

Fifty years after the revolutions of '68 - The World and, in Latin America, the Southern Cone

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The fiftieth anniversary of May '68, like the centennial of the Russian Revolution, is far from a mere ritual commemoration. Both mark high points of the struggle of the workers for their self-emancipation, and their lessons are incorporated into our history and give continuity to the struggle for socialism. History is alive in these central events of the class struggle. The revolutions of 1968 had objective and subjective consequences that have been fundamental in the last decades of the 20th century and the first decades of the 21st.

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The first thing that comes to mind when you remember 1968 is the French May. There is an inheritance in France, a long tradition of struggle, which left its mark and continues today. It is not a coincidence that French workers and students are now on the streets facing Macron, and that one of their slogans raised by one of the heirs of '68, the NPA, is "let's make a new May in France". French students and the workers have the greatest traditions in revolutions.

Now, 68 was not only the French May. The world system, (using the words of Wallerstein) was shaken by a wave of revolutions, probably the most important after the European revolutionary situation (then the hegemonic center of the world) with the first world war of 1917 and the world revolutionary situation of the second in 1945. The first meant the conquest of power in Russia, and the second in China, Yugoslavia and the expropriation of the bourgeoisie in a third of the planet. We will return to a comparison of these three world situations.

The events of 1968 were a great revolutionary wave that was preceded by strong upheavals in the student movement during the preceding years. The Tet offensive in Vietnam detonated the antiwar movement in the USA, in all the countries of Western Europe and Japan against the war in Vietnam. In the USA, the struggle for the racial liberation, ongoing for centuries, had taken immense strides and faced immense resistance in the few years preceding. The anti-bureaucratic revolution took place in Czechoslovakia, and other expressions arose in Eastern countries against Stalinism (Warsaw and Belgrade). The cultural revolution, promoted by Mao, became a revolution of the students and

young workers in China and was subsequently crushed by the bureaucracy itself. The list of popular uprisings in 1968 continues: the Tunisian student uprising against Bourguiba; the student demonstrations against the Brazilian dictatorship; the Rosariazo and the Cordobazo in Argentina; the general political strike in Uruguay in 1971; the victory of Allende in Chile, the petty-bourgeois nationalist governments of Velazco Alvarado and the agrarian reform in Peru; the Torres government in Bolivia and the Popular Assembly in that country. The end of this prerrevolutionary or revolutionary wave was the revolution of the carnations in Portugal that had its origin in the defeat of the Portuguese colonialist army by the national liberation movements in their colonies. [1]

At the end of this text we will refer in this article especially to the processes of the Southern Cone, Argentina, Bolivia, Argentina, Uruguay [2]. However, before that, we wanted to provide some general characteristics that serve to also draw general conclusions.

A revolutionary anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist and anti-bureaucratic movement that breaks the world order agreed in 1945 in Yalta

It was an anti-imperialist period, (the struggle in Vietnam and in many countries against the American imperialism that in Latin America had as a prelude the Cuban revolution), it was anti-capitalist (the mobilization detonated by the student movement in France culminated in the most important general strike that European history, which like any general political strike questions the system) and was anti-bureaucratic, not only because of the mobilizations against the bureaucracy in China and Czechoslovakia but also because it hit the Stalinist world apparatus that had consolidated in the Second World War thanks to the triumph of the Russian people and the Red Army against Nazism [3].

The Yalta pact between Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill in 1945, established a geographical division of the world with respective areas of influence. The USA became the hegemonic force in the West, displacing German and English imperialism.

At the same time, the pact was an agreement of zones of influence with the Soviet Union that emerged strengthened from the Second World War because of its fundamental role in the defeat of Nazism. Part of Germany and all Eastern Europe was now under Russian rule. The Russian bureaucracy and its world apparatus developed throughout this period the policy of peaceful coexistence with imperialism.

The so-called Cold War, as Walerstein points out, [4] existed as an essentially ideological dispute. With the Yalta agreement, the revolutionary situation of 1945 could be largely closed—though not entirely, because the Chinese revolution would triumph. Under that policy, the bureaucracy held back the revolutionary situation opened by the end of the Second World War, particularly in Western Europe where the resistance and mass communist parties had in France and Italy had developed the possibility of contesting power. For its part, the United States only condemned by word the political revolutions Germany in 1953, in Hungary in 1956, and in Czechoslovakia in 1968—these last two crushed with the invasion of the Russian army. Subsequent incidents like the Korean War and the adventure of the Russian bureaucracy stationing missiles in Cuba in 1962 created crises but did not affect the essence of this pact.

The revolutionary processes of 1968 occurred outside this pact, overflowing

the capitalist regimes and the Stalinist bureaucratic apparatus

Three revolutions marked this period: the liberation struggle in South Vietnam, the French May, and the Czechoslovak political revolution.

The Tet offensive in Vietnam

In January of 1968, the Vietnam Liberation Front / 5/ along with the Ho Chi Min Army of North Vietnam launched the Tet offensive, (Vietnamese New Year) against the troops of the dictator Ngô Đình Diệm, a puppet of the USA and the American army. This military-political operation led the FLNV troops to occupy strategic places in Saigon, including a part of the Government Palace and the entrance to the headquarters of the US embassy. However, the troops of the FLNV and North Vietnam lost ground in the following months. It was to a certain extent a military defeat but a political triumph because it brought support for FLNV and Ho Chi Min from large part of Vietnamese society and the world.

The US army suffered 14,000 casualties in the counteroffensive, and this high cost was the trigger that accelerated the great pacifist movement initiated on the campus of Berkeley that was extended to all universities in the country under the theme of "bring the young people home" . It was the beginning of the biggest military defeat suffered by imperialism that would culminate on May 1, 1975 with the mobilization of the FLNV and the Vietnamese people in Saigon occupying the US embassy, the fall of the puppet dictatorship, and the unification of Vietnam.

This military defeat cannot be explained only by the mobilization of the Vietnamese people and the military triumph of the FLNV and the Ho Chi Min army, but also by the decisive role of the mobilization unleashed by the youth in the imperialist metropolises. In the US, European countries and Japan, the world youth became radicalized.

In the USA, the spontaneous mobilization born in Berkeley transformed into a great organized national movement. The radicalization of the youth moved the foundations of the structure of the regime in the USA, also combining with the boom of the black liberation movement that counted with or main figures to Martin Luther King, Malcom X and the Black Panthers. The shock was so great that in the superstructure of the bipartisan regime between Republicans and Democrats it uncovered the Watergate scandal that ended in impeachment of President Nixon, who was forced to resign. [5]

The political revolution in Czechoslovakia (Prague Spring)

The Prague Spring began in January 1968 and ended in August with the invasion of the Russian army. It was a process of rupture with the policy of Stalinism in favor of a socialism with liberties initiated by the Czech Communist Party itself and the intelligentsia of that country challenging the authoritarianism that Russia imposed on the countries of the Warsaw Pact. Fractures in the bureaucracy had already been predicted by Trotsky in *The Revolution Betrayed*. The anti-Stalinist proposals were headed by Alexander Dubcek who demanded economic collectivization with more freedoms. A process of self-organization began, both communist youth and later the workers themselves, who formed labor councils that pushed Dubcek to accelerate the reforms.

The Soviet Union, fearing the influence of a democratic and socialist Czechoslovakia that also infected the neighboring countries, ordered the Warsaw Pact troops, especially Russian, to invade Czechoslovakia and its capital Prague in August 1968. Dubcek was arrested and sent to the USSR. The invasion was answered with a great spontaneous popular mobilization through clandestine radios that transmitted messages to the population nonstop. The Russian soldiers in the tanks were

paralyzed. Although they were able to enter Prague, they could not impose political authority. The population was undermining the morale of the troops. The workers' committees organized a general strike that began on August 23 and a decalogue of non-collaboration was disseminated.

The great resistance to the invasion failed to form an autonomous direction. Dubcek, imprisoned in Russia, was paralyzed while the bureaucracy reassembled a new authority in the Communist Party among those who had not been entirely for the political revolution.

The French May; from youthful spontaneity to anti-capitalist insurrection

The chronicles of the French May are better known. As Ben Said says in one of his writings, "Nothing indicated that Friday May 3 was going to make history on that sunny day at the Sorbonne" ... [6] However, it happened. It began one of the great revolts or youth revolutions that marked history in the twentieth century as they had been at the beginning of the university reform of 18 in Cordoba (1918) and Tiananmen Square in China (1991) at the end of it.

In a few days, there was a rejection of the students' struggle and their resistance to the occupation of police and gendarmerie troops at the Sorbonne to the large student demonstrations full of red flags with protesters singing The International, which confronted the forces of repression and ended by occupy with its barricades the Latin Quarter, in the heart of Paris. In its course, a direction was forged between the most radicalized revolutionary groups that included Cohen Bendit "the red one" (March 22), the main student agitator, the young people of the JCR "Revolutionary Communist Youth" Alain Krivine and Ben Said, Suavageot vice president of the UNEF, (National Union of Students of France) The university movement spread and began to add secondary students and working youth. It had to face the conciliatory line of the Communist Youth and the Maoists who maneuvered to stop the movement.

A special moment during the revolutionary transformation deserves to be quoted, the act convened in the Mutualité as part of a previous agenda of the JCR that was transformed into the rally that brought together movements mentioned above. Here is the story of Daniel Ben Said and Henry Weber of the JCR.

"At night, the JCR meets in the great hall of the Mutualité. This meeting is planned for a long time and carries a prophetic title: "Youth, from Rebellion to Revolution." The leaders of the student movements of the main European countries must take the floor in it. Daniel Cohen Bendit proposes to the JCR to open his meeting to the whole movement (...) We accept the proposal. Presented with a speech by Alain Krivine, the May 7 rally played a major role in the political maturation of the movement. Listening to the reports of the Belgian, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, German delegates, the 4 or 5 thousand French students, crowded into the room, where there was not a pin, become aware of the international dimension of their struggle. Ernest Mandel makes a didactic exhibition about the new role of the student body. (...) all the components of the student movement amply expose their way of seeing the current state of the struggle and the future perspectives.

Daniel Bensaid, co-founder of "March 22," speaks on behalf of the JCR. It exposes our analysis of the place that the movement occupies in the class struggle and insists on the problem of union with the working class and the broadening of the struggle front. Taking stock of the experience "March 22", invites all avant-garde groups to integrate into the movement. It is necessary that the small groups understand that the development of the avant-garde depends on the amplitude of the mass movement and that, therefore, they must endeavor to ensure its expansion. It is not about simply merging into the movement and disappearing into it. It is a question of abandoning the groupuscule attitude, which consists in imposing its mark and its seal on all possible and even impossible

occasions at the expense of the mass movement. The “March 22” has shown that militants from diverse political horizons can understand each other about a certain mode of action, over and above their political divergences. There is no self-proclaimed vanguard” [7]

The movement will extend to important factories in Paris that are occupied. In view of this, the CGT, controlled by the Communist Party decides, due to the great pressure from the bases, to call a general strike. This strike transformed into the largest in the history of all Europe, reaching 8 million workers. After several weeks of paralyzing France, the leadership of the CGT returned to work after extracting important concessions. In turn, the Bonapartist government of De Gaulle called for new elections. Despite winning them, he was soon forced to resign. Although the objective movement could not overcome the contention that the Communist Party ultimately made, the French May provoked a political, social and cultural transformation that has left its mark in the world until now, as part of what was the world’s ‘68.

The world changed with the revolutions of 68

The most notable objective fact was the military defeat of the imperialism of the United States in the Vietnam War. It was the first military defeat after 1945, when the US became “gendarme of the world”. But as Wallerstein correctly points out, it not only had military consequences but also economic and political ones. From the economic point of view, it was with defeat in Vietnam that the post-war economic boom ended and the stagnation and the new cyclical crises of the capitalist economy that led to the most global and chronic crisis that we live now began. The USA represented almost half of the world GDP. Since then, it has experienced a constant reduction in proportion of the world economy.

From the point of view of world domination, the decadence of American hegemony, initiated in 1945, began to decline, arriving at our days where a more “multipolar” and chaotic world appears. Vietnam was its first military defeat and since then, although it remains the aggressive “world gendarme”, it has not been able (and will not be able) to have military triumphs that expand or reestablish its hegemonic domination. The defeat of Vietnam was followed by the withdrawal of Lebanon in 1983 after the invasion of that country, as happened in Somalia in 1993. All subsequent military interventions—in Iraq twice and Afghanistan- increased the country’s military spending and ended up bogging down the gendarme of the world in situations that have no way out with permanent crises in both countries.

From the subjective point of view, the French May recovered the spontaneity and revolutionary disposition of the masses, defying the capitalist order and the Stalinist apparatus. If the revolutionary situation of the second postwar period (1945) had been capitalized essentially by Stalinism, the revolutionary wave of 68 was by Castroism, Maoism and in part by Trotskyism. A new revolutionary vanguard emerged from them (in Latin America it had already anticipated the Cuban revolution). Although an important sector of that vanguard was capitalized in Asia by Maoism and in Latin America by Castroism, there was also an independent sector, especially in France, where later the Trotskyist movement and the IV International SU emerged strengthened. After years of vegetating with the famous tactic of “entryism” in the communist parties of Pablo, Ben Said, and Krivine in France, Tariq Tali in England, and the Trotskyism of the USA became expressive streams of the movement for peace and / or the triumph of Vietnam. The SWP of the USA, which had Peter Camejo as one of the leaders of the anti-war movement, France for the LCR, in Argentina for the PST.

French May also shook the patriarchal structure and behaviors imposed by bourgeois society. From

there the democratic and anti-capitalist movement of the liberation of women and youth began, of confrontation with the authoritarian culture imposed by the bourgeois order, a democratic process that continues to this day.

The differences of 68 with the revolutionary situations of 1917 and 1945

The MES (Movimento Esquerda Socialista current within PSOL) tried to understand and update the Leninist category of revolutionary situation in its theoretical essay from 2008: "The current socialism and the tasks of the internationalists. [8] That definition had been extended by our current to the 80s as a continuity from the revolutions of '68 and particularly since the defeat of imperialism in Vietnam, the economic crisis of 1968/70, and the crisis that had begun in the Stalinist apparatus. The comparison with the situations of 1917 and 1945 was important in retaking Lenin's definition in its full formulation. [9] If a global crisis of imperialist domination had occurred after 1968, this analysis would be essentially correct and would even make a situation superior to the above-mentioned situations.

But this did not happen. US imperialism retained the ability to push the coup against Allende in Chile and begin secret negotiations with Mao Tsetung. In the 80s the defeat of the political revolution in Poland, the defeat of the mining strike in England and the advance of "Reganism" and "Thatcherism" occurred.

The "independent action" that took place in 1968 was not transformed into powerful revolutionary organizations with mass influence. Those who were strongest in Latin America were Castroism (which had already begun its political dependence on Stalinism by supporting the invasion of Russian tanks into Czechoslovakia) and Maoism. Ester engaged in negotiations with the US and then sent troops to invade Vietnam victorious and unified, beginning with them a period of war between states where there was "real socialism." A sector of the vanguard remained independent of these directions and as we will see later, the Trotskyist movement came out of marginality and influences important sectors of the vanguard.

1968 in the Southern Cone

Latin America was also part of the revolution of '68. The Cuban revolution had "anticipated" this global process. It was a revolution initiated from a guerrilla movement that became a mass movement among the poor peasantry, and that was combined with a resistance and subsequent mass insurrection that ended the Batista dictatorship. The confrontation with American imperialism led to the expropriation of the mills and to the transformation of the democratic revolution into a socialist one.

This revolution placed the armed struggle as a crucial issue for the seizure of power, thus overcoming the reformism of the socialist and communist parties. But part of the vanguard misinterpreted what this mass guerrilla movement had been like. As we wrote in "Fifty Years of Struggles and Revolutions in Latin America":

"The triumph of the Cuban Revolution opens a wave of sympathy in Latin America, with a vanguard layer that becomes radicalized and becomes socialist and revolutionary. Tens of thousands leave reformism and bourgeois nationalism to become revolutionaries. The communist parties and their policy of peaceful coexistence are overcome in this process with the line of Fidel and Che that pushed the revolution in Latin America with the slogan of Che to make two, three many Vietnam. "

“This vanguard of the masses concludes that the way to make the revolution in Latin America was to repeat the method used by Fidel in Cuba and take up arms without any connection with the mass movement. (...)”

This is how the “foquismo” emerged, at first as rural and then urban guerrilla as the greatest expression in the Southern Cone, the ERP guerrillas and the Montoneros in Argentina, and the Tupamaros in Uruguay. They are the greatest expressions of an individual heroism, revolutionary, but isolated from the mass movement and its struggles.

It is important to consider this situation to understand how, especially the PST of Argentina [10], was forced to engage in a theoretical, political and practical battle in the class struggle since the guerrillas seduced the best activists of the labor movement to leave the factories and join their ranks.

Unfortunately, the European vanguard emerged in the French May, which in its own experience in the student rebellion correctly defended “the union with the working class”, the “widening of the front of struggle” and postulated “that the development of the vanguard depends on the amplitude of the mass movement “and” that there is no self-proclaimed vanguard “, made a misreading of the Latin American process and supported for a time the guerrilla strategy for Latin America.

In this way they weakened the real revolutionary forces, our party and the labor classism that was the greatest expression of vanguard in that period of great class struggle that moved the Southern Cone. Indeed, the most authentic force of the vanguard in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay was worker classism that emerged in the heat of development of the automotive industry and other branches of production. Classism was a stage, a moment of the transformation of the workers’ vanguard into a revolutionary one. It vindicated and practiced the intransigent struggle against the bosses and the workers’ democracy against the union bureaucracies.

The “Cordobazo” and other “-azos” that moved Argentina from 1969

Classism was strong in Argentina and fought the bureaucracy for control of the committees of factories called Internal Commissions // and opposed the military dictatorship. Córdoba, the second city of the country was one of the centers of this industry, which also spread in Greater Buenos Aires [11].

The Cordobazo and the Rosariazo were great spontaneous mobilizations of masses “connected” to the revolutions of 1968 that shook Argentina, thus refuting the politics of the guerrilla groups. It preceded the “Cordobazo” the “Rosariazo” starring mainly railroad workers (Rosario was an important railway junction), where workers and students took the city center for several hours defying police repression.

The “Cordobazo” was a more forceful mobilization that changed the situation of the class struggle in the country. It was a student worker insurrection led by the electricity and automotive industry workers. A demonstration against zonal wage cuts that the military dictatorship tried to make is transformed in an insurrection that confronts the police, arrives at the center of the city where the students are added, barricades and contains and defeats the police. The police ran out of bullets and exhausted troops to continue repressing. After a day workers and student control of the center of the city, the army arrived to reclaim authority for the state.

With this action, a prerevolutionary period was opened in the country. New “azos” took place in Tucumán, in this case directed from the student dining room by a partner of our party; the “Rocazo” in Rio Negro, the “Mendozazo” and a new “Cordobazo”. Unfortunately, this semi-insurreccional

process does not reach Buenos Aires, which would have opened a clearly revolutionary situation.

These were years of intense class struggle that forced the dictatorship to agree, with the support of the bourgeoisie, to the return of Perón. However, the workers' mobilization and factory leadership in the hands of classism continued to confront Perón, his successor Isabelita Perón, and his attempt to impose a right-wing Bonapartist government by appealing to the paramilitaries of the Triple A (Alianza Anticomunista Argentina). A government that under the pretext of fighting the urban guerrilla also attacked our party and the class leaders [12].

This stage of intense struggle against the regime and the union bureaucracy, and of the vanguard dispute with the guerrillas, was closed in 1976 when the military took power and with their savage repression achieved the defeat of the working class.

The general strike in Uruguay

In 1971, Uruguay, where classist currents had also been formed, the pressure of the bases imposed a general strike for an indeterminate time, placing as a general political strike the issue of power in the streets. The strike lasted 16 days, and the military presence managed to defeat it thanks to the vacillations of the Communist Party. Thereafter, a period of repression and the imposition of the military by a civilian president controlled by them began.

The government of Allende in Chile; the failure of the peaceful way to socialism

As part of the process of the rise of the mass struggle, in the general elections of Chile in 1970, Popular Unity, a front between the Socialist Party, the Communist Party, with a bourgeois minority party that broke with the Christian Democracy, triumphed in the presidential election.

There is an idea in many sectors of the left that with the government of Allende Chile "was already socialist" and that "socialism was broken by Pinochet's military coup of September 11, 1973," but this is wrong.

It is true that the electoral victory in Chile opened a situation of mass uprising and working class struggle for their demands. The Allende government took enormously progressive measures against imperialism. It nationalized the copper mines, the most important economic resource of the country, made productive agrarian reform in sectors of the countryside, nationalized other factories, and introduced a system of miscellaneous production and cooperatives. Allende also nationalized the banking system and began profound educational reforms.

It was not a workers' government that had broken with the capitalist system, but an anti-imperialist government, since the Communist and Socialist Parties were in power with a bourgeois party. It was an anti-imperialist government very subject to the revolutionary pressure of the mass movement. Thus, while there were profound transformations, the structure of the state was not modified and a fundamental institution, the military, remained intact. Among the military's senior officers was Pinochet who, like many other officers, maintained a line of "support" democratic legality.

This government was sandwiched between the mass movement that wanted to radicalize the government towards socialism and the bourgeoisie and imperialist forces that began to harass it from the right. Faced with this advance on the right, the workers began the process of self-organization of the industrial cords, soviet forms of organization in the factories. Similar councils were formed in working class neighborhoods. In many factories, facing pressure from the right, which had already launched a reactionary truckers' strike, arms began to be produced. With these modes of self-organization, the workers prepared for the class confrontation they deemed inevitable. Among the middle and lower ranks of the military, there were uprisings and mutinies against anti-

democratic upper officers, especially after a first coup attempt. Meanwhile, Allende remained the defender of “institutionalism,” even naming Pinochet as commander-in-chief of the army.

Despite the famous photograph of Allende facing the bombing of the Palacio de La Moneda with a machine gun, the president possessed all along greater means to defend himself and the government. But mobilizing the workers against the expected coup would have meant placing power in the hands of the people to unleash a true socialist revolution. This Allende would not do, and that is why the government seized the weapons in the factories days before the coup.

If, as we saw before, the Latin American revolutionaries had to fight the guerrilla foquismo, we also had to fight the so-called pacific vision of socialism, which was instrumentalized throughout the continent by the communist parties and led to tragedy in Chile. The argument that it was necessary to “maintain legality,” to avoid provoking the right, and to maintain an institutional course ultimately led to the Pinochet dictatorship, which together with that of Argentina, was the bloodiest in our continent.

Some conclusions of 68

Why is not it just a commemoration? Why refresh now? Because, as we have seen, we still live its consequences, (decline of the American hegemony and the structural and ecological economic crisis), its historical linkage in the class struggle, and with lessons that are essential to transmit and to be incorporated by the new generations that approach to socialism.

In Latin America that historical link was in 1989 the caracazo and the subsequent Bolivarian revolution; the semi-insurrection of Argentinazo in 2001; the water war in 2003 and the insurrection that ended with Garcia Mesa’s government in 2005. More recently with the Arab revolutions of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria initiated in 2011 and later with the outraged of Spain, the rise of the workers in Greece, Occupy Wall Street, and the Brazilian revolt of 2013.

All these mass mobilizations, though they did not reach the size of ’68, prove that the workers and the peoples are not defeated historically or in a permanent defense against the advance of the right, as some sectors of the left claim.

And there is continuity. Now, when the serious crisis of capitalism presents a more polarized world with the emergence of new neopopulist sectors of extreme right, but where at the same time new political phenomena of broad parties occur that we can say are expressions of a new left.

Proof that the masses are not defeated are four events that must be emphasized that have occurred in recent weeks: In Albania began “A mass movement that the country has never seen before” [13], a popular insurrection that ousted the Prime Minister and former president Serj Sargsyan. The mobilizations in the streets ended with the right-wing government, and while this movement claims to be capitalized by the right, this event can be a positive movement for the oppressed youth and the working class in the country as Hovhannes Gevorkian, a student Armenian Law in Berlin. In Nicaragua, student and popular insurrection has put the autocratic government of Daniel Ortega against the ropes. It is a change of the situation in Central America, the closest “backyard” that Trump has. Anti-riot police prevented on Wednesday the advance of a demonstration, led by students, which demanded the clarification and punishment of those responsible for the 43 deaths that left the recent protests. As the comrades of the MAS (Panama) say “The multitudinous mobilizations in Nicaragua confirm the rise of the democratic struggles waged by the Central American peoples, against the governments that have imposed the neoliberal plans and use corruption to enrich themselves with their bourgeois partners. they finance their political campaigns

... “In France, May is the mobilization of the railway workers and other workers along with the student movement. And finally, there are the teachers’ strikes in the US that started in East Virginia and have now led to victory in Arizona. [14] The triumph of the strike in Eastern Virginia extended to Oklahoma, to a new triumph in Arizona and now to the University in California. The changes in the USA are also political, with the growth of the DSA (Democratic Socialist of America).

And here are some lessons ...

* The mobilizations of ‘68 corroborate that there are no changes without revolutions and that revolutions are made by the masses. No substantial change occurs in the world if there are no major mobilizations, popular rebellions, insurrections or revolutions

* 1968 and the whole history of the class struggle show that there are no triumphant revolutions without mass organization and without direction—a political subject that in the decisive moments can guide the movement on an insurrectionary course, as happened with the great Russian Revolution, China and Cuba.

* As in any mobilization period with a vanguard that remains attached to the needs of the mass movement, there are also sectors that, faced with the discrediting of the old bureaucratic or reformist leaders, assume anarchist, ultraleft positions. They believe that the fight against capitalism is to mobilize to attack and destroy banks and other actions of that kind. The “black blocs” and other anarchist sectors were a real problem in the mobilization of May 1 in France [15] as in June 2013 in Brazil. Their actions took less intensity and courage than of the guerrillas that we had in Latin America (also in Europe with the Red Brigades in Italy and in Germany), but that also hurt the mobilization.

* We need rebellious youth to understand that in 1968 the protagonist was the great movements themselves. The insurrections were of the student movement and of the workers. The confrontations with the police in the French barricades or the Argentine Cordobazo were made by thousands of students and workers and not by small groups; that is why they beat the regimes and the ruling classes.

* Trust the masses and build them as subject of the revolution. The party, under the organizational forms it takes according to the concrete situation, is now more necessary than ever.

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P.S.

* Portal de la Izquierda on 16 de May de 2018:

<http://portaldelaizquierda.com/en/2018/05/fifty-years-after-the-revolutions-of-68-by-pedro-fuentes/>

Footnotes

[1] Nahuel Moreno, in a polemical 1972 text with the majority of the IV said that the struggle for national liberation in the Portuguese colonies in Angola, Mozambique and Cabo Verde was the

Vietnam of Portugal, comparing what was the liberation struggle of Vietnam. South for the USA.

[2] So, we will not develop it in this text we cannot fail to mention the 1968 Mexican student strike and uprising that led to the Tlatelolco massacre. As we wrote in a course on Latin America this general strike and Mexican student insurrection has all the influence of the French May, and the massacre carried out by the PRI government to a mobilization in the plaza of Las Tres Culturas, called Tlatelolco “became a black spot of that regime and a vindication of justice for students and the Mexican people and Latin Americans.

[3] Mandel, in his book “The meaning of the Second World War” describes the great revolutionary resistance of the masses against Nazism.

[4] Wallerstein. “The decadence of the American Empire”. Edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique*.

[5] Watergate was a major political scandal that took place in the United States in the 1970s because of a theft of documents in the Watergate office complex in Washington DC, home of the National Committee of the United States Democratic Party, and the subsequent attempt to concealment of the Nixon administration from those responsible. When the conspiracy was uncovered, the United States Congress began an investigation, but the resistance of Richard Nixon’s government to collaborate in this led to an institutional crisis that ended in impeachment

[6] See article by Ben Said e Weber

<http://www.sinpermiso.info/textos/el-68-frances-el-estallido-de-may>

[7] Sin Permiso The highlights are ours.

<http://www.sinpermiso.info/textos/el-68-frances-el-estallido-de-mayo> In this meeting in which Mandel develops the role of the student body under neocapitalism, and the relationship between the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggle, when speaking of the revolt in the global world, they already include the Latin American “guerrillas” in the same line of the schematic transposition that a sector of the Latin American vanguard had made isolated of mass movement. <http://www.sinpermiso.info/textos/cincuentenario-del-68-del-levantamiento-contra-la-universidad-burguesa-hacia-el-levantamiento-contra>.

[8] View Portal de la Izquierda

<http://portaldelaizquierda.com/en/2016/03/a-atualidade-do-socialismo-e-as-tarefas-dos-revolucionarios-caderno-cinza/>

Lenin said: “There is a revolutionary situation when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their government without any change; when there is a crisis, in one way or another, among the “upper classes”, a crisis in the politics of the ruling class, which leads to a fissure through which the discontent and indignation of the oppressed classes erupts. For a revolution to occur, it is generally insufficient for “the lower classes do not want” to live in the old way; it is also necessary that “the upper classes cannot” live in the old way; (2) when the suffering and the need of the oppressed classes have become more acute than usual; (3) when, as a consequence of the previous causes, there is a considerable increase in the activity of the masses, who are allowed to steal without complaining in the “peacetime”, but, in turbulent times, they are attracted by all the circumstances of the crisis and by the “upper classes” in an independent historical action ”

[9] Pedro Fuentes 50 years of struggles and revolutions in Latin America. See the documents section in the Portal de la izquierda in Portuguese.

[10] The PST is the continuation of PRT La Verdad. In 1967/68 the PRT was divided between the Moreno wing that supported the mass mobilization as a strategy and that of Santucho and Luis Pujals who began the guerrilla.

[11] In Argentina since the first government of Perón, the working class conquered a structure of union organization from the very strong base. The Internal Commissions and the bodies of delegates established at the factory level a “dual power”, they disputed with the bosses and the foremen what the workers should do in their productive work.

In the Greater Buenos Aires our organization called PRT La Verdad after the break with an important sector of the party that founded the ERP (which was recognized as a section by the IV International Unified Secretariat), had a very good implementation in internal commissions of Citroen, Chrysler, Mercedes Benz and Peugeot had a class current called TAM, Advanced Mechanical Trend. We conducted important strikes.

[12] The PST (Socialist Workers Party), suffered attacks in about 20 of its premises, and the kidnapping and execution of 16 militants, mostly workers, in that period.

[13] ESSF (article 44534), [Armenian Prime Minister pushed out: “a mass movement the country never has seen before”](#).

[14] <http://portaldelaizquierda.com/en/2018/04/sparks-fly-from-west-virginia-but-will-they-ignite/>

[15] In front of the mobilization of the courtship of the unions were located 14,500 young people among anarchists, and black blocks.