was detained in London and the verdict of the [Chilean] Supreme Court opened up the possibility of beginning judicial proceedings against the former dictator in Chile itself.

In Argentina, promising to put an end to the "Menemist decade," Fernando de la Rúa won the presidential elections of 1999 at the head of the UCR-FREPASO alliance. De la Rúa, whose government was burdened by his predecessor's surrender of sovereignty and national assets, began his administration in early 2000, leading a country that had already privatized and "foreignized" its companies and natural resources, transferred the corresponding income received overseas, tied its currency to the US dollar, contracted debts with a maturity date within a year to the tune of $20 billion, and made a commitment to the IMF to maintain the deficit below $4.5 billion. Without even a

grace period that would have allowed him to dispel suspicions of a preconceived plan, de la Rúa continued implementing the tasks of neoliberal restructuring that his predecessor had left unfinished, despite being unable to prevent the rating agencies from maintaining Argentina on the list of high-risk debtors. The continuation of unpopular measures by a government that supposedly represented an alternative to Menem meant that it immediately experienced a baptism of fire through strikes, demonstrations, blockades of highways, and other protest actions.

In both Chile and Argentina, the "new" third-way model of the "alliance of the left with the center" was revealed to be a simple version of the division of labor, characteristic of social democracy, between a left wing used to attract popular support and a right wing that monopolizes the key positions in the cabinet and acts as representative of the real power. Although Chile and Argentina turned to the left and Mexico to the right, in all three nations the change of governments legitimized the continuation of neoliberal adjustment programs.

The confrontations between divergent currents of the Latin American left once again raised the tone of the debate at the seventh FSP conference, held in 1997 in Porto Alegre, Brazil. This was the result of attempts to impose a programmatic platform on this heterogeneous regional political grouping that would be consistent with the theses on the democratization of capitalism and would anchor this "alternative" to the horizon of this historical-social formation. This initiative was defeated by the protests of a radical left that had its own divergences and internal conflicts, as well as a lack of proposals of its own. After this clash, the eighth conference of the FSP, held for the second time in Mexico City in 1998, in an atmosphere of relative calm reestablished the norm of reaching agreements by consensus.

The increase in imperialist aggression against left electoral victories during George W. Bush's first presidential term (2001–05)

This book was finished in February 2006, when George W. Bush had just concluded the first year of his second presidential term. This can be considered the cut-off date in the transition that we have called "Latin America between centuries." It could be argued that the active rejection by growing social sectors in Latin America of Bush's erratic and aggressive policy indicates that it would be worthwhile to wait until the end of his presidency to conclude this analysis. Indeed, it is correct to speak of a stage in US imperialism's policy toward Latin America that began in January 1989, when George H. Bush took office, and that might extend, at least, until January 2009, when his son George W. Bush's presidency ends. We say "at least" because it is possible that this stage could extend even further.

If the study of US foreign policy demonstrates anything, it is that there is a tremendous consistency in its general lines, independent of which president or which party is in government. This was shown again in the timid presidential campaign of the anti-Bush candidate, Democrat John Kerry. Therefore, it is likely that the current imperialist policy will remain in effect as long as conditions are the same, in particular, until the peoples of the region force Washington to change course. It makes no sense to postpone the publication of these reflections, because one of its objectives is to bring forward the defeat of such policies.

In the transition between the 20th and 21st centuries, the history of Latin America would have been very different if the Cuban revolution had not demonstrated its capacity to resist the intensification of the blockade, the isolation, and the threats of US imperialism. However, we have not dealt with the multifaceted resistance of the Cuban people here, because this book is limited

to the countries of Latin America where the left and the popular movements have not taken or consolidated the political power that in Cuba is already secure.

The first years of George W. Bush's presidency were marked by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Bush manipulated these events to launch a "crusade against terrorism" and to legitimize the doctrine of "preventive war." These were the pretexts invoked for the invasion and militarily occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as to increase the threats against Iran, Syria, North Korea, and Cuba. In addition, the US president used the climate created by these attacks to reactivate the restructuring of the inter-American system, which stagnated soon after his predecessor, Bill Clinton, failed to obtain the backing of the US Congress to move forward in the FTAA negotiations.

Just a few hours after the attacks against the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Virginia, the OAS, meeting in Lima, approved the Inter-American Democratic Charter,[8] which gave it greater powers on the level of inspection, interference, and sanctions, and made the final touches to the framework of the Santiago Commitment for Democracy and the Renewal of the Inter-American system adopted in 1991. Bush also took advantage of the opportunity to obtain congressional authority to establish preferential trade agreements, albeit with restrictions on the terms that could be offered to other signatory countries, a step that reactivated the negotiations for the FTAA and a free trade agreement with Chile. But this triumphalism did not last long.

Immersed in a sense of euphoria and omnipotence, generated by the disintegration of the Eastern European socialist bloc and the terminal crisis of the Soviet Union, in the early 1990s, US imperialism was confident that the restructuring of its system of continental domination could not be stopped — and much less defeated — by the peoples of the region. Within this context, the implementation of the FTAA was conceived by US policy planners

as a process of negotiation/imposition of a hidden agenda not subject to popular scrutiny, and in many aspects, also beyond the scrutiny of national legislatures, whose clauses would have to be accepted as a single "package" by all the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean, by the deadline arbitrarily set by Washington for the beginning of 2005. This package would serve as scaffolding for the neoliberal reform that was initiated at the end of the 1970s.

Arrogant triumphalism led Washington to underestimate the commitment and capacity of the Latin American left and popular movements to resist the FTAA. But a growing popular movement in opposition to this new neocolonialist creature — a movement structured and coordinated on a hemispheric scale — inflicted the first official defeat at the ministerial meeting on finances and the economy of the Americas, held in Miami in November 2003, revealing the inability of the United States to impose its original plan.

This defeat, however, was neither complete nor definitive, because the same Miami meeting adopted an alternative negotiation schema that allowed the countries ready to sign all of the FTAA clauses to do so, while the other nations could make only partial commitments. At the beginning of 2006, this strategy offered mixed results, with some countries subscribing to bilateral or sub-regional free trade agreements with the United States, while others chose not to. The most important development, however, was the defeat of Bush's attempt to revive the FTAA negotiations at the Summit of the Americas held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in December 2005.

The reforms to the OAS Charter showed signs of getting bogged down as had the FTAA negotiations. Furthermore, the interference in the Bolivian presidential elections of December 2005 in an attempt to prevent Evo Morales's victory, the fraud committed in the Haitian presidential race of February 2006 to

try to steal the victory won by René Preval, and the beginning of a new international campaign aimed at isolating the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela allow us to begin to speak of the failure of this restructuring effort.

In a unipolar world, US imperialism believed it could implement a model of neoliberal democracy in Latin America that would guarantee its interests without the need to resort to the traditional methods of interference and intervention — such as military invasion, coups d'état, electoral fraud, military dictatorships, political assassinations, and others — that provoked such repudiation in US and international public opinion. The idea was to encase the Latin American and Caribbean states in a straightjacket, so that imperialist domination would not depend mainly on Washington's actions — either violent or "peaceful" — to prevent independent, local political forces from taking office. Rather, the idea was that the electoral system would "open up" to the different political forces alternating in office, as long as each and every one of them was committed to respecting the "rules of the game," in particular, the rules of the transfer of wealth to transnational financial capital, which meant rejecting the implementation of policies for the social distribution of wealth compatible with the objectives and historical programs of the left. One of the key pieces of this straightjacket was the reform of the OAS Charter, aimed at imposing the parameters of neoliberal democracy, enforcing compliance with these parameters, and punishing violations. Today we can speak of the stagnation, exhaustion, or even the total failure of this reform.

The stagnation of the reform of the system of domination was reflected in the defeat of the US government's attempt at the OAS General Assembly in 2005 to grant the organization powers to monitor the "democratic functioning" of the countries in the region and to adopt punitive measures in pertinent cases. This represented the failure of an attempt to create a new inter-

ventionist mechanism specifically conceived to attack President Hugo Chávez's government in Venezuela, which would have also established a useful precedent against other nations. Furthermore, the Bush administration was unable to impose either of its two favored candidates for the post of secretary general of the OAS, former Salvadoran president Francisco Flores and Mexican foreign minister Luis Ernesto Derbez. Instead, Chilean Interior Minister José Miguel Inzulsa was elected with the support of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and other countries.

As with the failure of US imperialism in the FTAA negotiations, in the cases of the reform of the OAS charter and the election of the secretary general of that organization, the defeats were not "total" or "definitive," but limited the advances that imperialist domination had been registering. The OAS mechanism for the "protection of democracy" continued to exist and the recently adopted resolutions explicitly indicated that governments can use it to seek OAS support in response to a popular movement that threatens the stability of neoliberal democracy. Meanwhile, whatever the personal intentions of José Miguel Inzulsa might be — without a doubt different from those of Flores and Derbez — he will have relatively little room to maneuver as an official of an organization that for the past 15 years has been restructured to adapt to the New World Order.

Here we are not speaking of the failure of the political reform of the system of continental domination in the sense that the US government no longer has the brute strength to destroy the popular social movements that are developing in Latin America; neither are we saying that all these processes are already consolidated. This part of the history remains to be written. The failure consists of US imperialism being obligated to once again use — or continue to use — the most grotesque, crudest methods of interference and intervention, which it wanted to avoid.

Based on the premise that the exception confirms the rule, until

recently Washington's interventions in the Nicaraguan elections of 1990, 1996, and 2002 to prevent the victory of the presidential candidate of the FSLN, Daniel Ortega, and in the Salvadoran elections of 2004 to prevent FMLN presidential candidate Schafik Handal from winning office, could be considered "exceptions." Only with a great deal of naivety can the intensified destabilization campaign against Venezuela's Bolivarian revolution since 2001 be considered another "exception." And the forced resignation in February 2004 of Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his being sent to Africa might be considered an "exception" only by the politically blind. In view of the US interference in the December 2005 Bolivian presidential race to prevent the election of Evo Morales, the fraud committed in the February 2006 Haitian presidential elections aimed at snatching victory away from René Preval, and the renewed international campaign undertaken by the Bush administration to isolate Hugo Chávez's government, there can be no room for doubting the existence of a pattern of behavior. Imperialism failed to replace interference and intervention with its schema of "democratic governability," and is increasingly and overtly resorting to its traditional strong-arm policy.

On the military terrain, the insignificant results of the so-called Patriot Plan — an offensive involving more than 17,000 troops launched by Álvaro Uribe's government in Colombia against the FARC-EP, reveal the failure of the counterinsurgency strategy behind Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative, although these policies did actually fulfill the objective of justifying a heightened presence by the US armed forces in Latin America, more control over Latin American armies, and greater appropriation of the region's biodiversity.

The failure to restructure the system of continental domination is the result of increasing popular struggles and resistance in Latin America that encompasses the most diverse forms of social protest — including strikes, demonstrations, blockading the streets and

highways, the *cacerolazos* or banging of pots and pans, and picket lines — the construction of national, continental, and worldwide networks of popular movements; actions directed against the meetings of the WTO, IMF, World Bank, OAS, the Summits of the Americas and other institutions that represent imperialist interests; the consolidation of the World Social Forum and the Social Forum of the Americas as a systematic process of convergence and popular organization; and the election of left candidates to posts in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of local, state and/or national government in almost all the countries of Latin America.

This movement of popular struggle and resistance has been responsible for the overthrow of presidents Fernando Collor de Mello in Brazil (1992), Carlos Andrés Pérez in Venezuela (1993), Abdalá Bucaram (1997), Jamil Mahuad (2000) and Lucio Gutiérrez (2005) in Ecuador, Fernando de la Rúa and his immediate successors (2001) in Argentina, and Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (2003) and Carlos Mesa (2005) in Bolivia.

On the political-electoral level, the most important victories of the Latin American left have been in the presidential elections won by Hugo Chávez (Venezuela, 1998 and 2001), Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2002), Tabaré Vázquez (2004), and Evo Morales (2005). In addition, the left is governing cities such as Porto Alegre, São Paulo, Montevideo, Mexico City, Managua, San Salvador, Caracas, and Bogotá, and provinces, states, and departments such as Río Grande do Sul, Santa Fé, Michoacán, and Estelí, just to mention some examples.

With the election of Evo Morales as president of Bolivia, four leaders of the Latin American left have now taken office since Hugo Chávez's victory at the polls in 1998. Depending on the degree of intensity of the capitalist crisis in which each of those victories occurred and the political orientation of key leaders and their attitude toward the current system of domination, it is clear

that US imperialism considers the governments of Venezuela and Bolivia to be incompatible with the system of domination imposed on the subcontinent since 1991, while Brazil and Uruguay are treated as being part of it.

Our review of left alternatives in Latin America between the centuries must start with the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela because it represents the first victory of a popular candidate in a contemporary presidential election in Latin America and its subsequent confrontation with US imperialism; moreover, it has overcome numerous destabilization campaigns. President Hugo Chávez was elected in December 1998, amid the crumbling of bourgeois democratic institutionalism in Venezuela. So weakened and discredited were the traditional parties that imperialism and its local allies took more than three years to put together a destabilization program based on their control of the media, business organizations, yellow unions, and the Catholic Church hierarchy. During this period, the Constitution of the Fifth Republic was approved, Chávez was reelected, and various elections were held that expanded popular power.

The counterrevolutionary offensive in Venezuela reached a climax during Bush's first presidential term. Among the most important attempts to overthrow President Chávez have been the coup d'état of April 11, 2002, which was defeated by a spontaneous popular mobilization; the national strike, which included the private sector lockout and sabotage of the Petróleos de Venezuela S.A. (PEDEVESA) oil company; and the presidential recall referendum held on August 15, 2004. Following Chávez's victory in the recall referendum with more than two million votes, the Bolivarian forces recovered the initiative vis-a-vis a political opposition once again divided, weakened, and discredited. The popular victory was ratified in the state and municipal elections held on October 31, 2004, in which the Bolivarian forces won almost all of the country's gubernatorial races (with the exception

of Zulia and Nueva Esparta) and 270 of the 337 mayoral posts.

In this new situation, President Chávez's government — which during the first years of his administration focused its efforts on the reform of the constitutional, legal, and electoral systems — could complement its work with the development of the social missions, which guarantee health-care, education, training and other services to the downtrodden sectors of the Venezuelan population. At the same time, on the international level, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) began a new era of cooperation with the rest of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, based on a solidarity-oriented and mutually advantageous focus.

Slightly more than seven years after Chávez's election, the consolidation of the Bolivarian revolution is still a priority, because its enemies will not abandon their desire to destroy it, and because of the inadequacies inherent in any burgeoning popular-oriented political process. In this sense, the results of the December 2005 legislative elections were contradictory. On the one hand, convinced that it would only obtain a few legislative seats, the opposition decided to call for abstention — traditionally high in Venezuela — which cleared the way for the government coalition to win all the seats in the National Assembly. On the other hand, although the voter turnout of only 25 percent can be attributed only partially to the opposition's call, it reveals the need to strengthen electoral work on the level of organization and mobilization; because although President Chávez's reelection in December 2006 is not in doubt, abstention facilitates the de-legitimization campaign. This campaign took on a new dimension with the offensive launched by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and other top officials of the Bush administration to isolate the Bolivarian revolution.

Just when it seemed that left-wing presidential candidates like Chávez would not be successful in other Latin American countries, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was elected president of Brazil

in October 2002. This victory occurred 14 years after the vote Lula received in his first presidential bid marked a new stage of struggle by the Latin American left. During this period, the PT leader had experienced three consecutive defeats (1989, 1994, and 1998) that almost ended his political career. Furthermore, the party had been rocked by a continuing debate on whether these defeats were the result of too narrow or too broad a political alliance with the center parties.

On January 1, 2003, Lula assumed the responsibility of governing Brazil within the narrow limits of the obstacles imposed on his country by transnational financial capital. Furthermore, Lula's government did not have a majority in the national congress, which would have made it easier for his legislative agenda to be adopted. Therefore, initially the new administration had to negotiate the incorporation of center and center-right political forces into the governmental alliance, currents that had not participated in the electoral coalition originally formed around the PT. The strategy of this alliance was to prioritize the fulfillment of commitments with international creditors, based on the argument that it was first necessary to reduce external vulnerability in order to subsequently accumulate surpluses that could be earmarked for economic and social development in a second term in office.

Through initiatives such as Zero Hunger and the Family Fund credit program, Lula's government focused its social policies on fighting extreme poverty, a goal that did not go beyond the position of the World Bank. The demands of the popular sectors in Brazil would be met to the extent that they did not endanger compliance with those financial commitments. To a greater or lesser degree, this policy left a range of expectations unsatisfied that, rationally or not, had been raised by the popular movements that had constituted the social base of the PT since its founding. Slightly more than three years after taking office, the consequences of these contradictions can be observed, which makes the Lula

government a "case study" of the possibilities and challenges that are posed for the Latin American left, the main challenge being the impossibility of reconciling respect for the rules of the system of domination with the fulfillment of the historical objectives proclaimed by the left.

The crisis that has been buffeting the Lula government since the first few months of 2005 reveals another danger that plagues left parties when they enter institutional space under conditions of neoliberal democracy: the temptation to which valuable compañeros have succumbed by resorting to the same practices used by the bourgeoisie to maintain their power. The issue that detonated the crisis was the accusation that leaders of the government and the PT were operating a financial scheme, known in Brazil as Caja 2, that involved receiving secret donations that were used to cover expenses of the PT and other parties of the government alliance. Although what was involved was not a case of personal enrichment or corruption, it was a violation of the principles held by the PT since its founding. This tarnished even the "minimum plan" of the current center-left forces, which consisted of "staking out the difference" with regard to the bourgeois governments, if not through a break with the status quo imposed by financial capital, at least through transparent and efficient government administration.

Between the "rock" of the expectations created by the election of a left government and the "hard place" of the system of transnational domination that prevents the satisfaction of such expectations lies the government of the Broad Front of Uruguay headed by President Tabaré. Following its electoral victory in October 2004, on March 1, 2005, the government of the Broad Front-Progressive Encounter-New Majority took office, after Progressive Encounter and the New Majority joined the Broad Front to form a single political coalition in December 2005.

The Uruguayan government, which encompasses left, center-

left, and center political forces, has a legislative majority in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, although it does not have a sufficient majority to enact constitutional reforms. The Broad Front (FA) consolidated its victory and drew a new political map in the municipal elections of May 2005, for the first time retaining not only the mayor's office in Montevideo — which it won for the fourth consecutive time with 60 percent of the votes — but also having governors elected in seven other provinces. Thus, the control exercised for 170 years by right-wing parties over the national government and the municipal governments outside the capital was broken. Today the FA controls an area inhabited by 75 percent of the population and in which 80 percent of the country's wealth is produced.

Like Lula's government in Brazil, Vázquez's cabinet prioritizes — and makes advance payments on — foreign debt obligations based on the premise that this will allow, eventually, for the accumulation of surpluses that can be invested in economic and social development. Despite the restrictions determined by these priorities — which are not insignificant — the FA has paid unprecedented attention to the demands of the popular sectors.

One can agree or disagree, to a greater or lesser extent, with the objectives, strategy, and tactics of any left current. However, when exercising that right "from the outside" in cases such as those of the PT and the FA, it should be with respect and moderation, because these are pluralist political forces, within which different political and ideological currents converge, each formulating and defending their own vision of the emancipation project that their party, movement, or coalition fights for, as well as the strategy and the tactics to build it. From this flows the consideration that, whatever opinion an external critic might have on the general political line or on the concrete actions of these organizations — or similar forces — it is very probable that within them there are already groups of leaders or activists that defend similar opinions,

with a much greater knowledge of the situation. What is most important to keep in mind is that organizations such as the PT and the FA are attempting to blaze a trail in almost virgin terrain, and therefore their successes as well as their mistakes will contribute valuable experiences to the rest of the Latin American left.

Another left candidate that ran in a presidential election in 2004 was the recently deceased Schafik Jorge Handal, of El Salvador's FMLN. Schafik was defeated, despite obtaining a higher vote than any elected president in the history of that nation. Among other factors, his defeat can be attributed to the interference of US imperialism in the electoral campaign, such as Washington's threat to halt remittances and massively repatriate undocumented Salvadoran immigrants living in the United States, which contributed to the candidate of the official party, ARENA, receiving an even larger vote than that obtained by Handal. This imperialist interference was similar to what has occurred in all the Nicaraguan presidential elections since 1990.

Just when the governments of Lula in Brazil and Tabaré in Uruguay decided to seek a good conduct report from financial capital — which would have left Venezuela alone in confronting imperialism and the national oligarchy — Evo Morales was elected president of Bolivia in December 2005, despite the interference of US imperialism. Evo's election as the candidate of the Movement to Socialism (MAS) was an unprecedented development for several reasons: he is the first indigenous president in the history of Bolivia — and the first in Latin America, since Benito Juárez in Mexico; he is the first leader of the left and the popular movement in Bolivia to become head of state; and this was the first time a presidential candidate obtained 53.7 percent of the vote — higher than the 50 percent plus one required by law, eliminating any possibility that Evo's victory would be overturned by the National Congress.

Evo's election can be attributed to his ability to capitalize on

the effects of the crisis that broke out in October 2003, during which president Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada was deposed and his replacement, Carlos Mesa, proved unable to rise to the occasion. In general, the traditional political forces were unable to satisfy the demands of the popular movement, including the nationalization of the country's energy resources and the election of a Constituent Assembly. In addition to support from the indigenous majorities and other sectors on the bottom of the Bolivian social pyramid, the MAS attracted the vote of the lower middle class, comprised of poorly paid professionals and small businesspeople and shopkeepers on the road to ruin.

The new Bolivian president will face a range of challenges that fall into three categories: first, to form a functional and consistent government and a political force able to mobilize the popular sectors on its behalf; second, to satisfy the expectations created by the election, which will necessitate overcoming the resistance of the transnational and national power structures to the new administration's efforts to implement the popular agenda; and third, to defeat the destabilization campaign that imperialism launched immediately after the election. In this regard, a reactionary offensive against Evo can be expected, similar to that conducted against Chávez in recent years.

Although we are not considering them among these other victories of left candidates, the elections of Néstor Kirchner in Argentina (February 2003) and Michelle Bachelet in Chile (January 2006) also hinder the "maximum plan" of imperialist domination. Kirchner's success was due to his rejection of the FTAA and other aspects of Bush's policy, and Bachelet's election was the result of the impact of the communist vote in the second round, mobilized to block the ultra-right candidate.

In general, the current political system has been discredited and the bankruptcy of its institutions exposed, especially after Lula's victory in the Brazilian elections in 2002 and Néstor Kirchner's

election in Argentina. Furthermore, Kirchner subsequently implemented a policy of honorable negotiation with the IMF and attempted to meet important political and social demands (not so much economic demands) raised by the left and the popular movements. This reflects the retreat that transnational capital and the Creole oligarchy have been forced to beat. They had been betting on a weakening of Kirchner's administration in order to regain the offensive, either to push the government toward orthodox neoliberalism, or to destabilize it to demonstrate that there is no alternative to that policy.

The Kirchner government has been strengthened by the popular perception that it has been able to contain the political, economic, and social problems that have plagued the country over the past four years. The strengthening of the Kirchner administration was clearly indicated in the legislative elections of October 2005, in which voters elected part of the National Congress, the legislatures in eight provinces — including the federal capital and the provinces of Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, and Córdoba — and their corresponding municipalities, where 75 percent of the population resides.

After maintaining an ambivalent relationship with the George W. Bush administration, which during 2005 seemed to indicate that the Argentine government was drawing closer to Washington, the differences between the two sides sharpened when President Kirchner joined with Hugo Chávez, Lula, and Tabaré at the Mar del Plata summit as an outspoken opponent of the proposal to relaunch the FTAA negotiations; this was confirmed when he later traveled to Venezuela to sign collaboration agreements. Kirchner combined criticism of the IMF and the transnational companies that violate the terms of privatizations with a heterodox neoliberal policy, his social rhetoric hiding the priority given to debt payment to the same IMF and his guarantee that profits can be sent abroad.

This current political spectrum of Latin American governments

from the center to the left might also include Mexico — that is, in the event that Andrés Manuel López Obrador, candidate of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), the Democratic Convergence Party (PCD), and the Workers Party (PT) emerges as the victor in the July 2006 presidential elections. López Obrador is the candidate of a broad and heterogeneous spectrum that encompasses sectors of the left, center-left, and center. He won popularity as a PRD leader because of his image as a dedicated, honest, austere, and efficient administrator when he was mayor of Mexico City. Part of López Obrador's popularity is due to the attempt by President Fox and the PRI leadership to fabricate charges to disqualify him as a presidential candidate, a maneuver that made him a national figure and earned him massive grassroots support.

The performance of the Socialist Party of Chile (PSCh), the Party for Democracy (PPD), and the Radical Social Democratic Party (PRSD) within the Coalition of Parties for Democracy, which has governed in Chile since 1990, cannot be considered as part of the same left, center-left, and center spectrum as the governments of Lula in Brazil and Tabaré in Uruguay, and not even as occupying the progressive center as the Kirchner government does in Argentina. It is enough to recall that Chile was the second Latin American country, after Mexico, that signed a free trade agreement with the United States, and that it is an active promoter of the FTAA. This being said, it can be argued that Michelle Bachelet's election as president and the change in the correlation of forces that occurred in Congress at the expense of the ultra-right sectors is preventing Chile's situation from further deteriorating.

The victory of the socialist Bachelet, with 52 percent of the vote cast in the second round of the presidential election held on January 15, 2006, opened the road to the fourth successive government led by the Coalition. The defeated candidate was Sebastian Piñera of the Alliance for Chile, formed by Independent Democratic Union

(UDI) and National Renewal (RN), both representing the most recalcitrant right-wing sectors, who obtained a not unimpressive 46 percent of the vote.

The Communist Party played a decisive role in Bachelet's victory by mobilizing their voters to get her to commit herself politically and morally to eliminating the binominal electoral system imposed by Pinochet to discriminate against left forces. Bachelet's victory was combined with the change in the correlation of forces in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies that occurred in the elections held in December 2005 and the first round of the presidential race, which favored the Coalition over the extreme right-wing parties. At the same time, within the Coalition, the center-left and center pole comprised of the PSCh, the PPD, and the PRSD benefited, at the expense of the right-wing pole of the PDC.

The government of Martin Torrijos in Panama has been one case where present performance has not been consistent with historical antecedents. Elected in 2004, he generated expectations that he would develop a center-left policy, evoking memories of General Omar Torrijos and the existence of left currents within the governing Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD). However, the Torrijos government has been one of the main defenders of the FTAA, and Panama City aspires to be its home base. Factors complicating relations between Panama and the United States, however, have been the rejection of the terms of the FTAA by the Panamanian agricultural sector and the interest demonstrated by the Panamanian leader in reestablishing diplomatic relations and expanding collaboration with Cuba.

Relations between Cuba and Panama, which had been broken following the pardon granted by former president Mireya Moscoso to four terrorists of Cuban origin who planned an attempt on the life of Cuban President Fidel Castro in Panama, were reestablished on August 20, 2005. This date was the 21st anniversary of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries

following the break in ties imposed by the OAS at the Punta del Este meeting. One of the main proponents of the initial re-establishment of diplomatic relations was the now deceased Omar Torrijos.

Although this book does not analyze the events that have occurred in the English, French, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries, it is impossible to ignore the developments that have taken place in Haiti in the past few years. Amid a sharp political crisis that saw a wave of violence led by armed gangs, in February 2004 US special forces occupied Haiti's Presidential Palace, forced president Jean-Bertrand Aristide to resign, and sent him to an African country. The Haitian provisional government and UN peacekeeping forces took two years to organize elections for a new constitutional president and a new legislature. After several postponements attributed to organizational and logistical problems, these elections were held on February 7, 2006.

In the initial figures released by the National Electoral Council (CNE), the former prime minister (of the Aristide government) and ex-president René Preval appeared to have more than 60 percent of the popular vote, while his nearest rival barely surpassed 11 percent. However, in following vote tally updates, Preval's vote "fell" to less than 50 percent, forcing him into a second round in which the other defeated candidates agreed to form a common bloc against him. The evidence of fraud against Preval — including thousands of ballots found in garbage dumps and subsequently shown on television — and the protests of his followers, led the CNE to award each candidate a number of blank votes proportional to their respective percentages, after which Preval was elected president with more than 51 percent.[9]

It is important to note that the logistics, security, and transparency of the Haitian electoral process were the responsibility of a contingent of UN peacekeepers led by a Brazilian general and including, among others, soldiers from two countries governed

by left presidents, Brazil and Uruguay, and soldiers from a nation led by a progressive president, Argentina, and another country governed by a president with a prior history on the left, Chile. The Bush administration and its allies in Haiti had no scruples in committing fraud that, by commission, omission, tolerance, or ignorance, would implicate the left and progressive Latin American governments with troops in that country.

Of the right-wing Latin American governments, who are generally under fire from the intensification of the political, economic, and social crisis, the one enjoying the best fortune is Álvaro Uribe's administration in Colombia. The decision of the Colombian Constitutional Court to approve the reelection of the president opened the door to a second term in office for Uribe, whose "strong-man" image inspires broad support in a population weary of continued insecurity and violence. Another important development on the political terrain is the fusion of two coalitions, the center-left Independent Democratic Pole (PDI) and the left-wing Democratic Alternative (AD), in a new electoral front known as the Alternative Democratic Pole (PDA). Although the PDA's presidential candidate for the May 2006 elections faced an uphill battle, the new coalition represented an important effort to unite the entire left, center-left, and center spectrum in a common front in opposition to the ultra-right bloc headed by Uribe.

Paradoxically, although the promise "to pacify" the country is what sustains Uribe's popularity, his Democratic Security Policy has not been able to either destroy or inflict major casualties on the insurgent movements. The most noticeable failure of Uribe's policy was what is known as the Patriot Plan, a military campaign involving more than 17,000 soldiers against the FARC-EP. The supposed success received tremendous media coverage, but the government failed to prove this by exhibiting dead, wounded, or captured guerrilla fighters.

One of Uribe's actions that has been widely rejected by

national and international public opinion was the approval of the Justice and Peace Law, which provided legal backing for the demobilization of and amnesty for the paramilitary forces, some of which adopted new modalities to continue operating within the repressive criminal web of the drug trade and the counter-insurgency, while others immediately resumed the activities that had supposedly been abandoned. According to declarations made by their own leaders, the paramilitary forces have the support of 35 percent of the senators and deputies in the National Congress.

In order to compensate for the costs generated by the Democratic Security Policy and the amnesty for the paramilitary forces, Uribe adopted two measures. One was a dialogue with the ELN in Havana, held in the third week of December 2005 to explore the possibility of initiating peace talks; and the other one was to torpedo — behind the facade of a supposed acceptance — the proposal of a European commission comprised of Spain, France, and Switzerland, which would have allowed for concretizing the humanitarian exchange of prisoners proposed by the FARC-EP.

Elsewhere in South America, right-wing governments have not enjoyed such a favorable panorama as in Colombia. In 2005, although Alejandro Toledo's government in Peru established a new record for being unpopular, discredited, and the target of social protests, still no political current brought it down as there was hope that a coalition might emerge in the April 2006 election campaign that might deal with the crisis. Sixteen presidential candidates, 12 of them right-wing and four left-wing, registered for those elections. Recognizing that no one would obtain more than 50 percent of the votes needed in the first round, each candidate tried to form alliances for the second round, pragmatically not ruling out the possibility of some combination of right-wing, center, and left parties.

In Ecuador, as occurred with former presidents Abdalá Bucaram and Jamil Mahuad, the fall of President Lucio Gutiérrez

in April 2005 only saw the recycling of neoliberal policies and submission to US imperialism, particularly through the administration of interim president Alfredo Palacio. The difference was that the mobilizations leading to Gutiérrez's resignation were not called by political parties, the trade unions, or the indigenous movements, but by the middle and upper classes of Quito that, since February, had demanded his removal from office with protests that eventually involved many thousands of people.

Central America, the region most subjugated by US imperialism, was devastated by the lack of environmental protection and civil defense policies adequate to deal with natural disasters. Amid floods and mudslides, on October 10, 2005, the FMLN of El Salvador celebrated its 25th anniversary. Following its defeat in the 2004 presidential election, the FMLN focused its attention on the March 2006 legislative and municipal races, in which it hoped to recover — or even to increase — its parliamentary caucus and the mayors that it had lost through desertions. Schafik Jorge Handal, a member of the national leadership of the FMLN and head of its legislative caucus, died in January 2006 when he was returning from Evo Morales's swearing-in ceremony in Bolivia. His death represents an irreparable loss, not only for the Salvadoran left, but for all of Latin America and the world.

In Nicaragua, following the setbacks of 1990, 1996, and 2002, the general secretary of the FSLN, Daniel Ortega Saavedra, is preparing to launch his fourth presidential campaign for the November 2006 elections. The most likely candidates are Ortega and liberal constitutionalist Eduardo Montealegre, the US government's favorite to head the "everyone against the FSLN" alliance, which was successfully organized in the three previous elections. Another candidate that is attracting the attention of the media and voters is the former mayor of Managua, Herty Lewites, who is trying to bring together the scattered forces of those who broke with the FSLN during the past 15 years since the defeat of the

Sandinista revolution in February 1990.

The 12th FSP conference was held in July 2005 in the same Brazilian city in which it was born, amid a complex interaction between imperialism's efforts to expand and deepen its penetration in Latin America and the struggles of the left and the popular movements that are resisting this external domination. During these 15 years, the FSP has been the most palpable and comprehensive expression of the transformation of the Latin American left in the last years of the 20th century and the first years of the 21st century.

The FSP is currently passing through a complex stage in which its identity is being defined. To the extent that many of the political parties and movements that are members of this regional grouping have begun to put into practice strategies and tactics that they were only able to dream about 15 years ago, the intensity of the political and ideological debates within the FSP has deepened. Today no one knows how much longer the FSP will continue to function, because the very development of the popular struggle demands a constant modification of the forms and methods used by the left political parties and movements for relating to each other. This modification may signify a renewal of the FSP or other bodies that might take its place. In any event, the FSP's contribution to the debate, coordination, and the solidarity between the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, and between them and other regions of the world, has already won a worthy place in history.

Latin America Between the Centuries

An analysis of the main events that took place in Latin America between 1989 and 2005 allows us to identify the development of four irrevocably linked processes: the first is the subordination of the region to a system of worldwide and continental domination that is qualitatively more advanced than that of the bipolar era; the second is the political, economic, and social crisis caused by the inability of the Latin American nation-states to fulfill their assigned functions within this new system of domination; the third is the rise in the struggles of the popular movements against neoliberalism; and the fourth is the strategic and tactical reformulation by the left political parties, movements, and coalitions to adapt to current conditions.

A qualitatively higher form of domination

Slightly more than a century after the 1889–90 International American Conference in Washington, US imperialism was able to make its youthful dream a reality, namely, to institutionalize a political, economic, military, and ideological system of domination and subordination of Latin America. This vision was based on the acceptance by Latin American ruling political forces and the social

sectors that they represent of the principles and premises of their own domination and subordination, an acceptance partly imposed on them and partly the result of their complicity.

The inter-American system is no longer composed solely, and not even primarily, of the OAS and other regional mechanisms, such as the Río Treaty, the Inter-American Defense Board, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Above this obsolete scaffolding, we now have the Summits of the Americas, and the ministerial, sectoral, and thematic meetings based on imposition/negotiation held under this "umbrella," the "certification" processes through which the US government "judges" the "behavior" of others, the conditions placed on trade agreements and military and non-military assistance, and other direct and indirect pressures. But there is more. All the institutions and agencies, mechanisms and agreements, regional, sub-regional or bilateral — whether or not the United States participates in them, whether they were established before or after 1991, and whether or not they are part of the inter-American system — are the foundations of the new system of transnational domination, through lip service to "representative democracy," "human rights," and the "market economy."

Although the new model of imperialist continental domination is not exempt from contradictions and resistance, it fulfills its role of appropriating the independence, sovereignty, and self-determination of Latin America. It represents the imposition of a "straightjacket" that eliminates the possibility of progressive reform or a revolutionary situation. Nevertheless, this system of domination is a giant with clay feet.

The worsening of the capitalist crisis in Latin America

The purpose of this system of domination is to impose the political, economic, and social conditions that guarantee the maximum transfer of wealth from Latin America to the centers of imperialist power, particularly the United States, with a minimum flow of productive investment. It is a process that, instead of creating new sources of wealth, appropriates and plunders those that already exist. If we consider that the wealth produced in the region was always insufficient to satisfy social needs and that, in addition, it is the most unequally distributed on the entire planet, we can understand that the result is the worsening of the crisis of Latin American capitalism, which intensifies and extends the social contradictions. It intensifies them because it further removes resources whose historical deficit has always been a cause of instability and it extends them because it not only affects the traditionally deprived social groups, but also the Creole bourgeoisies and the increasingly polarized, fragmented, and diminished middle layers, which were previously part of the dominant social bloc.

Viewed from another angle, the new system of domination is based on an exclusive and vertical transnational integration of the deep pockets of the economy and the Latin American technocratic elites that imperialism incorporates into the transnational cycle of capital accumulation. From this flows the conclusion that in each country these "deep pockets" of the economy (oil and other natural resources, financial, commercial, and service sectors, *maquiladoras*, and others), and the elites, including the local partners of transnational financial capital and their white-collar employees are isolated from the rest of the nation. It is these uprooted elites who do not live, think, feel, or suffer like Latin Americans, who pull the strings of political power in the region, and who do so at the behest of the transnational companies, albeit within certain limits.

This disintegration destroys the social structure and the system of political alliances on which the equilibrium — precarious, unstable and short term, but an equilibrium nonetheless — was established and maintained by the Latin American republics during the national developmentalist period.

The concentration of property, production, and political power has the "collateral," undesired (yet unavoidable) effect of destroying the capacity of the Latin American nation-states to fulfill their three basic functions as links in the chain of imperialist domination. These functions are the overseas transfer of the largest amount of wealth possible, whatever the economic, political, and social costs; the permanent redistribution of political and economic power within the dominant national sectors; and the co-optation of some subordinate social groups (certain trade unions, peasant, neighborhood, and women's organizations and others of a pork-barrelling nature), with the aim of facilitating the control and repression of the popular majorities. It is clear that the first of these functions prevents the other two from being accomplished.

The Latin American states cannot redistribute political and economic power to resolve the contradictions within the elites because the elites themselves are polarized between those sectors dedicated to finance, services, and commerce —which become appendages of transnational financial capital — and the productive sectors oriented to the domestic market, which are now true "endangered species" — the remnants of developmentalism. The state is also unable to maintain the status previously enjoyed by the middle classes, the main beneficiaries of the public services provided during the developmentalist period, whose place is currently taken by the technocrats employed by the transnational monopolies, which reproduce the way of life and the ideology of the North, of which they consider themselves part. The state is even less likely to co-opt the popular sectors, because the working class swells the ranks of the unemployed, the underemployed,

and those working in the informal economy, while the number of peasant farmers declines and the number of landless agricultural workers grows.

The rise in social struggles

"Globalization" and the "scientific technological revolution" are not new phenomena that represent a landmark in the history of humanity, but are, in fact, the products of their own historical development; by the same token individuals and groups who struggle against contemporary capitalist domination and exploitation are not "new subjects" or "new social actors." We should remind ourselves that neither the native peoples of the American continent, nor the descendants of African slaves, nor women are "new" on this planet.

The native American peoples have a millennial history; they have fought against domination, exploitation, and ethnic oppression for more than 500 years. So too did the Black population, descendents of the African slaves brought to the Americas during the conquest and colonization. They have written glorious chapters in their history, such as the victory of the Haitian revolution. This struggle not only gave rise to the first independent republic in Latin America and the Caribbean, but Haiti was also the first country to abolish slavery in the Western Hemisphere. The same phenomenon occurred with the feminist movement, whose history dates back as far as that of the labor and socialist movements. The seeds of these three movements, the women's, workers', and socialist movements, reached Latin America with immigrants from Europe during the period of the development of modern capitalist industry. The landless, homeless, and other groups that struggle against other manifestations of social exclusion and the concentration of wealth are also the descendants of the permanently

marginalized. Where we can speak of new subjects or new actors are in those sectors struggling against more recent problems, such as the destruction of the environment and the human rights violations committed by military dictatorships.

Something different has occurred with the emergence of new social movements. In Latin America we can indeed speak of the existence, development, and consolidation of new social movements — of workers, peasants, the landless, the homeless, indigenous peoples, Blacks, women, environmentalists, human rights advocates, and others — because the objectives of their struggles, their composition, their organizational expression, and many other features, represent a response to the new forms of capitalist domination and exploitation. They are, overwhelmingly, historical social subjects or actors organized today in new movements.

Of course, in a world in which transnationalization and denationalization reign supreme, the Latin American popular movements have points in common with their counterparts in the rest of the world, including those in the North. Nevertheless, as in other fields, it is a frequent error to mechanically transplant the experiences of Western Europe and North America to Latin America. It is not "post-materialism," but poverty, which unites the entire spectrum of the Latin American popular movements.[1]

In Latin America, popular movements played an indisputable leading role during the 1964 to 1990 period, because after the initial repression unleashed by the military dictatorships they were able to open a certain space for social struggles, while the left political parties and organizations were still subjected to repression that, in most cases, led to their decapitation and almost to their destruction. Between the 1980s and 1990s, new popular movements emerged in Latin America, swimming against the stream of neoliberalism. These movements functioned, on the one hand, as a sanctuary for many left leaders and activists, disenchanted by their political experiences or frustrated by the apparent impossibility of

effecting structural change, and on the other, as a space for the incorporation, education and training, organization, and mobilization of a young generation of fighters. In countries such as Brazil, Mexico, and Uruguay, these new popular movements were a key component of the rising tide of parties and political movements that tried to adjust the historical practice of combining social protest with electoral struggle to the new conditions. It should be pointed out that it was the new social movements that promoted the initial development of such an important party as the PT of Brazil.

The struggles of the Latin American popular movements did not decline even in the most confused and complex moments of the terminal crisis of Eastern European socialism. At that moment, however, a capitalist offensive was launched that, in a general sense, placed the popular movements on the defensive, with the argument that the neoliberal restructuring was indispensable to square accounts with previous "excesses" in the redistribution of wealth, and that the concentration of wealth had become a necessary condition for its subsequent disbursement. The notion prevailed that it was not only impossible to replace capitalism with a higher form of society, but it was even impossible to maintain an economic model not determined by inequality as a "dynamic" element — an argument that rejected any idea of class struggle, even around daily demands. It was the Zapatista insurrection in Chiapas in January 1994 and the Mexican financial crisis in December of that same year that marked a breakthrough in this ideological barrier. From that moment, we can speak of a rise in the popular struggle in Latin America.

It is logical that the active role played by the popular movements would expand in the current stage of neoliberal democracy, for at least four reasons: first, because these movements took on their own life and their own reasons for existence; second, because the socioeconomic crisis worsened considerably; third, because the

increase in competition among workers, encouraged by neoliberal accumulation, weakened the labor movement and other traditional forms of organization and social struggle; and fourth, because the political system became "impervious" to prevent the parties from serving as intermediaries between the bourgeois state and society, even in the limited way that they had done in the past,

For some years now, the Latin American popular movements have become capable of bringing down neoliberal governments. This can be seen in the cases of Fernando Collor de Mello in Brazil; Carlos Andrés Pérez in Venezuela; Abdalá Bucaram, Jamil Mahuad, and Lucio Gutiérrez in Ecuador; Fernando de la Rúa and his immediate successors in Argentina; and Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada and Carlos Mesa in Bolivia. However, in none of those cases did the fall of the neoliberal regime lead to its replacement by a popular government. It was only in Venezuela, Brazil, and Bolivia that left leaderships arose capable of making political gains, and where the crisis created the conditions for the victory of presidential candidates representative of the popular sectors. Thus, Hugo Chávez won a five-year mandate in Venezuela following Pérez's spectacular fall from power; Lula took office in Brazil in the third presidential election (10 years) held after the fall of Collor, and Evo Morales in Bolivia won the election held six months after Mesa's resignation. These were three political victories obtained by leaders who were able to unite and channel the strength of the popular movements whose interests they represented.

Several factors determine the complex relationship between the popular movements and the left political parties in Latin America: the diversity and the heterogeneity of the popular movements, many of them organized around a single or main issue; the reduced capacity of the left parties and political movements to force concrete concessions from the bourgeoisie within the "contested space" that Gramsci spoke about; the rejection of "politics" and "political parties" encouraged by imperialism to ensure div-

isions within the revolutionary social subject; previous traumas caused by the manipulation of the popular movements based on the short-term objectives of many left political parties and fronts; and the isolation of some sectors of the left from their social base, when electoral success becomes an end in and of itself, for which they are willing to respect the neoliberal status quo in practice, if not in their discourse.

Left political alternatives

With the victory of the Cuban revolution, the debate over forms of struggle was revisited in Latin America, specifically between those supporting the armed struggle that had been effective in Cuba and partisans of the electoral participation developed by the political parties of the traditional left, which encompassed both the social democratic as well as the socialist and communist parties. In earlier chapters we presented an overview of how US imperialism and its Latin American allies developed a counterinsurgency and counterrevolutionary offensive from 1964 to 1990. This offensive made no distinction with regard to forms of popular struggle. Both the left political parties as well as the revolutionary political military movements were repressed. With equal fury, imperialism overthrew the constitutional Popular Unity government in Chile (1973); militarily invaded Grenada (1984) and Panama (1989); and destroyed the Sandinista revolution (1990).

Twenty years passed between the victory of the Cuban people (1959) and the triumph of the Grenadian and Nicaraguan revolutions (1979). The Grenadian experience facilitated the conditions and the pretext for a US military invasion, through the internal conspiracy that led to the assassination of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. The Nicaraguan revolution succumbed in the February 1990 elections as a result of the exhaustion caused by the low

intensity war, the decline in Soviet support, and errors acknowledged by the Sandinista leadership itself. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba faced unprecedented isolation. This marked the end of the stage of revolutionary struggles that began in 1959, and ended the debate on forms of struggle, which was, above all, a discussion on whether or not a revolutionary situation existed in Latin America.

Due to the close links between, on the one hand, armed struggle and social revolution, and on the other, electoral struggle and the reform of capitalism, after the defeat of the Sandinista revolution the political and ideological debate in the Latin American left leaned toward reform and away from revolution. As a result, there was no longer talk of the revolutionary left, but of transforming the left. However, the New World Order was not only conceived to prevent socialist revolution, but also to block the progressive social reform of capitalism; so the problem of the strategy and the tactics of the left reemerged time and time again. In general, the "reformist" currents feel that this historical debate is closed, while the "transformers" search the inventory of errors made by the Soviet Union in order to elaborate a new socialist platform based on the commitment not to repeat those errors.

In today's conditions of a unipolar world, two factors stand out in the region. The first is that the elements of the revolutionary situation that ebbed and flowed from 1959 to 1989 have become blurred. The second is that for the first time in history, imperialism and its Latin American allies have adopted a casuistic approach to the space conquered by left parties in local and state governments, in national legislatures, and even in the governments of several countries. Does this mean that in Latin America the road to social revolution has been closed and the path to the progressive reform of capitalism has opened up? The answer is no.

After the collapse of Eastern European socialism, the ebb experienced by the revolutionary forces and the reestablishment of

bourgeois democratic institutionalism in the countries governed by military dictatorships, and the increase in the economic and social crisis in the second half of the 1980s, unprecedented space opened up for electoral struggle by the Latin American left. It is no accident that the end of bipolarity and the downturn in the revolutionary wave coincided with the supposed democratization process. As the New World Order emerged, insurgent organizations disappeared or became political parties. Furthermore, as the system of domination undermined the region's independence, US imperialism decided to replace its opposition to any left electoral victory for a model, apparently more flexible, of democratic governability.[2] This model imposes so many restrictions on the state's sovereign decision-making capacity and ability to act that the problem is no longer who exercises governmental power, but rather that whoever does so must respect the "rules of the game."

Democratic governability promotes what Zemelman defines as "alternation within the project," which means a schema of "democratic" alternation between individuals and parties elected to government, all of them subject to a single neoliberal project that cannot be replaced or modified beyond very narrow margins.[3] However, "alternation within the project" leads to failure because it provokes a chain reaction, wherein the "project" intensifies the crisis, the crisis strengthens social struggles, and social struggles begin to connect with the political struggle of the left, including its electoral expression. This chain reaction threatens to break free of the straightjacket imposed by imperialism to annul the effect of the victories of the Latin American left.

It is worthwhile to review the balance sheet of the victories and setbacks experienced by left presidential candidates between 1988 and January 2006. Of the 28 elections that have taken place in this period in which left presidential candidates stood, 19 defeats were registered and nine victories were scored. The defeats occurred in Mexico, 1988, 1994, and 2002 (Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, PRD); Brazil,

1989, 1993, and 1997 (Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, PT); Uruguay, 1990 (Líber Seregni, FA); 1994 and 1998 (Tabaré Vázquez, FA); Nicaragua, 1990, 1994, and 1998 (Daniel Ortega, FSLN); Peru, 1990 (Henry Pease, United Left); Venezuela, 1994 (Andrés Velásquez, Radical Cause); Colombia, 1994 (Antonio Navarrese Wolf, AD-M19); El Salvador, 1994 (Rubén Zamora, Convergence), 1998 (Facundo Guardado, FMLN), and 2004 (Schafik Handal, FMLN); and Bolivia, 2002 (Evo Morales, MAS). The victories were in Panama, 1995 (Ernesto Pérez, PRD) and 2004 (Martin Torrijos, PRD); Venezuela, 1998 and 2001 (Hugo Chávez, MVR); Chile, 2000 (Ricardo Lagos, Coalition) and 2006 (Michelle Bachelet, Coalition); Brazil, 2002 (Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, PT); Uruguay, 2004 (Tabaré, FA), and Bolivia, 2005 (Evo Morales, MAS).[4] If we consider that the electoral victories of Pérez Balladares, Lagos, Torrijos, and Bachelet led to the formation of center and center-right governments, this leaves 24 elections, with 19 defeats and five victories. These victories were Hugo Chávez's two wins and one each for Lula, Tabaré, and Evo Morales.

It cannot be said that the victories of Chávez, Lula, Tabaré, and Morales mark a general move to the left in Latin America, because in few countries is there a left with a sufficient degree of unity and electoral capacity, and moreover, the real possibilities of implementing a leftist program of government are very limited. In reality, the political trend is toward an intensification of the political, economic, social, and moral crises that are battering the region, and these crises have only translated into victory for left presidential candidates in countries where liberal democratic institutions were discredited, as in Venezuela and Bolivia, or where the leftist forces had accumulated a political and social strength that allowed them to take advantage of the weakening of the right, as in Brazil and Uruguay.

Only in the elections of Chávez and Evo Morales was there a direct link between the weakness of the institutional political

system, the rise in the social movements, and a popular political force taking office, in circumstances in which it was possible to break with, at least in part, the restrictions imposed by the model of domination. It is of course true that the socioeconomic crisis and the rise of the social movements were ingredients in the victories of Lula and Vásquez, but in Brazil and Uruguay we did not see a worsening of the crisis or a social explosion that could have put the institutional equilibrium in danger. Even more than in Brazil and Uruguay, the crisis and the social struggle were key ingredients in Néstor Kirchner's rise to office in Argentina. However, in the case of Kirchner we are not dealing with a leftist leader, but rather a politician from a traditional party who attempted to establish and maintain a difficult political, economic, and social equilibrium.

The main problem of the electoral struggle, however, is not quantitative. The other reason why we cannot speak of a general favorable move to the left is because, even when progressive forces manage to win presidential elections, such victories take place under conditions in which it is very difficult to use the reins of government to halt — and much less to reverse — neoliberal restructuring. This is not to deny or to underestimate the importance of the institutional spaces won by the left, but to understand that these achievements are not in themselves the alternative. The priority of the left cannot be to win government and claim a permanent space within the neoliberal bourgeois schema of parties alternating in power, but rather, to politically accumulate power with a view to the future revolutionary transformation of society.

Analyzing the relationship between imperialist domination and popular struggles in the period between 1988 and 2006, we can conclude that the predominant factor in Latin America continues to be the system of continental domination imposed to prevent or destroy any attempt at social revolution or progressive reform. Recognizing this system of domination, the left governments of

Venezuela, Brazil, Uruguay, and Bolivia are subject to the conditions of the schema of "democratic governability" that imperialism redefines, almost on a daily basis, so that presidents Chávez and Morales fail to meet its criteria of "legitimacy." Nevertheless, although imperialist interference and intervention might be the dominant force in the region for a long period, during which there will be advances and setbacks for the left and the popular movements, we can assert that this system of domination has lost the steamroller effectiveness of its first few years, and that it is already showing signs of exhaustion. Among these signs are the failure of Plan Colombia and the Andean Regional Initiative, the refusal to accept the US military presence — or to grant immunity to its troops — by several governments in the region, the inability of Washington to impose its favored candidate as secretary general of the OAS, the stagnation of several bilateral or sub-regional free trade agreements, and the defeats suffered by the FTAA, in particular, at the Mar del Plata Summit in December 2005.

In the dialectical analysis of the relative strengths and weaknesses of imperialist domination, it is necessary to consider the balance sheet of the electoral struggles of the left. When US policy planners decided to impose the concept of democratic governability in Latin America, they did so convinced that within this schema there would be no room for any government that would challenge its interests. When this assumption was not realized in practice, imperialism was obliged to implement a different policy in three scenarios:

- In the Caribbean Basin, the sub-region most subjected to Washington's dictates, the crudest violations of sovereignty, independence, and self-determination take place. The fear that the presidential candidates of the FSLN in Nicaragua and the FMLN in El Salvador might win leads imperialism to openly interfere in the electoral processes in these countries, including

the threat of the massive repatriation of immigrants and the suspension of remittances. Although this book does not deal with the question of the English, French, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, and apart from the opinion one might hold on his government, it is impossible to ignore Jean-Bertrand Aristide's forced resignation as Haiti's president and his removal to Africa by US troops in February 2004. It is even more difficult to ignore the fraud perpetrated in the attempt to steal victory from René Preval in the Haitian presidential elections of February 7, 2006, an attempt that was countered by popular protests.

- The countries of the Andean region have experienced similar interference in their internal affairs, as crude as in the Caribbean Basin, but with different outcomes. The electoral victories of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia were achieved, despite all the efforts to prevent them, because the political crisis and popular support for the left candidates were so great.
- In the Southern Cone, where the Brazilian PT and the Uruguayan FA insist on respect for the institutional political system, Washington did not oppose Lula or Tabaré's victories, calculating that they could be contained within the schema of parties alternating in government but within the neoliberal project.

The arguments presented here demonstrate that neither a process of democratization nor an opening of space for the progressive reform of capitalism has taken place in Latin America. In fact, what we are witnessing is the imposition of a new concept of democracy, neoliberal democracy, capable of "tolerating" left governments as long as they are committed to governing with right-wing policies. At the same time, however, the intensification of the crisis of Latin American capitalism, and the social and political accumulation of

experiences and forces that the left has achieved in some countries, has allowed the left to conquer institutional space to an extent not anticipated by imperialism, and to use that space in ways that to a greater or lesser extent throw a spanner in the works of "democratic governability."

Imperialism took it for granted that the straightjacket imposed on the Latin American and Caribbean states guaranteed that the only political forces — right-wing, center, or even left-wing — that would be elected to government would be those that did not challenge its interests. However, the election of Hugo Chávez and Evo Morales, and the possible successes of the FSLN and FMLN presidential candidates in Nicaragua and El Salvador respectively do not fit into this definition. These experiences do not follow the expected pattern.

No longer can these be regarded as "isolated developments" — "exceptions" in politics caused by unforeseen circumstances — when there is talk of an attempted coup d'état, the "oil lockout," the recall referendum, and the media-orchestrated destabilization campaign against Chávez; or when there is talk of the threat to halt remittances and massively deport Nicaraguan and Salvadoran immigrants from the United States if the presidential candidates of the FSLN and the FMLN win; or when we witness the interference in the most recent election campaign in Bolivia aimed at preventing Evo's victory; or when Yankee marines overthrow, kidnap, and send Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide into exile. The fraud committed to try to snatch victory away from Preval was the straw that broke the camel's back; it is the most recent evidence that US imperialism has failed in its attempt to replace crude interference and intervention in the region with the schema of "democratic governability."

The recent events in Haiti leading to the presidential elections of February 2006 came as an unpleasant surprise to several Latin American governments led by left and progressive parties, move-

ments, and coalitions, which believed that there was some degree of sincerity in the discourse on the "defense of democracy," now that the dictatorships ceased to be useful to imperialism. This confusion can be attributed, in part, to the fact that such a change in imperialist policy facilitated the opening of electoral space that allowed these left and progressive forces to take office.

In order to receive a good conduct report and show their respectability in the current system of international relations, and undoubtedly based on the sincere belief that their troops in Haiti could play a moderating role within the occupation forces, these governments decided to join (or remain in) the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The result is that today these countries have troops as part of the UN peacekeeping mission that carried out, tolerated, did not prevent, or did not know how to avoid the attempted fraud against Preval, and which, immediately afterwards, launched a repression against the Haitian people when they protested against the fraud. Within the broad and heterogeneous spectrum of the left, there can be many points of view on what democracy is and is not, but when, either on the conceptual level or in a practical situation, a left-wing current agrees with imperialism in such circumstances, independent of any other consideration, we should always ask: who is on the wrong side?

History shows that the progressive reform of capitalism has only prospered in those places and at those moments when it was compatible with the process of capital accumulation. This compatibility does not exist today, either in Latin America or in any other region of the world. It can be argued that with the deepening of the contradictions of capitalism, it is impossible for such compatibility to arise again. From this reality flows the conclusion that, sooner or later, the popular content and capitalist "packaging" of the political processes developed by the Latin American left today will lead to an untenable contradiction,

because only a revolutionary social transformation, however it may be accomplished in the 21st century, will resolve the problems of Latin America.

What is called the transformation of the left is also not clear. Part of this current is redefining its concept of socialism, solely on the basis of criticizing the "Soviet model." However, it is not enough to identify all the negative aspects of capitalist society that we seek to eliminate nor all the positive features of the socialist society that we aspire to build. Beyond any doubt, there can be no socialism without socialist democracy, by which we mean a political system that does not copy or transplant bourgeois democracy, but is based on mechanisms of popular participation and representation capable of establishing a consensus that guarantees unity of thought and action on the key points of socialist construction and of mutually reinforcing this unity through the free and constructive flow of all ideas and proposals that reflect the diverse interests of the sectors of society for whose benefit such an effort is being undertaken. Above all, the construction of "popular alternatives" will be conditioned by the concrete historical situation from which new problems will arise that will demand new solutions.

It is not enough to affirm a commitment to building a socialist project that, in addition to eradicating class domination and exploitation, would be characterized by ecological sustainability, gender balance, respect for the sexual preference of each individual, recognition of the cultural diversity of all nations, and other theoretical and practical problems incorporated into contemporary Marxism. It is not enough because the fulfillment of the objectives of socialist construction, both its classical goals as well as those assumed more recently, is determined by where, when, how, and in what conditions the seizure of political power occurs, which must be its indispensable premise. These are questions that have still not been resolved in the conditions of a unipolar world.

Concluding Remarks

It is easier to analyze the world situation — and, within this analysis, the situation of Latin America — than to find solutions to the problems that flow from this analysis. The new system of domination contains a contradiction, the resolution of which requires a new sea change in history. With unprecedented intensity, contemporary imperialism plunders the economy, society, and the environment, to the point where the very survival of the human species is in question. At the same time, it also shakes the foundations of the nation-state, which is the historical arena of popular struggle for both reform and revolution. This is one of the reasons why at present there is a greater development of social resistance than of the construction of left political alternatives.

In essence, the current metamorphosis of the capitalist system does not create a "better" or "worse" scenario for popular struggles and the construction of left political alternatives. But it is a qualitatively different situation, insofar as all the new, objective, real, clear power that capital has at its disposal to secure its domination, is accompanied by the intensification of antagonistic and irresolvable contradictions; and these contradictions are also objective, real, and clear, but which are usually ignored. We still do not have at our disposal all the data on the concrete historical reality that would settle the debate on forms of struggle, but we can be sure that:

- Sooner rather than later the intensification of the global crisis of capitalism will provide us with such information.
- Left political alternatives will have to include the struggle for revolution, even though today the left might have to fight on the level of progressive social reform in response to the neoliberal counterreform.
- The use of some type of revolutionary violence will be inevitable, because those holding power in the world will cling to it to the very end.

100 FACTS IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

Ernesto Che Guevara

Ernesto Che Guevara was an exceptional Latin American, and his life and accomplishments are an enduring inspiration to young Latin Americans. This book, the fruit of a joint publishing program of Cuba's Che Guevara Studies Center and Ocean Press, is a succinct chronology of the 100 most important events in his life. The text is richly illustrated with a selection of images.

2019, 208 pages + images, ISBN: 978-1-925317-56-5

Endnotes

Author's Note

1. Rafael Cervantes Martínez, Felipe Gil Chamizo, Roberto Regalado Álvarez, and Rubén Zardoya Loureda. *Transnacionalización y desnacionalización: ensayos sobre el capitalismo contemporáneo*. First Spanish-language edition: "Tribuna Latinoamericana," Buenos Aires, 2000; second Spanish-language edition: "Nuestra América," Bogotá, 2001; third Spanish-language edition: Editorial "Félix Varela," Havana, 2002. First German-language edition: *Imperialismus Heute: Über den gegenwärtigen transnationalen Monopolkapitalismus*. Neue Impulse Verlag, Munich, 2000.

PART ONE: REFORM OR REVOLUTION?

The Cycles of Capitalist Development

1. The transition between one socioeconomic formation and another does not occur as a uniform, lineal, and simultaneous process. Even at the present time, in many countries of the South, remnants remain of different types of pre-capitalist modes of production and forms of social organization. Nevertheless, their existence does not invalidate the idea that ancient society, slavery, and feudalism disappeared centuries ago as a result of historical development. For Marx and Engels' views on the transition from primitive society to slavery, from slavery to feudalism, and from feudal to capitalist society, see: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. "Feuerbach. Oposición entre las concepciones materialista e idealista," in *Obras Escogidas*, Editorial Progreso, Moscow, 1973, Vol. 1, pp. 16–61; also see Friedrich Engels. "El origen de la familia, la propiedad privada y el Estado" in *Obras Escogidas*, Editora Política, Havana 1963, Vol. 3, pp. 42–120.
2. "The starting-point of the development that gave rise to the wage-laborer, as well as to the capitalist, was the servitude of the laborer.

The advance consisted in a change of form of this servitude, in the transformation of feudal exploitation into capitalist exploitation. To understand its development, we need not go back very far. Although we come across the first beginnings of capitalist production as early as the 14th or 15th century, sporadically, in certain towns of the Mediterranean, the capitalist era dates from the 16th century. Wherever it appears, the abolition of serfdom has been long effected, and the highest development of the Middle Ages, the existence of sovereign towns, has been long on the wane." Karl Marx, *Capital*. Chapter XXVI, "The Secret of Primitive Accumulation." In Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 2, Progress Publishers, 1969, p. 101.

3. "As soon as this process of transformation has sufficiently decayed the old society from top to bottom, as soon as the laborers are turned into proletarians, their means of labor into capital, as soon as the capitalist mode of production stands on its own feet, then the further socialization of labor and further transformation of the land and other means of production into socially exploited and, therefore, common means of production, as well as the further expropriation of private proprietors, takes a new form. That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the laborer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many laborers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalist production itself, by the centralization of capital. One capitalist always kills many." Ibid., p. 144.
4. See: Friedrich Engels. "Del socialismo utópico al socialismo científico" in *Obras Escogidas*. Editora Política, Havana, 1963, Vol. 2, p. 312. Also see Ibid., pp. 358–359.
5. According to Lenin "…the principal stages in the history of monopolies are the following: (1) 1860–70, the highest stage, the apex of development of free competition; monopoly is in the barely discernible, embryonic stage. (2) After the crisis of 1873, a lengthy period of development of cartels; but they are still the exception. They are not yet durable. They are still a transitory phenomenon. (3) The boom at the end of the nineteenth century and the crisis of 1900–03. Cartels become one of the foundations of the whole of economic life. Capitalism has been transformed into imperialism." Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. *El imperialismo, fase superior del capitalism*o (popular outline). Editorial Progreso, Moscow, p. 22.
6. Rafael Cervantes Martínez and others. *Transnacionalización y desnacionalización: ensayos sobre el capitalismo contemporáneo.* Editorial "Félix Varela," Havana, 2002, p. 134.
7. Ibid., pp. 214–242.
8. See Friedrich Engels. "Del socialismo utópico al socialismo científico," op. cit., pp. 366–367.

9. See Vladimir Ilyich Lenin on Hobson. "Reseña de *La evolución del capitalismo moderno*" in *Obras Completas*, Editorial Progreso, Moscow, 1981, Vol. 4, pp. 162–163.
10. Rafael Cervantes Martínez and others. *Transnacionalización y desnacionalización: ensayos sobre el capitalismo contemporáneo*, op. cit., p. 185.
11. I owe this idea to Rafael Cervantes, who generously shared it with me before publishing it —Author's note.

The State, Political Power, and Capitalist Accumulation Between the 16th and 19th Centuries

1. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. "El Manifiesto del Partido Comunista." *Obras Escogidas,* Editorial Progreso, Moscow, 1972, Vol. 1, p. 115.
2. Karl Marx. *El Capital*. Capítulo XXIV, op. cit., p. 148.
3. Ibid., p. 103 (Progress Publishers English-language edition).
4. "The proletariat created by the breaking up of the bands of feudal retainers and by the forcible removal of the people from the soil, this 'free' proletariat could not possibly be absorbed by the nascent manufactures as fast as it was thrown upon the world. On the other hand, these men, suddenly dragged from their wonted mode of life, could not as suddenly adapt themselves to the discipline of their new condition. They were turned *en masse* into beggars, robbers, vagabonds, partly from inclination, in most cases from stress of circumstances. Hence at the end of the 15th and during the whole of the 16th century, throughout Western Europe a bloody legislation against vagabondage. The fathers of the present working class were chastised for their enforced transformation into vagabonds and paupers. Legislation treated them as 'voluntary' criminals, and assumed that it depended on their own good will to go on working under the old conditions that no longer existed." Ibid, p. 118.
5. Ibid., p. 108.
6. "We have seen how the forcible usurpation of this, generally accompanied by the turning of arable into pasture land, begins at the end of the 15th and extends into the 16th century. But, at that time, the process was carried on by means of individual acts of violence against which legislation, for a hundred and fifty years, fought in vain. The advance made by the 18th century shows itself in this, that the law itself becomes now the instrument of the theft of the people's land, although the large farmers make use of their little independent methods as well." Ibid., p. 110. "Finally," Marx explained, "the last process of wholesale expropriation of the agricultural population from the soil is the so-called clearing of estates, *i.e.,* the sweeping men

off them. All the English methods hitherto considered culminated in 'clearing.' …(Now that) there are no more independent peasants to get rid of, the 'clearing' of cottages begins; so that the agricultural laborers do not find on the soil cultivated by them even the spot necessary for their own housing." Ibid., pp. 113–114.
7. Ibid., pp. 126–127 (Spanish-language edition).
8. Friedrich Engels. "Prefacio a la segunda edición alemana de 1892" in "La situación de la clase obrera en Inglaterra," in *Obras Escogidas*, Editora Política, Havana, 1963, Vol. 3, pp. 274–275.
9. Antonio Gramsci. *Cuadernos de la Cárcel*, Vol. 3. Ediciones Era, Mexico City, 1984, pp. 59–60.

Bourgeois Democracy and Political Parties

1. Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State,* Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968, p. 168
2. "One hundred and fifty years ago two manifestos were published, one in February and one in July. One, the Manifesto of the Communist Party, is well known. The other, the Declaration of Sentiments, was not known by the large majority of people at that time and unfortunately it has also been ignored on this anniversary. The statement of the women gathered in Seneca Falls represents the elaboration of the first political points of another social movement that for over a century and a half continues to attempt, also with ebbs and flows, with unifying proposals and divisions, to be recognized as the bearer of the voices of the excluded and repeatedly forgotten in the proposals of political and social organizations. A fine and sinuous thread, sometimes hidden for years, ties the political proposals from the past with the present debate and objectives of the movement. When New York was a mere village, a group of some 300 women and men met to draft the 12 point manifesto entitled the Declaration of Sentiments. That was on July 19–20, 1848." Lucía González Alonso. "Cuestión social, cuestión de géneros: Del 'olvido' al diálogo." "Papeles de la FIM," No. 10, second series. Época, Fundación de Investigaciones Marxistas, Madrid, 1998, p. 131.

The Origins of the Socialist Movement

1. G. D. H. Cole. *Historia del Pensamiento Socialista I: Los precursores (1789–1850).* Fondo de Cultura Económica, Mexico City, 1986, p. 19.
2. Friedrich Engels. "Del socialismo utópico al socialismo científico," op. cit., p. 339 (Spanish-language edition).
3. Ibid.
4. "'Communism' was another word that began to be used in France

during the social turmoil that followed the 1830 revolution. It is not possible to say exactly how and when it arose; but we noticed it for first time in connection with some secret revolutionary societies of Paris during the 1830s and we know that it began to be commonly used toward 1840 to describe Étienne's Cabet's theories. As the French used it, communism evoked the idea of the commune, as the basic unit of the neighborhood and the autonomous government, and it indicated a form of social organization based on a federation of 'free communes.' But at the same time, it suggested the notion of *communauté*, of having things in common and common property. Under this criteria, it was developed by Cabet and his supporters, while the other aspect was related to the secret clubs of the extreme left, and through them, with the revolutionary exiles, who used it in the name of the Communist League of 1847 and in the *Communist Manifesto* of 1848… It was deliberately chosen by the group for which Marx and Engels prepared the *Communist Manifesto*, because it implied more than the word socialist, namely the idea of revolutionary struggle, and at the same time it was more clearly connected with the idea of common property and pursuits. It was, as Engels has explained, less 'utopian,' it better lent itself to be associated with the idea of the class struggle and with the materialist concept of history." G. D. H. Cole. *Historia del Pensamiento Socialista I: Los precursores (1789–1850)*, op. cit., pp. 14–15.

5. See: G. D. H. Cole. *Historia del pensamiento socialista VII: socialismo y fascismo (1931–1939)*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, Mexico City, 1986, pp. 272–273.
6. Friedrich Engels "Introducción a la edición de 1895" of "Las luchas de clase en Francia de 1848 a 1850," *Obras Escogidas*. Editorial Progreso, Moscow, 1973, Vol. 1, p. 192. Marx himself said: "What I did that was new was to prove (1) that the *existence of classes* is merely bound up with *certain historical phases in the development of productio*n; (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat;* (3) that this dictatorship itself constitutes no more than a transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society."* Karl Marx, "Letter to Joseph Weydemeyer" in *Selected Works,* Progress Publishers, Vol. 1, p. 528.
7. G. D. H. Cole. *Historia del pensamiento socialista II: marxismo y anarquismo*, op. cit., p. 7.
8. See: Karl Marx. "La guerra civil en Francia." *Obras escogidas,* Vol. 2, Editorial Progreso, Moscow, 1973.
9. See Friedrich Engels "Introducción a la edición de 1895" of "Las luchas de clase en Francia de 1848 a 1850," op. cit., p. 198.
10. Lenin recapitulates the evolution of Marxism as follows: "In the first half-century of its existence (from the 1840s on) Marxism was

engaged in combating theories fundamentally hostile to it. In the early 1840s Marx and Engels settled accounts with the radical Young Hegelians whose viewpoint was that of philosophical idealism. At the end of the 1840s the struggle began in the field of economic doctrine, against Proudhonism. The 1850s saw the completion of this struggle in criticism of the parties and doctrines which manifested themselves in the stormy year of 1848. In the 1860s the struggle shifted from the field of general theory to one closer to the direct labor movement: the ejection of Bakuninism from the International. In the early 1870s the stage in Germany was occupied for a short while by the Proudhonist Mühlberger, and in the late 1870s by the positivist Dühring. But the influence of both on the proletariat was already absolutely insignificant. Marxism was already gaining an unquestionable victory over all other ideologies in the labor movement." Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "Marxismo y Revisionismo." In *Obras Completas*, Vol. 17, Editorial Progreso, Moscow, 1983, p. 18.

Reform and Revolution to the 1970s

1. Rosa Luxemburg. *Reforma Social o Revolución y otros escritos contra los revisionistas*. Distribuciones Fontamara S.A., Mexico City, 1989, pp. 119–120.
2. "Paul Brousse (1854-1912) was a medical doctor. Having left France after the Commune, he first went to Spain and later to Switzerland where knew Bakunin and worked with the Jura federation. After residing in England, Brousse returned to France when an amnesty was proclaimed, and joined with Guesde and Lafargue. He made his newspaper, *Le Prolétaire*, the organ of the possibilist movement, and in 1883 expounded his political ideas in a pamphlet, *La propieté collective et les services public*. From quasi-anarchism he moved to a gradualist socialism that placed importance on local control. He argued that industries and the services would gradually be mature for socialization to the extent that they were placed under control on a large scale, and that the first stage should be that the municipal, regional and national public bodies, depending on the case, should take possession of the essential public services. Brousse was against Guesde's ideas, both due to his insistence on initiative and local autonomy as well as because he believed that it was necessary to take charge of the industries and services when they were ready for it, without waiting for a new 'workers state' to administer them. His hostility to centralization attracted the support of many socialists who did not approve of his gradualist opinions." G. D. H. Cole. *Historia del Pensamiento Socialista III: La Segunda Internacional*, op. cit., pp. 307–308.

3. See: Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. "Marxismo y Revisionismo," op. cit., pp. 24–25.
4. Lenin synthesized his criticism of revisionism as follows: "'The movement is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing' — this catch-phrase of Bernstein's expresses the substance of revisionism better than many long disquisitions. To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the chopping and changing of petty politics, to forget the primary interests of the proletariat and the basic features of the whole capitalist system, of all capitalist evolution, to sacrifice these primary interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment — such is the policy of revisionism. And it patently follows from the very nature of this policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms, and that every more or less 'new' question, every more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though it changes the basic line of development only to an insignificant degree and only for the briefest period, will always inevitably give rise to one variety of revisionism or another." Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "Marxism and revisionism," *Collected Works,* Vol. 15, pp. 37–38.
5. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International" in *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, pp. 213–214.
6. This coming to terms with colonialism led Lenin to declare that: "The non-propertied, but non-working, class is incapable of overthrowing the exploiters. Only the proletarian class, which maintains the whole of society, can bring about the social revolution. However, as a result of the extensive colonial policy, the European proletarian *partly* finds himself in a position when it is *not* his labor, but the labor of the practically enslaved natives in the colonies, that maintains the whole of society. The British bourgeoisie, for example, derives more profit from the many millions of the population of India and other colonies than from the British workers. In certain countries this provides the material and economic basis for infecting the proletariat with colonial chauvinism." Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart," *Collected Works*, Progress Publishers, 1972, Moscow, Vol. 13, p. 77.
7. See: Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International," op. cit., pp. 205–259.
8. Anthony Giddens. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Polity Press, Cambridge, 1988, p. 4. "What became 'the welfare state' (a term not in widespread use until the 1960s and one William Beveridge, the architect of the British welfare state, thoroughly disliked) has in fact a checkered history. Its origins were far removed from the ideals of the left — indeed it was created partly to dispel the

socialist menace. The ruling groups who set up the social insurance system in imperial Germany in the late 19th century despised laissez-faire economics as much as they did socialism. Yet Bismarck's model was copied by many countries. Beveridge visited Germany in 1907 in order to study the model. The welfare state as it exists today in Europe was produced in and by war, as were so many aspects of national citizenship." Ibid., p. 111.

9. See: Peter Havas. "Los conflictos sociales del capitalismo, la lucha de clases en la ideología y en la política de la socialdemocracia," in *Memorias del Seminario Internacional "Proyección de la socialdemocracia en el mundo actual,"* Havana, October 6–9, 1981, in two volumes, Vol. 1., pp. 56–57.
10. The faint heartedness of that government, which only served to repeat the history that began with the Ramsay MacDonald government, led the leader of the Labour Party left, Tony Benn, to declare: "In observing the defeat suffered in May 1979 by the Labour government, the more I think about it, the more I am convinced that it was a surrender and not a defeat. For 20 years they proclaimed an apolitical union movement and it turned out to be a dead end; they proclaimed a non-socialist Labour Party and this was also a dead end." Quoted by Peter Havas, Ibid. Meanwhile, Boris Orlov says "a group of specialists that, in the framework of the Fabian Society, made an analysis of the practical results of the activity of the Labour government during the entire time when they were in office. P. Ormrod, one of the authors of the investigation, noted: 'In 1929–31, in 1969–70 and in 1974–79, in the final analysis, the Labour governments understood that they had no alternative but to accept the policies dictated by the interests of the financial groups.'" Boris Orlov. "Acerca de la correlación entre la teoría y la práctica en la actividad de la socialdemocracia." In *Memorias del Seminario Internacional "Proyección de la socialdemocracia en el mundo actual,"* Havana, October 6–9, 1981, in two volumes, p. 96.
11. Karl Marx, "Wage, Labour and Capital," *Selected Works*. Progress Publishers, Moscow, pp. 150–174.
12. Friedrich Engels. "Introducción a la edición de 1895" of "Las luchas de clase en Francia de 1848 a 1850," op. cit., p. 199 (Spanish-language edition).
13. Ibid., p. 201 (Spanish-language edition).
14. Karl Marx, "First Draft of Letter to Vera Zasulich" in *Marx and Engels Collected Works*, Volume 24, p. 346.
15. Friedrich Engels, "*Communist Manifesto*" (Preface to the 1882 Russian edition), *Selected Works*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 100.
16. Even Cole, a well-known critic of Marx, Lenin, and the concept of revolution, concludes: "The German revolution of 1918 was, in fact,

as we have seen, the most complete example of the wrong way to make a revolution. The reformists who only want gradual and not too radical changes can, to a certain extent, allow most of the old structure to be incorporated into the new — to use the existing administration and courts and even army officials — although the degree to which they can do so depends on the mentality of these social groups. A true revolution, on the other hand, should, to survive, if not completely sweep away all of the old, at least introduce a decisive change in the composition of the top administrative positions, the judiciary, and the armed forces, and should immediately place people whose support for the revolutionary cause can be trusted in the key posts." G. D. H. Cole. *Historia del pensamiento socialista VI: Comunismo y Socialdemocracia (1914–1931) Segunda Parte*. Fondo de Cultura Económica, Mexico City, 1986, pp. 388–389 (re-translated from the Spanish).

17. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, op. cit., p. 117.
18. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. In *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964.
19. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky," in *Collected Works,* Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, Vol. 28, p. 235.
20. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, "The State and Revolution," in Collected Works, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, Vol. 25, p. 381–491.
21. Ibid., p. 488–489.
22. See: Piero Gleijeses. *Misiones en conflicto: Havana, Washington y África 1979–1976*. Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, Havana, 2002.

US Imperialism's Counteroffensive

1. The "Gulf of Tonkin incident" was a supposed attack by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's naval forces against US ships that was utilized as a pretext to justify US intervention in Vietnam.
2. See. Peter Kornbluh. *The Pinochet File, A National Security Archive Book*. The New Press, New York, 2003–04.
3. See: Holly Sklar. "Trilateralism: Managing Dependence and Democracy — An Overview," in: Holly Sklar (editor) *Trilateralism: The Trilateral Commission and Elite Planning for World Management*, South End Press, Boston, 1980, pp. 5–6.
4. See: Ibid., p. 7.
5. Samuel Huntington, quoted by Holly Sklar, Ibid., p. 38. "To some people democracy has or should have much more sweeping and idealistic connotations. To them, 'true democracy' means *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, effective citizen control over policy, responsible

government, honesty and openness in politics, informed and rational deliberation, equal participation and power, and various other civic virtues. These are, for the most part, good things and people can, if they wish, define democracy in these terms. Doing so, however, raises all the problems that come up with the definitions of democracy by source or purpose. Elections, open, free and fair, are the essence of democracy, the inescapable *sine qua non*. Governments produced by elections may be inefficient, corrupt, shortsighted, irresponsible, dominated by special interests, and incapable of adopting policies demanded by the public good. These qualities make such governments undesirable but they do not make them undemocratic." Samuel Huntington *La tercera Ola: la democratización a finales del siglo XX*. Editorial Paidós, Buenos Aires, 1994, pp. 22–23.

6. Holly Sklar. "Trilateralism: Managing Dependence and Democracy — An Overview," op. cit., p. 44.
7. Ibid., p. 36.
8. "The trilateralists," Holly Sklar concludes, "look forward to a pseudo postnational age in which social, economic and political values originating in the trilateral regions are transformed into universal values. Expanding networks of like-minded government officials, businessmen, and technocrats — elite products of Western education — are to carry out national and international policy formation. Functionally specific institutions with 'more technical focus, and *lesser public awareness*' [my italics] are best suited for addressing international issues in the trilateral model. Trilateralists call this decision making process 'piecemeal functionalism.' No comprehensive blueprints would be proposed and debated, but bit by bit the overall trilateral design would take shape. Its 'functional' components are to be adopted in more or less piecemeal fashion, lessening the chance people will grasp the overall scheme and organize resistance… At the international level, trilateral leaders would be responsible for *rule-making*…"
9. Gregorio Selser. *Reagan: Entre El Salvador y las Malvinas*. Mex-Sur Editorial, Mexico City, 1982, p. 51.
10. Ibid., p. 41.

Consequences of the Collapse of the Soviet Union

1. To consider the recent opinions of a group of Cuban specialists in the field, see: Round table discussion "¿Por qué cayó el socialismo en Europa oriental?" Rafael Hernández (moderator). In *Temas* magazine, No. 39–40, Havana, October–December 2004.
2. Nils Castro. *Las izquierdas latinoamericanas: observaciones sobre una trayectoria*, Fundación Friedrich Ebert, Panama City, 2005, p. 86.

3. The author adds that: "From this reversal flow several observations. One of them is that when completing each part or stage of a practical event or history, reality is modified and in turn, a new range of demands, alternatives and opportunities opens up. As a result, in their respective circumstances and according to their own levels of consciousness, it is the individuals and peoples involved who discern between immobility or the new options, and who decide to follow one or another of the different alternatives, choosing them on the basis of their own beliefs, expectations and possibilities… And, finally, the changes and social revolutions themselves, when carried out, modify the individuals and peoples who forged them, as well as the national circumstances and the external conditions in which the events have taken place. If the program has been fulfilled, the reality that demanded and justified it has ceased to be what it was originally, initiating another reality, which in the next period will lead to citizen demands to remake the objectives, program, and style of functioning to launch a new generation of additional changes." Ibid., pp. 87–88.

Neoliberalism in the United States and Western Europe

1. Tulio Halperin Donghi. *Historia contemporánea de América Latina*. Edición Revolucionaria, Havana, 1990, pp. 480–481.
2. Hayek argues that "formal equality before the law is in conflict, and in fact incompatible, with any activity of the government deliberately aiming at material or substantive equality of different people, and that any policy aiming directly at a substantive ideal of distributive justice must lead to the destruction of the Rule of Law. To produce the same result for different people, it is necessary to treat them differently. To give different people the same objective opportunities is not to give them the same subjective chance. It cannot be denied that the Rule of Law produces economic inequality — all that can be claimed for it is that this inequality is not designed to affect particular people in a particular way." Friedrich Hayek. *Camino de Servidumbre*. Alianza Editorial, Madrid, 1976, p. 111.
3. See: Perry Anderson. "El despliegue del neoliberalismo y sus lecciones para la izquierda," in: Renán Vega (Editor). *Marx y el siglo XXI. Una defensa de la historia y el socialismo*, Ediciones Pensamiento Crítico, Santafé de Bogotá, 1997, pp. 360–361.
4. See: Ibid., p. 355.
5. Ibid., p. 367.
6. Ibid., pp. 356–57.

"Post-Neoliberal" Social Democracy and the Doctrines of the Third Way and Global Progress

1. "I am taking for granted that the third way refers to a framework of thinking and policy-making that seeks to adapt social democracy to a world which has changed fundamentally over the past two or three decades. It is a third way in the sense that it is an attempt to transcend both old-style social democracy and neo-liberalism." *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*, op. cit., p. 26.
2. Ibid., pp.vii–viii (preface).
3. Ibid., p. 26.
4. Tony Blair. "La Tercera Vía: nuevas políticas para el nuevo siglo." En: *La Tercera Vía: nuevas políticas para el nuevo siglo/Una alternativa para Colombia*, Tony Blair and Juan Manuel Santos, Editora Aguilar, Bogotá, 1999, pp. 72–73.
5. See: Norberto Bobbio. *Left and Right*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1996.
6. Anthony Giddens. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*, op. cit., pp. 38–39.
7. Ibid., pp. 39–40.
8. Ibid., p. 25.
9. Felipe González. "Presentation in the inaugural session of the Global Progress Foundation" in *CD Progreso Global*, Comunicación Interactiva, Madrid.

PART TWO: DOMINATION, CRISIS, AND POPULAR RESISTANCE IN LATIN AMERICA

The Rise of Capitalism in Latin America

1. During the first years of the conquest and colonization, the Americas did not have their own name. Christopher Columbus died in 1506, convinced that he had fulfilled the objective of his exploration voyages, which was to find a new route to the East to facilitate trade with that region. Soon the Europeans realized that the land that Columbus had accidentally reached had until then been unknown to them, and therefore they initially named it the New World or the Indies. Soon after, the latter name was supplemented with the word West, or West Indies. Gradually, these appellatives were replaced by the Americas. This name had been suggested in 1507 by German explorer Martin Waldseemüller in honor of navigator Americo Vespucci, who was mistakenly considered to have discovered the continent. See: Sergio Guerra Vilaboy and Alejo Maldonado

Gallardo. *Los laberintos de la integración latinoamericana: historia, mito y realidad de una utopía.* Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, Morelia, 2002, pp. 15–16.

2. Manuel Lucena Salmoral. *La esclavitud en la América española*. Latin American Studies Center, Warsaw University, Warsaw, 2002, p. 115.
3. Ibid., p. 29.
4. Sergio Guerra. *Historia Mínima de América Latina*. Editorial Pueblo y Educación, Havana, 2003, p. 52.
5. "The true fathers of the neologism Latin America that apparently made its appearance in the mid-19th century were the Colombian José María Torres Caicedo and the Chilean Francisco Bilbao, both then residents in Paris. Bilbao used the term for the first time in a conference presented in the French capital on June 24, 1856 under the title of 'Initiative of America' in which *Latin American* was also used as a word to indicate national origin. Three months later… Torres Caicedo also used the term, on September 26, 1856, in the first verse of part nine of his poem 'The two Americas.' Caicedo, contrary to Bilbao —who would not continue using the neologism to protest against the French intervention in Mexico— would be an indefatigable propagandist of the innovative expression and its most tenacious promoter — to the extreme of correcting the second edition of his works published prior to 1856, to substitute Spanish America with Latin America… In his book *Mis ideas y mis principios* (My ideas and my principles), published in Paris in 1875, Torres Caicedo… claimed credit for the adoption of the new term, which has led some historians to bestow upon him its exclusive paternity, ignoring the role of co-author that legitimately corresponds to Bilbao. Throughout the 20th century, the use of Latin America would definitively and categorically end up being imposed over the other terms that indistinctly had been used." Sergio Guerra Vilaboy and Alejo Maldonado Gallardo. *Los laberintos de la integración latinoamericana: historia, mito y realidad de una utopía*, op. cit., pp. 32–38.

From Colonialism to Neocolonialism

1. See: Tulio Halperin Donghi. *Historia contemporánea de América Latina*, op. cit., pp. 163–164.
2. A circumstantial analysis of the policy of US imperialism toward Latin America and the Caribbean can be found in: Luis Suárez Salazar. *Un siglo de terror en América Latina: Crónica de crimenes de Estados Unidos contra la humanidad.* Ocean Sur, Melbourne, 2006.
3. The US colonies were Puerto Rico, Guam, the US Virgin Islands, Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the Midway Islands, the

Johnston Atoll, the Kingman Reef, Navaza Island, the Pamyra Atoll, and the Baker, Howland, and Jarvis islands.
4. See: Luis Suárez Salazar, op. cit.
5. The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine was not established through a single pronouncement, but was the result of different actions and declarations made between 1901 and 1906.
6. See: Luis Suárez Salazar, op. cit.

Pan-Americanism

1. Tulio Halperin Donghi. *Historia contemporánea de América Latina*, op. cit., p. 415.
2. Claude Heller. "Las relaciones militares entre estados Unidos y América Latina: un intento de evaluación." *Nueva Sociedad*, No. 27, Caracas, 1976, pp. 18–19.

Developmentalism and its Consequences

1. See: Francisco Zapata. *Ideología y política en América Latina*. El Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Sociológicos, Mexico City, 2002, p. 142.
2. Sergio Guerra Vilaboy. *Historia Mínima de América Latina*, op. cit., p. 253. Also see: Sergio Guerra Vilaboy. *Etapas y procesos en la historia de América Latina*, Centro de Información para la defensa, Havana, undated, p. 40; Luis Suárez Salazar. *Un siglo de terror*, op. cit.
3. Francisco Zapata. *Ideología y política en América Latina*, op. cit., p. 16.
4. See: Ibid., p. 14–15.

Revolution and Counterrevolution in the 1960s

1. In April 1961, US President John F. Kennedy authorized the invasion of Cuba by a counterrevolutionary military force organized by his predecessor, Dwight Eisenhower, with a similar schema as was employed in 1954 against Jacobo Árbenz in Guatemala. It was conceived to mask the US aggression behind the facade of a supposed conflict involving forces within the nation being attacked.
2. See: Luis Suárez Salazar. *Un siglo de terror*, op. cit.
3. Nelson A. Rockefeller. "La calidad de la vida en las Américas." *Documentos No. 1*, Centro de Estudios sobre América, Havana, 1980.
4. Ibid., p. 23 (re-translated from the Spanish text).

The Impact of the Nixon Government and the Vacillations of the Carter Administration

1. Commission on US-Latin American Relations (Linowitz Commission). "The Americas in a Changing World" (Report of the Commission on US-Latin American Relations or the Linowitz Report I), Washington, DC, October 1974. In *Documentos No. 2*, Centro de Estudios sobre América, Havana, 1980.
2. Ibid., p. 51 (re-translated from the Spanish).
3. Commission on US-Latin American Relations (Linowitz Commission). "The United States and Latin America: Next Steps" (Report of the Commission on US-Latin American Relations or the Linowitz II Report), Washington, DC, October 1974. In *Documentos No. 2*, Centro de Estudios sobre América, Havana, 1980.
4. Ibid., pp. 100–102.
5. "What was simply at stake," argued Luis Maira, "was to accept the minority and corrupt character of the regime; to warn that its long tradition of repression made it unrecoverable for any democratic move; to evaluate to what extent the control of the Nicaraguan productive structure by members of the dynasty had led to a civil resistance that included increasing broader layers of the bourgeoisie itself. In short, to realize that within Nicaragua there existed internal political forces capable of giving shape to a new moderate democratic government." Luis Maira. "La política latinoamericana de la administración Carter." In: *Lecturas No. 2*. Centro de Estudios sobre América, Havana, pp. 23–24.
6. See: Gregorio Selser. *Reagan: Entre El Salvador y las Malvinas*, pp. 74–75.

Ronald Reagan's Strategy of Force

1. The document of the Santa Fe Committee, known as Santa Fe I — since three other versions were subsequently issued (Santa Fe II, II, and IV) — can be found at: http://www.nuncamas.org/document/document.htm.
2. This statement does not extend to the English-speaking Caribbean, where, tied to Britain as a result of old colonial ties, most governments aligned themselves with the old metropolis, while others did not take any public position.
3. "There could be no other position," says Thomas Enders, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, "for the United States than to oppose the illegal use of force to resolve a dispute." Thomas O. Enders. "Prepared Statement of the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs" US House of Representatives,

Mimeographed edition, Washington, DC, August 5, 1982 (retranslated from the Spanish).

4. *Report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America*. Published by the US government, Washington, DC, 1984.
5. Source: Gregorio Selser. *Reagan: Entre El Salvador y las Malvinas*, op. cit., pp. 186–187.

Latin America in the New World Order

1. For a representative example of how the political circles of the United States at the time viewed the possibilities that the crisis in the Soviet Union would offer it to reaffirm its dominance over Latin America, see: *The Americas in a New World: The 1990 Report of the Inter-American Dialogue*. The Aspen Institute, Washington, DC, 1990.
2. The concept of "restricted democracy" has been widely used in Latin America. This is a term that can lend itself to confusion because democracy is a form of class rule and subordination in which the notion of restrictions on the liberties of the dominated and subordinated classes is implicit. The term restricted democracy refers to the political system imposed in Latin America in the wake of the military dictatorships, which in addition to the limitations and conditioning factors inherent to bourgeois democracy in a general sense, was specifically conceived and introduced to close the contested space of which Gramsci spoke in the countries of the region, in which the people can force concessions from imperialism and its local allies.
3. "The dictatorship gave way to the [neoliberal] economic model through the use of extreme violence. A new stage, with the model already introduced, required another base of support and also another way to move forward. Violence was being progressively replaced by economic mechanisms. It was also necessary to achieve a fuller international presence, without the obstacles that the dictatorship represented, due to the resistance that it sparked in different countries." Hugo Fazio. *El Programa Abandonado: balance económico y social del gobierno de Aylwin*. LOM Ediciones, Santiago de Chile, 1996, p. 175.
4. Bolivia, whose constitution stipulates that Congress must choose the country's president in cases where no candidate obtains 50 percent or more of the vote in the elections, was the nation where the best conditions existed for this type of alliance to flourish.
5. As historical background, it is worthwhile pointing out that Sergio Guerra and Alejandro Maldonado speak of "the Madrid meeting (1900) of a Hispanic-American Congress, inaugurated by the Mexican man of letters Justo Sierra without the presence of official

government delegations, whose purpose was to prepare for the second Pan-American Congress, which would be held the following year in Mexico, promoted by the United States. In this conclave, at the initiative of the Spaniard Rafael María de Labra, participants approved the creation of the Ibero-American Union, in charge of promoting Pan-Hispanism, to counterpose it to the Pan Americanism promoted since 1889 by US Secretary of State James G. Blaine. In relation to Pan-Hispanism it should be noted, as Fernando Ortiz did, that it is also accompanied by protective intentions and even imperialistic aspirations by the Spanish government, sustained by the idea of a supposed Hispanic race." Sergio Guerra Vilaboy y Alejo Maldonado Gallardo. *Los laberintos de la integración latinoamericana: historia, mito y realidad de una utopía*, op. cit., pp. 38–39.

6. The São Paulo Forum is a regional grouping formed by around 100 Latin American and Caribbean political parties and movements that encompass the entire ideological spectrum of the left. With an anti-imperialist and anti-neoliberal definition, the FSP represents a place where the different member organizations can meet each other, a space for debate, and a mechanism of communication, coordination, and solidarity. As a rule, the FSP holds an annual conference of all its member organizations. It also organizes seminars and thematic workshops with the goal of interacting with the popular movements of the region. Its activities are attended by political parties and popular movements from North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East in an observer capacity. A working group functions as a mechanism of coordination and is currently comprised of political parties from 12 countries: Brazil, Cuba, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua, Mexico, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, and Uruguay.
7. This refers to the imperialistic practice of issuing certifications on the "good" or "bad" behavior of other governments such as in relation to "respect for human rights" and "fighting drug trafficking." Based on these certifications, the US government decides on sanctions against those it sees fit.
8. AG/doc. 8 (XVIII-E/01), approved September 12, 2001.
9. It is clear that the artificial increase in the number of blank ballots was one of the means used to commit fraud, since it is inconceivable that voters in poor neighborhoods and rural areas of Haiti lined up for between six and eight hours at the polling stations to simply annul their ballot.

Latin America Between the Centuries

1. In this sense, Carlos Vilas states that in Latin America "the identity of the collective subject *people* is heterogeneous in its constituent elements and homogeneous in its inclusion in the world of poverty and its confrontation with exploitation and oppression, even though the manifestations of this confrontation assume a broad variation. The plurality of constituent elements makes it necessary to refer to the "popular classes" as a doubly collective subject — due to the heterogeneity of their components and expressions — in which the concept of class abandons its narrow reference to the (1) productive, (2) wage earning, (3) formal sector worker, in order to include all those who participate as the exploited and oppressed in the relations of power — political, economic, gender, cultural, ethnic… — institutionalized in the state, its mechanisms and policies. From this it follows that *class* as a social subject should not be viewed as the past of a broader popular present." Carlos Vilas. "Actores, sujetos, movimientos: ¿Dónde quedaron las clases?," *Nuestra Bandera* No. 176/177, Vol. 2, Madrid, 1998, p. 34.
2. As explained in previous chapters, governability was not conceived as a form of democracy, but as a model of social control, aimed at reversing the "democratic excesses" and "egalitarianism" that hindered the concentration of wealth. The cult of governability, rebaptized democratic governability and transformed into the machinery of the system of continental dominance, became generalized in Latin America in the 1990s as a panacea to avoid political crises, without noting their economic and social causes.
3. "What we are seeing at this moment in Latin America is that the democracy open to alternation between projects, of which Allende was an example, is coming to an end. On the contrary, a democratic system exists that is promoted by the transnational institutions themselves, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, not to speak of the State Department. They are interested in alternation, therefore, in a majority and minority interplay, but within the parameters of a single and non-negotiable project, and that this be identified with democracy; so that any idea of alternation between projects is characterized as antidemocratic no matter how democratic it might be." Hugo Zemelman. "Enseñanzas del gobierno de la Unidad Popular en Chile." In: *Gobiernos de izquierda en América Latina: el desafío del cambio* (Beatriz Stolowicz, coordinador), Plaza y Valdés Editores, Mexico City, 1999, pp. 35–36.
4. These figures do not include the English-speaking Caribbean, where progressive governments were elected in Guyana, Dominica, and St. Lucia.

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