

REMARKS ON "THE NECESSITY OF ARMED STRUGGLE AND REFUTATION OF THE THEORY OF SURVIVAL"

INTRODUCTION

The following text is a translation of an article printed in Nos. 59 and 60 of "Khabarnameh", a periodical published by the Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas in the early 80s prior to the IPFGs' current publication "Payam Fadaee". The above mentioned article elaborates upon the illuminating essay titled "On the Necessity of Armed Struggle and Refutation of the Theory of Survival", written in the spring of 1970 by comrade Amir-Parviz Pouyan, one of the great founders and leaders of the Organization of Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas.

REMARKS ON "THE NECESSITY OF ARMED STRUGGLE AND REFUTATION OF THE THEORY OF SURVIVAL"

More than twenty-eight years have passed since the writing of comrade *Pouyan's* article titled *"On the Necessity of Armed Struggle and Refutation of the Theory of Survival"*. This short article was one of the factors, which absorbed a numerous force of revolutionaries into our people's most difficult, most acute and bloodiest anti-imperialist struggle. And on the other hand, it opened a new chapter in the history of Iranian communist thought. Evidently, comrade *Pouyan* wrote his article under conditions, which were significantly different from the present ones. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that comrade *Pouyan's* article is, till this day, one of the outstanding works of Iranian armed struggle literature.

"On the Necessity of Armed Struggle and Refutation of the Theory of Survival" was written under the conditions when national and class struggle in our society was passing through a less eventful period. And now, we are in a period of time when our people's history of revolutionary struggle, in the last few years, has amassed numerous events. Comrade *Pouyan*, besides describing the conditions of that time, presents a solution for change. Now that we have witnessed a period of activities, a look into the past can clarify history's judgement on this work.

Comrade *Pouyan's* article can be analyzed from various aspects and studied with different attitudes and understanding. For example, the comrade's work can be studied as an independent article, or it can be considered as a phase in the development of the process of formation of the revolutionary line. Only under the second condition can the latent intelligence of the article be realized, and the comrade's real position and thoughts be comprehended. In that case, it is necessary to study comrade *Pouyan's* article in relation to comrade *Massoud Ahmad-Zadeh's* article. In fact, each of the comrades has summed up the groups' inner discussions at different stages. The interval between *"On the Necessity of Armed Struggle and Refutation of the Theory of Survival"* and *"The Armed Struggle both a Strategy and a Tactic"* is equal to the interval between *"exercising revolutionary power"* and *"the protracted massive war"*.

The work of comrade *Pouyan*, if considered as a single system, will leave ambiguities. The comrade himself, in a short introduction on the article, addressed the comrades of the

group: "...This article is being published without any alterations so that it may be corrected and developed in the future with the help of comrades. At any rate, it should not be considered complete (flawless), in my opinion, its development is necessary" (1), and then he adds: "In the three months that have passed since the writing of this article, tens of times we have tested the policy of armed action, and naturally, each one of our encounters has taught us new things. Therefore, it seems necessary that I reflect in my article what we have learned and if these lessons necessitate some changes in parts of the article, I shall do so." This warning by comrade Pouyan instructs us to study his article in relation to its developed system, meaning "*Armed Struggle, both a Strategy and a Tactic*". This is only a recommendation.

The article, which is presented here, attempts to further describe the fundamental thesis of comrade Pouyan's article. The necessity of this is felt mainly because the revolutionary young generation does not have enough knowledge on the literature of armed struggle and its formation. Their acquaintance with different angles of the theory of armed struggle should be tried, followed by a detailed discussion of it so that greater accuracy in the process of learning would contribute to its enhancement.

If comrade Pouyan's article is considered as a totalisation of our groups' beliefs on objective observations, the theoretical considerations and their practical conclusions in a particular period of its evolutionary growth, then the process which resulted in the creation of this work can clarify many important problems. This exigency still exists to consider the circumstances in the process of formation for the theory of "*the Armed Struggle both a Strategy and a Tactic*" given that this theory was born to refute the old ideas and show their non-conformity with the objective process of our people's struggle against imperialism and its various lackeys, as today, we are witnessing that again, the same ideas in another form, continue their existence.

However, some of the most important problems here have been considered and the comrades' methods of action have been shown in some facets. In order to clarify the problems which were posed to the comrades, the prominent work of comrade Massoud Ahmadzadeh called "*Armed Struggle, Both a Strategy and a Tactic*" is a confident source to refer to. Comrade Massoud wrote: "*In this way, we have accepted that our goal and that of other communist groups must be the creation of the Marxist-Leninist Party. Immediately, this question was posed: what should be done in order to create such a party? Two fundamental tasks then confronted us. The other groups and we would have to educate the cadres for the future party amongst the masses. That is to say, by working among the masses and participating in their combative life, particularly that of the proletariat, we had to prepare them for the acceptance of such a party....*" (2)

As it is clear, our group, because of the lack of the necessary experience of struggle and under the effect of the experiences of the past revolutions, set forth in its program the creation of the Marxist-Leninist party. Yet, our group could not find its independent identity. And, in addition, could not establish an exact and appropriate relationship between accepted "principals" and conditions of practice.

Yet, whatever made it possible for our comrades that revolutionary development could rectify the incorrect views and attain the nature and essence of Marxism-Leninism, was their

revolutionary passion and devotion to participate in the fundamental reconstruction of the conditions of struggle which had surrounded them. Immediately they asked themselves "what should be done" to create such a party? And thus, determined their fundamental tasks. Now, the conditions in which these tasks should be performed are to be studied and researched furthermore. Without any doubt, in preparing the grounds for the creation of a party and preparing the people, especially the proletariat, to accept it, it was necessary to have an active and revolutionary relationship with the masses. We should be capable of bringing revolutionary consciousness to the masses. What methods should we employ? Could participating in the production process of a factory, establishing a relationship with some of the more progressive workers and, in this way, affecting the whole situation, be the way that would lead us to our goal?

On this basis, there were some experiences that could count as evidence for many realities. After the "White Revolution", a relatively strong current was created among the political forces, which placed all of its efforts into establishing contact with the masses. Many students as *Sepahe-Danesh* workers and other apparently appropriate forms tried to establish contact with circles of the masses, and to create the necessary grounds for the merger of the vanguards with the masses.

This trend lasted only a few months. The students, who had embarked on this task, became disillusioned and returned with disappointment and regret to their social classes and continued their normal intellectual life. Whereas, our comrades, who were involved in the process of this encounter and also enjoyed having conscious workers in their line, were soon able to totalize this experience. They also emphasized this point; that the purpose of bringing awareness amongst the masses does not mean to be in contact with some isolated individual workers. But, rather, it means that class-consciousness should affect the entirety of the class (working class) and its practice, and determine its content. The first condition for the accomplishment of this task was that the vanguard would have an active relationship with a vast number of masses of the working class and second, the spontaneous movements of the working class and the assemblance of the masses would exist.

As a matter of fact, such a relationship was non-existent. Neither was the problem that the intellectuals could not, due to their place in social production, at least accept to undertake such duties under the given conditions, and leave a revolutionary influence on the struggle of the class or even a segment of it. Reality showed that even the conscious worker elements that had worked at their workplace for many years and had extensive relations with their fellow worker comrades, could not have any revolutionary influence with ordinary methods even in one factory. Given the extensive police network, any protest from anybody would result in his/her prosecution, assault and if the individual belonged to a particular political group, this would endanger the totality of their organization. All these observations forced the groups themselves to refrain from having extensive and active connections. Such groups became ever more isolated and transformed into mere intellectual circles that had broken with any ties and any active connection with their surroundings. Under such conditions, the class-consciousness that was carried on by the vanguards could not have a class-function on the basis of such methods, and even to a more limited extent, it could not penetrate into some segments of the working class. On the other hand, participating in the life-struggle of the masses required the existence for a particular condition of struggle. When, in a society, an active struggle is not in process, when our people's movement,

and among that, the working-class movement encounters stagnancy and abatement; and when the masses themselves, because of a series of reasons which will later be discussed, have evaded active practice in struggle and avoided contact with revolutionary vanguard elements, and have not expressed any fervor or devotion to struggle, then how can one talk about participating in the masses' life-struggle actively?

No doubt, these realities persuaded our comrades to review the experiences of the world's revolutions once again, and to take the following problem under consideration and evaluation; under what conditions did the revolutionary parties come to exist? The reconsideration of these conditions exposed important differences between the conditions of our country and the conditions of others, like Russia and China. Later, comrade *Massoud* wrote: "*We had not observed, until now, the question of the necessity of the creation of the party being posed without the practice of struggle itself demanding it, without the grounds for it existing amongst the workers and non-proletarian masses. The elements and constituent parts of the party and its cadres, the groups and organizations that already participate in the life and practical struggle of the masses in proportion to their capabilities, were always at hand. The economic and political struggles of the masses and the relationship of the conscious vanguards with the masses always existed; yet, the dispersed nature of these struggles, their shortsightedness and halfway measures demanded the vast organization of a party. But while we recognized the necessity of creating the party, due to the absence of spontaneous mass movements, due to the non-participation of that intellectual force in the life and practical struggle of the masses and due to the lack of any serious connection among Marxist-Leninist groups, we found ourselves facing a difficult path to the formation of the party.*" (3)

The problem, however, did not resolve itself easily. In the course of analyzing and considering the differences of our country's conditions with the experiences of previous revolutions, several other problems have been identified and solved. It was on the basis of identifying and solving these problems that the theory of "The Armed Struggle both a Strategy and a Tactic" was formed and consolidated. Comrade *Pouyan's* article is a statement of the view and discussions of the group and a point of the evolutionary process of these discussions.

When our comrades assessed the conditions of formation of the party in Russia or China, they noticed that an extensive spontaneous mass movement existed there whereas our people's struggle was dispersed and less extensive. If our comrades believed, like the traitorous Tudeh Party and its other cronies and friends had, that the imperialist land reform had reduced the class contradictions, then they, too, would have justified the above problem.

The same justification that all large and small opportunists make is: "the absence of spontaneous movements is due to the insufficient growth of "contradictions". On the contrary, considering the society and the analysis that the comrades presented showed exactly the opposite. These studies showed that the land reform not only did not reduce the contradictions, but rather intensified them. Therefore, the question raised was 'how is it that the masses feel this suffering with their skin and bones, yet, we are not witnessing the mass spontaneous movements on a large scale, or to be more precise, they exist on a much less extended and limited one?' This was not the kind of problem whose answer could be found in 'the books'. Direct encounters should be made with reality. Only through studying the specific state of affairs of class struggle in our society would it

be possible to give a definite and realistic answer. In fact, one of the important theses of comrade *Pouyan's* article was to answer this very question. He wrote: "*If we express the oppression brought against them in words, they themselves feel this oppression with their whole being. If we write about their sufferings, they themselves constantly experience these sufferings. Nonetheless, they tolerate them, accept them with patience and, by taking refuge in petty bourgeois entertainment, try to ease the burden of this suffering. Why? The various reasons can be summed up into one. They presume the power of their enemy to be absolute and their own inability to emancipate themselves as absolute.*"

Comrade *Pouyan's* article was subjected to the criticism and the curse of the opportunists. The pathetic opportunists also criticized 'that from the point of view of dialectical materialism, if there is no such thing as "absolute", then how is it that comrade *Pouyan* talks of absolute inability and absolute power?'

They had heard of something yet were unable to understand its meaning correctly. Whatever dialectical materialism has said concerning this, is related to the movement of matter and it does not mean that an individual or some people cannot be found whom in their minds consider a subject as absolute. The pathos of opportunists, who in criticizing comrade *Pouyan's* article capitalize and use different rules of punctuation for the word absolute, become exposed especially when they look, for once, at the world around them in a superficial manner and see how religion makes many thoughts "absolute" and how millions of people keep these thoughts in their minds for thousands of years.

The professor-like writers of "*Rahe Kargar*" (*the so-called Workers' Path*), inspired by some Russian writers, wrote that they [I.P.F.G.] intend to "psychologize" all the laws of society's movement. It would be enough if these gentlemen study the letter of Engels to Boloch once more, and ask themselves once more again; what do the subjective conditions of revolution mean? It is probable in this case that they can independently find the answer. But these individuals who know of no art other than the parrot-like memorizing of the texts, are accustomed to saying repeatedly that the preparedness of the objective conditions means the existence of the party, and it cannot go beyond this limit. Whereas, besides that, objective conditions are related to the sensations and perceptions, inclinations and wishes of millions of people. Now, how is it that considering these conditions means, "psychologizing" the laws of society? For example, when writing that the workers lose their old beliefs of the indestructibility of the system and they are drawn to struggle, was Lenin engaged in "psychologizing" the laws of society? Concerning the latter, it should be stated that comrade *Pouyan* does not believe that the enemy has absolute power, or *the masses have absolute inability*. Rather, comrade *Pouyan* says that the masses' perceptions are such. And his problem is to find a true path in order to eliminate this perception.

Setting aside these illiterate criticisms, it should be said that the formation of these perceptions in the people's minds is the consequence of a relatively protracted process of our people's practical struggle. Certainly these praxis of a period of struggle, its consequences, and its reflection in the masses' minds, and its transformation into a material force, affect the quality of the process of future praxis. According to this dictum, whose correctness has been proven by the realities, the

manner in which the formation of these perceptions have dominated the people's minds for years, should be sought in the history of our people's struggle.

Since August of 1941 during which our masses' struggle reached its culmination till July 1953, and later on in more limited dimensions and with some fluctuation till the year 1961, our people's struggle continued. During this period (1941-53), the masses assembled in different groups and organizations, where the Tudeh Party and National Front were the most important ones. Approximately for eighteen years our people's struggle, which was conducted mostly under the leadership of these two currents, had been consistently defeated. Under the conditions where the masses had entered the scene of struggle with a combatant morale and preparedness for any dedication, the parties and groups could not correctly use the masses' historical energy. By specifying goals and utilizing methods and tactics that by no means had any conformity with the laws of our society's movement, these parties and groups caused the defeat of our peoples' struggle. After the imperialist coup d'etat of July 1953, all the masses' organizations had been demolished. In fact, the dispersed strength of the masses concentrated in the form of an organization will find the opportunity to show its opposition to its enemy's concentrated power. The disintegration of the masses' organization resulted in the destruction of the people's organized struggle from its limitations and poor content, and consequently fragmented the struggle among the different segments of the population. Under these conditions, we are confronted with the enemy's concentrated crushing power on the one hand, and with the dispersed and unorganized power of the people on the other. Our people lacking a proletariat revolutionary vanguard in such a situation, encountered all of its resistance with defeat.

Right at the point when the masses' movement needed leadership more than ever, it found a vacuum of this leadership instead. The consistent defeat of the masses' dispersed struggles created the mentality within the masses that the enemy is an almighty power, and they are unable to confront it.

We see that comrade *Pouyan's* thesis precisely reflects an angle of reality in our peoples' struggle. The reason that the working class, and also other toiling masses reach this incorrect conclusion, is because they cannot independently put forward a scientific statement of their experience in struggle.

As far as spontaneous mass movement or their struggle independent of revolutionary vanguard is concerned, they chiefly and "fundamentally" judge the correctness or incorrectness of their actions based upon their immediate consequences. They alone could not realize the fact that power and its magnitude are relative concepts so much so that the manner of struggle of the opposing sides, their methods, organization and other various factors render power and its magnitude conditional. They could not single-handedly discern the fact that their struggle and resistance in confronting the enemy was quite fragile for the enemy's power acts through a centralized apparatus somewhat organized, whereas the masses' power is dispersed and unorganized. With brutal means and methods, the organized power of the anti-people regime can undoubtedly be more effective than the power of the masses who still use the same means and methods as in the past while facing completely different conditions.

This was the reason that after the coup of 1953, through a process, our peoples' dispersed resistance was brought to defeat and the remnants of the previous organizations were gradually wiped out. After the so-called land reforms known as "The White Revolution", following the events of June 5, 1963 and its defeat, this process was completed by the enemy, and thereby the monster of the bayonet, once again, cast its shadow upon Iran.

The enemy succeeded to impose its power upon the masses and to terrify them by violently suppressing the masses' struggles, crushing the popular organizations, and by preventing the reconstruction of the people's organizations, which is an inevitable point for unity between the conscious vanguards and a relatively vast number of masses, and finally by extensive propaganda on and alongside these counter-revolutionary actions. The enemy strove to make the masses have a pessimistic view toward any leadership, thereby weakening the people's morale of resistance more than ever. Publishing admonitory remarks, exposing the *Tudeh Party's* betrayals and the other leading figures of the movement, disgracing genuine honest individuals, all in all were used at the service of this goal. In practice, the masses witnessed their own consistent defeats on the one hand, and watched the betrayal of the previous leaders right in front of their astonished eyes, on the other. These were all realities. It was within the same process that a type of distrust was formed in the minds of the masses toward the "vanguard". The masses, who instinctively realize that they certainly need a revolutionary vanguard in their political struggle against the enemy, witnessing these facts then, and also realizing the defeats of their struggles, thus avoided the revolutionary political struggle.

In short, by dispersing the masses first and then suppressing their fragmented ranks, the enemy could consequently shatter their material resistance and along with that by extensive and various propaganda about its own power, about their leadership's betrayal and about the elements who claimed to have struggled in the past, it could break the masses' resistant morale and consequently establish its domination. In fact, the success and victory of the land reform also automatically meant the suppression and refutation of the political forces of the time. In the center of these events, a new communist generation began to grow. Considering the historical activities of the traitorous Tudeh Party and its tragic consequences of political activities, this generation, could by no means believe in following and utilize the same paths and methods propounded by the traitorous and fugitive leadership of this party. This generation now needed profound thinking about the new conditions, needed to search the theoretical and practical ways, and all this was to take place under the conditions where police control had been established all over the society.

After suppressing the people's struggle, that also being the process of separation of the vanguard from the masses, the anti-people regime strove to maintain this condition. The regime was well aware of the fact that the conscious sources, mainly the revolutionary vanguard elements possessing class-consciousness, should be kept separated from the masses, for the working class can fight against the influence of the degraded ideology of other social classes only with the help of its vanguards. Therefore, the police was trying more than ever to deepen this separation and prevent any kind of connection. But this was not the revolutionary vanguards' only problem. In addition, the negative experiences and the despair and hopeless morale of the masses had made them desolate and disappointed toward any political struggle or political connection. The masses found themselves disabled of participation, and evaded those connections.

Therefore, we can see that the above mentioned picture is the consequence of a specific national and class struggle, which was in progression in our country. Undoubtedly, this consequence can also be eliminated through the course of class struggle itself and likewise compensated by a promoted and revolutionary morale.

Between comrade *Pouyan's* analysis on the absence of spontaneous movements, and the thesis of the traitorous Tudeh Party and its masked or unmasked followers, there exists a fundamental difference.

The traitorous Tudeh Party and its followers, who believe that the reason for the absence of spontaneous movement is the insufficient growth of class contradictions, lay the foundations along the same line and common interests of the majority of classes in society. Consequently, there remains no place for active and radical class struggle. In this thesis, the existing reality is accepted as an obstinate fact. From these dictums, there appears a non-revolutionary or even a counter-revolutionary pacifism.

Comrade *Pouyan* considers the reasons for the absence of spontaneous movements to be the violent suppression of the masses' struggle by the regime, the despair and hopelessness of the masses, and the vanguard's weakness.

From this viewpoint, a searching and revolutionary radicalism is deduced. Furthermore, the whole question is of how the vanguard can participate in changing this reality and draw the masses to the acute scene of struggle. This revolutionary proletarian radicalism, which too demands revolutionary practice, will become a river through which the truth in all its dimensions will be discovered. The revolutionary confidence and determination based upon proletarian ideology is the basis upon which to obtain the factual truth as the passion and excitement of obtaining the truth finds its revolutionary conclusions in taking a proletarian stand.

In comrade *Pouyan's* thesis, this reflection is accepted as a reality but its justification is not. It is the incorrect understanding of the masses' practice that is pictured in their minds. And the enemy, with the help of these subjective conditions, strives more than ever to restrain the grounds for the penetration of proletariat ideology. As soon as this fact becomes evident, it should be brought to the masses; it should be made known to the masses.

Although during the Shah's time, even a logical mind searching for the truth was able to comprehend the realities as they were and to analyze them correctly, and even though there existed a loophole for inverting and freezing the truth in the past, this ground was diminished from the beginning of the revolutionary elevation of our people's movement. During the whole process of struggle of the past few years, our people used any tribune in order to explain and describe their endured pain and suffering. Only by referring once to the publications of different political groups, the speeches and letters of workers, peasants and other toilers can be studied; and the truth can be seen for what it was. In the majority of these letters and speeches, the peasants and workers talk about their grave fears. They state how terrified they were to raise their voice of protest during the Shah's time, because "any voice of protest was answered back by bullets". They also describe how the Shah's regime and its terrible police apparatus had put them under such pressure that any objection could cost them their home and shelter, and so they

tolerated the conditions. The peasants talk of the immense and boundless pressures, and of the usurpation of their lands. The majority of them talk about the "just" land reform and many other things, which confirm all what comrade *Pouyan* had reflected in his thesis. Even today, a logically minded individual can easily listen to the words of many people and hear straight from their mouths the story of their lives during the Shah's time.

The course of our peoples' movement reveals how the masses, as soon as they perceived the government to be in a weaker position than before, gradually recaptured their courage and sprang into the realm of action. All these facts indicate that comrade *Pouyan* had been able to correctly analyze the realities of his time.

Comrade *Pouyan* utilizes the Marxist-Leninist dictum, mainly the full-fledged and resulted dictums from the experiences of the world proletariat. And by relying on the concrete analysis of the conditions, he presents a concrete action and determines particular revolutionary duties.

The general task of all the revolutionary vanguards of the proletariat is to raise the awareness of the masses and the practical leadership of the working class in the course of class struggle. But in what struggle does the proletariat find its class self-consciousness and takes the effort of reconstructing history? This is exactly one of the problems that Lenin discusses in his magnificent work "*What Is To Be Done?*" Lenin clarifies that proletarian self-consciousness appears and grows only through the proletariat struggle against the capitalist system. As long as the proletariat limits its struggle to the corporal economic struggle, it cannot perceive its position within the whole system of society's class relations. And this limitation will not allow the working class to present its great strength as a revolutionary class and realize its immense force through practice.

Only through changing the whole socio-economic system does the proletariat recognize its real enemies, its unwavering allies as well as its temporary ones for the proletariat self-consciousness is accomplished through subtlety and the precise re-recognition of its relationship with other social classes. When the proletariat is determined to change the system, it has to destroy the obstinate resistance of the reactionary classes. The first condition is in setting up new relations for the seizing of state power. It is through the course of this struggle and in the pursuit of such goals that the proletariat has to destroy the ideological barricades of the other classes, and has to explain its practice in the light of its ideology.

The masses do not analyze first and then act. They do not ask themselves what the revolutionary "principal", is in order to conform their future practice in accordance to these principals. The learning of the proletariat doesn't take place through polemics, but rather takes shape mostly by relying upon the experiences of struggle. It is precisely with the help of their vanguards that the masses can relate all the social events to their own combative experiences. It is with the help of their vanguard that the masses can present the correct explanation of their own position and practice. Consequently, they cannot obtain their class ideology otherwise. On the other hand, the proletariat lives in social interactions and relationships with other classes and is always vulnerable to the ideological propagation of these classes. As a result, there exists the ongoing potential of non-proletarian ideology penetrating into the working class. It is, therefore, one of the vanguard's important tasks to prevent the penetration of other class ideologies into the ranks

the working class. Should we arm the proletariat with Marxist-Leninist ideology, and in this way lead its practice to make its stand ever stronger and determined through class struggle? Having presented this introduction, let us now see what comrade *Pouyan* says in this regard.

Comrade *Pouyan* wrote: *"A relationship with the proletariat, with the aim of drawing this class into political struggle, cannot be established except by changing this assumption, by destroying these two absolutes in their minds. Thus, under existing circumstances, where there exists no democratic possibility of making contact with, giving political consciousness to, and organizing the proletariat, the proletarian intellectuals must of necessity make contact with the masses of its class through revolutionary power. The revolutionary power establishes a moral tie between the proletariat and the proletarian intellectuals and the continued exercise of this power will lead to organizational ties."*

The main goal of the vanguards' relationship with the proletariat is expressed within the first sentence, "A relationship with the proletariat, with the aim of drawing this class into political struggle...." The reason for this dictum has been explained, however, this is the general task of all revolutionary vanguards in the world. Under specific conditions, one should realize as to how the vanguard could provide the circumstances in order to achieve this goal. Comrade *Pouyan* here relies on the concrete analysis of concrete situations in his argument and expresses the circumstances for achieving this goal. In raising the question: 'What the fundamental reason for the absence of the extensive spontaneous mass movements is', comrade *Pouyan* has answered that 'the masses have an incorrect perception, i.e., the enemy has absolute power, while they have absolute inability. Therefore, how can the masses, who cannot enter the realm of active struggle, think of freedom with absolute inability facing absolute power, unless this image is destroyed? Comrade *Pouyan* specifies that, one of the important conditions, therefore, is to destroy this image, but with what method and how? In order to reach these objectives, connections must be established with the masses, yet, we were in circumstances where "the absence of any democratic conditions" had made our connection with the people very difficult. Even in using the most indirect and hence the least fruitful method of communication, we could not embark upon the previous known models and methods of activity. Not only would the analysis of the objective reality and the code of understanding the class struggle in our dominated country show the weaknesses and the inefficiency of those methods, but also the experience of eighteen years of struggle would cancel them out.

No, by recognizing the basic ways, "...that the enemy had chosen for keeping us separated from the proletariat and the proletariat from us...", we proportionally should choose the methods that would neutralize the enemy's methods. Not by ideological struggle, but basically by violently suppressing the people's movement along with the spreading of an extensive police network, the enemy could draw the movement to stagnation. It was in this context that extensive anti-people propaganda became useful. But this was not the only problem. As mentioned in part one of this article, through a relatively protracted struggle, the masses realized the inefficiency and inability of the chosen methods of struggle and forms of organization, and had lost all confidence in those methods and in the vanguards. If our comrades were only satisfied with propaganda leaflets and exposure, they would not be any different from the opportunists of the time. We did not believe that the defeat of our people's movement was due to their lack of preparation. Through the pages of history, all can see the heroism of our people during that period. Rather, in our opinion, the

lack of proletarian leadership and appropriate line, the adaptation of wrong and inappropriate methods of struggle, and the disproportional forms of organization led the movement to defeat. Furthermore, as was previously pointed out, for instance, it wasn't that the workers didn't know the meaning or importance of "strike" nor was it that they were not familiar with this kind of struggle. Rather, the problems existed precisely for the reason that the people had constantly experienced these methods of struggle only to witness negative consequences. As a result, they divorced themselves from active struggle and adopted an inactive stance toward any serious agenda of struggle.

Therefore, a method had to be presented so that the working class and other popular classes could experience its material development in practice. This was the core of the problem. A certain method had to be adopted that would neutralize police procedures in practice, and demonstrate our revolutionary power; a method of struggle and organization in which the circumstances of class struggle in our society would guarantee its survival.

This great task was both theoretical and practical. It was under these circumstances that Comrade *Pouyan* wrote, "the proletarian intellectual must establish ties with the masses of the proletariat through the vehicle of revolutionary power", and he immediately expressed the outcome of this method of connecting in the process of movement. "Revolutionary power establishes spiritual ties between the proletarian intellectuals and the proletariat", and the application of this power in its continuity shall lead to organizational ties. Revolutionary application of power practically shows the masses that the enemy is vulnerable. The continuance of this revolutionary practice shows the masses that we can resist and struggle against the enemy. The masses, who feel the pain and suffering with their own skin and bones, see their future in the survival and growth of this course and hence are attracted to it. The existence and growth of the revolutionary power teaches the masses that they can keep the enemy under attack; that they can begin to resist and struggle and it is important that with the correct method and proper organization they begin the struggle. Application of both the correct method and the survival of the organization together with "distinct political propagation" that, in particular, could be useful in such a process, weakens the previously described misconception in the masses' minds, and eventually provides a basis for creating a revolutionary change in them.

The opportunists tried to find a similarity between comrade *Pouyan's* views and the Narodniks of Lenin's time. The opportunists thought that the finding of a pretext would strengthen their ideological viewpoints. They strove to reduce the reasons for the necessity of armed struggle to the level of the Narodniks' reasoning, and to represent the armed struggle merely as an agitational issue so that they could then comfortably ruminates Lenin's work.

As it was briefly explained, our main goal of "exercising the revolutionary power" that comrade *Pouyan* suggests, was not to "encourage" the proletariat to go on strike nor was it to "agitate" them.

It is not necessary to create struggle by "motivating" the masses. The motivation for struggle exists in the heart of the material conditions of the masses' lives. Thus the mentioned objection like the other objections is both futile and groundless.

The important task was that the misconception of the "absolute" in the peoples' minds would practically be shaken. And only the application of revolutionary power by the revolutionary vanguards and continuance of this struggle could prove this reality to the masses. The problem was to determine the specific methods through which the energy of the masses could heave its tremendous revolutionary force, and demonstrate its power in its entirety and completion.

This is the idea that comrade *Pouyan* pursues. However, that is not comrade *Pouyan's* sole idea presented in his short and substantially meaningful essay. Comrade *Pouyan's* essay could be considered from various angles, but unfortunately there is no opportunity here to discuss them all. However, a subject that we cannot ignore and which should be discussed, even if briefly, is the section of the article where he argues the refutation of the theory of survival. In this part, comrade *Pouyan* severely criticizes and exposes the pacifist views of those who evade any sort of revolutionary action in order to save their own sordid existence or that of their group's.

Here again, two main currents can be distinguished. One current stays aside of the struggle, evades face to face confrontation with the enemy, and denies active struggle so that it saves itself for the "promised moment". This current considers its submission to the existing reality as the only condition for the perpetuation of its survival. The other current is determined to change the status quo through revolutionary practice and by face to face and direct combat with the enemy.

The former creates the "*theory of survival*" and the latter the "*refutation of the theory of survival*". The former, being secluded, considers itself isolated and its growth independent of its social circumstances. The latter is a source of the breakdown of airy optimism. It is all rebellion, and it is determined to destroy the deterrent forces through its active practice, and to open the way by annihilating those forces to a more advanced development. One is the praiser of silence and tranquility and the other is the follower of the philosophy of movement and progress.

Comrade *Pouyan* represents the latter current in his work, and strongly criticizes those supporting the theory of survival.

Indeed, why do we need an organization consisting of conscious elements within the working class? Why is its preservation and continuance necessary? The answers to these questions are clear for Marxist-Leninists. We need an organization for change, for revolutionary practice and for a new rebuilding of the present reality, and as long as it can undertake this great task, its preservation and continuity is necessary. "Survival" at all costs is not what is sacred to Marxist-Leninists, but rather, it is both development and revolutionary survival of their organization that is vital to them. A form of survival that gives the organization the possibility to create radical changes under given circumstances, to improve and radicalize itself while providing the circumstances for ever more profound and revolutionary changes. The revolutionary organization cannot be assessed by its very existence, but rather by the roles it plays in the course of combative conditions. Only through the process of revolutionary practice and the active participation in changing the circumstances can the revolutionary organization develop itself, mature and become evermore prepared for playing an increasingly advanced role in the revolutionary struggle. What did become of those groups who thought they could protect their survival without any active association to their surroundings, without confronting the existing

problems deterring the revolutionary struggle, and without continuous revolutionary activity? They became putrefied swamps contaminating their surroundings.

These groups thought that their "cadres" would be able to undertake the task of leadership at the promised moment, when the masses had risen all at once. Only the metaphysically minded could accept the elusiveness of this type of thinking. The cadres will become skilled through problems that they encounter; they will enrich their acquired knowledge through the course of struggle and thereby obtain the preparation for an even more comprehensive and profound understanding of the realities.

If the cadres do not gain experience through the process of struggle, they certainly will never achieve effectiveness at the moments of crisis, at the moments when millions of people will have risen to change their history. Just as people discover their identity and change themselves alongside changing circumstances, revolutionary cadres develop their potentials as well and constantly expand their practical abilities purely through revolutionary practice. A revolutionary organization, too, attains its identity through revolutionary policy, that is, revolutionary practice. And in this manner, it broadens and advances. It is only through this active practice, through radical changes and the reconstruction of society that they warrant the name vanguard. If they are not able to play their revolutionary role, then they do not merit the name revolutionary vanguard.

Comrade *Pouyan's* theoretical work is one of the explicit contributions in the literature of the armed struggle. Nevertheless, as it has been already mentioned, it should be noted that comrade *Pouyan's* article was not the last stage of the group's thoughts concerning the Iranian revolutionary approach. But rather, our comrades studied the problem from all angles "tens of times" thereby acquiring an all encompassing view toward the armed struggle whose summary crystallized in the work of comrade *Massoud Ahmad-Zadeh*, a great leader of the Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas. If comrade *Pouyan's* work is read single-handedly, his actual views cannot be fully comprehended, but if this work is studied in the context of the revolutionary thought process of our organization in connection with revolutionary *modus operandi*, then one can better acquire the inner intelligence of the article.

In comrade *Pouyan's* work, the meaning of "*Armed Struggle; both a Strategy and a Tactic*" latently exists, in spite of the fact that it does not appear in its completed form. Studying comrade *Pouyan's* and comrade *Massoud's* works in relation with each other can provide a basis for perceiving the process of the theoretical evolution of our organization, which demonstrates that only through answering these theoretical and practical problems the inscription of the revolutionary theory of the armed struggle became possible.

The Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas, 1981

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