

Our Road

"We vow, on the blood spilled of our comrades on the Santa Elina farm, to carry the struggle for land, for democracy, justice and work to its final victory, at any cost."

Oath taken by the resisters of the Battle of Santa Elina at the founding of the MCC, in Jaru-RO, February 25, 1996, signed by the continuators of the Santa Elina struggle and founders of the Poor Peasants' League.

Presentation

Dear companions,

Our Road first appeared 22 years ago, in mid-1996. It contained the summary of the studies and ideas resulting from the social practice, mainly in the class struggle, of hundreds of militant revolutionary companions, and companions from the popular masses from different regions of our country. Its purpose was to serve as a basic orientation for intervention in the peasant movement in the struggle for the conquest of land and for the transformations necessary for the social and political liberation of the poor people of the countryside in particular, and for the liberation of the Brazilian people and our Nation from the yoke of imperialism, in general.

Under the impact of the dramatic events of August 9, 1995 in Corumbiara - Rondônia, where thousands of peasants camped in the farm Santa Elina imposed the fiercest resistance to the savagery of the latifundium and its old bureaucratic genocidal State in its cowardly act of sowing terror and eviction of more than 600 families, the peasant movement of our country entered a new stage of its history.

Those events deeply marked the history of the popular movement in the state of Rondônia and in our country, also deeply demarcating the field between the various political currents in the popular movement and in Brazilian society. With them began an open struggle inside the peasant movement about the direction, political line and methods of organization and struggle. In fact, it started a necessary and inevitable process of separation and purging for the peasant movement, of its two-line struggle - between the proletarian or the bourgeois line, the democratic or the bureaucratic line - in its long and complex course in our country.

This struggle is the one between the road of opportunism, which is the same bureaucratic road of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, who have always subordinated the peasant movement to electoral projects, treating the peasants as a secondary class in the class struggle, and the revolutionary road, the only one capable of effectively conquering the land through the complete destruction of the latifundium, because it is guided by the revolutionary program of transformations for the countryside considering the poor peasants as the main force for the revolutionary democratic transformations of our country, based on the worker-peasant alliance.

Since the heroic Battle of Santa Elina, throughout 23 years, the experience of the popular struggle in our country has only confirmed the analysis and orientation of **Our Road**. It has also presented important challenges that have required new responses to new problems, imposing on us the need to revise and adjust aspects of our orientation, as has occurred throughout the 13 and a half years of management by the opportunist PT/PCdoB/PSB/PDT parties, supported by the rest of the so-called "electoral left," by CONTAG, MST, the central unions, and other organizations controlled by opportunism.

With the electoral triumph of Luiz Inácio in 2002, the opportunist leaderships, although increasingly decadent, have still prevailed in the peasant movement, have had every opportunity to demonstrate and prove who their theses really serve: the big bourgeoisie, the landlords, and imperialism. But not the poor peasants. Let's see: here we are after 13 and a half years of their governments (Luiz Inácio and Dilma), in truth a mere shift in the administration of this old bureaucratic-landlord, imperialist servant State, that ended in its most complete failure, sunk in the economic and general crisis of decomposition of bureaucratic capitalism and amidst the general crisis of imperialism. Furthermore, the serious political crisis that ousted Dilma Rousseff by impeachment is an expression of the contention between the factions of the ruling classes, due to this same economic crisis. In all these years, the poor peasants can only say that their situation got worse. Was it not Luiz Inácio who said, among so many campaign promises, that "if he had to take only one measure in his government, it would be agrarian reform"? Yes, it was him! Was it not the opportunists who gained, no less, control of the Ministry of Agrarian Development, and were it not the cadres linked to the national leadership of the MST and CONTAG who occupied the most important positions in INCRA at the national and state levels? Yes, they did!

And what has all this been for? What all this is serving for is for all poor peasants to see the failure of the usual old "government land reform" drive. This has served to unmask all the opportunists, shameless electioneers that they are, and this entire government, which has revealed itself to be nothing more than a shift in the administration of this old bureaucratic-landlord, imperialist servant State. The only thing left to the peasant movement is to carry on the struggle for a genuine agrarian revolution. But for this it is necessary to reject the rotten opportunist road of conciliation, taking the thorny, difficult revolutionary road of the struggle for the complete destruction of the latifundium.

And it is to wage this struggle and to give a great impulse to the peasant movement that Our Path has been born, always new, invariable, reinvigorated and incontrovertible.

Revision and Editorial Committee,
Goiânia, June 2018.

For an Agrarian Program of radical transformation of the countryside

I. Introduction

The agrarian-peasant question in Brazil, contrary to the relegation of its meaning by reactionaries, bourgeois academics, the press monopolies, and opportunists of different affiliations, continues to be central, of fundamental importance for the solution of the great national problems, and is the basis for achieving a true democracy. It is not by chance that the struggle for land has never stopped and has been growing in the last decades, to the point that the dominant classes themselves have had to make it a central point in their government policies, and of course, not to change anything in relation to their structure, but as an attempt to paralyze the growing and militant peasant movement.

The general economic-social crisis of the capitalist system, with the advance of financial capital in the countryside, has and is provoking the most brutal expulsion of millions of people from their land through the grabbing of these lands for the megaprojects of primary production for export (sugar cane, soy, coffee, as well as cattle, homogenous forests, and the unbridled expansion of mining). To the masses of landless poor peasants, or poor peasants with little land, are added the indigenous peoples, the remnants of quilombolas, tens of millions of people harassed by the concentration of land in the hands of a tiny minority of landlords and transnational corporations, by servile labor and by the lack of any government support and incentive. This situation is further aggravated by the continued application of "adjustment" policies and liberalizations to the free action of foreign capital demanded by the empire, deepening class contradictions in the countryside, causing the explosion mobilizations, occupations, and land seizures, confronted by the persecution of the judiciary system, with the most brutal repression by the police and military forces of the State, attacks by gunmen and paramilitary gangs, and prohibitive environmental laws. In the face of this, the poor peasants respond in a more organized way, emerging as the most dynamic and driving factor in the popular struggle.

For the big bourgeoisie and the different landowning sectors, the change in the land ownership structure in the country is unacceptable, since it is a determining factor as an underpinning of imperialism and reproducing the bureaucratic capitalism that it drives in the country. Thus, as it has always been, the ruling classes continue to use all forms of violence to prevent any reform, even the most superficial, combining the legal and police-military action of the old State with that of the gangs of gunmen and paramilitaries in the repression, selective assassinations and mass massacres. In the last twenty-two years, more than two thousand people, among peasants, lawyers, and clerics, were murdered in the countryside. Four savage massacres, Corumbiara-1995 and Eldorado dos Carajás-1996, Colniza-Mato Grosso, 2016 and Pau D'Arco-Pará, 2017, are the most dramatic demonstration of the weight that the land question has and the centrality of the contradiction between poor peasants and landlords in the class struggle in our society.

Currently, after 13 and a half years of opportunist management (electoral front headed by PT, PCdoB, PSB, etc.) the application of "neoliberal" policies dictated by imperialism has deepened, particularly in the sense of strengthening the country in its condition as a producer of primary goods for export (raw food in natura).

This has led to an increase in land values through the increasing hoarding of large tracts of land for this production, either by dispossessing small proprietors of their land or through the massive and free incorporation of public lands (from 2003 to 2015 more than 150 million hectares of public lands were donated to big landowners through "Terra Legal") [legal land - T.N.], meaning a colossal reinforcement and strengthening of the old landowning class. In addition, and as a direct result, the already timid agrarian reform program was completely paralyzed, repression against the militant peasant movement increased, and a latifundist offensive was unleashed through the judiciary with waves of evictions and reviews of "settlement" decisions, and campaigns of defamation of the peasant struggle by the bourgeois press. In a single sentence, the agrarian reform policy of the opportunist administration was reduced solely to repression of the militant peasant movement, besides facilitating projects and transactions of the State with MST and CONTAG.

With the serious political crisis that deposed Dilma Rousseff by impeachment, expression of contention among the fractions of the ruling classes due to this same economic crisis, and with the inauguration of the bandit Temer, together with the continuation of the reactionary offensive in the countryside, the offensive against workers and other salaried workers has been unleashed, with cuts in rights that were hard won in years of hard struggle by the proletariat, with the approval by Congress of the "labor reform" and preparation for the approval of the "pension reform", besides all kinds of attacks against free public education and other rights of the people. The impeachment of Dilma and the inauguration of Temer was the reaction of the official political world against the "Operação Lava-Jato" (Operation Carwash) moved by the guardians of this old State, who through the Public Ministry intended to clean up the facade of their institutions and political system, demoralized and increasingly without any legitimacy before the masses of people. All in an attempt to save the old order from its general collapse, deflecting the hatred of the masses against this whole system of exploitation and oppression, instigating them against corruption, as if mere corruption were the main cause of so much injustice, abuse, misery and abandonment suffered by the masses, as well as the plundering and subjugation of the nation.

The crisis has only deepened, and the massacres, slaughters, imprisonments and brutal repression against the masses in the struggle for land and in defense of their trampled rights in the countryside and in the city do not stop, because the electoral farce has been completely unmasked and there is no other path for the people than the increasingly bloody struggle. The popular masses must consciously prepare their inevitable rebellion. Faced with the crisis, division of the ruling classes and the growing revolt of the masses, the armed wing of the old state, the reactionary armed forces, have already set in motion a preventive counterrevolutionary military coup, in anticipation of this rebellion. The masses of our people in general and the peasants in the struggle for land in particular, are facing a great challenge.

To furnish the answers to this question, in the daily struggle for the conquest of land, we understand that it is extremely necessary that the class-conscious trade-union movement,

together with the militant peasant movement, have a deep consciousness of this reality, in order to establish and develop the deepest and most solid worker-peasant alliance, a determining force to achieve the great pending transformations, beginning with the agrarian question, that the impoverished masses and our homeland demand and need. For this it is necessary to examine the historical reality of our country, starting from its social-economic formation, in which the land problem occupies a central and decisive role, in order to substantiate and formulate an authentic agrarian program that starts from the need to completely break the old relations of land ownership that have existed for centuries in our country and have never changed, but have always been reinforced and reproduced.

II. The society we live in

Capitalism is a system based on the exploitation of man by man. Capitalist society is divided into antagonistic classes with irreconcilable interests. Fundamentally, the exploiting class (the bourgeoisie), owner of the banks, factories, companies, land (the large landowners, latifundium), who accumulate their wealth by exploiting the labor of the exploited class, the worker, or proletariat. The capitalist system is the one that completely dominates the world today, and it is not capitalism in general. It is monopoly capitalism as a world system, i.e. imperialism. And the capitalism that developed in our country was the one that imperialism, mainly British initially and then mainly US imperialism, imposed upon the semi-colonial condition of the country and supported by its semi-feudal base, bureaucratic capitalism. These were important particular conditions that determined the backwardness and conservation of totally archaic and retrograde structures in the country's economic, social, political and cultural life, in force for more than a century until today.

From the end of the 19th century (1890 to 1900), capitalism passed to its monopolist stage (it ceased to be a regime based on free competition and became a monopoly regime), transforming itself into a single imperialist international system. As a direct result of this the world was divided into oppressor and oppressed nations and was divided among the great powers. Thus, the development of capitalism in Brazil is supported on a semi-feudal base and has always been submitted to imperialism (monopolistic capitalism) under the condition of a semi-colony, firstly by the British and after World War II mainly by US imperialism.

Capitalism emerged in our country in the second half of the 19th century and grew more from the beginning of the 20th century (from 1901 on). Thus, capitalism appeared in Brazil in a period when it was already in its monopolistic phase, that is, the imperialist phase. It was introduced here by British imperialism, mainly, in alliance with the big landlords (the rural landowning oligarchies) and big local importers (commercial and comprador bourgeoisie). Such origin and development never radically changed determined that, no matter how much in the course of a century capitalism has developed, Brazil continues to be a backward country, submitted to foreign domination and millions of our people living in misery, ill and illiterate.

Thus, even though capitalism has developed, it has not led to even a minimal democratization of land ownership, as has occurred in the imperialist countries: United States, Canada, Germany, England, France, Japan, etc. On the contrary, the development of capitalism in Brazil only accentuated the monopoly and concentration of land ownership, as well as the backward relations that originate and reproduce it, even if many times in an underlying way, through the evolution of its forms.

Backward, our society is divided not only into the bourgeoisie and proletariat, there is also the class of landlords (latifundium), owners of large extensions of thousands and even tens of thousands of hectares, large estates of unproductive and productive types (the so-called agribusiness) that exploit and oppress poor peasants. There are also middle sectors that are classes of medium and small owners (industrialists, merchants and farmers) that make up the middle and small bourgeoisie, also oppressed by the local big bourgeoisie and imperialism. Moreover, there are other exploited classes made up of private and public sector employees, commerce and service workers, and others, like street vendors.

For this reason the land question in Brazil is deeply related not only to the formation of social classes, but has also determined the type of bureaucratic, semi-feudal, genocidal and corrupt state, necessary for the maintenance of power in the hands of the landlords and big bourgeoisie, lackeys and at the service of imperialism.

Following their arrival, the Portuguese took possession of the lands, and for this they massacred the indigenous nations; later, the king of Portugal distributed lands to his friends and protégés, through sesmarias (large extensions of land). Immediately the Portuguese Crown prohibited the poor from owning unoccupied land, and in 1850, with the Land Law ("Lei da Terra"), the State instituted that land ownership would be recognized **only through its purchase**, in anticipation of the situation that was already emerging with the inevitable abolition of slavery and the increasing influx of poor immigrants into the country.

Over the years, a population of poor peasants was formed, who were exploited by the big landlords, working as colonists, aggregates, partners and sharecroppers, etc., along with the enslavement of black people, who for more than 300 years were brought from Africa, and who formed a system of servitude destined exclusively to supply the European metropolises. With the abolition of slavery in 1888, a great mass of a few million landless peasants emerged, the ex-slaves, and poor immigrants, unwanted in their countries and pushed out [to Brazil]. A large part of this contingent wandered into the deep expanses of land and settled as squatters, and part of the immigrants were absorbed into colony systems, mainly in the coffee culture.

Thus the struggle for land in Brazil became an acute contradiction between poor peasants and the latifundium, and consequently with its State. The peasant aspires to conquer the land in order to be able to make a living from it and never again need to sell, even for a day, his labor force to a landlord. The large estates and the bourgeoisie in general are interested in the concentration of land and the failure of small production, expelling peasants from the land, generating an abundant labor force to be exploited in their interests, and a large and permanent mass of unemployed. These reactionary classes are also interested in the existence at a certain level of a mass that lives off the peasant economy, capable of supplying the internal market with basic necessities (food, raw materials and small artisan

utensils), in a form totally subjected and exploited by capital that condemns it to a permanently ruined existence. This is a reality that has never changed qualitatively. In the last five decades, mainly, the growing mechanized exploitation of large extensions of land, the use of high technology, improved seeds, intensive use of fertilizers and pesticides left the small producer, mostly integrated to the market, totally unable to compete with the big producers, composed more and more of monopolies.

Lower and middle peasants cannot survive in a country dominated by monopolies like Brazil, except in constant ruin. All small and middle property is submitted to the spoliation of finance capital. The bourgeois-landlord system protects big capital and the latifundium, systematically massacring small and medium property and exploiting and plundering to the extreme the proletariat and the popular masses, among them the poor landless peasantry. For this reason, besides the conquest of the land that destroys the latifundium, it is fundamental to organize small production in associative forms to make it minimally viable as an economy of resistance. Organizing cooperatives, collective groups for mutual aid, or any other form of joint work is fundamental so that the peasant does not give up the conquered land and so that it does not return to the hands of the latifundium, and so that it serves as a point of support for sustaining and continuing the struggle.

The tasks that correspond to the necessary and urgent radical transformations in the countryside cannot be accomplished by any governments emerging within the current order. It can only be the work of the peasant movement itself, organized in its objective and in alliance with the urban and rural proletariat. Such programmatic tasks imply a protracted struggle to seize the land, distribute it to the poor landless or nearly landless peasants, to liberate the productive forces by organizing production in a collective way, based on the association of the plots at various levels of cooperation and to organize the exercise of political power in the areas taken over and around them (villages and small towns), making these victories new points of support to continue striking against the latifundium and this whole system of hunger, misery and exploitation sustained by the old state.

Keeping the nationalization of the big rural capitalist enterprises and the "nationalization of the land" itself in perspective, developing and strengthening the strategic alliance with the working class, broadening it with the other oppressed sectors of the people in the united front to seize the land from the latifundium, bit by bit, and to bring down the old bureaucratic-landlord State, servile to imperialism, by improving the form of struggle that has most strengthened the land struggle, that of the **peasant war**, to build the people's power of new democracy as the only possible way to achieve true agrarian transformation and conquer democracy, justice, land and work.

III. The land struggle in Brazil

At the end of the 1950s several peasant organizations arise, mainly unions and the ULTAB - Union of Farmers and Agricultural Workers of Brazil - a result of a greater work of the Communist Party with the peasants. In the Northeast, mainly, but not only there, Peasant Leagues emerged, which organized tens of thousands of peasants to take over mills. The Peasant Leagues were the most important mass organizations of peasants in the struggle

for land. Their growth placed the agrarian reform issue as a national question of first order and radicalized the class struggle in the country with the slogan "**agrarian reform by law or by force**". The big bourgeoisie, the latifundium, and US imperialism, felt seriously threatened by these and organized the military coup of April 1, 1964, designed to destroy the popular organizations, mainly the Peasant Leagues, and to stop the growing reformist mass movement.

In the struggle against the Yankee-backed military dictatorship, which protected the latifundium with iron and fire, many attempts were made at resistance and armed land struggle, as was the struggle in the countryside of Maranhão, in the Zona da Mata region (lit. Forest Zone), in the sugarcane fields in the coastal states of the Northeast and in the Araguaia region, South of Pará. At the end of the 1970s, the struggle for land began to grow again, with the action of reformist sectors of the Catholic Church (Pastoral Land Ministry) and other popular movements. In the early 1980s, the struggle for agrarian reform gained new impetus, and many rural workers' unions began to have militant leaderships; in the south of the country, the Landless Rural Workers' Movement emerged.

The land struggle in Rondônia: a new chapter

Of relatively recent colonization, Rondônia has its best lands in the hands of the latifundia. Attracted by promises of fertile land and government aid, tens of thousands of peasant families migrated to that state. There, the great majority became cheap labor for the exploitation of the latifundium landlords. The dream of conquering the land only really started to come true with the first land seizures that took place in the state. In all of them, they had to face the violence of the latifundium through gangs of gunmen and police.

The large number of poor, landless masses of peasants abandoned to their fate was met with an immediate and preventive reaction from the landlords, who had already been schooled to massacre indigenous villages in the south of Rondônia and the northwest of Mato Grosso, in order to take possession of their territories. Spontaneous land seizures were unleashed. With the violence and cowardice of the latifundium, using the police and their gangs of guaxebas (gunmen employed by the large cattle ranches), attempts were made to paralyze the land seizures. It was the aggressions, the cowardly murders, barbaric massacres that forced the movement to advance in its organization and self-defense. In the face of the increasing violence of the latifundium and the government, the defense of the masses of peasants in the land seizures and camps demanded a greater mobilization, organization, combativeness and courage from their leaderships.

The radicalization of the land struggle caused a shift in positions in the peasant movement and consequently its division in Rondônia. The leadership of the MST in that state began to have a vacillating and police-like attitude, and the PT allied itself with the PMDB government of Valdir Raupp, today a senator, trying to isolate the most militant comrades and adopting a conciliatory attitude in the land struggle. These comrades, who corresponded to the aspirations of the masses, one by one, broke away from the vacillating leadership and joined together in preparing the historic takeover of the Santa Elina farm, in Corumbiara.

The Battle of Santa Elina

The southern region of Rondônia has the best and healthiest land in the state. Most of them unproductive, they were - and still are - the best alternative for the 40 thousand poor peasant families in the region. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the victorious takeovers of Verde Seringal, Vitória da União and Adriana had already occurred. To continue confronting the latifundium, headed by retired army colonel Antenor Duarte, who with his gunmen spread terror trying to intimidate the masses and their leaders, required courage and combativeness. This is what a group of comrades demonstrated when they began mobilizing and organizing more than 600 families to take over a large estate, the 18,000-hectare Santa Elina farm in the municipality of Corumbiara.

When invited to contribute to the occupation, the MST leadership of Rondonia not only refused, but also informed the state government of the names of comrades who would be leading the mobilization. Already at this time the PT had made a deal with the PMDB and was participating in the government of Valdir Raupp. This betrayal was the password for the landowners to plan, together with the state government, the barbaric massacre that took place in the early hours of August 9, 1995. The result: 16 dead, 7 disappeared, more than 200 comrades with serious consequences resulting from the savagery unleashed by the police, and several persecuted comrades. The number of victims was not higher because the peasants organized the resistance with the weapons they had: sticks, scythes and hunting rifles.

The massacre was an intentionally prepared action, with military planning, with the objective of spreading terror among the peasant families and thus paralyzing the land seizures of the latifundia in Rondônia and in the country. However, contrary to what was expected, the bloody repression generated enormous solidarity and made the hatred of the masses explode, raising a wave of new land seizures throughout Brazil.

The opportunists and conciliators of the MST leadership in Rondonia were completely unmasked and the comrades who led that struggle now have the responsibility of continuing the struggle against the latifundium in the state, honoring the generous blood of those comrades who died in the struggle for land. A few months later, another defeat for the opportunists: victory for the opposition for the FETAGRO board of directors, with the election of comrades who supported the struggle in Santa Elina, defeating the situation, supported by the MST board.

The struggle opened by the Battle of Santa Elina in a general way demarcated two paths in the Brazilian peasant movement and, in this sense, became a fundamental milestone in the history of the peasant movement, especially in its most recent phase. This split within the peasant movement continued to deepen, not as a weakening of the movement, but on the contrary, as the possibility of the development of an authentic and combative peasant movement. From the Santa Elina struggle emerged the MCC - Peasant Movement Corumbiara, with the purpose of continuing to support the legacy of the Santa Elina struggle. With time, the struggle became established within the MCC itself, giving way to the purification process that began with the Battle of Santa Elina. From the fight within the MCC itself against the influence of opportunism poured mainly by the Petism and the Catholic

Church and for the deepening of the combative peasant movement that was advancing in the north of Minas, the Poor Peasants' League arose.

With the emergence of the Poor Peasants' Leagues and their multiplication in other regions of the country, the peasant movement entered a new phase, that of playing its historical role as the main force in the democratic revolution that is being stalled in the country. The level of organization and the methods of struggle gained new contours under the banner of **"Conquer the land"** and **"Destroy the latifundium"**. New and more massive battles are being fought by the peasant movement, which is facing a greater intensification of juridical-political repression by the old state, of paramilitary action by the landlords, and of defamation campaigns by the bourgeois press. Also, the struggle between the two roads - that of opportunism and the bourgeoisie with their drip-drip-drip "agrarian reform" and that of following the path of revolutionary struggle for the destruction of all the latifundium - has moved to a more advanced level that puts the complete unmasking of all opportunism in the peasant movement, represented principally by the leadership of the MST, by CONTAG and its structure of state federations and assistentialist unions, on the short and medium term. And this is the main aspect of the militant peasant movement that continues to develop and seeks to orient itself by a revolutionary program of agrarian transformation, a program that combats the influences of the bourgeoisie and opportunism and that includes the worker-peasant alliance. In short, a program in which the proletariat, objectively supporting the struggle of poor peasants for the destruction of the latifundium, is the basis for profound transformations not only in the countryside but in all of Brazilian society.

IV. The agrarian question

Many scholars of the land question in our country, and political parties that define themselves as socialist and even communist, have defended that an agrarian reform in the country is no longer necessary to solve the problem of the production of food and raw materials, alleging that, today, the solution of these problems is guaranteed with agroindustry, the so-called "agribusiness", as Rede Globo boasts, "the wealth industry of Brazil", with the application of modern techniques, new technologies, and advanced equipment, and that the need for agrarian reform only arises because of the social problem of great inequalities and marginalization of millions of Brazilians. And, therefore, any reform is enough.

Such conclusions do not correspond to reality. First, because the large production where the most modern resources are applied is export-oriented and based on monoculture, concentrated in the central-southern and central-western regions, occupying the best lands. Second, that following the dictates of monopolistic capital, it is focused on obtaining maximum profit, and not on satisfying the needs of the country and the population. Third, as a consequence, the much publicized grain production, with its record harvests, which has only resulted in a deformation of the national economy and the deepening of the country's dependency, its per capita ratio (720 kg/person/year) is far below international standards. Unquestionably, the country's basic food supply is provided by small and medium-sized properties, increasingly subjected to the most complete exploitation by the agroindustry.

It is not a matter, therefore, of carrying out an "agrarian reform" to develop capitalism in the countryside, which is how agrarian question has always been approached in the country, because capitalism penetrated the countryside through the bureaucratic path, maintaining the semifeudal relations through the evolution of their forms, both in the relations of land ownership as in the other social and cultural relations derived from them. It is also not a matter of "nationalizing the land", making them all public lands for their usufruct and not private property (state property), which would ensure the greatest impulse in the development of capitalism in the countryside, allowing free access to land by the bourgeoisie without the obstacle of the landowner charging rent or having to tie up capital in its purchase. Nor is it a question of its nationalization, as the electoral opportunists who hide behind the self-denomination of "socialists" proposing the "collectivization of the land" spread, while in practice they support and promote policies that only strengthen the landlords, and the maintenance of, in the last instance, the existing property relations of monopoly and concentration of land.

The high concentration of land in the country (1% of the landowners own almost 50% of the land, while the 91% own only 20% of it) has been accentuated, and the more capitalism penetrates into the countryside the more this tendency accelerates. Even the growth of agro-industry itself has not meant an increase in the agricultural labor force (around 4.5 million). The use of modern machinery has drastically reduced the number of jobs, as exemplified by the sugar cane region of Ribeirão Preto for the production of sugar and alcohol, and the growing use of archaic forms of exploitation of the labor force, as semi-servants in the traditional crops of coffee and others.

Land concentration in Brazil

Property size (ha)	Number of properties	Percentage	Area (ha)	Percentage
Less than 10 ha	2.543.681	51%	7.993.969	2%
From 10 to less than 100 ha	1.980.684	40%	63.810.646	18%
From 100 to less than 1.000 ha	420.719	8%	112.257.692	32%
1.000 ha and above	51.203	1%	167.227.511	48%
Total	4.996.287	100%	351.289.818	100%

Source: IBGE, Agricultural Census, 2017

Although the national economy is no longer essentially agricultural, as it was until 40 years ago (total agricultural production has reached almost 40% of the GDP), the labor force directly linked to agricultural production exceeds 50 million people. The country continues to import large quantities of food, and the application of new technologies, equipment, inputs, fertilizers, poisons, etc., have accentuated in an exponential manner the country's dependence on foreign capital, which in turn has come to dominate agroindustry as well.

The concentration of land in Brazil has historically contributed to the maintenance and aggravation of the economic and social crisis, by constituting the base for sustaining this bureaucratic capitalism, contributing decisively to the maintenance of a colossal reserve army, the existence of a permanently ruined peasant economy that serves to supply food (replacement of the labor force exploited by the capitalist) and raw materials to industry that have been fundamental factors in obtaining high rates of profits for the bourgeoisie, for the formation of financial capital and today, more than ever, as the generating source of the mass of excluded people and of an enormous peasantry. Finally, as a result, it functions as a brake on the proletariat's struggle and an element in its disorganization.

The modernization of agriculture, which occurred mainly in the last 42 years, was based on large properties, monoculture and export-oriented agriculture (coffee, sugar cane, soy, tobacco, cacao, orange juice, cotton), concentrated in the central-south and central-west regions, around the most industrialized areas of the country, increasing the concentration of land and expelling, in different ways, the rural workers. Furthermore, the growing use of mechanization, automation, improved seeds, and the systematic use of fertilizers and different types of poisons has violently increased foreign dependence, since the state and national petrochemical, machine and implement industries have either been privatized and handed over to the monopolies, or liquidated completely, with Monsanto, Cargill, Agrocere, Massey Ferguson, etc. reigning freely.

The violence of the latifundium

Consequently, the concentration of land has historically been the main cause of the acute social inequality and extreme misery of millions of peasant families, of the swelling of the big cities, of the marginalization, hunger, misery, and permanent violence that befalls the poor of the countryside. In the resistance struggle against their expulsion from the land or to conquer it, the peasants face the most systematic and prolonged violence unleashed by the old

reactionary Brazilian State and by the paramilitary bands of the landowners, with the criminal cover-up through the so-called "Justice", in the most shameless impunity that further increases the savagery of the dominant classes.

As shown in the table below, the violence with deaths continues to increase over the last decades, which reveals the intensification of repressive action by the old State, combined with the armed wing of the latifundium, as occurred in the massacre of Corumbiara, Eldorado dos Carajás, among others, where the eviction was carried out by PM troops together with gunmen, who even wore police uniforms. The eight years of FHC's and Luiz Inácio's governments, apart from the great publicity on agrarian reform, reveal themselves as mere administrative managements of the old State of the big bourgeoisie and landlords, that has protected the interests of the reactionaries with fire and iron.

Violence in Brazil's countryside

1976 to 1991	Over 1000 murders
1991 to 1995	268 murders
1995 to 2002	292 murders
2003 to 2013	403 murders
2013 to 2017	251 murders

Approximated data - source: national press, CPT

This whole picture constitutes a fundamental factor in the gearing of the system dominated by international financial capital, keeping the country in a permanent whirlpool of economic crisis, deepening the social crisis in a frightening way, with hunger for millions, misery, violence, and death. Therefore, the agrarian question is a central question and of fundamental importance not only for peasants, but for all workers, for the middle classes, and for the independence and progress of the Nation.

The four pillars of the fundamental transformations of Brazilian agriculture

In addition to starting from the immediate and general demands of the different sectors of rural workers, small producers and temporary salaried workers (like the "boias frias"), where various forms of servile and semi-servile relations reign under the formal name of salaried workers (relations that the legislation of the old state calls "analogous to slave labor"), issues that are already present in the general program of proletarian resistance; considering that the fundamental and basic agrarian issue is the question of land ownership, the agrarian program to achieve the required radical transformations presupposes the total destruction of the latifundium and the immediate handing over of land parcels to the poor, landless or nearly landless, peasants. To achieve this goal, the peasants can only count on their own forces, in the first place, and with the decisive support of the urban and rural proletariat. This is a radical struggle that has no room for conciliation, it is in itself a question of political power. In the historical and present conditions of the organization of poor peasants, this conquest becomes completely impossible to be accomplished overnight, and will demand a long time and protracted process. Therefore, the peasants should not renounce this program

in exchange for the promises and crumbs offered by the bourgeoisie and the opportunists with their make-believe agrarian reforms. They must fight right now, as they are doing, for the application of this program in the areas taken over from the latifundium, until the complete conquest in the whole country of the great democratic transformations is finally concluded, initiating a new stage of total nationalization, state ownership and collectivization of the lands, defended and applied by the peasant movement itself.

1 - destruction of the latifundium and handing over of the land to the landless or nearly landless poor peasants;

2 - liberation of the productive forces of the countryside in the areas taken from the latifundium, through the elimination of all relations of production based on the exploitation of man through the adoption of cooperative forms. The organization in associative forms of the plots in different levels of cooperation according to their experience, from Mutual Aid Groups, an elementary form, to higher forms of cooperation, passing through other levels of cooperative forms. Adoption of more advanced means of production and working tools, and of the most modern techniques.

Cooperative organization of the system of production, distribution, commercialization, supply and exchange between the various areas and regions, of the infrastructure such as warehouses, transport, roads, bridges, basic sanitation, etc;

3 - organization and exercise of the political power of the masses in the seized areas. Organization of the various forms of participation of the masses at the different levels for decision making and the embryo of their self-government (People's Assembly and the People's Committee). Organization of cultural life and its various manifestations. Organization of a mass self-defense system. Organization of the new People's School based on the three principles of study, work and struggle (for scientific research, production and class struggle) to liquidate illiteracy and promote the elevation of the scientific and technical knowledge of all. Organize a people's system of preventive and curative health (polyclinics);

4 - Immediate defense of the the future nationalization of the big rural capitalist enterprises and the control of their production and management by the workers when the New Power is established in the regions where they are installed.

V. The quilombola and indigenous question

The indigenous problem in our country is part of the set of great national and democratic problems. In order to understand it correctly, it is necessary to investigate and study it. However, we could not fail from the outset to take a clear position with regard to it. We recognize that the indigenous problem is not merely a question of the right to land demarcation. The indigenous problem, the problem of the original peoples of these lands, is a problem of nationalities and today, more than ever, is the problem of national minorities oppressed by the old Brazilian State of big bourgeois and landlords, servants of imperialism. The indigenous populations that today number more than 700,000 are the result of a long heroic and tragic resistance against the culture of domination, exploitation, destruction and genocide of the white colonizers, the great lords of misappropriated lands, the great merchants, the big bourgeoisie and the imperialists. We uphold in our agrarian program and in the struggle for a new democracy the inalienable right of self-determination of indigenous nations. We commit our efforts to integrate our struggle for land and for a new democracy with the indigenous struggle, which includes rejecting the intervention and control exercised by the old State through its tutelary instrument, FUNAI, as well as the interventions of religious institutions and NGOs, national and foreign, that in the name of "defense of indigenous peoples" seek to traffic with their interests and serve the interests of the foreign powers.

Starting from the recognition that they are original peoples of these lands, thus being communities of the same language, culture, customs and psychology inhabiting the same territory, they are, therefore, nationalities in conformation that have passed to the condition of oppressed nationalities in the course of the last 500 years, initially through the process of conquest (genocide), in which the white colonizer imposed himself and took possession of the territories that came to make up Brazil as a new country, and in the continuity of the genocide with the advent and conformation of the Brazilian State already in the era of modern capitalist colonialism, imperialism. Just as the poor and exploited white people, the proletariat, are oppressed by this State founded by the Portuguese colonizers (colonial Brazil) and later exploited by foreign powers, monopolies and financial capital (semi-colonial Brazil), the indigenous peoples have also continued to be oppressed by this same old State.

In the same way we unconditionally defend the historical claim of the remaining quilombola communities for the lands that, in their resistance against slavery and then against all forms of exploitation, segregation, prejudice and racism, territories where they built their way of life. The remaining quilombola communities, the most traditional expression of the cultural resistance of the black people, always marginalized and the target of permanent pressure and dispossession of their lands had, in the years of opportunist management, at the same time of a boost in their mobilization in defense of the demarcation and regularization of claimed "territories", an institutionalization that led to their corporatization, dependence, and subordination to the opportunist, so-called "Worker's Party", political project.

In the old State's search for total control, its policies, with the initiative of the governments of opportunism, posing as a "great achievement", established the ratification of "quilombola territories" in the condition of possession for collective usufruct, subordinated to reactionary legislation on subsoil use, equivalent to the tutelage imposed on indigenous lands. The

tradition of struggle of the quilombola communities has gone hand in hand, similarly and simultaneously, with the struggle of poor peasants to take possession of land legally belonging to the Union, in different historical phases. Moreover, the vast majority of the Brazilian peasantry is composed of black and brown people, and many remaining quilombola communities have remained more closed, but this has never been a basis for conflict and hostility, even though racism, often veiled, has never been overcome.

From the recognition of this condition of the indigenous peoples and quilombola communities we see that these and all the rest of the Brazilian people have a common enemy, the old State of big bourgeois and landowners, servants of imperialism. The causes of each one are an integral part of the liberation struggle of our people and our homeland. The single revolutionary front based on the worker-peasant alliance so fundamental to the struggle and its triumph could not be democratic, popular and revolutionary at all if it did not embrace the indigenous peoples and their historic demand, their right to self-determination, as well as the demands of the Quilombola communities. Such an alliance is based on the need for a single revolutionary front in whose program the construction of a new democratic, popular, and revolutionary state is inscribed and realized. Only on the basis of the recognition of the right to self-determination of the indigenous peoples, which in a democratic way, with self-decision and self-consent, can be realized; such a realization in turn is only possible in a New Democratic Republic.

VI. The Path of the Agrarian Revolution

The League of Poor Peasants fights to destroy the latifundium, the only way to guarantee land for poor peasants and to prevent that small and medium rural properties continue to be massacred by the landlords and the government. This struggle for land directly affects the government.

The large landowners are part of the class bloc that supports the bourgeois power and the official agrarian policy, just as the institutions (Ministry of Agrarian Development, INCRA, etc.) and technical organs (Embrapa, Emater, etc.) are to serve their interests and make them viable. The radical struggle against the latifundium and for their complete destruction inevitably leads to a clash with the ruling classes as a whole and with the interests of imperialism, which is expressed in the direct confrontation with the repressive legal and police-military apparatus of the State.

The agrarian revolution is the banner around which more sectors of society can rally. In this struggle the peasants have, as their allies, the workers, students, honest intellectuals, the middle class, small and medium sized merchants and the popular masses of the city and countryside.

The old State and its different administrations, regardless of which party or coalition of parties they are (PFL, PMDB, PSDB, PT, PTB, PCdoB, PP, PL, PSB, PDT, PPS, etc.) face the peasant struggle in two different ways, and a combination of them: through **repression** and through **cooptation**. One hour they use violence against the peasants in struggle, and the next they propose negotiations and agreements, presenting "agrarian reform" policies

and programs just for publicity. With this, the government seeks to put the brakes on the struggle for land, trying to isolate the most militant sectors and co-opting the conciliatory and opportunistic sectors of the movement.

As the history of the struggle of the peasants in the country proves, who only through violent forms of struggle have conquered the land, although they have not been able to sustain and maintain them, the recent struggles have shown that in order to conquer the land and develop forms that ensure its conquest, an ever-increasing organization of the peasants is necessary, paying particular attention to the secrecy of the plans for the seizures and the organization of active self-defense. And what is learned from the experience of a capture, its mistakes and successes, should be used as the basis for the continuity of the struggle.

VII. The Poor Peasants' League: principles, objectives, organization and methods of action

The construction of the Poor Peasants' League

Emerging from the purging process in the peasant movement, the Poor Peasants' Leagues (LCP) have been the result and continuation of the historic struggles for land in the country in general and particularly of the combative struggle of the Rondônia peasants, since the 1970s, whose development culminated in the historic Battle of Santa Elina that, in August 1995, established a watershed and a new phase in the struggle for land not only in Rondônia, but also throughout the country.

Since that crucial moment, the Poor Peasants' League has been fighting to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of the land struggle, as well as waging a tenacious struggle against opportunism in the midst of the peasant movement in general, and particularly against organizations that seek to drag the movement into conciliation, collaborationism, and to serve as instruments for personal political projects.

Throughout these sixteen years the Poor Peasants' League, facing all sorts of difficulties, attacks by the right wing and opportunists, persecution of its leaders by the judiciary, police, and gunmen, intrigues and slander by the government and the bourgeois press, has never tired itself of fighting and has active participation in the people's struggle in the country.

The Poor Peasants' League has sought, despite its difficulties and weaknesses, to carry out innumerable internal activities of training and of struggle against the vices to advance its organization, its leaders, and its grassroots militants. The Poor Peasants' League has considered its main weakness to be overcome as the post-land seizure activities, of greater integration, organization, and productive activities in the seized areas (even in those recognized by INCRA as Settlement Projects). A better and more efficient work in the seized areas is the main and constant challenge. Other problems, such as those of organization at various levels and spheres, finances, and training, are also important tasks for the construction and development of the Poor Peasants' League.

VIII. The General Program of the Poor Peasants' Leagues

Why and for whom do the Leagues fight

The Leagues struggle to destroy the latifundium as the only way to achieve a true agrarian transformation, to give the land to those who work on it, to give land to landless poor peasants, or those that have little land, and to organize them in such a way as to advance the understanding that only through collective forms of work - in production, storage, commercialization, health, education, and social organization - will it be possible to make their progress possible in the face of the domination of monopoly capital. Besides defining as their main immediate objective the conquest of land, the Poor Peasants' League also raises the struggle to demand credit for small landowners and to organize them into cooperatives, helping them to advance their consciousness towards collectivization. The Leagues fight for a new agricultural policy aimed at expanding production, fundamentally directed at improving the living conditions of the workers of the countryside, of the city, of the population in general, and the interests of the nation. The Leagues struggle to defend all rural wage workers and to conform with them and those in the city to conquer better living and working conditions.

Create the Agrarian Revolution Committees in the countryside to organize, advance and centralize the application of the following programme:

- 1 - End of the latifundium, and land to the tillers;
- 2 - The land with a social destination according to the interests of the immense majority of our people and the national interests;
- 3 - Nationalization of the land and nationalization of the large rural capitalist enterprises, as the final objective;
- 4 - For a new agricultural and credit policy aimed at making small and medium landowners economically viable;
- 5 - Creation of agro-villages and promotion of agricultural industry¹ in every rural region of the country;
- 6 - Creation of a health system with all necessary infrastructure in the countryside;
- 7 - Creation of an education system centered on the conception of the School of a New Type, linked to production and class struggle;

¹ This refers to industry applied to agriculture, and not the so-called "agro-industry" applied by the latifundium.

8 - Independent social and political organization based on the direct democracy of the People's Assemblies;

9 - Special policy for the dry (semi-arid) northeast region;

10 - Special policy for the Amazon region, end of predatory exploitation and strengthening of agricultural production according to the vocations of the geographical environment, the interests of the working masses and of the Nation;

11 - Support for the struggle of the city workers, develop and strengthen the worker-peasant alliance;

12 - Recognition and active support for the self-determination of indigenous nations and peoples;

13 - Strengthening and ideological-political development of the masses toward the collectivization of the land, as a final objective;

14 - For a new economy, a new culture, a new politics of new democracy and a new People's Democratic Power;

15 - Internationalist solidarity with the struggle of the peoples against imperialism and for progress.

We emphasize that the fundamental pillars of the Agrarian Program that guide and submit all its tasks and already mentioned above are:

1 - destruction of the latifundium and handing over the land to the landless or nearly landless poor peasants;

2 - liberation of the productive forces of the countryside in the areas seized from the latifundium, through the elimination of all relations of production based on the exploitation of man through the adoption of cooperative forms. The organization in associative forms of the plots in different levels of cooperation according to their experience, from Mutual Aid Groups, an elementary form, to higher forms of cooperation, passing through other levels of cooperative forms. Adoption of more advanced means of production and working tools, and of the most modern techniques.

Cooperative organization of the system of production, distribution, commercialization, supply and exchange between the various areas and regions, of the infrastructure such as warehouses, transport, roads, bridges, basic sanitation, etc;

3 - organization and exercise of the political power of the masses in the areas taken. Organization of the various forms of participation of the masses at the different levels for decision making and their self-government (People's Assembly and the People's Committee). Organize the cultural life and its various manifestations. Organize the system of mass self-defense. Organize the new People's School based on the three principles of study, work and struggle (scientific research, production and class struggle) to liquidate illiteracy

and promote the elevation of the scientific and technical knowledge of all people. Organize a popular system of preventive and curative health (polyclinics);

Statization of the big rural capitalist enterprises and control of their production and management by the workers in the areas already taken over.

The Poor Peasants' League's short, medium and long term objectives

In the short and medium term, the Poor Peasants' League struggles to develop its organization to transform it into a great movement of the peasant masses throughout the country, seeking to unite with all the popular, militant organizations, helping to build the worker-peasant alliance and to advance the struggle for land, democracy, and justice throughout the country.

In the long term, the Poor Peasants' League's objective is to strengthen the struggle against the whole bourgeois-landlord system that serves imperialism, for its destruction, and for the establishment of people's power to build a new democracy, to conquer the independence and progress of the nation and our people, building socialist society.

IX. The Poor Peasants' League's mass work

The Poor Peasants' League starts from the principle that the center of everything is the masses, it is they who decide everything, and that the masses make history. The land struggle only makes sense if it is centered on the masses as the fundamental forces to solve their own problems, to conquer and realize their broad interests. The *raison d'être* of this struggle starts from the existence of the masses in the harsh conditions in which they live.

To realize the interests of the broad masses it is indispensable that they organize themselves more and more, acquiring a deep consciousness of their problems and the correct ways to solve them. Nothing and no one can solve the problems of the masses but the masses themselves. Only the masses can transform reality.

The Poor Peasants' League is a process of building an organization of the poor peasant masses of our country. It is a mass movement that fights for the economic, social, political, and cultural interests of peasants, especially poor peasants. However much a leadership may advance, it can only help as a leading force, because the strength to move obstacles, to clear the way, and to transform reality, only the masses possess and can accomplish this. That is why the Poor Peasants' League proposes to its activists to unite with the majority of the masses, to live like them, to learn from them and to serve them.

Exactly because of this, the Poor Peasants' League's reason for existence only makes sense if it carries out a permanent and patient work among the masses. This work cannot be any kind of work, it must be of a certain type, that is, class work, that takes place in the political, ideological, cultural and organic spheres, obeying different stages for its

development: before the land seizure, during it and after the conquest of the land, in the organization of life in the area seized.

In general, the mass work in its different stages should, on the political level, raise the most deeply felt demands, point out the origin of the people's suffering, the causes that provoke and maintain the people in misery and under oppression, denouncing the different governments as the stand-in governments of the big bourgeoisie and the landlords in the service of imperialism.

We must denounce their policies, as has been happening in the current stage with the so-called "neoliberal" policy initiated by the Collor de Mello government and by FHC and deepened to extremes by Luiz Inácio, who following the dictates of international financial capital and the orders of the United States, completed the denationalization of the economy and the surrender of our country through the auctioning of state-owned companies that they call privatizations. They impose cruel unemployment, sowing hunger and misery everywhere, they scrap public services like health, education and social security, they promote "reforms" to remove historical rights acquired by workers through much struggle and sacrifice and to overwhelm the country to the greed of foreign powers and their monopolies.

To deepen the work of the masses in the political sphere, it is necessary to clarify these questions in order to raise the fight against such policy, defending a new economic policy aimed at the interests of the immense majority of the Brazilian people and the defense of national interests and sovereignty.

On the ideological side, to point out that this system of exploitation and oppression is the world capitalist system, imperialism, that keeps the reactionary classes in power in the oppressed countries with a bureaucratic capitalist system of that serves them and the old bureaucratic-landlord state, only spreading hunger, disease, death, hate, selfishness, injustice and oppression to the overwhelming majority of the population. To show that the alternative is class-based, socialism, the social system of the workers, and that to achieve this it is necessary to build the worker-peasant alliance, developing the radical struggle against the latifundium, the big bourgeoisie and imperialism that they serve, to destroy their rotten system, to conquer people's power that will ensure the construction of the new society.

Moreover, it is decisive, in order to strengthen the ideological work of the masses, to educate ourselves from a classist point of view, to spread the ideology of the proletariat, to be clear about the role of the state as an instrument of domination and violence of the bourgeoisie, the landlords and imperialism. Educate the masses in the struggle against the police-military and judicial apparatus. Develop and embody the symbols of the struggle such as the red flag of the movement, the combative songs and its Anthem.

In the cultural area, develop the fight against the rotten culture that the latifundium, the bourgeoisie and imperialism disseminate to maintain their domination, a culture of individualism, egoism, consumerism and destruction of human values, as well as crushing all manifestations of national and people's culture, imposing a true brainwashing through the control of the mass media and the dissemination of music, soap operas, publications, a true cultural pornography. Develop and promote popular culture, especially with music, dance

and theater, and stimulate, organize and develop physical education and the various kinds of sports.

In the organic side, patiently develop the organization based on people's democracy, strengthening the mass work as a determining element and the permanent promotion of the increasing participation of the masses in the leadership bodies. The creation and strengthening of nuclei and base groups is fundamental to ensure a greater rooting of the movement, besides intensifying mass participation in the commissions for different issues, thus raising the commitment and political consciousness of the masses.

Develop and stimulate the organization of women, youth, and children, building specific organizations that can ensure greater activity in these sectors. Spread the importance of discipline, of correct behavior towards the enemy and life in general.

Life in the camps and conquered Areas

The encampment period and its regime imposes many restrictions and should be as short as possible. The objective of the movement is not to form camps, which is a necessity, but constitute a transitory phase. In general, life in the camps and in the areas seized have to be regulated by a set of norms that are approved by the General Assembly of the Camp and Area, according to the disciplinary definitions of the movement. Specifically during the encampment period the regime with disciplinary norms defined by the movement will be in force. In the areas, the regime should be defined and improved permanently by the People's Assembly. Life in the encampments and areas must be regulated by rights and duties applied to everyone and its definition process must go through broad discussions with the masses.

To ensure a greater organization of life in these places, the whole masses should be part of one of the commissions in charge of the different activities that concern their functioning, such as

The distribution of activities and responsibilities in the camps:

- camp coordination;
- security;
- collective kitchen;
- cleaning and sanitary conditions;
- collection of warm clothes and food;
- agitation (assemblies, parties, acts, demonstrations);
- finances;
- education;
- health;
- culture.

In the case of the conquered areas, the same level of organization must be reproduced, but it is necessary to observe the degree of development of the consciousness of the masses, the particularities of each area, with the objective of constantly seeking to raise the level of organization, so that the maximum number of members of that area have the most effective participation in collective life.

The production question

The struggle for production is the most immediate and important objective for the masses and is decisive to ensure the development and sustainability of the land struggle. All our activity must be based on the work of organizing and making production possible. The masses struggle to own a plot of land in order to organize their lives and that of their families, meaning they struggle initially for individual ownership of the land. The Poor Peasants' League recognizes and supports this right of the masses and fights to show them that in the face of the existence of the latifundium and the land monopoly, small individual production has little to no viability, and in general reinforces the bourgeois ideology of ownership over means of production and labor exploitation. It must be shown that the way to face both problems is cooperation, starting with the simplest forms of Mutual Aid in production, developing it into higher and more advanced forms of cooperativization, with the complete collectivization in the countryside as the objective.

But only practice, through persistence in concrete experience in the long term, will lead the masses to understand that collectivization is the only alternative. For this it is necessary to stimulate, all the time and patiently, forms of collective work, association of private plots for collective production and distribution/commercialization. However, it is crucial to understand that we must help those who still don't understand and don't accept these forms, always encouraging them to organize themselves in cooperatives and mutual aid associations, permanently debating the differences and advantages between one form and another.

Once the land seizure is complete, it is decisive to begin the work of collective farming, trying to strengthen the self-sustainability of each camp as much as possible. During the encampment period, we must fight so that all forms of organization are carried out in a collective way, particularly production. In the sphere of production, the movement aims to stimulate and advance as much as possible the viability of collective production processes, but without in any way imposing them on the masses. The same efforts and objectives are necessary for the commercialization of production.

Health and Education

In the daily life of the camps and settlements we must work hard to solve the problems of education and health. The responsible committees must take the initiative in not allowing these issues to take a back seat. Struggling for the government to provide the conditions for regular schooling in these areas is decisive and important for two reasons: First, for ensuring the permanence of families who have children of school age; second, to guarantee the regular education of all children as a fundamental and necessary right for their development. The movement must fight to gain the sympathy of teachers to apply the conception of the School of a new type, conception of education linked to production and the class struggle, according to the goals of the movement. Until this goal is achieved in each area, the Peasant Family School should be organized immediately, with the same conception but completely supported by the peasants themselves in each area. Improving the literacy and education of children, young people, and adults is of vital importance for the movement and for the struggle.

In the same way, the health question should receive the same attention, seeking to make possible health centers and periodic visits by professionals to the areas, paying special attention to the health problems of women and children. The organization of campaigns and disease prevention actions is of great value.

The implementation and maintenance of general cleaning, ensuring the necessary conditions for collective hygiene, as well as services that improve sanitation (water and sewage) contribute to the organization and general well-being of the camp and the areas taken. To execute such activities it is extremely important to prepare as many health promoters as possible.

Sports, entertainment and culture

We must stimulate, organize, and promote sports, leisure and cultural activities (arts and literature) as much as possible to assure a complete and healthy development of the masses, particularly the youth and children. Such activities are also decisive in stimulating the youth not to withdraw from the encampments, from the areas taken over, and from the struggle itself for the land and for the new society.

The correct moral conduct

One of the most important struggles that must be fought daily within the movement, the encampments, and the areas is to encourage everyone to adopt a correct behavior, as a determining factor to destroy all the rottenness of the hypocritical, individualistic, selfish, dishonest, and corrupt bourgeois morals. The fight for our major objectives can only triumph if we build from now on a new form of coexistence and relationship based on collectivism.

Fighting all incorrect attitudes, not covering them up, not conciliating them with frivolous, rascal, clever, clever, disloyal and disintegrating behaviors, no matter who they come from, is the main struggle that we can carry out to forge collective morale and trust, and foster the growth of each individual. Systematically practicing criticism and self-criticism is the right way to fight the evils that bourgeois society forces into all of us. The society for which we fight and dream of achieving one day, socialism, is made of collective fraternity and solidarity, which we must practice right now. Let us fight to transform our organization into embryos of the future society.

One of the issues to be highlighted in this struggle is to confront the problem of alcoholism and other drugs. We all know how destructive it is for human beings from the point of view of physical and mental health, along with social and family life. The capitalist society stimulates and facilitates the use of drugs for two reasons: the first is that it represents a fabulous business where billions are profited; the second is that drugs and alcoholism are efficient instruments to keep the masses away from the real understanding of their problems, making them apathetic and unbelieving, facilitating their exploitation and domination.

Relationship with State organizations and agencies

In the struggle against the old State, whether it is for the demands most required by the masses or for building our organization, we have to confront its federal, state and municipal agencies. The entire policy of the different governments is not aimed at meeting any of our interests, on the contrary, the old State, through its shifting administrations, seeks to demoralize us and destroy our struggle. In our relations with governmental bodies we must always remain vigilant and alert. The enemy uses these relationships to try to achieve its objectives.

When the government pretends to meet a demand, we can't rely on promises and boast of victory. The enemy is treacherous and uses this nonsense to discredit the leadership before the masses. Not trusting, not believing, only carrying out understandings that are correct in the open and in the presence of the masses, pressuring them all the time, is our task. We must take into account that the so-called "negotiation" is an artifice that the exploiters have developed to destroy the combative popular organizations. The "negotiations" appear in moments of conflict as a tool to destabilize the position of strength that a movement develops and that threatens the power of the exploiters. It is necessary that everyone be very well prepared for the clashes against the hard forms (repression) and soft forms (negotiations) employed by our enemies.

Relationship with NGOs

A question that requires the greatest attention is the possible relationship with NGOs - non-governmental organizations - which are sprouting everywhere. In the Amazon regions, there are thousands of them. A large part of these institutions are instrumentalized from abroad, they are financed by imperialist institutions destined to corrupt, domesticate, and destroy the militant organizations of the peoples of the oppressed countries. Regarding NGOs as a whole, we must be vigilant about them.

NGOs have not come into being for their self-proclaimed goals. They are part of a deliberate policy on an international scale, aimed primarily at interfering in oppressed countries such as ours. This policy aims to involve "needy communities", "minorities" such as indigenous people, those in defense of "gender" (women), "environmental protection" such as "defense of the Amazon forest", etc. These organizations appear with a lot of financial resources and start financing health projects, agricultural development, production, environmental preservation, defense of human rights, etc.

This is a policy destined to create a whole parallel structure to the State, while the State is being disengaged from such obligations through "reforms" promoted by the governments. This is a strategy of international capital to remove from the State any public service activity in favor of the people. Later on, these organizations will claim their financial resources have run out, having fulfilled their role. In addition, they play the role of corrupting popular leaders through paychecks, changes in their living standards, distancing the leadership from their mass bases, etc.

Many of these organizations house agents from foreign power governments destined to spy on and infiltrate the militant people's organizations. Some are controlled by honest people

who truly intend to support the people's struggle. Knowing them well, we should seek to establish relations in favor of organizing and strengthening the struggle, but always remaining alert and vigilant.

Relationship with the Press²

The press is another sector with which we need to be very careful in our relationship. In general, the means of information and communication are under the strong control of the big bourgeoisie and their objective is to manipulate reality, to lie, to misinform, to keep the people under their influence. In the face of the people's struggle, the media, the press, increasingly plays a decisive role in favor of the enemy. Today it is the main instrument of information, mapping, internal knowledge of the organizations in the struggle and of distorting these organization's supposed objectives in order to create a negative image of the proletarian and peasant struggles.

In our relationship with the press, we must be vigilant and act in an extremely organized and objective way to reduce to the maximum the margins of manipulation and distortion of the information that we are interested in passing on to public opinion. We must be especially alert for the co-optation techniques in which the press, particularly the Globo Television Network, have specialized in, through promotion and deification, creating illusions of the personal importance of the leadership. We must fight against all these instruments of the enemy, acting firmly, energetically, and without contemplation towards them. Every relationship with these bodies must be done in a planned way through responsible people defined by the organization and according to the interests of the organization.

Who are our friends and enemies

To clearly and objectively define who are, in our arduous struggle, our true friends, and who are our sworn enemies, is also a fundamental question for the strengthening and success of our movement. Generally speaking, our friends are all those who are directly or indirectly benefiting from the results of the struggle for land, and who will fully benefit from them in the future. They are also those who already have a democratic and honest conscience. In other words: the workers in the city and the countryside, the people in general. They are the small rural and urban landowners, small businessmen, students, teachers, honest intellectuals, sincere "politicians" (of rare existence in the country), unions, popular organizations and those that defend the rights of the people (we should be suspicious of many bodies that claim to defend "human rights", since they are usually NGOs or State bodies), committed artists and progressive religious people.

Our enemies are the landowners, the big landowners (landlords) and their gangs of gunmen, the big businessmen, the big bourgeoisie and its parties full of corrupt politicians, the electoral parties that call themselves "leftist", the government bodies, the "Justice" bureaucracy, and the repressive police-military apparatus. There are still some sectors that

² This section of the text refers to the relationship with the press monopolies and non-democratic-revolutionary press in general.

we could call "middle sectors", among which many we will need to neutralize, and attract other parts of this sector to our struggle.

The necessity of protecting ourselves: self-defense of the masses

For all the reasons that the struggle for land implies, from historical conditions such as the present ones, the movement cannot have the naivety of expecting any democratic treatment from the old State and the latifundium. Drawing the lessons from historical experience and weighing everything that has happened in the struggle for land in Brazil, it is a necessity and a moral obligation to assume all the necessary tasks to defend our movement and our organizations from the different types of attacks from our enemies.

To keep the situation unchanged, the old Brazilian state and the latifundium have vast experience and will spare no effort to destroy any organization that goes against their interests and that mainly works concretely to transform the land situation and destroy their system of exploitation and oppression. The system not only uses all the instruments that the State has to repress and destroy our struggle, but also counts on innumerable political and paramilitary organizations to carry out its criminal plans.

To make the masses aware of the repression, of the real and true concept of the State and of what the old Brazilian State is in essence, of its role, as well as denouncing the action of the gunmen gangs, is decisive. The old State, together with the press, tries to defame and mischaracterize all combative social struggles, seeking then to criminalize them in order to justify all repression against them. But it is not enough simply to denounce their methods and objectives, it is necessary to fight them with firmness and determination. And this can only be done by defining a policy of self-defense and preparing the whole movement to exercise it. Facing the need for self-defense, many activities must be developed and organized. Starting with the participation of everyone in the defense of our organization, of the masses, and of our leaders, who are the main target of elimination by the enemy.

The permanent vigilance against the enemy's infiltration, the vigilance on the enemy's movement, the permanent obtaining of information from the enemy and counter-information are indispensable activities for our protection and in which everyone should participate. Protecting the identity of the most exposed comrades is also important and necessary. In the acts that lead to confrontation, one must be minimally prepared so as not to facilitate the enemy's bandit and criminal action. In the confrontations necessary to achieve our objectives, in the land seizures and occupation of administrative organs of the old state, it is necessary to use camouflage and face covering to protect the identity of our comrades.

Educate the masses about the historical experience of the struggle of the peoples and of our Brazilian people, whose conquests, whatever they may be, were only possible through violent struggle. Educate the masses that the enemy permanently exercises criminal violence against the people and that the people have the sacred right to defend themselves by resorting to just violence. Raise the slogan: **"The rebellion is justified"**.

Disciplinary and operating norms

Article 1 - To ensure the proper functioning of the different relationships within the camps and other areas, it is necessary to establish disciplinary rules based on rights and duties to which everyone, without any exception, is bound;

Article 2 - The supreme decision-making body of the collective is its General Assembly. The functioning of these bodies is based on democratic centralism, that is, everyone participates in the discussions and decisions, approved unanimously or by majority. Once decisions have been made, everyone is obliged to put them into practice. The fraternal practice of criticism and self-criticism is the means to seek the overcoming of failures and errors;

Article 3 - The rights of all members of the camps and areas, as well as of the nucleus of preparation for new decisions, are to participate in the definitions of the directions of the struggle and the life of the collective, to elect and to be elected for the different instances of direction, to criticize, in public or privately, the leaders and any members of the collective;

Article 4 - It is the duty of everyone, without any exception, to defend the unity of the collective, to watch over and be vigilant against the disrupters, to fulfill the tasks for which they were elected, periodically rendering accounts to the movement and to all interested parties, to help in the political and material construction of the movement, to keep the movement's secrets, and to pay contributions democratically defined by the collective's assembly;

Article 5 - Anyone who has been sanctioned for acts of indiscipline and violation of the rules will be barred from exercising the right to elect and be elected for leading positions;

Article 6 - The carrying, use and sale of alcoholic beverages and any type of drug is strictly forbidden inside the camp. It is forbidden to carry, use and trade drugs and alcoholic beverages in the areas;

Article 7 - It is expressly forbidden to practice or advocate discrimination based on race, religion and gender (sex);

Article 8 - The practice or any apology of prostitution, gambling, and other forms of moral corruption is expressly forbidden;

Article 9 - The sale or business involving ownership rights, lots, land or any object related to the conquest of the collective struggle is strictly forbidden;

Article 10 - It is strictly forbidden to supply information about the internal life of the organization and the collective to strangers, agents of the landowners and the State;

Article 11 - Non-compliance with articles 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are considered serious violations, which will be punished with special punishments defined by the People's Court formed by the General Assembly of the collective;

Article 12 - Other violations will be sanctioned based on the Disciplinary Measures referred to in Article 13, applied by the organization to which it is connected (commission, work group, etc.);

Disciplinary Measures

Article 13 - According to the seriousness of the violations, measures range from a simple warning and formalized and public criticism of the collective, removal from office and loss of rights to elect, be elected, and to receive information about the direction of the movement for a determined period of time; expulsion from the movement, expulsion from the collective;

Article 14 - Any and all forms of collaboration with the enemy and betrayal are considered acts of treason;

Article 15 - The acts considered treasonous will be immediately sanctioned, as soon as they are proven, with dishonorable expulsion from the movement and the collective;

Article 16 - All those accused of violations will have the right to a full defense, before the investigation commissions and the body responsible for forwarding the process.

X. How the Poor Peasants' Leagues organize

The Poor Peasants' League is based on organized peasants:

- in the encampments;
- In the areas seized;
- In the nucleus of poor peasants mobilized for new land occupations.

In each of these places, the highest decision-making body are the assemblies, where all the companions have the right to participate, to vote on the proposals that are presented, to elect and to be elected for the commissions that are constituted.

The tasks to be accomplished must always be the responsibility of a committee of companions, always seeking the participation of new people in the work. With this, excessive centralization is avoided and the development of new leadership is made possible.

The decisions taken and the commitments made must be accountable to the collective. Whoever has taken on a task must be accountable to the collective for the work done.

The Coordination of Camps and Areas, Commissions and Organizational Sectors

Several tasks arise in the organization and mobilization of the camps and areas:

- security;
- collective production;
- food and collective kitchen;
- cleaning and health;

- education and training;
- collection and control of finances;
- mobilization of women, youth, children, etc.
- youth;
- women;
- children.

For the execution of these tasks, it is important to form commissions or sectors, trying to involve as many people as possible in the tasks. The members of each commission or sector should elect a coordinator to direct the work.

The coordinator should be elected in the assembly of members of camps and of the Areas. It should meet regularly to discuss the problems that arise and to accompany and coordinate the work of the commissions or sectors. The coordination is a collegiate governing body where the collective should always be strengthened, fighting the deviations of individualism, bossism, careerism and personalism.

The coordination and the commissions (or sectors) must always be able to render accounts of their work and their acts in the Assemblies and meetings with the bases. Special attention must be given to the rendering of accounts of financial activities (collection and expenditure) and the control of the use of the collective patrimony. The administration of the movement's resources and assets will always be done by the Finance Committee, never by a single person.

The Regional Coordination

The Regional Coordination is elected in the Poor Peasants' League Meetings of the Region (a region is composed of parts of states - from the official political division) where the delegates chosen in the various camps and areas run by the movement participate.

Commissions and sectors should also be organized in the Regional Coordination, which will help the development of the same commissions and sectors in the camps and areas. At the Regional level a press commission will be organized that will take care of the elaboration of notes, pamphlets and newspapers of the Poor Peasants' League.

The Council of Representatives

The Council of Representatives is to be formed by one or more members of each camp or area at the Region level. Its character is that of an advisory body, being able to call the Meeting of Delegates or extraordinary meetings of the Coordination, by decision of 2/3 of its components.

The Congress

The Congress is a mass instance of emulative character and of cohesion of the movement, open to the participation of the bases that must organize their participation by camp and

area. The Congress may or may not endorse the decisions made by the Regional Delegates' Meetings.

The role of the leadership

The leaders of the Poor Peasants' League, at any level, should be examples of discipline, seriousness, moral uprightness, and responsibility in the fulfillment of their tasks. They should be an example of combativeness, solidarity, and commitment to the objectives and program of the movement. They must be firm in the confrontation with the enemy, always careful to prepare the masses to face the violence that the latifundium and the old State practice against them.

The leadership must not be deceived by the flattery that the government, the press, the landlords and the politicians sometimes show to the leaders of the people. This is always to buy them, to take them out of the struggle. The companion that assumes the function of leadership must understand that they will always be subject to greater pressure, that they must always be the first person to comply with the decisions of the bases and that everyone will be vigilant about their political and moral conduct.

A leader must never use his position as a member of the board of directors to take advantage of his own interests or for personal projects. Nobody is obliged to accept the function of direction; but if they have accepted it, they know that their responsibilities are greater; if they think that they are not able to assume them, they should resign.

The leadership must be thoughtful, patient, simple and humble when dealing with the masses, serving them wholeheartedly. They should always be concerned with developing, studying, and participating in courses and training activities organized by the movement.

The leadership must take special care to always support and stimulate the participation of women. Without the participation and the organized presence of the woman our movement has no chance of victory in its objectives.

Our struggle will be hard and long. That is why it is also important to integrate young people and children in the struggle. Stimulate study, sport, culture, develop in them a love for the land and incorporate them early into the fight against the latifundium.

Seize all lands of the latifundium!

Long live the Agrarian Revolution!

Conquer the Land

Original version by Benedito Monteiro;
Current version by Carlos Prexedes.

Now we set out to our fight
For the land that is ours to occupy
The land belongs to the tiller
History won't fail, we will win.

**Enough of so much suffering
Enough of so much waiting
The struggle will be very difficult
No matter how long it takes,
We will win.
(encore)**

Those who like us are ourselves
and those who come to our help
So trust those in the struggle
History won't fail, we will win.

**Enough of so much suffering
Enough of so much waiting
The struggle will be very difficult
No matter how long it takes,
We will win.**

If we are to die in this fight
Our blood will become a seed
We will conquer our Justice
History won't fail, we will win.

**Enough of so much suffering
Enough of so much waiting
The struggle will be very difficult
No matter how long it takes,
We will win.**

We are already thirty million
The people with no land, with no bread
Our road is to fight for our soil
History won't fail, we will win.

Enough of so much suffering...