

# Morenoites rebrand as “Permanent Revolution Current”: A conspiracy against Trotskyism and the coming socialist revolution

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At the end of 2025, the Morenoite current led by the Socialist Workers Party (PTS) of Argentina held an international conference in São Paulo, Brazil. Previously known as the Trotskyist Fraction, the organization used the gathering to rebrand itself as the Permanent Revolution Current – Fourth International (PRC-FI).

This operation represents a critical political reorientation of the Morenoite movement in response to the eruption of the imperialist crisis and the disruption of the bourgeois national orders around which its organizations operate. Anticipating massive struggles by the working class and youth throughout the world, the Morenoites are consciously preparing to divert them from the road of socialist revolution and back into the arms of the national bureaucratic apparatuses that defend capitalism.

Renaming their organization “Permanent Revolution Current” plays a sinister and well-defined role in these counterrevolutionary efforts. At the center of the Morenoite conference’s deliberations was a reactionary theoretical revision aimed at eviscerating Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution.

By formally identifying themselves with the internationalist revolutionary doctrine that they expressly repudiate, the Morenoites seek to gaslight the working class and youth and prevent them from accessing genuine Trotskyism represented by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). They will not succeed.

The Morenoite conference was opened with a “Great Internationalist Rally” on December 14 in São Paulo with representatives from the different national groups affiliated to the PRC, such as *Révolution permanente* (RP) from France, Left Voice from the US, Revolutionary Workers Movement (MRT) from Brazil and other Latin American groups.

Preceded by a video juxtaposing scenes of war with images of street protests, the speakers at the rally highlighted some notable elements of the international crisis: the intensification of imperialist wars and economic crisis, along with the growth of social inequality and authoritarianism. The Morenoite leaders also referred to the process of social radicalization, particularly the massive protests against the genocide in Gaza, and what they defined as the return of “class struggle as a dynamic factor.” The main focus was to present themselves as standing in the “front ranks of each of the struggles” in their respective countries.

In a recorded speech, the longtime leader of the Argentine PTS, Emilio Albamonte, addressed the framework of the political reorganization:

The ruling classes have not lost their ferocity, but there is beginning to be a response from the mass movement, as demonstrated by the tendency in Italy toward a general strike.

Accordingly, we must bring our organization up to the level of the circumstances, and that is what this Conference is for.

Clarifying what rising “to the level of the circumstances” is for the Morenoites, he pointed to the PTS’s policy of pressuring the General Confederation of Labor (CGT) in Argentina, “which is the right wing of the vacillating Peronist movement.”

Albamonte celebrated, in particular, the alleged success of the Argentinian “left wing”—that is, the pseudo-left electoral coalition led by the PTS, the Left and Workers Front (FIT-U)—in “forcing” the CGT “to call a demonstration” against the anti-labor bill that was subsequently rammed through the legislature by President Javier Milei’s fascistic government. Together with the “traitors of the CGT,” the Morenoite leader said, “we will carry forward our policy of the Workers United Front.” The same supposed accomplishment was hailed by PTS congress members Myriam Bregman and Nicolás del Caño. Speaking in person at the rally in São Paulo, they boasted that “Several media outlets said that the left *marcó la cancha* (i.e., set the terms) for the CGT’s call for this mobilization.”

This demonstration, held exactly two months after the speeches, resulted in “total betrayal” by the CGT, according to the Morenoites themselves.

In the aftermath of the February 12 protest in Argentina, *La Izquierda Diálogo* admitted that the CGT had been cooking up the betrayal “for many months,” and explained that its “lukewarm call for Wednesday’s day of action, without a strike and with ‘freedom of action’ for the unions, and with the added insult of not even filling the square in front of Congress or holding a rally, sought to serve the policy of negotiating with the far-right government to allow the essential parts of the plan to pass and to prevent the working class from expressing its full social force.”

In other words, what the Morenoites actually accomplished was “setting the terms” for the CGT bureaucracy’s subordination of the working class to Milei’s fascistic government, proclaimed as the “centerpiece of the United States’ strategy for Latin America” by Trump’s Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent.

The assistance in carrying out this betrayal of the Argentine working class was hailed by Albamonte as “the course that our organization must follow, not only to build parties in each of our countries, but to rebuild the world party of socialist revolution, the Fourth International.”

The subordination of the working class in Argentina to the bourgeois Peronist movement and its trade union bureaucracy is hardly new to the Morenoite movement. It has long been the speciality of the tendency founded by Nahuel Moreno since the 1950s.

The cultivation of reactionary political blocs with the demoralized Stalinists and “left-wing Peronists,” in the fraudulent name of applying the “united front” tactic of Lenin and Trotsky, was the political stock in trade of the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS)—the party founded by the Morenoites in 1982, during the decline of the Argentine military dictatorship whose rise had been facilitated by their capitulatory policies. The MAS was the political cradle of Albamonte and his nationalist tendency, which remained for years as an exclusively Argentine party. Only in 2004, did the “Trotskyist Fraction” launch itself as an international organization, separating from the International Workers League (IWL-FI) founded by Moreno.

The “Permanent Revolution Current” (PRC) is being built as a new cover—adorned with “revolutionary” colors—for the Morenoite movement’s promotion of different national pseudo-left parties and trade union bureaucracies that defend the rotting capitalist order from the revolutionary offensive of the working class.

The stains on the Morenoites’ newly sewn political flag were quick to appear. The disgraceful role that the PRC is destined to play was graphically exposed in its response to the crisis unleashed in Venezuela by the US imperialist invasion on January 3, just two weeks after the end of their conference.

As the Chavista government led by “interim president” Delcy Rodríguez collaborates with the fascist Trump administration in establishing a neocolonial regime in Venezuela, the PRC has joined a political bloc with the Stalinists, pseudo-left dissidents of Chavismo and other Pabloite currents. This coalition is aimed at carving out space for the pseudo-left organizations in the new bourgeois setup being forged under imperialist tutelage and at preventing at any cost the working class breaking free of the bourgeois nationalist bureaucracy.

Among all organizations in this reactionary bloc, which were either directly integrated into the Chavista bourgeois regime or acting as its cheerleaders, the PRC plays the filthiest role.

For years, the “Trotskyist Fraction” had dedicated itself to issuing fraternal polemics against other pseudo-left currents for carrying out “zigzags, without any anchoring in the firmest class independence and anti-imperialism,” between aligning themselves with the Chavistas, on the one hand, and the Venezuelan far-right financed by US imperialism, on the other. But, as the historical development exposes the catastrophic result of such a political orientation, the PRC rushes to aid the demoralized pseudo-left parties to whitewash their past and masquerade as representatives of the working class.

While the Morenoites speak of internationalist resistance to war and imperialism, the theses approved at their congress clarify nothing about the nature of the global crisis. Leaving the characterization of all fundamental aspects of the political situation undefined, the central concern of the PRC’s deliberations is to create leeway for their adaptation to imperialism.

The Morenoites reported having discussed different definitions of the international crisis directly extracted from bourgeois analysts and academia without ever politically digesting them or reaching any conclusion. They write: “[A] debate developed around some categories such as ‘interregnum,’ ‘systemic chaos,’ ‘asymmetric polarization,’ and ‘period of hegemonic dispute between the US and China,’ and the need to specify their use within the framework of a Marxist analysis of the international situation.”

What the situation definitely *is not*, according to the Morenoites, is objectively revolutionary.

The conference also could not reach an agreement about whether or not to characterize China as imperialist. This impasse directly reflects the dilemma of the Latin American bourgeoisie, to which the Morenoites are prominently oriented, as it seeks to balance between China and US imperialism. Nevertheless, the PRC’s decisions indicate an ongoing

preparation to justify Washington’s imperialist offensive against China under fraudulent “anti-imperialist” banners.

### “New political phenomena to the left of social liberalism”

Unable to present a worked-out perspective on the world historic crisis, the Morenoites, however, have set guidelines. They write:

Therefore, [the congress] reaffirmed that we are preparing for a period of sharpening of rivalries between powers and processes of political radicalization and class struggle. In this framework, it addressed the discussion of the situation from the angle of intervention in the class struggle and the new political phenomena to the left of social liberalism.

By “new political phenomena to the left of social liberalism” the PRC means the pseudo-left political traps such as the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) in the US, “The Left” party in Germany, and Corbyn’s “Your Party” in the UK into which they will seek to divert the mass upsurge of workers and youth against war and capitalism.

The PRC’s orientation represents a deepening of the counterrevolutionary role played by Pabloite revisionism, of which Morenoism was one of the most right-wing expressions, in the 20th century. The quintessence of Pabloism was the liquidation of the Fourth International, sabotaging the struggle to resolve the historic crisis of proletarian leadership.

In the closing speech of the “Great Internationalist Rally” that opened the work of the Morenoite conference, Diana Assunção, leader of the Brazilian Revolutionary Workers Movement (MRT), declared:

I believe the conclusion is that we need to prepare ourselves and fight more vigorously so that the international working class has a tool equal to the coming events of the class struggle that the international situation may be announcing. In this sense, more than ever, it is fundamental to battle for the reconstruction of the Fourth International....

The Fourth International fragmented after the Second World War, including into currents that ended up seeking shortcuts, that is, in the old opportunism, or sinking into useless dogmas....

Therefore, in this Conference we will debate how to forcefully resume the struggle for a movement that promotes an International of Socialist Revolution, which for us is the Fourth International.... we want to deepen this call and open this debate with all the left that claims to be revolutionary.

Our current is the most dynamic of Trotskyism at the international level, but we are few in the face of the enormous challenges we face. Therefore, we do not proclaim ourselves a revolutionary international, but rather seek to call on all those who wish to fight for this program and strategy to face the new processes and challenges together.

The Pabloite conception of an “international party” advocated by Assunção is diametrically opposed to that defended by Leon Trotsky.

In the *Transitional Program*, Trotsky answered the “skeptics” who opposed the foundation of the Fourth International with the claim that “its

ranks are not numerous.” He wrote: “Outside these cadres there does not exist a single revolutionary current on this planet really meriting the name. If our international be still weak in numbers, it is strong in doctrine, program, tradition, in the incomparable tempering of its cadres.”

By proclaiming itself as the “most dynamic current of Trotskyism at the international level,” the PRC arrogates to itself the right to repudiate the doctrine, program and traditions of the Fourth International—long ago rejected as “useless dogmas” by Morenoism.

The PRT creates the crudest political amalgam between the current that embraced “old opportunism”—i.e., Pabloism—and the tendency that fought to defend the revolutionary principles of Trotskyism—i.e., the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI). This is a gross and deliberate distortion of the criminal role played by Pabloism and its Morenoite variant. The Pabloites did not simply “end up” in opportunism, they waged a conscious, protracted struggle to completely liquidate the Trotskyist movement.

With this slander, the Morenoites hope to whitewash the record of historical betrayals of the working class committed not only by Pabloism, but by Stalinism and the different anti-Trotskyist forces that they seek to rehabilitate as the “left that claims to be revolutionary.”

As we enter a period of the greatest revolutionary struggles in history, the derailing of the construction of the Trotskyist leadership in the working class assumes the greatest importance for the preservation of the power of the capitalist oligarchy.

To assimilate the conquests of the struggle against anti-Marxist revisionism, in particular of the ICFI’s battle against Pabloism in the Fourth International, and to develop this struggle in light of the strategic experiences of the 21st century, is the most critical factor in developing the revolutionary vanguard that will establish working class power internationally.

### **The Morenoites’ renewed assault on Permanent Revolution**

The perfidious character of the Morenoite operation finds no more damning exposure than in the fact that the rebranding of their movement as “Permanent Revolution Current” came hand-in-hand with the call for an all-out revision of Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution.

In preparation for their “international conference,” the Morenoites held a seminar in Argentina titled “Theory of Permanent Revolution: Toward an Expanded Formulation.” Its main documents were published in December by *La Izquierda Di ario* as “Dossier: Debates on the theory of permanent revolution and its relevance today.”

The Morenoites’ “debate” amounts to a declaration of war on this fundamental doctrine of Trotskyism. While their leaders cannot find agreement on what the “current form” of permanent revolution might be, they concur on proclaiming Trotsky’s formulations to be incompatible with present reality.

In the article presented as “Notes to the Militants,” the Morenoites’ leading theoretician in the renewed assault on Trotskyism, Juan Dal Maso, “attempts to provide an overview of the ongoing debates regarding the relevance of the theory of permanent revolution.”

Dal Maso writes:

By expanded formulation of the TPR [Theory of Permanent Revolution], we refer to a new interpretation of the TPR that considers various elaborations by Trotsky, but also by Gramsci. ... We also include Gramsci’s elaborations on hegemony as the “current form” of permanent revolution ... because, on the one

hand, it also contributes to thinking about the problem of the mechanics of permanent revolution in metropolitan or “Westernized” peripheral countries and, on the other, it contributes to thinking about the strategy corresponding to a reading of permanent revolution that emphasizes the aspects of the struggle for hegemony.

Anticipating criticism, Dal Maso’s “Notes” rhetorically ask: “Doesn’t this run the risk of deforming the TPR?” He bureaucratically answers:

No, because we are not changing the Marxist concept of revolution, nor that of permanent revolution, nor are we changing the concept of theory, nor are we combining incompatible elaborations with each other.

In other words, everything must be changed for nothing to change.

The Morenoites’ contempt for theory and program (and for their own membership) is so tremendous that the adoption of their so-called “new interpretation of the Theory of Permanent Revolution” did not even merit a direct vote. Entrusting the leadership to lead its revisionist drive as far as it likes, the conference simply “voted to hold as a major event an open public international seminar on the Theory of Permanent Revolution in the 21st century.”

It is clear that the Morenoites’ decision to rename their organization was taken so as to preempt challenges to their theoretical offensive against the Theory of Permanent Revolution.

The essence of this revisionist attack is, first, to declare the precepts of the Theory of Permanent Revolution a dead letter and, second, to completely redefine the term “permanent revolution” so as to abolish its historical and political association with Trotsky and the Fourth International.

Presenting the fundamental conclusions of the Morenoites’ seminar, Dal Maso writes in an essay titled “Searching for the Present Form of Permanent Revolution”:

Understand well, when we say that the actuality of the Theory of Permanent Revolution is in debate, we are not saying that it is not valid. What that statement means is only that the typical, classical or virtuous dynamics foreseen by this theory do not coincide with current processes. Here it is important, precisely because of this circumstance, the difference between prescription and description. Prescription involves a practical will (in our case, the realization of socialist revolution with a strategy proper to the proletariat). Description seeks to account for a state of affairs or process that is, not necessarily in its development but in its existence, independent of that will. Taking this distinction into account, the TPR is irreproachable from a prescriptive point of view, unless one is in favor of alliances with the national bourgeoisie, social democracy, Stalinism or capitalism in general. However, from a descriptive point of view, the type of processes for which this theory was conceived are not those that occur in our reality. This circumstance forces us to rethink the question of the actuality of the TPR (in order to re-articulate both dimensions (prescriptive and descriptive) in relation to the reality of this epoch.

This statement stands out, in the first place, for its hypocrisy. Not only can one be “in favor of alliances with the national bourgeoisie, social

democracy, Stalinism or capitalism in general,” but, if one is a member of the “Permanent Revolution Current,” one is obliged to systematically pursue such alliances.

Moreover, once it is determined that the Theory of Permanent Revolution does not “describe” the processes that occur in “our reality,” it can only be invoked in holiday speeches. In fact, what the Morenoites present as the “current form” or “expanded formulation of the Theory of Permanent Revolution” is merely the reactionary politics of the pseudo-left disguised with pseudo-Trotskyist rhetoric.

### The political swamp of the pseudo-left

However vulgar, Dal Maso’s contention about the “difference between prescription and description” raises profound theoretical issues.

By declaring an opposition between “practical will” and the “state of things independent of that will,” Dal Maso assumes a fundamental split between the subjective and objective elements of historical development. A party that conceives of its subjective activity independently from objective reality and its inherent contradictions is not a Marxist tendency rooted in the working class, but an outfit of petty-bourgeois pseudo-left freebooters.

In his *Theses on Feuerbach*, a foundational work of the historical materialist method, Marx proclaimed:

The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object or of contemplation, but not as sensuous human activity, practice, not subjectively. Hence, in contradistinction to materialism, the active side was developed abstractly by idealism—which, of course, does not know real, sensuous activity as such.

The development of human understanding of the subjective and objective elements of reality under the same materialist system of thought was the great achievement of Marxist theory. From it, arises a political practice that was summarized in Lenin’s words:

The highest task of humanity is to comprehend this objective logic of economic evolution (the evolution of social life) in its general and fundamental features, so that it may be possible to adapt to it one’s social consciousness and the consciousness of the advanced classes of all capitalist countries in as definite, clear and critical a fashion as possible.

But a party that dissociates its subjective will from objective necessity orients its activity to completely different goals. It acts not to adapt social consciousness to the objective logic of historical development, but to conform it to its subjective ideals and moral standards. Its chief goal is not to clarify the masses on the tasks posed by the objective development of the capitalist crisis and the class struggle, but to appeal to their emotions. The domain of the irrational is its preferred political arena.

While failing to clearly draw out the anti-Marxist implications of their conclusions, the Morenoites are not oblivious to them. The vindication of “Gramsci’s elaborations on hegemony” serves them, in fact, as a strategically positioned bridge to the vast swamp of pseudo-left theories

and politics.

The Morenoite PRC’s orientation towards virulent anti-Trotskyist tendencies was laid bare in the very framework of its pre-conference debate on the “present relevance” of the Theory of Permanent Revolution.

As Dal Maso reports:

The works we discussed at the first meeting offer different summaries of the theory of permanent revolution during the 20th century, each linked to the various issues we discussed in the previous section. These are Isaac Deutscher’s “The Age of Permanent Revolution,” “Leon Trotsky as a Theorist,” chapter 4 of Raya Dunayevskaya’s *Philosophy and Revolution*, Perry Anderson’s “Epilogue” to *Considerations on Western Marxism*, and chapter 2 of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*.

Thus, the Morenoites’ review of the “theory of permanent revolution during the 20th century” is based entirely on works dedicated to refuting the fundamental premises and perspectives of the Fourth International and of Marxism as a whole.

The political biographies of the authors referenced by the Morenoites illustrate a broad historical process of political demoralization and rejection of socialism by the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. They reveal, moreover, the fundamental connection between the main trends of revisionism that emerged in the post-war period in the Fourth International—Pabloism and Shachtmanism—and the development of post-modernism and the politics of the pseudo-left.

Isaac Deutscher—merely presented as “the great biographer of Trotsky” by the Morenoites—was directly opposed to the foundation of the Fourth International based on his rejection of Trotsky’s characterization of Stalinism as counterrevolutionary. Deutscher advanced the perspective that Stalin played the role of a Soviet Napoleon, and that the Moscow bureaucracy could be pushed by mass pressure to play a progressive historical role, theories that would later be developed in the outlook of Pabloism.

Raya Dunayevskaya (Forest) and C.L.R. James (Johnson) were protagonists of a petty-bourgeois tendency within the American Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the 1930s-1940s that broke with Trotskyism on the same basis as the Shachtman fraction. As with the Shachtmanites, the Johnson-Forest tendency repudiated Trotsky’s characterization of the Soviet Union as a workers’ state, although degenerated, and of the ruling bureaucracy as a parasitic formation, and not a class. Dunayevskaya’s interpretation of the Soviet Union as a state-capitalist imperialist formation rapidly developed into a fundamental repudiation of Marxism and of the revolutionary role of the working class, embracing instead “Humanism” and the centrality of gender and racial struggles.

Perry Anderson has been the long-time editor of the *New Left Review*, the mouthpiece for a petty-bourgeois tendency that emerged in the context of the massive crisis of Stalinism and the labor bureaucracies of the late 1950s. The defining feature of this tendency was that its break with Stalinism on moral grounds was rooted in its rejection of the revolutionary role of the working class and hostility to the historical perspective of Trotskyism.

Summarizing the ideological conceptions that animated the New Left—which are profoundly connected to the present politics of the Morenoites—the Socialist Equality Party (Germany) explains in its founding document:

Instead of capitalist exploitation, the leading figures of the New

Left placed at the heart of their social analysis the concept of alienation, which they interpreted in a psychological or existential manner. The working class was no longer regarded as a revolutionary class, but, rather, as an apolitical, or even backward mass, thoroughly integrated into bourgeois society via the mechanisms of consumerism, the domination of the media and repressive forms of education. Herbert Marcuse, Heidegger's pupil and a member of the Frankfurt School, even detected a "proto-fascist syndrome in the working class". The "revolution" would proceed not from the working class, but from the young intelligentsia, social fringe groups or guerrilla movements. Its driving force was not the class contradictions of capitalist society, but critical thinking and the actions of an enlightened elite...

The common historical and social roots of the demoralized anti-Marxist perspectives that came to dominate the petty-bourgeois "left" and the liquidationist tendencies that developed within the Fourth International over the same period were explained by David North in "The Theoretical and Historical Origins of the Pseudo-Left" (*The Frankfurt School, Postmodernism and the Politics of the Pseudo-left—A Marxist Critique*):

The aftermath of World War II saw the development within diverse sections of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia of an increasingly self-consciously anti-materialist, anti-Marxist, anti-Trotskyist, anti-socialist, and anti-working class outlook. Especially as capitalist rule was restabilized in the United States and Western Europe, and the Soviet bureaucracy consolidated its position, the petty-bourgeoisie sought to develop the intellectual conceptions and elaborate the political program which best suited the defense of its own interests in the post-war order. The emergence of Pabloism between 1949 and 1953 was an expression within the Fourth International of this social, political and intellectual process....

It was not a matter of a few confused people making unfortunate political mistakes. Rather, the theoretical and political "errors" of Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel, to name only the most important opponents of orthodox Trotskyism (that is, the political expression of revolutionary Marxism), arose as the expression of socio-economic processes that developed in the aftermath of World War II. Through the tendency known as Pabloism, the petty-bourgeoisie attempted to seize control of the Fourth International and utilize its prestige in its own interests.

The rightward trajectory of these petty-bourgeois tendencies culminated in their complete integration into bourgeois politics and the consolidation of the outlook of what the ICFI scientifically characterized as the pseudo-left.

The perspectives of the pseudo-left were epitomized in the influential work by Chantal Mouffe and Ernest Laclau, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. Launched in 1985 by the Pabloite publishing house Verso (which also published Anderson's *Considerations on Western Marxism*), the book proclaimed: "What is now in crisis is a whole conception of socialism which rests upon the ontological centrality of the working class, upon the role of Revolution, with a capital 'r', as the founding moment in the transition from one type of society to another." Laclau and Mouffe's "left-wing populist" perspective found concrete expression in the betrayals and political catastrophes carried out by Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain.

The hatchet jobs against the Theory of Permanent Revolution by these

authors from various anti-Trotskyist traditions serve as the undeniable foundation for the PRC's *mala fide* rewriting of Trotsky's theory. The Morenoite scoundrels, however, fail to specify what has been refuted in the Theory of Permanent Revolution by a balance-sheet of the 20th century and why it requires revision.

The answer to this question emerges more clearly from other writings by Juan Dal Maso, the architect of the Morenoite "expanded formulation" of the Theory of Permanent Revolution.

The Morenoite leader's theoretical elaborations have focused on, in addition to Gramsci, the works of the Peruvian heterodox socialist thinker José Carlos Mariátegui. In 2025, *La Izquierda Diálogo* published two essays by Dal Maso reclaiming the contributions of Mariátegui for the development of a present-day political "myth."

He praised Mariátegui's "idea of myth as the banner, the goal, or what a group of people, especially crowds, pursue." Claiming this concept to be the "most productive for thinking about the problem of revolutionary politics today," Dal Maso recognized it to be indissolubly linked to the ideas of "myth as a metaphysical necessity, as something that obeys the human being's 'need for infinity,'" and "as that which moves human beings in history ... as when [Mariátegui] says that history is made by men possessed and enlightened by a 'higher belief' and the rest are 'the anonymous chorus of the drama.'"

Mariátegui, who died in 1930 at the early age of 35, argued for the Communist movement's need for a "revolutionary myth." Dal Maso, for his part, prescribes a "democratic myth" for the 21st century.

But why would the "problem of revolutionary politics today" require delving into the realm of "myth"? Dal Maso answers:

Returning to Mariátegui's terms, rather than a crisis of the "bourgeois absolute," that is, rather than a crisis of the idea of progress with a capital P and the opening up to "heroic and voluntarist" imaginaries such as those of the early postwar period of the 20th century, what we are experiencing today is an exhaustion of bourgeois ideology due to its own banality, which in turn constitutes the very process of survival of that ideology as such: the idea that capitalism is the only possible system and the idea of presentism that closes off any view of the past (especially in its revolutionary aspects) and the future (as a possibility for change) because we live and must live in an immediate, instantaneous present in which we must devote ourselves to consumption. This imaginary, as befits any crisis situation, is not homogeneous either, but it has enough gravitation for us to ask ourselves whether there is not a certain chronic aspect to the ideological crisis, which can only be overcome as a stage of mass subjectivity through major historical events.

This formulation presents clearly not only how the Morenoites conceive of the "problem of revolutionary politics today," but why the Theory of Permanent Revolution in its "classical form" is utterly unsuited to its purposes.

The perpetuation of the capitalist system is presented as the result of its ideological domination over the working class.

If this ideological crisis of the masses has taken on a chronic character that only unspecified major events can overcome, as Dal Maso proposes, then we are living under a completely different historical epoch from that analyzed by Trotsky, and one in which his theoretical postulates are absolutely useless.

The only thing original about the Morenoites' ideas is their audacity in presenting them as an "expansion" of Trotsky's theory. But long ago, the founding leader of the Fourth International already answered their

demoralized petty-bourgeois contentions:

All the various types of disillusioned and frightened representatives of pseudo-Marxism proceed ... from the assumption that the bankruptcy of the leadership only “reflects” the incapacity of the proletariat to fulfill its revolutionary mission. Not all our opponents express this thought clearly, but all of them—ultra-lefts, centrists, anarchists, not to mention Stalinists and social-democrats—shift the responsibility for the defeats from themselves to the shoulders of the proletariat. None of them indicate under precisely what conditions the proletariat will be capable of accomplishing the socialist overturn.

If we grant as true that the cause of the defeats is rooted in the social qualities of the proletariat itself, then the position of modern society will have to be acknowledged as hopeless.

### **The historical vindication and actuality of Trotsky’s Theory of Permanent Revolution**

The PRC never gives a straightforward account of what they consider inconsistent with reality in the Theory of Permanent Revolution. But this question has been answered by the historical practice of Morenoism. The long political record of the Morenoite tendency has been consistently shaped by its repudiation of the basic interconnected premises of Trotsky’s theory: 1) The international character of the socialist revolution, which, as Trotsky wrote, “flows from the present state of economy and the social structure of humanity” 2) The decisive revolutionary role of the working class in every country in the current, imperialist epoch.

Contrary to the Morenoites’ claims, the Theory of Permanent Revolution entirely corresponds to the unfolding objective global capitalist crisis and the political problems of revolutionary politics today. The fundamental world political dynamics described by Trotsky’s theory are entirely contemporary.

The fundamental principles of this world political conception were elaborated by Trotsky back in 1905, as he determined the necessary programmatic framework for the coming Russian revolution.

Trotsky insisted that the backward Russian bourgeoisie, simultaneously oppressed by imperialism and confronting the internal challenge of a powerful working class, was incapable of resolving the tasks historically associated with the democratic revolutions of the past. Only the working class, by taking power, could carry out these revolutionary tasks. The Russian proletariat, however, would not be able to limit itself to democratic tasks and would be compelled to implement directly socialist measures, whose completion depended upon the expansion of the socialist revolution internationally.

As explained in David North’s 1993 essay, “Permanent Revolution and the National Question Today”:

The relation of the Russian Revolution to the world socialist revolution constituted the essential foundation of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution. With a consistency and far-sightedness that was unequaled by any of his contemporaries, Lenin not excluded, Trotsky insisted that the character of the Russian Revolution would be determined, in the final analysis, not by national, but by international, conditions. To the Menshevik pedants, who continuously argued that Russia was too economically backward to embark upon a program of socialist

economic development, Trotsky replied that Russian economic potentialities could not be properly evaluated only from the standpoint of its national stage of development and the national resources at its disposal. The real dynamics of Russian development could be understood only within the context of the world economy and the international political relations within which it actually existed.

North continued:

The outbreak of the First World War vindicated Trotsky’s insistence on the primacy of the international situation over national factors. The imperialist war signified, in essence, the impossibility of peacefully reconciling the productive forces of world capitalism with the outmoded nation-state. Both the working class in the advanced as well as backward countries faced a common dilemma: The solution to all the fundamental problems of human society was to be found only at the level of world economic development and through the medium of international revolutionary struggle.

This scientific conception underlay Trotsky’s appraisal of all political problems.

The critical historical experiences of the last century have time and again verified the laws of political development described by the Theory of Permanent Revolution.

Trotsky’s theory was positively confirmed in the victory of the 1917 October Revolution, which successfully established working class power by adopting the programmatic prescriptions of the Theory of Permanent Revolution. But it was also vindicated, in the negative, by the series of revolutionary defeats provoked by the treacherous nationalist perspectives promoted by the Stalinist and Pabloite enemies of Trotskyism. Nowhere in the world were the disastrous consequences of the renunciation of the Theory of Permanent Revolution demonstrated so repeatedly and definitively as in Latin America.

Stalinism emerged as a conscious political reaction against the revolutionary internationalist program which inspired the October Revolution. Its perspectives expressed the material interests of the bureaucracy of a workers’ state established in an economically backward country surrounded by imperialism. Its search for accommodation was rationalized in Stalin’s anti-Marxist theory of “Socialism in One Country,” which severed the link between the development of socialism in the Soviet Union and the advance of world proletarian revolution.

The major setbacks for the international revolution produced by the Comintern’s betrayals, from the crushing of the 1927 Chinese Revolution to the rise of Hitler to power in 1933, consolidated Stalinism as a counterrevolutionary agency of imperialism. On the basis of this assessment Trotsky issued the call for the Fourth International.

Stalinism’s counterrevolutionary role was clearly presented in its adoption of the “Popular Front” alliances aimed at preserving bourgeois rule as the capitalist crisis prepared a second inter-imperialist global war. But it was even more clearly exposed by its efforts to physically liquidate the revolutionary Marxist vanguard, which it correctly identified with Trotskyism.

The Trotskyist movement was politically forged in the struggle to develop the internationalist revolutionary strategy of the working class and to defend its political independence against the efforts by Stalinism to subordinate it to national alliances with the bourgeoisie. Pabloite revisionism represented a systematic attempt to disrupt that struggle from

within the Fourth International.

The Pabloite tendency—led by Michel Pablo and Ernest Mandel, who presided over the International Secretariat of the Fourth International—adapted itself to the conditions of relative stabilization of capitalism in the post-war period, only achieved through Stalinism’s betrayals of the revolutionary struggles of the working class at the end of World War II.

Whitewashing the counterrevolutionary crimes of Stalinism, the Pabloites hailed its “successes” in establishing deformed workers’ states in Eastern Europe. These “successes,” along with the advance of the anti-colonial revolution and the “quiescence” of the labor movement in the imperialist centers, were impressionistically presented as the elements of a “new reality.” “Objective social reality,” Pablo stated, “consists essentially of the capitalist regime and the Stalinist world.”

This grossly impressionistic assessment gave rise to a completely new historical perspective. As David North wrote in *The Heritage We Defend*:

...Trotskyism was no longer seen as the doctrine guiding the practical activity of a party determined to conquer power and change the course of history, but rather as a general interpretation of a historical process in which socialism would ultimately be realized under the leadership of nonproletarian forces hostile to the Fourth International. Insofar as Trotskyism was to be credited with any direct role in the course of events, it was merely as a sort of subliminal mental process unconsciously guiding the activities of Stalinists, neo-Stalinists, semi-Stalinists, and, of course, petty-bourgeois nationalists of one type or another.

At the Third World Congress of the Fourth International in August 1951, Pablo drew out the full liquidationist implications of his perspective, declaring that no Trotskyist organization could avoid “subordinating all organizational considerations, of formal independence or otherwise, to real integration into the mass movement wherever it expresses itself.” Under this doctrine, dubbed “entryism sui generis,” the Pabloites oriented the sections of the Fourth International to fully dissolving themselves into the Stalinist and Social Democratic parties and into the bourgeois nationalist movements in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

As for the Latin American sections, the Third Congress’s theses oriented their “participation and activity, free from all sectarianism, in all mass movements and all organizations which express, even in an indirect and confused fashion, the aspirations of the masses which may, for example, take the channel of the Peronist trade unions or the Bolivian MNR movement, or the APRA in Peru, the ‘laborite’ movement of Vargas, or Democratic Action in Venezuela.”

This line directly repudiated the previous orientation of the Trotskyist organizations in Latin America. In Brazil, for instance, the Socialist Revolutionary Party (PSR) had built its prestige in the workers’ movement as the most consequential opponent of the right-wing nationalist government of Getúlio Vargas and its corporatist state apparatus, to which the Stalinist Communist Party completely subordinated itself.

In relation to Bolivia and Peru, Pablo’s thesis specifically sanctioned popular front alliances with the national bourgeoisie. They argued for the Bolivian Revolutionary Workers Party (POR) to intervene in the mass movement “with the aim of pushing it as far as possible up to the seizure of power by the MNR on the basis of a progressive program of anti-imperialist united front.”

As North critically observed in *The Heritage We Defend*:

This proposal demonstrated clearly that Pabloite liquidationism led directly, beneath the guise of “integrating into the mass movement,” to class collaboration and the betrayal of the working class. The orientation proposed by Pablo had nothing whatsoever to do with the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks in 1917 on the basis of the theory of permanent revolution. It sanctioned the adaptation of Lora to the bourgeois nationalism of Paz Estensoro, which led directly to the defeat of the Bolivian working class in 1952. ...

The idea that the Trotskyists should challenge the bourgeois nationalists of the MNR or the APRA for the leadership of the working class and oppressed peasantry, that it should strive to expose before the masses the inability of these organizations to complete the democratic revolution and wage a consistent struggle against imperialism, and that it should unmask the political insincerity of these organizations’ democratic pretensions, was anathema to the political outlook being championed by Pablo.

The 1953 split with the Pabloite revisionists and the founding of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) preserved the international Trotskyist movement from this massive liquidationist attack.

The “Open Letter” by the Socialist Workers Party (SWP) leader James P. Cannon, which launched the ICFI, restated the fundamental principles of Trotskyism under attack by Pabloism. It defended Trotsky’s characterization of the epoch as that of the “death agony of the capitalist system,” which “threatens the destruction of civilization through worsening depressions, world wars and barbaric manifestations like fascism,” and “can be avoided only by replacing capitalism with the planned economy of socialism on a world scale.” The “world relationship of social forces was never so favorable as today for the workers to take the road to power,” it affirmed, but the crisis of leadership in the working class had to be resolved. “The main obstacle to this is Stalinism,” Cannon’s letter clearly stated, “which attracts workers through exploiting the prestige of the October 1917 Revolution in Russia, only later, as it betrays their confidence, to hurl them either into the arms of the Social Democracy, into apathy, or back into illusions in capitalism.”

Developing on the fundamental political-theoretical divisions with Pabloism on the role of conscious leadership and internationalism, Cannon wrote in the months following the split:

We alone are unconditional adherents of the Lenin-Trotsky theory of the party of the conscious vanguard and its role as leader of the revolutionary struggle. This theory acquires burning actuality and dominates all others in the present epoch.

The problem of leadership now is not limited to spontaneous manifestations of the class struggle in a long drawn-out process, nor even to the conquest of power in this or that country where capitalism is especially weak. It is a question of the development of the international revolution and the socialist transformation of society.

The foundation of the ICFI established the essential political issues in the split with Pabloism. But it could only initiate what out of necessity developed as a protracted and relentless political struggle against the powerful material pressures manifested in Pabloite revisionism.

## Nahuel Moreno’s repudiation of Permanent Revolution

The profound implications of the 1953 split in the Fourth International emerged with greater force less than a decade later, with the SWP's promotion of unprincipled reunification with the Pabloite International Secretariat. The political differences with Pabloism, which had only grown sharper, were declared by the SWP leaders and its international backers to have been overcome by agreement on major events, above all, the 1959 Cuban Revolution. The essence of this agreement was a full-scale assault on the Theory of Permanent Revolution.

Reunification was justified on the basis of a common understanding with the Pabloites that Fidel Castro's guerrilla movement had demonstrated that the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' state could be accomplished with "blunted instruments," that is, by petty-bourgeois non-Marxist leaderships based on social forces other than the working class. The Pabloite United Secretariat, established in 1963 as a result of this unprincipled merger, explicitly assigned to Trotskyism the servile role of helping to "strengthen and enrich the international current of Castroism."

The main architects of this operation to liquidate the Trotskyist movement into the realm of petty-bourgeois politics were Joseph Hansen, the former GPU and then FBI agent in the leadership of the SWP, and his Latin American ally, Nahuel Moreno.

Hansen and Moreno, echoed by their heirs in the "Permanent Revolution Current" today, cynically presented their frontal assault on the Theory of Permanent Revolution as an "update" of Trotsky's theory. Hansen argued that the alleged fact that Castro's "petty-bourgeois leadership, beginning with a bourgeois-democratic program," had been driven by the objective logic of events towards "establishing the first workers state in the Western Hemisphere" was the ultimate vindication of the laws of Permanent Revolution.

Moreno's gross revision of the Theory of Permanent Revolution was developed in tandem with his growing clash with the principled orientation of the ICFI in Latin America. Having initially supported the ICFI in the 1953 split, largely motivated by national factional disputes with Pablo's protégé in Argentina, Juan Posadas, Moreno soon found himself in disagreement with its perspectives. These differences were formulated for the first time in his report to the Latin American sections on the 1958 Leeds Conference of the ICFI, which he attended. The report was later published under the title "Permanent Revolution in the Post-War."

The main point of Moreno's report was declaring "total opposition" to the ICFI's resolution that "In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, our central task is to build revolutionary proletarian parties," which "armed with the theory of permanent revolution" fight for "establishing proletarian leadership of the masses." Rejecting this orthodox formulation, he argued: "The most important theoretical and programmatic problem lies in this fact: the revolutionary process in this postwar period has enriched and given a new content to the thesis of permanent revolution."

Moreno's revisionist conclusions were formulated in the clearest fashion in his programmatic document, "The Latin American Revolution," issued the year before his reunification with Pabloism. The document stated:

Life has made evident the holes, omissions and errors of the Program of Permanent Revolution. ... The dogma that the only class which can carry out the democratic tasks is the working class is false. Sections of the urban middle class and the peasantry are on occasion the revolutionary leaderships. ... It is not only the workers who can organize and in the first stages of the revolution, the democratic agrarian movements can do so.

Western Marxism forgot the armed struggle, the permanent

method of the masses which incorporates to the class struggle a new factor which is specifically original: geography erases the classification of mature and immature regions. Any country, any region is ready for permanent revolution. ... The Cuban and Chinese revolutions took place under circumstances which the classical Marxists described as unfavorable: there were no great social struggles, and a handful of men began an armed struggle. Nonetheless, this group transforms the conditions into favorable.

This outlook finds a direct echo in the PRC's claim, in implicit reference to the ICFI, that part of the Fourth International "ended up sinking into useless dogmas." The conclusion drawn by Moreno in the 1962 document also leaves no doubt about the origins of the gross eclecticism displayed in the PRC's "expanded formulation." He wrote: "It is necessary to synthesize the correct general theory and program (Trotskyism) with the correct particular theory and program (Maoism and Castroism.)"

Addressing the critical issues at stake in his revisionist line, Moreno declared in "The Latin American Revolution" that it was "a matter of finding out for what objective reasons the world revolution continued to advance despite the betrayal and the lack of revolutionary proletarian leadership." In other words, that the basic premise of the Fourth International, that the crisis of humanity reduces itself to the crisis of revolutionary leadership of the working class, had been historically refuted.

The attempt by Hansen and Moreno to definitively liquidate the Trotskyist movement was blocked by the political counteroffensive mounted by the ICFI under the leadership of the British Socialist Labour League (SLL) of Gerry Healy. Rejecting the Pabloites' glorification of petty-bourgeois guerrillism and demolishing the myth that Castro's bourgeois nationalist revolution had established a workers' state in Cuba, Healy and his comrades reasserted the need to build sections of the Fourth International as the conscious revolutionary leadership of the working class in Latin America and throughout the world.

The refusal to dissolve the ICFI guaranteed the preservation of the historical continuity of the international Trotskyist movement. But the disruption of the construction of revolutionary leadership provoked by Pabloism had catastrophic consequences. Thousands of revolutionary workers and youth throughout Latin America were massacred in the guerrilla adventures promoted by the Pabloites.

Moreover, as the United Secretariat was proclaiming the strategic centrality of rural guerrillas and the peasantry, the region was in fact pregnant with mass uprisings of the urban working class. Movements like the *Cordobazo*, that rocked Argentina in 1969, and the subsequent revolutionary upsurge of workers in Chile, objectively posed the taking of political power by the working class. But in the absence of a conscious Marxist/Trotskyist leadership, these struggles remained politically subordinated to Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies and were led to defeat.

In Argentina and Chile, as in other countries through the region, immediately after splitting with the ICFI, the Morenoites carried the orientation to liquidate the existing sections of the Fourth International into "developing militant currents that want to carry things through once and for all 'a la cubana,'" as wrote Luis Vitale of the Chilean Workers Revolutionary Party (POR). Moreno carried out an unprincipled fusion with Mario Santucho's petty bourgeois nationalist Popular Indo-American Revolutionary Front to form the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) in Argentina.

As Bill Van Auken wrote in "Argentine Workers at the Crossroads" (in the *Bulletin*, Dec. 1988- Jan. 1989 as Bill Vann), Santucho "soon drew the logical conclusion from the Pabloite line: that it was necessary to

immediately launch an armed guerrilla struggle in Argentina.” By 1968, on the eve of the mass uprising in Argentina’s industrial center of Cordoba, “Santucho, who was already organizing individual armed actions, and Moreno, whose relation to guerrillaism was entirely platonic, split,” with two-thirds of the PRT leadership siding with Santucho and the United Secretariat recognizing his group as the official section.

While a section of the Argentine Pabloites launched themselves into catastrophic isolated armed struggles against the state, Moreno increasingly integrated his organization into the bourgeois apparatus that was murdering his former comrades. As Van Auken wrote:

Following the assumption of power by Peron in 1973, Moreno’s PRT played an increasingly key role in the betrayal of the Argentine workers. Under conditions in which the Triple A death squads organized by Peron’s Social Welfare Minister Lopez Rega launched a wave of terror and assassinations, and military and police repression was rampant throughout the country, the PRT proudly announced, “Our party is the only one on the Argentine revolutionary left which publicly has proclaimed its support for the ‘process of institutionalization.’”...

Thus, precisely when the life-and-death question facing the Argentine proletariat was the necessity to break with Peronism and construct an alternative revolutionary leadership for the struggle to smash the capitalist state and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Morenoites acted to bolster Peronism and defend the bourgeois state machine.

The political disarming of the Argentine working class by Pabloism paved the way for the 1976 military coup led by Gen. Videla that gave rise to one of the most murderous regimes in the region’s history.

The reign of terror that spread throughout Latin America under the US-backed network of military dictatorships was the price paid for the revolutionary defeats of the working class. As Van Auken wrote, “The *counterrevolutionary* role of Pabloism was written in the blood of the workers and youth of Argentina,” and beyond.

### **For the resolution of the historical crisis of leadership in the working class: Build the ICFI!**

Pabloism’s attack on the Theory of Permanent Revolution through the glorification of Castroism and promotion of the revolutionary protagonism of non-proletarian forces had a political impact far beyond Latin America. It played a critical role in disorienting the working class and youth in the advanced capitalist countries and preventing the revolutionary wave inaugurated by the French general strike of May 1968 from resulting in the overthrow of capitalism.

All the apparent “successes” of Stalinism and bourgeois nationalism utilized by Pabloism to revise the core perspectives of the Fourth International were subsequently reversed and the counterrevolutionary character of Stalinism was definitively established by the bureaucracy’s dissolution of the Soviet Union with the Pabloites’ backing.

Over the last 40 years, the heirs of Pabloism and its Morenoite variant have increasingly integrated themselves into the bourgeois political order and promoted the US-NATO imperialist wars for redivision of the world.

In Latin America, they acted as chief sponsors of the restabilization of bourgeois rule amid the crises of the military dictatorships in the 1980s. Moreno promoted the return of a capitalist civilian regime in Argentina as

a completed “democratic revolution,” a characterization extended by his supporters, shortly after his death, to the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. The Pabloites and Morenoites have been implicated ever since in the construction of all the major bourgeois nationalist traps laid for the Latin American working class, from the rise of Brazil’s Workers Party to the 21st century governments of the “Pink Tide.”

The whole nationalist framework of the Morenoites’ political operation is being shattered by the explosion of the contradictions of imperialism. The year 2026 was opened by the US invasion of Venezuela, the encirclement of Cuba and the launching of a war of annihilation against Iran backed by all major imperialist powers. As imperialism launches the world into a rapidly developing third world war, the task of socialist revolution is being immediately and urgently posed to the international working class.

In this context, the Morenoite PRC’s conference proclaimed:

The task of building an international of socialist revolution is one of the main duties of revolutionaries to face the new stage that is opening. We are aware that no currently existing organization that claims to be revolutionary can resolve by itself this task of historical magnitude. Against all sectarian self-proclamation we maintain that the construction of revolutionary workers parties and the building of an international of social revolution, which for us implies the refounding of the Fourth International on revolutionary bases, will not be the product of the evolutionary development of our organizations or of our international tendency, but the result of the fusion of left wings of revolutionary Marxist organizations and sectors of the workers’ and youth vanguard who orient themselves toward social revolution.

Let us clearly respond to them: The organization capable of resolving this task of historical magnitude does exist, it is the International Committee of the Fourth International. The ICFI is not afraid of self-proclamation because, contrary to yourselves, it does not fear claiming its own history. That it represents the only international party of socialist revolution is not a matter of subjective opinion, but of a historically verifiable record of struggle.

The 20th century has not passed in vain! The lessons of the historical triumphs and defeats of the working class, which are embedded in the ICFI’s theory and program, constitute the fundamental weapon for the education of the revolutionary vanguard that will establish socialism in the 21st century.

The principles spelled out in the ICFI’s foundational statement, written by Cannon 73 years ago, have acquired even greater contemporary relevance. The death agony of the capitalist system threatens, more than ever, the destruction of civilization through worsening depressions, world wars and fascism. At the same time, the world relationship of social forces was never so favorable for the working class taking the road to power and replacing capitalism with the planned economy of socialism.

As David North, the chairman of the International Editorial Board of the *World Socialist Web Site*, stressed in a February 2026 statement:

[The] same contradictions that are driving the ruling class toward authoritarianism and militarism are simultaneously creating the conditions for a revolutionary movement of the working class on an international scale.

...The [fundamental] cause [of the crisis] is structural and systemic: the irreconcilable contradiction between the private ownership of the means of production and the increasingly social

character of the process of production itself. This is the central contradiction identified by Marx, and its operation in the present epoch has reached an intensity without historical precedent.

To this must be added a second, closely related contradiction: between the growth of the world economy—the development of a genuinely global system of production, exchange and communication—and the obsolete nation-state system within which political power remains organized. The emergence of transnational production networks, global supply chains spanning dozens of countries, and instantaneous worldwide communication has rendered the nation-state a fetter on the rational development of the productive forces...

The American imperialist bourgeoisie seeks to resolve this contradiction through the assertion of military power—through the violent reorganization of global economic relations in its favor...

There is, however, another force that this same process of globalization has created—a force that the bourgeoisie did not intend to bring into existence and whose revolutionary implications it does not yet fully comprehend. The global integration of production has created a massive global working class of a size, concentration and objective interconnection without precedent in human history...

Moreover, despite the political dominance of reaction, the past half century has witnessed what can justly be described as the greatest scientific and technological revolution in human history. ...

Humanity possesses, for the first time in its history, the scientific knowledge and technological capacity to solve the most fundamental problems of material existence—hunger, disease, environmental degradation, the drudgery of exploitative labor. And yet these capabilities are imprisoned within a social system that subordinates them to the accumulation of private profit, that channels scientific genius into financial engineering and weapons development, that allows children to starve while algorithms optimize advertising revenue.

These are the objective material conditions creating the possibility and urgent necessity for the adoption of the program of Permanent Revolution and the construction of the ICFI as the revolutionary leadership of the international working class.



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