

On Araguaia*

Pedro Pomar

1976

Note from Serve the People–Brazil

We publish below an important assessment made by comrade Pedro Pomar about the Araguaia Guerrilla. Pomar supported the correct assessment, drawing important lessons from the defeat in Araguaia, and fought hard in the Central Committee for its correct evaluation.

As established by the Nucleus of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism Studies:

The first and most important of these [errors in the armed struggle in Araguaia] was pointed out by Pedro Pomar in his report *On Araguaia*, presented at the Central Committee meeting held in June 1976, which was resumed in December of the same year. Pomar had pointed out that, contrary to what was set out in the document *People's War, the Road of Armed Struggle in Brazil* [*Guerra Popular, caminho da luta armada no Brasil*], what was doomed to happen was the practice of another concept, not one of People's War. This assessment can be summarized as follows:

- The military question is not the militarization of the Party (of the whole Party) as it corresponds, but rather a task for specialists, the Military Commission and the Detachments created.

*<https://serviraopovo.com.br/2017/09/20/intervencao-no-debate-sobre-o-araguaia-pedro-pomar-1976/>

- We fall into the opportunistic criterion of considering that political work among the masses is not possible, on the grounds that it would attract the attention of the reaction and should only be carried out once the armed struggle has begun, which leaves us only activities that are based on winning the friendship and sympathy of the masses.
- Party organizations are not built in and around the region with conflict.
- The armed struggle is not carried out in both the countryside and the city, only in the countryside, creating the cause of the armed struggle's isolation.
- The Araguaia region was defined as the main area, a region which at the time had a relatively small population, was very dispersed and had practically no experience of organization or struggle, even economic. Undoubtedly, the triple border of Bico do Papagaio was a region of great importance for the revolutionary war, because in addition to many favorable factors from the military point of view, the terrain, etc. it was already receiving a large influx of peasants due to the large military management projects in the Amazon region. However, its importance was seen as a secondary rather than the main area. The Northeast region, as Amaro Luiz de Carvalho and Manoel Lisboa had said, "where the principal contradiction is most acute," was the region where a concentrated, numerous peasantry was located, deeply rooted in the land and with strong cultural ties, with acute contradictions with both the latifundium and the state and a recent organizational process in the Peasant Leagues, within a vast region where popular struggles of various kinds, since the beginnings of the formation of Brazilian nationality, with centuries of accumulated experience of struggle.

But the underlying problem, the main cause of the misconception that will become very evident with the Araguaia process and which will continue to determine its tragic consequences, is ultimately the problem of ideological insufficiency in the assimilation of Maoism.

For the occasion of the 104th anniversary of the birth of the great communist leader comrade Pedro Pomar—September 23, 1913.¹

On Araguaia

Pedro Pomar

Comrades:

The debate, at CC (Central Committee) level, on the experience of the Araguaia guerrilla struggle will, I think, produce the results that we all want. Undoubtedly, we are taking too long to learn the fundamental lessons from it. The current political conditions, of unbridled persecution of patriots, as well as our inexperience and other weaknesses, have hampered and delayed efforts in this direction. But if we want to live up to our duties, we must undertake the critical and self-critical evaluation of this struggle without further delay.

Comrade J.'s report² serves as a basis for discussion. Now it's up to everyone, according to their ability, to appreciate the true significance for the people's movement and for the Party of the results of this feat, of the immense sacrifice of a host of comrades. In Brazil, the problem of the revolutionary road to free the people from exploitation and oppression has been extremely difficult. And the determination to tread it has become the touchstone of the different revolutionary forces, especially the Marxist-Leninist ones. There have always been major differences over the road, the concept and the method of armed struggle. The revolutionary character of our Party, its political line, its behavior, have always been gauged by the position it took on the armed struggle and the way it sought to carry it out. The fidelity of the Marxist-Leninists to this idea and their efforts to make it triumphant distinguish them from all other popular groupings. This determined the break with contemporary revisionists, especially Prestes'³ gang. It is no coincidence that the flag of the popular uprising of November 1935 now serves as a parameter

¹RedLibrary: This was originally published in 2017.

²RedLibrary: This refers to the famous "Arroyo Report," written by Ângelo Arroyo (1928-1976), also known as Comrade Joaquim, a great Communist revolutionary and member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Brazil that was murdered by Brazilian state forces alongside Pedro Pomar in what would be known as the Lapa massacre.

³RedLibrary: Luís Carlos Prestes (1898-1990) was a revisionist that led the Khrushchevite-revisionist "Brazilian Communist Party," distinct from the Communist Party of Brazil.

for communist activity. It is this flag that we must raise today with greater strength and audacity if we want to liberate the Brazilian people once and for all and become the true leaders of the country's revolution.

From what I understand, the Araguaia experience has some very positive aspects. First and foremost, I would like to highlight the CC's firm decision to carry out the task it approved, of deploying dozens of comrades in some of the most remote areas of the Brazilian interior, who demonstrated their willingness to endure all sacrifices in order to prepare and launch the armed struggle. The devotion of these comrades and the heroism they have shown are a source of legitimate pride for our Party and deserve just and due appreciation. I would also like to highlight the choice of the area, which in the country's current conditions proved to be favorable to our strategy. Despite its very low demographic density and the fact that it has no political or mass organizational tradition, it offered an excellent position for defense. I consider it equally important that, after the outbreak of the armed struggle, the guerrilla comrades were committed to winning over the masses and managed to sensitize them to a high degree, gaining their sympathy and even the active support of some poor peasants. Even more significant was the fact that they organized some ULDP⁴ nuclei on the basis of a program containing the most heartfelt demands of the region's residents. Both this program and the organization of these nuclei reflect the effort to link up with the masses and make them play a political role, to mobilize them towards their emancipation. In addition, the comrades were concerned with advertising the ideas of the struggle for freedom, for national independence, proposing the union of the Brazilian people to overthrow the military-fascist dictatorship. In this way, they sought to interpret the desires of broad social and political forces at a national level, thus not constituting themselves as yet another sectarian, isolated or regionalist group. And by sustaining themselves in arms for such a long period, despite the superiority and ferocity of the enemy, they proved that their combative capacity, their level of awareness and organization and their determination were very high. They have thus given the measure of what will be possible to accomplish in order to broaden and carry forward the popular armed resistance, in accordance with the Party's orientation. And all this was done with precarious weapons, with very small resources. The Araguaia experience undeniably represented a heroic attempt to create

⁴RedLibrary: ULDP stands for Union for Freedom and People's Rights [*União pela Liberdade e pelos Direitos do Povo*].

a political base and continue the revolutionary process under the leadership of our Party. It aimed to form a solid base area in the countryside and develop the nucleus of a future powerful people's army, capable of defeating the armed forces at the service of the ruling classes and Yankee imperialism.

Nevertheless, it remains difficult for us to assess the full significance of the armed struggle in Araguaia. How far-reaching was it in history? Did it produce the results we expected? Did it compensate for the sacrifice of the comrades who died there, some of the best we had?

Wherever the news of this remarkable achievement reached, it aroused admiration, sympathy and support. In our ranks, it ignited enthusiasm and hope. The armed struggle in Araguaia was eloquent testimony to the fact that the CP of Brazil is the champion of freedom and national independence, a staunch enemy of the military-fascist dictatorship and a consistent defender of democracy for the masses. Among the country's patriotic currents and our friends abroad, the event was greeted with jubilation, with expressions of favorable expectation. As for the repercussions among our enemies, it is enough to see how they mobilized to liquidate the armed struggle in its infancy, prevent any publicity about the guerrillas and mercilessly persecute anyone who helped them.

That, let's say, is the more general, political meaning of Araguaia. There is no doubt that it had the value of a historic initiative. It represented a selfless, bloody effort to pave the way for the situation the country is in, showing the people the direction of their struggle.

However, we have to face the harsh reality. The struggle that began on April 12, 1972, with all the heroism we know, and which remained organized in our minds until late 1973 or early 1974, practically ceased to exist as such from that period onwards. The enemy's third campaign, at the beginning of October 1973, managed in less than three months to disperse the guerrilla detachments, decimate most of the combatants and even hit and dismantle the Military Commission (MC). The Party leadership in the cities lost contact with the comrades from the south of Pará and currently doesn't know how many of them survived, or if they survived at all.

For two years now, the CC and the Party have been in a waiting phase, hoping that some news or information would dispel the doubts about the fate of the comrades who were in Araguaia, about whether or not the guerrilla struggle was over. What is the situation of the guerrillas today?

Comrade J. acknowledged that the guerrillas had suffered a defeat, but a temporary one. It seems that it is possible to resume the struggle that began

in April 1972, although he doesn't say whether with the same elements and factors, or with new ones. I think comrade J. is wrong. If we look at the defeat from the point of view of the strategic and tactical objectives set by the Party and justified by comrade J., the Araguaia defeat cannot be considered temporary. What were these objectives? First, to fight in the area; second, to liberate it; third, to convert it, over time, into a solid base area. Therefore, there is no escaping the bitter realization: by ceasing organized resistance, by failing to achieve any of the objectives it had set itself, the guerrillas, despite the positive results presented, suffered a complete defeat, and not a temporary one. Unfortunately, the CC has to accept the harsh truth that the fundamental and most general result of the heroic battle fought by our comrades was a setback. And even if we succeed in resuming the armed process that began in 1972, the gap has become so great, the conditions are so different, etc., that this resumption will not be at the same level or identified with the previous process, although the characters may be the same—forest, masses, Party and enemy troops. It is therefore necessary to practically admit the start of another process, although it will benefit from the previous, painful experience and we want it to be useful.

What causes were responsible for this defeat? How does comrade J. analyze other aspects of the preparation for the struggle? In my opinion, comrade J.'s report doesn't give a full and satisfactory answer to this. It is even contradictory on certain points. He says that the main mistake was that the guerrillas concentrated their forces instead of dispersing them. Or that it didn't try to expand the guerrilla base, but to restrict it. And this after the guerrillas had achieved around 100% successes by October 1973. He adds that the blows suffered during the third campaign could have been avoided if the Military Commission had not made the mistakes mentioned. He also adds that the enemy was underestimated, because the tactics used by the enemy surprised us. In fact, comrade J. explains, when the enemy changed tactics, he inflicted the denouement on us. In other words, while the enemy learned and adapted to the situation created, the guerrilla detachments didn't proceed in the same way. When referring to the preparatory work, including in other areas directly subordinate to the CC, he explains that there has already been an objective report on the aforementioned work, failing to formulate any criticism or clarify why these areas did not correspond or were not taken into account. When dealing with the actual political aspect, he only assures us that the armed struggle was launched under favorable conditions because we appeared as victims. That's it. It doesn't even briefly

analyze the national situation at the beginning of 1972, which was not at all favorable, nor does it examine the Party's situation, both at that stage and afterwards. In parentheses, we should talk about what the Party as a whole did, what each of its militants did in support of the preparation and struggle in Araguaia. This would perhaps require a special report, because it won't be enough to say that the Party wasn't up to the task, or that the enemy took us by surprise with his attack, or that as much as possible was done in solidarity with the comrades in arms. The fact is that the enemy dealt very heavy blows to the Party organizations in the cities and claimed to have thus greatly isolated the guerrillas. Our initiatives, although just and opportune, were very limited, even below our possibilities and needs. Who knows, maybe in a more complete assessment, with the contribution of everyone, the Party's role will be even better evaluated? comrade J. doesn't even comment on the situation of the peasant movement, not even in the south of Pará, which seems very significant to us. Finally, among the mistakes and shortcomings that became more evident after the start of the struggle, comrade J. lists the failure to build shelters, the failure to make proper use of the mass elements in the guerrilla war, the lack of an information network, the precariousness of a communications network, the absence of a Party on the periphery, and others.

Addressing the reasons for these errors and shortcomings in passing, comrade J. said that they were "due to certain conceptions in our midst and our lack of military experience." He also included an underestimation of the enemy. However, he sheds no light on the type of these conceptions, their nature or their origin. It simply ignores the eagerness, expressed by more than one comrade, to know why these mistakes were made, which cannot be attributed to the Military Commission or to questions of tactics. That's why comrade J. says that the defeat was temporary and that it doesn't disqualify the road taken in preparing and unleashing the armed struggle in Araguaia. On the contrary, in his view, the Araguaia experience is fundamentally valid; the Party must continue to work on this basis, given current Brazilian conditions. He only admits to slight variations, although he agrees with the possibility of new experiences appearing in the effort to carry out the people's war.

Let's take a closer look at these opinions expressed by comrade J. According to me, the conception, the general idea, which presided over the preparation and then the outbreak of the struggle, as well as the struggle itself in Araguaia, was that, from a given moment, judged the best by the

Military Commission, to convert the nucleus of comrades deployed and organized in guerrilla detachments, into the fuse of an armed movement that would gradually expand and eventually encompass the whole country. It was based on this conception that we worked from 1966-67. We started by choosing suitable areas where the comrades would be based. They would go there voluntarily, but duly selected and warned. At first there was an effort to set up work in three contiguous areas, but for reasons of security, lack of confidence, or other reasons, the preparation ended up being limited to just one area, whose backdrop, however, was immense, practically guaranteeing peace of mind in the rear. Everything converged on this area, everything was subordinated. Carefully chosen comrades, but volunteers, would be placed in it. The size of the contingent was always kept secret. Through intensive and priority military training, knowledge of the terrain, ideological and political training, the study of local problems, etc., these comrades would be transformed, within a certain period of time (according to the criteria of the Military Commission), into a small guerrilla group—the main cell of the people’s army, the strengthening of the Party, the liberation of the country, etc. The configuration of this group already corresponded to that of a miniature army, directed by the CC’s Military Commission, which had moved to the area and concentrated its activity there. With regard to the local masses, the criterion was to make friends with them, get to know their problems and provide them with assistance. Each comrade had to appear as a friendly, serious, hard-working person who didn’t talk politics or anything else for nothing. The so-called mass work consisted of serving the people by providing medical and pharmaceutical assistance, helping out in joint efforts and other activities of this kind. To the extent that the situation of the residents was studied and their problems known, the aim was to formulate a program which, however, was only to be made known to the people and the country after the outbreak of the struggle, as indeed happened. Not even the Executive Committee knew about it beforehand, given the strict secrecy in which the work in the area was kept. As for the Party as an organization, it appeared formally through the work of the Military Commission. It wasn’t even structured on the outskirts, let alone in the area, as a precaution. The communists who were there remained within the military framework and had to concern themselves first and foremost with preparing themselves to become guerrillas and combatants. At the national level, it was mainly up to the Party to select militants and cadres for the guerrilla war in the priority area. It was not easy to send these militants, to meet the insistent requests

of the Military Commission and to fill the number of comrades deemed ideal. Despite this, there were regional organizations that did their utmost to do their duty, since the basis of the argument was that the future of the Party depended on the fulfillment of this task. At the beginning of 1971, when the Military Commission thought that the moment for the explosion of the struggle was very close (the image of the pregnant woman who, after nine months, is due to give birth to the child was propagated), the CC met and adopted a series of measures related to the unleashing of the armed struggle in the short term. Among the most important of these measures was the one that decided to assign to the leading comrades who were in the Araguaia area (then only known as “priority”) the task of creating the conditions to install the rest of the leadership there, which would remain in the cities until those conditions were met. The part of the CC in the cities had to give maximum support to the work carried out by the leadership of the priority area. Communications between the two directorates would depend, as they did, on the initiative and responsibility of the Military Commission. In short, everything depended on the success of the armed struggle that was being prepared in Araguaia. From a political point of view, the motives and decision to launch the struggle would also be the responsibility of the Military Commission. The Guerrilla Forces would be the Party’s armed arm in defiance of the military-fascist dictatorship. The political flag, although broadly democratic and liberating, was to be raised as soon as the struggle began, which would be through an action with national repercussions. The social and political contradictions of the area, the local motivations, should only support the national action; they would serve to attract the masses of the area and incorporate them into the struggle, into the process.

I repeat: this, in short, seems to me to have been the conception that presided over the preparation and ended up being applied in the armed struggle in the south of Pará. But what happened after April 1972, or shortly before? Despite all the secrecy of the preparation, it was denounced and discovered. The enemy immediately decided to liquidate the guerrilla nuclei with a surprise attack. The eventuality was foreseen. But how did the Military Commission react? Comrade J. puts it in terms of a choice between abandoning the area and resisting. The choice was resistance. This was a good thing, adds com. J., because we appeared as victims. But he doesn’t clarify the immediate and future objectives pursued by this resistance. And it doesn’t do so because those objectives had long been fixed. I mean that, in reality, this resistance had already been decided in advance, it was the result

of the entire conception of the work carried out: the number of elements deployed in the area, their organization, the general plan of struggle. The concentration of forces and the centralization of command were an integral and fundamental part of this conception. Because of this preparation and the prevailing political idea, it was difficult for the Military Commission to resort, for example, to another option, or even to a form of struggle such as that advocated in the People's War document for the armed propagandists. However, now com. J. recognizes that the guerrillas' main mistake was not to have dispersed their groups. But this is an error of principle and not of tactics. Comrade J. was also forced to agree that the number of combatants was large in relation to the terrain and the mass (70 combatants for an area of 6,500 km^2 and a sparse population). And he says that it was a tactical mistake (only tactical?) to keep forces concentrated in a much smaller area, instead of dispersing them. He explains that this was due to the need to consolidate the work of the masses in view of the fact that the army could return at any time. It was "essential to have personnel on hand." This concentration was aggravated by the MC's decision to merge the three detachments. Even so, the true meaning of this urgency to "consolidate the work of the masses" is unclear.

Despite these observations and the defeat he suffered, comrade J. accepts the concept that prevailed in the Araguaia struggle. He thinks we should continue to follow it. Frankly, I disagree with this opinion. Certainly, as I've already said, the Araguaia experience has valuable aspects that should be systematized and put to good use. The spirit of struggle, heroism even, the effort to adapt to the conditions of the environment, the capacity for resistance, need to be highlighted and duly esteemed, they serve as an example. Our Party will always be proud of this struggle, of the sacrifice of the comrades who fell there, trying to pave the way for the victory of our cause.

But that alone is not enough to determine the validity of an experiment. The key, in this specific case and as has already been made clear in documents related to guerrilla warfare, is its survival and development. And this depends first and foremost on the incorporation of the masses into the guerrillas, on them making the cause their own, the flag raised by the guerrillas. In this determination, we must of course count on mistakes, failures and terrible losses. To a certain extent, defeats and mistakes will be inevitable; but we will be able to judge their political outcome (and/or their survival) without difficulty by the level of incorporation of the masses, by their active support for the guerrilla struggle. This is precisely the difficulty we face when dealing

with the Araguaia experience. The number of mass elements won over to the guerrillas was insignificant, especially if you consider the duration of the armed struggle to be a formidable success. Even so, they didn't know how to work with these elements. The political activity of the ULDP's nuclei is also unclear. Everything leads us to believe that the guerrilla war began as a hand-to-hand action by the communists against the troops of the military dictatorship. And that's how it continued for most of the time. In my opinion, this is the biggest mistake and the most negative aspect of the Araguaia experience. For the political conquest of the masses cannot be achieved only after the guerrilla group has been formed. Nor should it be made up solely and exclusively, even if only at first, of communists. And let it not be said that the orientation contained in the Party's documents and resolutions is not crystal clear in this regard. Both in letter and in spirit, the Party documents, which are essentially directed against petty-bourgeois and Fascist theses, indicate without a doubt that: 1) the people's war is a mass war; 2) guerrilla warfare is a form of mass struggle; 3) in order to initiate it, "even if the situation is ripe, it is necessary for the combatants to have forged solid links with the masses"; 4) preparation "presupposes mass political work"; 5) the three aspects—mass political work, Party building and armed struggle—are inseparable in the people's war; 6) the Party, that is, the political, is the predominant of these aspects; 7) in a word, military work is the task of all communists and not just specialists.

Experience has directly contradicted this orientation on the people's war. On the grounds that in current Brazilian conditions it is impossible to create the political base before forging and activating the military apparatus, the armed arm of the people; on the grounds that it is impossible to gain mass elements for the guerrilla war before launching the armed struggle and that, therefore, the guerrilla nucleus must initially be organized with only communists, the road that led to the results we are discussing was taken. Life, however, has shown that this type of preparation, as well as the organization of guerrilla groups with only communists, will not allow them to survive or develop. No matter how conspiratorial the preparation, the enemy will discover it "before the child is born"; no matter how heroically the communist fighters behave, if they are isolated from the masses, without their active support, they will be beaten; and no matter how efficient the military leadership is, with such a conception it will be defeated. For this reason, the orientation followed in Araguaia must be modified in its essential lines.

Instead of considering that the preparatory work will only be viable on

the basis of this conception, the right thing to do is to first carry out the political work, to try, through planned, careful, patient, clandestine action, and taking into account the real peasant movement, to create the mass base necessary to unleash the struggle. To say that this work is not possible at the moment, because of the increased vigilance of the enemy, seems false to me. It would be the same as concluding that mass work in general, as well as building the Party under the conditions of the military-fascist dictatorship, is also impractical. But no one accepts this conclusion among us as absurd.

In this way, I believe that the preliminary issue to be clarified, in order to take any serious step forward on the path of preparing the armed struggle, is the question of whether or not the formation of the mass political base is a priority.

I'm not yet addressing the problem of the peasant movement itself, of effectively integrating ourselves into it, of starting from the need for its development and expansion in the struggle for land. No, I'm simply emphasizing the preliminary point that it is necessary to carry out a certain amount of mass political work in advance, to organize a minimum of P. and to gain some influence for our slogans. I believe that this point of view, accused of being dogmatic, is the only one capable of corresponding to the current reality and the principles of the people's war, both in conception and in method. In fact, any group of elements that can first form an armed detachment and then win over the masses will be able to win over the masses and, in the process, organize the armed detachment. This is what popular wisdom teaches us—he who can do the most, can do the least. In fact, this is a crucial question: how to win over the masses, convince them, so that they arm themselves and raise the level of their revolutionary actions? In any case, the mission of communists is always, starting from the interests of the masses and using all forms of struggle, to get them to take their destiny into their own hands. Even when we manage to fight over and liberate some areas, expanding the armed struggle, the task of the guerrilla groups or the People's Army that may be sent to non-fought areas is to create a political base in them by working among the masses, so that they decide for themselves to set up self-defense detachments, militias, guerrillas, etc. and take power. If we do the opposite, we run the risk of falling into militarism.

Therefore, if we seek to draw lessons from the Araguaia struggle that are valid, that will help us speed up the preparation and unleashing of the armed struggle, we must not go back to the right opportunist past of thinking that the masses on their own, spontaneously, should one day take up arms

and defend themselves against reactionary violence; nor adopt the “leftist,” blanquist, focoist principle that it is the communists who should take up arms instead of the masses. Our primary and urgent duty is to continue the effort, the attempts to prepare the armed work and the uprising of the masses, until the people’s war becomes a reality, since there is no other alternative for the Brazilian people, who will have to pay a high price to learn to fight and win freedom. The enemies, as well as opportunists of all stripes, try to dissuade the popular forces from pursuing this path, trying to prove that it will not succeed. However, true revolutionaries, particularly communists, are increasingly convinced that this path is not only viable, but also the only one capable of making the democratic and anti-imperialist cause triumph. What we lack is the ability to learn lessons from our mistakes, to carry out courageous self-criticism, without which we will never be able to transform the defeat we have suffered into the victory we have longed for.

Simultaneously with this self-critical process, it is necessary to draw up a strategic plan of work in the most suitable regions (from a political, military, and topographical point of view) and give priority to mass work and building the Party. The action plan, of course, must be carried out in the strictest clandestine conditions. But the deployment of comrades in certain areas to form military units must first of all obey political criteria; in other words, they must be primarily concerned with political problems and possess a certain political capacity. It goes without saying that if these comrades combine this with military skills, it will be excellent. So, at the same time as we carry out political and mass work, we will take care of organizing the infrastructure and the military apparatus.

I must insist that the preparation of the armed struggle is the task of the entire Party and not just a few specialists. The absence of Party organization, both within the area and on its periphery, in the south of Pará was more than a deficiency—it was a serious error of principle. It must not be repeated. The Party doesn’t get in the way, it facilitates, promotes, drives, organizes, sustains and directs the whole process. On the contrary, it presupposes the need to train and multiply cadres of all kinds, especially military personnel and specialists. The existence of the Party in the areas will also facilitate the division of functions and the compartmentalization of activities, the fair combination of legal and illegal work, open and secret work. In all cases and aspects, communists must be able to carry out clandestine, in-depth work, both political and military.

Military work itself is very important. We must take urgent steps to plan

and systematize the study of military art. In this field, the Military Commission has a key role to play. It must avoid the mistake, made in Araguaia, of becoming an operational command or commission for a particular area, even if it is the priority.

While concerned with concrete preparation and concentrating its efforts on a few key points, it needs to orient all Party organizations towards the task of preparation and control them.

Comrades.

There are a whole series of relevant issues to be faced and resolved in relation to the preparation and perspective of the people's war. I don't deny the importance of studying and debating them. But as long as we don't agree on some basic points, it will be difficult to move forward. Experience has shown us how much our learning will cost in sacrifices, how hard and long our journey will be. But if we want to be faithful to the people and respond to their wishes, we must not lose heart.

At the moment, the correlation between favorable and unfavorable factors continues to be the key to examining our preparation for unleashing the armed struggle. The enemy is still (relatively) strong, has gained experience, and is afraid that new challenges to its power will arise, that conflicts in the countryside will spread and that explosions will occur in the cities. On the other hand, the Brazilian people are more willing than ever to throw off the military-fascist dictatorship and are looking for ways and means to shake off the yoke of their exploiters and oppressors. Our Party, despite having been severely beaten and suffering serious losses, is no longer the same as it was in 1972. It has also gained experience. Therefore, in order to transform the present unfavourable conditions, we must persist in our single front policy, concentrate more efforts on winning over the broad masses of workers and peasants, further revolutionize our ranks, firmly defend our organization and accelerate our military preparations. Everything indicates that the horizons are clearing up for the Brazilian people. The flag of armed struggle, which the comrades from Araguaia wielded so heroically and sacrificed themselves for, must be raised even higher. If we can really connect with the great masses of the countryside and the cities and win them over to the Party's orientation, no matter how ferocious the enemy is, victory will certainly be ours.