

**Arturo C. Porzecanski**

**Uruguay's Tupamaros**  
= The Urban Guerrilla

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To write a book about any clandestine social movement is no easy undertaking, and my attempt to write an analytical account of Uruguay's Tupamaros proved to be no exception. Since my formal training is in economics, the completion of this book owes much to the generous and competent help of many people.

Much research for this work was done in Uruguay during June-September 1970, July-August 1971, and August 1972. Individuals in many walks of life risked their positions and even their liberty to provide me with confidential information and references. Hence, as much as I would like to, I cannot name them.

My major debt is, however, a collective one. This book would not have come into existence without the encouragement and help of five people, to whom I wish to reexpress my most sincere appreciation: Dr. Ben G. Burnett, who was the first to prompt me to do research on and write about the Tupamaros; Dr. Cole Blasier, who suggested that I pull my research collection and unpublished writing together and produce a book, affording me much courage and confidence along the way; Dr. Jose A. Moreno, who coauthored with me an unpublished paper on the ideology of the Tupamaros that served as the basis for the first and second chapters of this book; Dr. Bernardo Porzecanski, my father, who kept me up to date on developments in Uruguay and managed to obtain for me a wealth of information and documents concerning the subject of this study; and Walter J. Porzecanski, my younger brother, who prepared a comprehensive and most useful chronology of events in Uruguay during the past 10 years and who critically read and corrected the manuscript until most of the more obviously biased and prejudicial statements were removed.

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This book is an attempt at a comprehensive and analytical account of the birth, growth, and destruction of the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaro, a social movement that existed in Uruguay from 1962 to 1972. Specifically, it is a study of the motives behind its emergence, of the objectives it sought to accomplish, of the means used to attempt a seizure of political power, of its composition and internal organization, of its challenge to and interaction with the Uruguayan government, and, finally, of its extinction.

Why a book about the Tupamaro National Liberation Movement or, as it was known, the Tupamaros?\* Because the importance and uniqueness of this social movement make it worthy of close study. Its story is deemed important because it was one of the most enduring and powerful armed social movements to emerge in a contemporary urban context, and its urban character makes it intrinsically relevant.

Whether their concern for socioeconomic-political events and trends has focused on "less developed" or "developed," "socialist" or "capitalist," "preindustrial" societies, most social scientists have learned that urban growth and the urbanization process have become unavoidable. The only difference among countries and regions appears to be the pace at which the explosive growth of cities is taking place. There is a low rate of metropolitan agglomeration in much of Europe, for example, because many societies are already between 60 and 80 percent urban-populated and the overall population growth rate is approaching zero. But in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and, to a lesser degree, the rest of the world, a massive exodus of people from

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\*The name Tupamaro comes from Tupac Amarú, the famed Inca rebel who during 1780-81 tried to free his people from the Spanish. After the defeat of his forces and his execution, the Spanish called "Tupamaros" all members of rebellious groups that sprang up throughout most of Latin America—particularly those engaged in independence movements. In Uruguay, too, the followers of revolutionary hero José G. Artigas received the name "Tupamaros." However, instead of rejecting the nickname, Uruguay's revolutionaries accepted it proudly and used it freely throughout the struggle for independence. The choice of the name "Tupamaro" for the guerrilla organization was meant, therefore, to have historic and symbolic meaning.

rural to urban areas is taking place and is reaching, in some regions, an annual urban population growth rate of 7 percent.

It is no wonder, then, that social scientists are becoming very much interested in the socioeconomic and political life of the cities. It is there that the most significant human, economic, cultural, and technological accomplishments are likely to take place. Furthermore, since it is there that political processes and institutional structures acquire the greatest strength and development, social movements emerging and acting within urban areas are likely to strike at the nerve center of a nation's life. Hence, scholars specifically concerned with social movements have had to focus their attention and research on those movements that develop within an urban environment.

Uruguay, where the Tupamaros emerged, is one of the most highly urbanized societies in Latin America and the world. Although it has only about 3 million inhabitants, close to 80 percent of them have been classified as urban. Montevideo, the capital, is estimated to hold almost 1.5 million people—half the total. Relative to other Latin American nations, Uruguay ranks first in proportional urban level yet eleventh in size of total population. This distortion is further exaggerated by the fact that it has no city with more than 100,000 population save the capital.<sup>1</sup>

In this sense the study of the Tupamaros becomes relevant to many social scientists because Uruguay is faced with the problems stemming from a relatively giant urban population concentrated in and around Montevideo, the country's economic and political nerve center. Thus, the country has characteristics in common with the more industrial societies in Europe, North America, and Japan as well as with other highly urbanized areas in the developing world. The growth of the Tupamaros in Montevideo is therefore significant because Uruguay may well represent, in terms of demographic peculiarities and urban concentration, the first instance of what the less developed countries of Latin America, Africa, and Asia will look like in years to come.

Aside from the fact that the Tupamaros waged an armed struggle within the context of a highly urbanized society, there is the fact that this social movement endured for a decade and established itself as a contender for power. Indeed, it posed a veritable threat of an armed take-over of power, and it profoundly affected Uruguayan society. Its threat to the country's government resulted from the systematic application of innovative and effective urban guerrilla tactics. Using a strategic scheme that included military actions and political activity, the Tupamaros established an urban guerrilla group that became—in terms of financial resources, arms, and manpower—the best-endowed clandestine, urban social movement in the history of Latin America. Since the movement was interested in seizing political power, it devised

and carried out actions that directly and powerfully challenged the legitimacy and authority of the Uruguayan government.

The actions of the Tupamaros and the government's reaction to them caused very important societal and institutional changes. Uruguay was once admired as a unique experiment in democracy and used to be described as a political "utopia" and the "Switzerland of the Americas."<sup>2</sup> Yet anyone visiting or reading about Uruguay today cannot but be perplexed as to how it is possible for a peaceful and seemingly democratic society to have been torn apart so severely in just a few years. Beyond doubt the quasi-military regime and quasi-dictatorial political structure existing in contemporary Uruguay find their roots in economic bankruptcy and political turmoil. Yet the Tupamaros acted as catalysts and were the first social movement to prove and accelerate the decay and obsolescence of the nation's institutions and political traditions.

The story of the Tupamaros is important, then, because they carried out an urban struggle that had serious consequences on a modern and politically advanced society. But their story is also relevant because the Tupamaros clearly departed from and presented a viable alternative to the widely held doctrine that revolutionary wars and liberation struggles in Latin America and elsewhere were to be fought among the peasants and in the rugged countryside.<sup>3</sup> Instead, they chose to set up a guerrilla foco in the heart of a large metropolitan area.<sup>4</sup> In so doing they may have added a new chapter to the theory of revolution and provided an important case study of the extent to which an urban social movement can be a carrier of a revolutionary ideology and become an agent of societal change. No longer need revolutionaries flee the urban centers, seeking to kindle revolutionary flames from the mountains and jungles, no longer need they rely on the crucial support of peasants, the financial contributions stemming from the cities, the supply of arms and ammunition from abroad, or the ideological direction of city-based political parties; and no longer need they worry about the mighty helicopter or the deadly high-altitude bomber, or fear being spotted or annihilated by the instruments of modern counterinsurgency technology. Now revolution can, so to speak, start in anybody's own living room! In other words, that revolutionary guerrilla activity not only can, but must, become an urban phenomenon may well be the most lasting and historically significant contribution of the Tupamaros.

Revolutionary activity in the city, however, poses some very peculiar problems. Hence, the Tupamaros were forced to devise a singular set of strategies and tactics to match the particular constraints and advantages of contemporary city life. The original way they went about building a disciplined organization, devising a strategic scheme, developing and applying ingenious tactics, and accurately coordinating

military and political activities is worthy of study. In this respect the Tupamaros may have established an important precedent as to the manner in which an urban guerrilla group can cope with, or devise ways to cope with, the reality of metropolitan life. At the same time they stand out because of the peculiar yet universal message of their ideological objectives, the sophistication and complexity of their strategic scheme, the innovativeness and extensiveness of their tactics, the variety and broadness of their membership, and the interesting characteristics of their internal organization.

The book is organized in the following manner. Chapters 1 and 2 deal with the movement's ideology: an outline of the Tupamaros' view of Uruguayan society and the beliefs and ultimate objectives toward which their ideology was oriented are presented in Chapter 1; and the strategies or means devised to seize political power, and thus be able to implement their long-term goals, are analyzed in Chapter 2. A study of the membership and internal organization of the Tupamaro movement is presented in Chapter 3. Finally, there is an analysis of the methods used by the Tupamaros to translate their broad strategic scheme into specific actions in Chapter 4.

The importance of the Tupamaros as catalysts of societal change is dealt with in Chapter 5 and in the Epilogue. They contain a survey of the actions undertaken by the Uruguayan government in its efforts to contain and eliminate the guerrillas, particularly through the application of political measures designed to isolate them and the execution of counterinsurgency campaigns launched to eliminate them. They also include some reflections on recent events in Uruguay, particularly the extent to which the Tupamaros contributed to changing the nation's political destiny.

#### NOTES

1. L. Vicario, El Crecimiento Urbano de Montevideo (Montevideo: Banda Oriental, 1970); and J. Miller, "The Urban Phase: Raison d'etre for Policy," in J. Miller and R. A. Gakenheimer, eds., Latin American Urban Policies and the Social Sciences (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1971), p. 13.

2. See such classic studies as R. H. Fitzgibbon, Uruguay: Portrait of a Democracy (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1954); and S. G. Hanson, Utopia in Uruguay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1938).

3. For information on Latin America's guerrilla experience prior to the emergence of the Tupamaros, see J. Petras, "Revolution and Guerrilla Movements in Latin America: Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia and Peru," in J. Petras and M. Zeitlin, eds., Latin America:

Reform or Revolution (New York: Fawcett, 1968), pp. 329-69; R. Gott, Guerrilla Movements in Latin America (New York: Doubleday, 1972); and L. Mercier Vega, Guerrillas in Latin America: The Technique of the Counter-State (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969).

4. Foco literally means "focus" or "center of attention." The doctrine of the foco as applied to guerrilla warfare was developed by "Che" Guevara and later popularized by Regis Debray in his book Revolution in the Revolution? (London: Penguin, 1967). For a concise discussion of the theory of the foco and its applicability to Latin America, see J. Moreno, "Che Guevara on Guerrilla Warfare: Doctrine, Practice, and Evaluation," Comparative Studies in Society and History, 12, no. 2 (1970): 114-33.

**IDEOLOGY:  
THE VIEW AND  
THE MODEL**

A political ideology refers to a specific set of shared beliefs about what society is and ought to be, including a certain commitment to act. Ideologies not only have objectives that offer a meaningful orientation to guide the behavior of individuals in concrete situations in which choices or decisions are to be made and actions are to be undertaken; they also imply a commitment to reconstruct reality and act upon society in a meaningful way. In situations of crisis or uncertainty, ideologies quite often emerge within the context of a social movement, which is an organized attempt to change the social structure in significant ways in the name of an ideology. Therefore, an ideology provides a social movement with a set of long-term goals or objectives, justifications for them, and commitments to action. In return, a social movement provides an ideology with the necessary organizational arrangements to recruit support and eventually to achieve those objectives. While an ideology operates as the driving force behind a social movement, the latter functions as the carrier or as the most efficient social mechanism to implement the goals of an ideology.

The ideology of the Tupamaros was never presented in any single official document. In fact, the Tupamaros did not believe in issuing lengthy political statements or ideological platforms. Rather, they felt that actions were the most important way to create "revolutionary consciousness." In other words, they believed that actions speak louder than words. Nevertheless, from a series of documents the major tenets of the Tupamaros' ideology can be constructed by tracing a number of familiar and often-repeated themes in their rhetoric and by noting a series of frequent and similar thoughts.

For the purpose of this study, the ideology of the Tupamaros has been separated into three components. The first component can

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This chapter was written with the collaboration of José A. Moreno.

be called the Tupamaros' view of the present. It is a view of Uruguayan society as the Tupamaros understood it to be and includes an analysis of the historical roots and present causes of Uruguay's economic and political problems—an analysis based on the Tupamaros' own very particular perspective. This view of the present is also closely connected with the reasons behind the creation of the Tupamaro movement as those involved saw it. The second component can be called the Tupamaros' model for the future, that is, the fundamental societal changes that the Tupamaros wished to see introduced. On the basis of their analysis of the political and economic problems of Uruguay, the Tupamaros offered what they perceived as desirable solutions. Such solutions implied, at a very general level, a set of long-range objectives according to which Uruguayan society needed to be reconstructed. The third component is the Tupamaros' commitment to action or strategies, since in order to achieve their goals, certain specific means had to be devised and employed. Indeed, it was the specific task of the Tupamaros to design and implement strategies such that their ultimate ideological goals would be efficiently obtained.

In this chapter the first two components of the Tupamaros' ideology—their view of the present and their model for the future—are analyzed. Chapter 2 deals with the third and last component of their ideology, strategies. Although strategies are treated last and somewhat separately, the reader should note that they are inextricably linked with the first two ideological components. In fact, strategies are nothing but means to go from the present to the future, that is, means necessary to be able to reconstruct today's society according to a certain model of what society should actually be.

At this point a methodological note is in order concerning the use of documents to determine the ideology of the Tupamaros. I compiled a large collection of documents published by, for, and about the Tupamaros both in Uruguay and in other countries. Original Spanish sources were always used. Whenever quotations are given, they are my own translations; and more attention was paid to the meaning of the sentences than to strictly literal translations. From the dozens of documents available, those thought to be most representative in terms of the ideas and issues presented in them were selected. The documents were then read, informally coded, and analyzed in terms of the previously mentioned definition of ideology and of what was considered to be its components—beliefs about the present, objectives for the future, and strategies to go from the one to the other. Each of the key concepts discussed in this chapter and the next was carefully studied in the context of the various Tupamaro documents for interpretation and clarification of meaning. Many of the documents used in this study were released to the press or to

the public by the Tupamaros themselves. A few of them, however, were intended for internal circulation only and were released to the press either by the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Defense of Uruguay after capture. I have no doubts about the authenticity of any of the documents quoted. Neither the documents released by the Tupamaros nor those published by government authorities and chosen for this study were ever denounced as false by the guerrillas, government officials, the nation's police and armed forces, journalists, or other persons involved.\*

## THE VIEW OF THE PRESENT

This section will sketch, as accurately as possible, the beliefs of the Tupamaros about Uruguayan society. Specifically, it will seek to determine what were, according to them, the structural conditions that produced the profound political and economic crises that have plagued Uruguay since the 1950s. There is no intent to verify whether such conditions are indeed responsible for the evils they have allegedly produced. Rather, there will be an examination of the beliefs of the Tupamaros; the way that causation was attributed to people, institutions, and political forces; and the manner in which solutions or remedies were suggested and/or anticipated.

As most economic studies have shown, the Tupamaros felt that the economic crisis faced by Uruguay since the 1950s—output and productivity stagnation, rising unemployment, and severe inflation—was caused by stagnation in the country's important livestock and industrial sectors.<sup>1</sup> Where they differed was in the way in which they assigned causation. For instance, the failure of the agricultural and industrial sectors to grow and expand was attributed mostly to inherent contradictions and malfunctions of Uruguay's primitive capitalist system. Therefore, the Tupamaros showed little interest in pointing out particular economic and political forces and circumstances, such as excessive and detrimental government tampering with market incentives and mechanisms, the burdens of heavy economic protectionism, the constraints of a small domestic market, and the existence of outdated economic institutions. As another example, Uruguay's persistent inflation was viewed as the consequence

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\*For convenience, a capital letter designates each document. If the document is divided into sections, a Roman numeral indicates the section. If the sections are subdivided, an Arabic numeral is given. Full references for the documents are in the Appendix, "Documents."



of cost-push pressure resulting from the struggle among different sectors of Uruguayan society (for instance, organized labor, business, and landowners) that were dissatisfied with their share of the national product. The existence of this struggle was blamed on the incentive system peculiar to capitalism, not on the presence of particular political institutions or economic variables.

Furthermore, the Tupamaros were convinced that three important processes were at work in the Uruguayan economy. First, they believed that the workings of Uruguay's economy and its institutions were so deficient that the nation's crisis, "rather than being overcome, is worsening day by day"; hence, the Tupamaros were pessimistic about the outcome of the country's economic troubles (B-18). Second, they believed that during the many years of economic stagnation and inflation, "capitalists" had tended to enrich themselves relative to the rest of society through an income redistribution mechanism that worked in favor of the already wealthy: indeed, "those who have been gaining the most are big bankers, cattle owners, industrialists, and merchants" (A-V, 5). Third, they were convinced that output stagnation and inflation had had a very detrimental effect on the country's international economic relations. For instance, the Tupamaros noted Uruguay's growing foreign debt, the flight of domestic savings, and other balance-of-payments problems, charging that Uruguay had increased its degree of economic and political dependence on industrial countries—read here the United States—and on international financial organizations (A-V, 3).

More important than a mere analysis of the causes of Uruguay's troubles, the Tupamaros had strong convictions about the framework within which the nation's economic problems might be solved. They believed that little could be accomplished through minor administrative reforms. Rather, they proposed "deep structural change" that would affect the production, exchange, and distribution of the country's output. However, since the rich and powerful would stand to lose part of their wealth and influence if such necessary policies as land and income redistribution were undertaken, the Tupamaros felt that the nation's government would never be willing or even able to bring about such widespread changes. Thus, they wrote, "the solutions that no doubt do exist to solve the problems of our country will not be achieved without an armed struggle, because those solutions go against the personal interests of those who have everything in their hands, just as they go against powerful foreign interests" (E).

Uruguay's political system was regarded by the Tupamaros as ineffective and obsolete. They saw the country's political parties as incapable of generating the kind of innovative leadership that could challenge vested interests and pursue progressive and developmental

policies. Such incapability, they felt, arose from the fact that, during recent years, Uruguay's traditional political parties had become so controlled by the country's wealthy that by 1971 "Oligarchs and businessmen now personally hold key government posts in detriment of professional politicians" (A-IV, 5). As a whole the Tupamaros viewed Uruguay's political system as unable to fulfill a dynamic administrative role and as unresponsive to the people's demands for change and progress. As they stated, "If the present government of Uruguay were to find an answer to workers' demands, there would be no reason for conflict [between the Tupamaros and government forces]."<sup>2</sup> The Tupamaros also accused government officials of deep-seated corruption and charged that instead of coping with Uruguay's deteriorating socioeconomic reality, they had become allies of the wealthy and powerful: the government, they wrote, had turned into a regime "that serves only a handful of privileged people."<sup>3</sup>

The failures and unresponsiveness of the Uruguayan government were, for the Tupamaros, evident in an event that took place just before the emergence of the movement and that could be considered the precipitating factor that triggered its creation.<sup>4</sup> In 1961 a group of young labor and socialist leaders succeeded in unionizing the poverty-stricken sugarcane and sugar beet cutters in the country's northern areas of Salto and Artigas. Led by Raúl Sendic, a law student from Montevideo, the peasants soon turned away from such conventional demands as decent working conditions and higher pay and started to demand land expropriation and redistribution. Two slogans became popular and summarized their demands. "Land for Those Who Work It" and "For Land and with Sendic." After walking some 350 miles, the peasants arrived in Montevideo to express their demands. There were shooting incidents, arrests, and, above all, an immense frustration because Uruguay's legislative and executive branches played deaf to the request for land expropriation. After spending some time in prison and becoming thoroughly disenchanted with the traditional and legal options for interest articulation, Sendic and others decided that if the political system were not capable of even listening to its constituents, then it was surely time to abandon it. Soon after, he, a few friends, and a handful of peasants began the Tupamaro National Liberation Movement.<sup>5</sup>

To the initiators of the Tupamaro movement this incident provided evidence of how useless the conventional and legal channels of political participation had become; evidence of how, in fact, political parties and the government as a whole would not listen to the people's demand for change—much less question the existence of an uneven land distribution that heavily favored a few large landholders. So the plight of the peasants gave way to the rise of the guerrillas, and from among the followers of Sendic the Tupamaros were born.

Justifying their decision to place themselves outside the legal institutional system, they wrote years later: "We have placed ourselves outside the law . . . because that is the only honest attitude to be taken when the law is not equal for everybody; when the law is here to defend the spurious interests of a minority that damage those of the majority; when the law is against the country's progress; and when even those who have created the law place themselves outside it whenever it is convenient for them to do so"(E).<sup>6</sup>

In summary, the Tupamaros perceived Uruguay's current political and economic order to be at the very roots of the crisis. They blamed the economic structure for being traditional, inflexible, and unable to innovate and modernize the country. They blamed the political system for being elitist and for favoring the interests of the oligarchy to the detriment of the masses. They claimed, moreover, that it was not lack of skills or resources that created the inability of the system to introduce change; rather, it was the ideology underpinning the status quo that made it unable to devise adequate solutions.

#### THE MODEL FOR THE FUTURE

There seemed to be two major ultimate objectives in the Tupamaro ideology: the creation of an independent, nationalist identity for Uruguayan society and the implementation of socialism as a socioeconomic system for the nation.\* In the Latin American context these two concepts are usually viewed not only as compatible but also as complementary in identifying basic societal objectives. "Nationalism" has come to mean a movement away from political and economic dependence and toward both national and regional cultural identity. "Socialism" should be understood as a societal arrangement that includes widespread government ownership and allocation of resources, centralized planning of production and exchange, and a more equal income distribution. Other goals, either of a more general nature, such as modernization, or of a more limited scope, such as agrarian reform, were also mentioned by the Tupamaros—but always in the context of nationalism-socialism, to which they were subordinated. Consequently, it is particularly

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\*For the Tupamaros neither the concept of socialism nor that of nationalism seemed to have the traditional and somewhat contradictory connotations that they had in Europe, particularly prior to World War I and the emergence of "socialism in one country" during the Stalinist period.

relevant to analyze in detail the meaning of these two concepts in the rhetoric of the Tupamaros.

#### Nationalism: In Search of National Identity

To begin with, the Tupamaros seemed to be painfully aware that although officially Uruguay has existed as an independent nation for almost 150 years, politically, militarily, economically, and even culturally Uruguay depends heavily on the axes Brazil-Argentina and Great Britain-United States. Moreover, the Tupamaros saw the so-called nation-state of Uruguay as run by and for the benefit of an internal oligarchy, a small group of wealthy Uruguayans whose education, value orientation, and political affiliation link them more closely with similar groups in Europe and in the United States than with their own countrymen, with whom they barely share the land in which they were born.

It was against these two targets, the domination by foreign powers and the oppression by the oligarchy inside the country, that the Tupamaros directed their struggle. For these guerrillas the polarities, contradictions, and opposition that exist in the relationship of subordination between the industrial powers and colonial countries were duplicated in the relationship between the oligarchy and the masses (A-II, 1). Naturally, of these two enemies the oligarchy represented the first target, since its interests and members were physically closer than those of the "imperialist powers." It was the task of the Tupamaros to design those strategies that would be most efficient and least costly in completely destroying the power of the oligarchy.

The Tupamaros were aware that nationalism had been used in the past in the rhetoric of various political groups, including those representing the country's oligarchy. Indeed, the oligarchy had used nationalism as a rallying point for its own benefit and against the interests of the masses (F-I, 14). The Tupamaros wanted to attach a special new meaning to this old concept (F-I, 8). For them nationalism was not a rhetorical disguise to attract the middle class and the bourgeoisie to their side. It did not mean merely political boundaries and economic protectionism. Rather, it was thought of as a cultural identity that binds together different races and peoples with common geographic, economic, and linguistic origins that set them apart from other nations, to which they have been subordinated in the past. For the Tupamaros "Latin America can be a great nation" (A-I, 9).

Indeed, the potential of Latin America to become a "great nation" in opposition to the Colossus of the North and other foreign

powers has been a recurrent theme of liberation advocated by various well-known leaders, from Simon Bolívar to José Martí and from Fidel Castro to Juan Perón. What was new in the ideology of the Tupamaros was that nationalism was seen not purely as a theme of liberation but also as a necessary condition in the building of socialism. They claimed that total liberation from imperialist powers could not be achieved with political independence alone. Only through building socialism would total economic, political, and cultural liberation be possible.

### The Creation of Socialism

Among the ultimate objectives of the Tupamaro ideology was the construction of socialism, first in Uruguay and, later, in all of Latin America.\* The method to be used to bring it about would be the application of Marxism-Leninism to the country's specific historical conditions (A-I, 9). There was little doubt in the minds of the Tupamaros that the most important target for their movement was the seizure of power to implement a socialist revolution (A-II, 3). The kind of socialism that would be built, however, would not be patterned on the blueprints already implemented by other socialist countries; it would be worked out according to the specific historical and developmental conditions of the country. For the Tupamaros such socialism would have to be nationalistic and would not necessarily adhere to any monolithic ideological bloc (A-I, 9).

With regard to specific action and programs to be implemented after the seizure of power, their ideology was quite general and vague. The means of production would be controlled by the state, and a central planning agency would be constituted. There would be an agrarian reform with the expropriation of the latifundia, but small private enterprises might be allowed to continue operating. Following a more rigorous nationalist bent, the Tupamaros made it explicit that foreign interests would be expropriated without compensation. They also indicated that after adequate growth of output in the economy had taken place, the socialist goal "to each according to his needs" should be implemented. Several other reforms in the fields of health, education, and welfare were enumerated as services to be

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\*Following the U.S.S.R.'s example, the construction of socialism in one country aims at creating a highly centralized system of government that commands the factors of production and decides on how production and economic growth are to be achieved, as well as how a more equitable distribution of income can be accomplished.

provided to the collectivity. Changes in the legal system were anticipated, among which provision was made for punishment of those actively cooperating with the present government (C).

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the two major goals that made up the core of the Tupamaros' ideology were well emphasized in the often repeated slogan "There Will Be a Fatherland for All or for Nobody." This clearly implied that the Uruguayan nation-state, as it has existed, was functional to the interests of a small group—the oligarchy—but detrimental to the interests of large sectors of society. The nation-state contemplated by the Tupamaros would serve equally the interests of all individuals who made up the collectivity. Nobody would be excluded, and nobody would receive privileges not available to all: "Habr  patri  para Todos o para Nadie."

### CONCLUSIONS

The ideology of the Tupamaro movement included beliefs about what Uruguayan society was actually like and how it worked, definite thoughts about how that society was to be changed and in what directions it was to be changed, and ideas on the various means to reach power and thus be able to implement the objectives of the ideology. This chapter has dealt with the first two parts of the Tupamaros' ideology, calling them the view of the present and the model for the future. It has shown how and why the Tupamaros considered Uruguayan society to be in deep socio-economic trouble, how they were pessimistic as to the inherent ability of the current political system to solve the crisis, and how they perceived the country's institutional and political decision-making structure to be unjust and to behave in a manner that was heavily biased in favor of the oligarchic class. Yet the Tupamaros did not have only a list of complaints about Uruguayan society; rather, they possessed a more general and philosophic understanding of it and its workings. They also had concrete ideas about the direction in which they wished Uruguayan society to move. They wanted the country to become more nationalistic and more socialistic, which would mean the adoption of policies emphasizing national and regional cultural identity as well as policies leading to greater economic centralization and control, planning for economic growth and development, and income redistribution. The solving of Uruguay's socioeconomic problems, then, would become a process taking place within the context of nationalism and socialism.

Ideological objectives could not, in this case, be implemented unless political power was seized. Therefore, the Tupamaros' ideology would be incomplete if it did not specify the means which power would be reached (and thus the ideological objectives could

begin to be realized). Chapter 2 presents an examination of strategies, the means chosen by the Tupamaros to gain power.

## NOTES

1. R. H. Brannon, The Agricultural Development of Uruguay (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969); M. H. J. Finch, "Three Perspectives on the Crisis in Uruguay," Journal of Latin American Studies, 3, no. 2 (November 1971): 173-90; Instituto de Economía, El Proceso Económico del Uruguay (2nd ed.; Montevideo: Universidad de la República, 1971); and S. Schapiro, "Uruguay's Lost Paradise," Current History, 62, no. 366 (February 1972): 98-103.
2. Tricontinental Bulletin (Havana), 6, no. 58 (January 1971): 7.
3. O. Costa, Los Tupamaros (Mexico City: Era, 1971), p. 118.
4. Precipitating events and their functions are explained in N. Smelser, Theory of Collective Behavior (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963).
5. For more information on the founding and early days of the Tupamaro organization, see C. Núñez, Los Tupamaros: Vanguardia Armada en el Uruguay (Montevideo: Provincias Unidas, 1969); and "The Tupamaros: Armed Vanguard in Uruguay," Tricontinental (Havana), no. 10 (January-February 1969): 43-66; and M. Rosencof, La Rebelión de los Cañeros (Montevideo: Aportes, 1969).
6. For a discussion of the role of perceived inequalities and injustices in the emergence of social movements, see R. H. Turner, "The Theme of Contemporary Social Movements," British Journal of Sociology, 20, no. 4 (December 1969): 390-405.

Strategies are those short-run and medium-range goals that, under given historical and societal circumstances, are thought to be most efficient in bringing about the ultimate objectives of a social movement's ideology. Indeed, ideologies concern themselves not merely with objectives to be attained in the future but also with the means to reach them. Such means are here called "strategies," and they are suggested and often called for by the tenets of an ideology. Certainly strategies may be changed, postponed, or rearranged according to varying societal conditions or to developments within the social movement itself. Furthermore, certain strategies may be considered a sine qua non, while others may be viewed as contributing relatively less to the attainment of the ideological objectives.

What is it, however, that determines which strategy or which tactic should be applied? For the Tupamaros the choice of a given strategy or tactic and its implementation were a function of an assessment made by the members of the particular historical and societal conditions at any point in time. This evaluation process was called, in the rhetoric of the Tupamaros, a diagnosis of the coyuntura: the political, economic, military, and organizational conditions of both the society and the social movement. For instance, societal conditions (the coyuntura) may allow or demand a certain kind of political and/or military strategy, but the social movement (in this case, the guerrillas) might not be ready to take advantage of such an opportunity. As an example, urban warfare may be viewed as a viable instrument of political violence in a highly urbanized society; but the lack of manpower, leadership, or arms and ammunition can make it impossible for a social movement to undertake such course of action. The coyuntura is lost. On the other hand, a certain society may be ready for political change or radical institutional reform; but unless

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This chapter was written with the collaboration of José A. Moreno.

the proper strategy is implemented, the coyuntura will be lost. For instance, the use of violence by a social movement living in the midst of a society that hungers for political and institutional change but despises and fears organized violence to attain such purpose could result in a loss of the favorable coyuntura. For the Tupamaros, then, the choice of every strategy and tactic was the result of a careful, rational analysis of the present and potential strength of the guerrilla group as well as of the general conditions and political climate of Uruguayan society (A-VI, 14).<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the Tupamaros believed that the actions of urban guerrillas can help create a favorable coyuntura (F-III, 8). Indeed, they believed it possible to create a coyuntura provided certain minimum objective conditions exist. Take the case of political kidnapping. The guerrilla organization may wish to apply this tactic because it feels that it would help weaken the country's power structure or hurt the government's position of strength and coercion. However, if the guerrillas feel that political kidnapping may arouse popular feelings against the movement because people are not accustomed to viewing this tactic as "acceptable," the guerrillas must create the favorable coyuntura by publicizing certain illegal actions committed by the government officials in question or the wealth and influence of the businessmen or landowners kidnapped. In other words, the guerrillas must provide some credible rationale or excuse for the kidnappings before or after they take place. Therefore, the effectiveness of the guerrilla movement is partly a function of the ability of its leaders to recognize proper coyunturas as well as to create favorable ones. In this sense the Tupamaro strategies described below and the tactics discussed later reflect this belief in the maximization of the output of strategies according to coyuntura evaluation and creation.

Guided by the need to seize power in order to attain the objectives of their ideology, the Tupamaros designed military and political strategies. Such strategies were definitely interrelated, since they were means to attain the same objectives. In addition, many strategies had both military and political functions. For the sake of greater clarity, but with a caution to the reader about this rather artificial division, the military and political strategies will be discussed separately.

### MILITARY STRATEGIES

Military and political strategies converge in that they attempt to create the structural conditions that allow for a seizure of power. Military strategies contribute to such an endeavor in that they are designed to curb, oppose, discredit, and eventually destroy the

monopoly of the status quo in the use of force and coercion. In Uruguay such coercive tasks were allocated to the police until mid-1971, when the country's armed forces took over the traditionally non-military law enforcement role. It was against the police, and later against the armed forces, that the Tupamaros designed the most sophisticated military strategies ever used within a Latin American urban context. This section, therefore, will analyze the role of various military strategies employed by the Tupamaros. Included is a discussion of the use of organized political violence, the role of guerrilla warfare, the introduction of an almost exclusively urban struggle, and the importance of the achievement of power duality.

### The Use of Violence

The Tupamaros firmly believed that under the existing coyuntura of Uruguay, the long-run objectives of the social movement's ideology were unattainable through the use of constitutional (legal) means. Their conclusion was clear: the only path available was that of an armed struggle, that is, the use of violence. It is necessary to trace the reasons why the Tupamaros felt this way and the implications of such belief.

Ever since the Tupamaros' first public document had been issued, they emphasized time and again that violence is a legitimate means and the most powerful and efficient instrument to gain power (E). They considered violence legitimate because, just as it is employed (covertly or openly) by a country's ruling elite to keep itself in power, the use of violence is an inalienable right of people who wish to revolt against their government. In this sense political violence was viewed as an expression of intrasocietal power struggles and as a historically valid and natural way to achieve or retain political power. Since the Tupamaros felt that the objectives of their ideology were incompatible with the ideological goals of the status quo, violence became a means of forcing a confrontation and resolving that incompatibility. In this sense Uruguay's coyuntura was interpreted as allowing for violence as a means for seizing power and not just as an instrument for government control. This explains why the Tupamaros saw themselves as ordinary people turned soldiers, fighting to gain power (in the name of an ideology) much as the Uruguayan government had its policemen and soldiers working to preserve the status quo and its political power.

The Tupamaros also considered violence to be the most effective way to seize power in Uruguay. First, because their ideological objectives constituted such a radical departure from the beliefs held by Uruguay's ruling oligarchy, the Tupamaros felt that nothing short



of revolutionary political, social, and economic changes were required to achieve their objectives. In their view violence was justified, since "history demonstrates that the most fundamental and revolutionary processes of change have been brought about by armed struggle and have been preceded by the use of violence" (A-VI, 9). Second, because the Tupamaros felt that under the present condition of economic stagnation and increasing deterioration of the social situation in Uruguay, the maintenance of domestic peace was a matter of survival for the ruling (status quo) group (A-V, 7). Nothing was thought to be as effective as violence in undermining the monopoly of the ruling elite in the use of force and in curbing its claims to authority and legitimacy. If, through the use of violence, the inability of the government to eliminate its ideological opponents (the Tupamaros) became clear, then the ruling group would find its power position to be so undermined that power seizure by the Tupamaros could become a reality. Violence was thus seen as the tool for wrecking the government's decision-making process, curtailing the extent of its coercive powers, and reducing its ability to command loyalty and respect. In summary, violence was felt to be a perfectly legitimate, and definitely the best, tool at hand.

### Guerrilla Warfare

Guerrilla warfare is an expression of organized political violence. In the context of the Tupamaro struggle, guerrilla warfare was seen as the most efficient way to channel violence in order to secure political power. Three main functions were assigned to it: to destroy the forces of government coercion; to win over the masses for a popular uprising; and to prepare manpower for the implementation of ideological objectives once power seizure was accomplished (A-VI, 6, 8; B-4, 7, 8). The first function was to be realized through the demoralization and discrediting of the armed forces and the police. Obviously this was to facilitate gaining power. The second function was to be more political in nature, using tactics conducive to the creation of a mass popular uprising. Following the ideas of "Che" Guevara, the Tupamaros did not see themselves seizing power through a military coup or a strictly military defeat of government forces.<sup>2</sup> They were well aware that the military function of the foco is quite different: slowly to undermine, discredit, and eventually destroy the power of the armed forces. This was to facilitate a political process whereby the masses (and not just the guerrillas) would participate in a revolutionary uprising that would lead to power seizure. Guerrilla warfare was understood to be a temporary (although principal) stage in the ideological confrontation between the

Tupamaro social movement and the ruling elite. The destruction of the government's forces was to be a necessary military step to allow a more strictly political battle against the power of Uruguay's oligarchy and the influence of neocolonialism to take place. The third function involved on-the-job training of cadres. Indeed, the foco would prepare men not only for the military aspects of power seizure but also for the more political, decision-making functions that they would perform after that crucial event.

Now the reader can (hopefully) better understand why, for the Tupamaros, the creation of the foco (the guerrilla organization itself) became a very important strategy. Only with the emergence of an armed group working as a guerrilla unit and fulfilling the functions described above could a significant step in the long process of attaining the objectives of their ideology be taken. This is why the Tupamaros could boast in early 1971 that "the creation of the [guerrilla] organization is a fundamental achievement" (A-VI, 8). However, special geographic and demographic conditions peculiar to Uruguay led the Tupamaros to create not just any type of guerrilla group but to organize an essentially urban foco.

### The Urban Guerrilla

The decision to locate the Tupamaro struggle in the urban center of Montevideo, the country's capital and a city of over 1.4 million people—who constitute almost half of the nation's total population—was again a strategic one. In the first place, the Tupamaros realized that there were no places in the Uruguayan territory where a durable, rural guerrilla foco could be established, although there are some places where geographical peculiarities make approach somewhat difficult. However, they did have a huge city with more than 300 square kilometers of buildings that permitted the development of an urban struggle (B-18). Indeed, the simple geography of Uruguay almost precludes any type of guerrilla warfare except urban.

Second, the Tupamaros saw the countryside as having "a backward political panorama when compared with Montevideo's" (A-IV, 4; F-I, 15). Montevideo was viewed as a highly politicized city, with very active labor and student unions and a high degree of political participation. Not so with the rural areas, where the peasants have "an intuitive liking for policies of law and order" (A-IV, 4).

Third, they felt that an armed group operating in Montevideo "has practically all enemy targets within reach" (A-IV, 21).<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the President, his cabinet members, policemen, ambassadors, judges, communication networks, financial centers, arms and

ammunition depots, and such were all within easy access. The urban guerrilla, in fact, is able to pick and choose where he wishes to hit next—unlike his rural counterpart, who has only a handful of military and political targets available and thus limited possibilities for action.

Fourth, the Tupamaros reasoned that, in the event of intervention by either Brazil or Argentina, an armed group operating in Montevideo would be better able to wage a war of resistance (B-21). It must be pointed out here that the Tupamaros often considered this possibility, and for several years they referred to the possibility of armed intervention by foreign powers.

Finally, the Tupamaros saw that the urban guerrilla has one essential advantage over the rural one: he is physically close to the more politicized urban masses he wishes to influence (A-I, 12). Gone, then, is the necessity of relying on messengers who bring supplies and information from the city—a vital link for the survival of the rural guerrilla. Operating in the city makes it easier for the guerrilla to be in constant communication with the rest of the population, facilitating the processing of information and the dissemination of propaganda.

It should be added here that the Tupamaros were not just interested in establishing an armed group in Montevideo. In fact, during 1970-71 they tried to establish other armed fronts in several urban areas besides Montevideo. For several reasons, however, the Tupamaros were not successful in this endeavor, and they themselves admitted their failure\* (G-II). In 1971-72 an attempt was made to implement a new strategy. Designated as "Plan Tatú," it purported to open possibilities of warfare in some rural areas. The main purpose was to have guerrillas operating in the countryside and based in tatuceras—literally, underground hideouts located near highways and other strategically advantageous places.† It is important to clarify that this was not an alternative to urban warfare but only a complement. The purpose of the plan was to force Uruguay's armed forces—which were heavily concentrated in the capital city—to come out of Montevideo and thus weaken the degree of military control in that key urban center. The idea was not to replace an urban struggle with a rural one but, rather, to allow for even more armed confrontation. Also, these rural contingents could have been used to isolate

\*The country's second largest city has only about 60,000 inhabitants, thus making it much harder for the guerrillas to operate there.

†The tatú, a variety of armadillo found in Uruguay, lives underground.

important urban areas by cutting transport and communication routes (G-II). In the end this strategy also failed. (See Chapter 5.)

### Power Duality

The systematic use of violence through the actions of urban guerrillas was intended to facilitate the establishment of power duality. Power duality begins when the guerrillas establish themselves in such a status and power position that they not only represent a real threat to the status quo but also command loyalty and adherence from significant sectors of the population. This allows the organization to be seen as a parallel government and provides it with four important advantages. First, such tactical operations as gathering of information and supplies are easier to conduct. Second, recruitment of new members is greatly facilitated, since the organization operates in the midst of its potential recruits. Third, it places the guerrillas in a position of power that enables them to function as a shadow government: it is possible for them to legislate, to make policy, and to administer justice. The kidnapping of a certain landowner, for example, will no longer be seen as just an ordinary criminal action but, rather, as the consequence of certain "wrongdoings" committed by that person, for which the movement has now chosen to punish him. Fourth, power duality gives the masses an opportunity to visualize the eventual transformation of the guerrillas' localized de facto government into a generalized de jure one (A-VI, 16, 21).

The Tupamaros, however, were aware of the problems involved in maintaining power duality over a protracted period of time. Ideally, every day people must be confronted with the option of following the legal political order or siding with the guerrillas' shadow government. The masses must never feel that they are just watching a soccer match between the government and the guerrillas, each side winning now and losing then. There must not be just a few participants—the police vs. the guerrillas—and a crowd of spectators—the masses. Everyone must feel involved, actively pledging his or her allegiance and participating in a struggle in which it is the masses who will win or lose—not just the guerrilla movement or the police.

In a 1972 document the Tupamaros explained that they felt it was not enough to reach a stalemate with the status quo forces. They wrote that their military actions, successful as they may have been, were having less and less of an impact on Uruguayan society because violence had become routinized. "Actions that are highly efficient now go unnoticed." They felt that "the regime, the people, the oligarchy, all of society is getting accustomed to our presence." And

they gave a good example of routinization, or acostumbramiento: "Our organization and its actions have worked like a vaccine. . . . At the beginning it caused convulsions, but then the body built up a defense mechanism that allows it to survive without risk of fatality—and may end up giving it permanent immunity" (F-II, 1, 2, 3). The Tupamaros thought that they had accomplished many things: they had survived for almost 10 years, they had succeeded in creating a firm organizational structure, they had attracted members and collaborators by the thousands, and they had militarily checked the government's forces again and again. But that was not enough, because the people began thinking of the Tupamaros and their struggle as part of the normal state of Uruguayan affairs. The Tupamaros asserted, therefore, the need to move with unparalleled force "to a direct and systematic harassment of the repressive forces" to correct the situation (F-III, 4; IV, 4).

The Tupamaros were never able to reach the high degree of armed confrontation that they envisioned, but it is important to note how carefully they studied their relationship with the Uruguayan people. Their assessment of the acostumbramiento that might follow the systematic use of violence and urban guerrilla warfare during the period of power duality is a clear example of the Tupamaros' interest in constant coyuntura evaluation.

#### POLITICAL STRATEGIES

The coyuntura that would eventually allow a seizure of power demanded that progress be made by using military and political strategies simultaneously. The military strategies of this social movement have been discussed, and the political strategies are now considered. One could safely venture the opinion that while both types of strategies are equally important and interdependent, there is some subordination of the military to the political. Parallel to the power duality created by the guerrilla strategy in the military domain, political strategies seek to reinforce such duality in the political domain by presenting ideological alternatives as viable and desirable, thus attracting new recruits and widening the sphere of political action.

The most formidable and arduous task of any revolutionary movement is the mobilization of the masses. So difficult is this task that sometimes it must be completed after the seizure of power (A-III, 1). And yet such an enterprise is so vital that the objectives of the movement cannot be reached without it. In this section the various strategies the Tupamaros used to sensitize, reach, and recruit support from various sectors of the population are discussed.

The terms "aggregate" and "sectoral" mobilization are used to describe whether the strategies were to influence the masses in general or some societal groups in particular.

#### Aggregate Mobilization

Aggregate mobilization was a strategy whereby the Tupamaros attempted to influence the masses and to interact with them through various political and military actions with considerable propagandistic content. The idea was to attract recruits, receive information, and publicize the movement's actions and ideology in order to act as a catalyst or "magnetic pole" that would attract the people to the Tupamaros while serving to polarize opposing ideological forces within society. That bridge between the guerrillas and the masses was meant to create a broad movement of all opposition forces with mass popular support. It would be called the National Liberation Front (F.L.N.); to create it, the Tupamaros recommended "open-mindedness and flexibility to win, neutralize, organize, and mobilize all potential friends without clumsily alienating anybody" (A-III, 12, 20).

On the other hand, the polarization of ideological forces was meant to occur for two reasons. First, it would force people to take a stand either in favor of the long-range objectives of the Tupamaro guerrillas—or, better yet, in favor of their military strategies and tactics—or in favor of government forces and the status quo in general. This would allow the Tupamaros to know who stood with them and who did not, and thus be better able to evaluate Uruguay's coyuntura. In this sense the polarization would complement the process of power duality. Second, it was meant to create a climate of confrontation, a debate of ideas, and a radicalization of attitudes. This would allow for an increased awareness of ideological disparities and a greater acceptance of the Tupamaros as a political force.

This growing intimacy between the Tupamaros and the masses would be important for two reasons. First, proper coyuntura evaluation requires an assessment of the reaction to the guerrillas' actions by the people at large. Kidnapping a foreign diplomat, killing a policeman or army officer, and robbing a bank are actions that require careful evaluation with regard to the rejection or support that they might stir in the people. Violence and armed struggle help to create popular consciousness, but they can also create counter-productive effects unless used in the proper context and at the right time.



Second, the Tupamaros felt that the mobilization of the masses is a sine qua non strategy for a revolutionary process; indeed, all revolutionary movements must try to mobilize them—even though many do not succeed in so doing. Any armed group can stage military actions—rob, kidnap, and murder—but only a well-organized movement, equipped with the "right" ideology and using the "right" strategies, can succeed in winning the very essential support of the masses. Of course, under certain circumstances the support of the masses may be obtained by formulating political platforms and by organizing a legal political party. But, as explained earlier, the Tupamaros did not see that as viable in Uruguay and considered the most efficient means of mobilizing the masses to be through armed struggle. There must exist, according to them, a dialectical relationship among the movement, armed struggle, and mobilization of the masses (A-III, 3, 5; B-26).

#### Sectoral Mobilization

A revolutionary movement must be in permanent contact with all organized groups within society that can cooperate with or adversely affect the actions of the guerrilla struggle, as well as with foreign governments and social movements abroad, since they can affect local political events. The mobilization and the influencing of various domestic and foreign organized groups are, then, the strategy of sectoral mobilization.

The Tupamaros always considered it important to establish and maintain some sort of relationship with all sectors of Uruguayan society. They recognized that in some cases, such as in Peru and Ecuador, the armed forces have done well in defending the nation's sovereignty and promoting economic development. "This is why," they wrote, "the armed forces must not be massively disqualified and we cannot avoid the opportunity of doing politics in their midst" (A-I, 8; IV, 7). And they did not; several times the Tupamaros publicized communiqués specifically addressed to the Uruguayan armed forces; they managed to keep abreast of events within the military ranks; and, during 1972, when the military had been made responsible for the elimination of the guerrillas and the keeping of law and order, arrested Tupamaros were reported to deal with army officers directly on various matters as well as to help them prosecute currency speculators, tax evaders, and corrupt politicians. The Tupamaros were convinced that there are a number of important military officers who are uncomfortable serving a government that is unwilling and unable to solve Uruguay's socioeconomic problems. The guerrillas urged "the elaboration of a specific and permanent

line of propaganda toward the armed forces" (F-IV, 2). It was the Tupamaro leaders, in fact, who were quite aware of the political role that Uruguay's armed forces were playing and could play in the future. Indeed, the Tupamaros treated the country's military forces as an essentially political organization and not as a purely armed branch of the government and the nation's oligarchy.

As for the police, especially Montevideo's, the Tupamaros were unable to establish many ties or contacts with them, although they did succeed in obtaining information on plans and events at police headquarters. The policy that the Tupamaros pursued here sought to take advantage of the police's "contradictions, weaknesses, and fissures" (A-VI, 8). In this context intimidation and reprisals became a very important and effective Tupamaro tactic. Alleged ill-treatment of arrested guerrillas prompted "revolutionary justice," such as the execution of selected police officers. The Tupamaros asserted that this hard-line attitude gave "excellent fruits and must not be abandoned" (A-VI, 8). In other words, the guerrillas never visualized Uruguay's police as playing a political role or having a political potential but, rather, as a strictly obedient, coercive, armed branch of the nation's government.

The ideology of the Tupamaros identified the ruling class as its main enemy (A-III, 7). Included were landowners, industrialists, large merchants, professional politicians, and the wealthy in general. This provided the rationale for the selection of targets for robberies and kidnappings. But because there is a minority within the oligarchy that has suffered from Uruguay's deteriorating economy or is interested in country's socioeconomic progress, the guerrillas always considered it important to make contact with them (A-IV, 5; F-I, 12).

The guerrillas had a close and working relationship with labor unions, which in Uruguay have traditionally been dominated and led by leftists. Therefore, labor unions received "constant attention" (A-III, 12). Given the fact that the country's public sector employs about one-third of the labor force and all of it is unionized, this created the possibility of useful coyunturas for the Tupamaros: "It is not the same thing to attack a state that is in the plenitude of strength as to attack a state that is semiparalyzed by strikes" (B-18). However, in 1968-72 labor unions and their activities were severely curtailed by the Uruguayan government; strikes were forbidden and many leaders jailed. The Tupamaros believed that the power of labor had been greatly reduced and that the people's resistance had to find—and indeed did find—other avenues of expression (A-IV, 1, 3). Nevertheless, the guerrillas continued to support the creation of Committees in Support of the Tupamaros (C.A.T.'s) in as many business and government enterprises as possible (A-III, 14).

During 1970-71 the Tupamaros wrote that students and their unions are "the social sector that helps us in the strongest manner." Furthermore, they recognized that students' combativity "is an expression of the more general problem of an unemployed youth without good prospects living in a country in crisis" (A-IV, 2). This high degree of collaboration was true of both university and secondary-school students; in fact, the Tupamaros assessed that it was the high-school youngsters who were at the vanguard of the struggle (A-IV, 2).

Among the leftist political parties the most important one for the Tupamaros was Uruguay's Communist Party, which has traditionally followed a pro-Moscow line. Although its leaders "don't tie themselves down," the Tupamaros wrote, "their attitude toward us, both in theory and publicly, is one of respect and disagreement only as concerns tactics" (A-IV, 9). Smaller opposition parties, on the other hand, "respect us and their membership supports us. We have great influence in their midst" (A-IV, 9). In a 1968 document the Tupamaros predicted that, as had happened in Cuba, armed revolutionary action would generate unity among all leftist groups, "since they can only choose between giving [the guerrillas] their support or disappearing" (B-4). Three years later they were able to write that, indeed, "the [Uruguayan] left has entered a process of unification" (A-IV, 9).

Uruguay's Catholic Church has also been affected by the guerrilla struggle. As in other Latin American countries, the nation's main religious institution is torn by internal divisions; and various elements of the lower clergy seem to be sympathetic to the new trends for reform or revolution. The Tupamaros suggested that there are members of the Church "who support us, our relationship with them has been highly positive," and that the Church is "an environment that requires out action at various levels" (A-IV, 6).

The Tupamaros showed interest in opening intellectual contact and in exchanging information and experiences with armed movements abroad. Given their ideological concern with a Latin American nationalism, they believed it important to be in contact with all other Latin American revolutionary groups so as to allow for concerted action during and after the struggle for power (B-26). However, even though they thought it convenient "to form alliances against a common enemy, . . . We must maintain our obvious differences and our autonomy" (A-II, 1). The Tupamaros were also very interested in events in other countries where either nationalism or socialism forms part of the core of the government's ideology. In the case of Chile under Salvador Allende, "the electoral triumph there has demonstrated the feasibility of a strategy of alliances and elections to get to the government and thus come closer to having gained

power" (A-I, 6). Events in Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia (before the 1971 coup) "have shown the range of possible ways of trying to achieve power" (A-I, 7; F-I, 6). As for Cuba and its contemporary role, the Tupamaros asserted that "it maintains a purely political support for all fighting forces but, as of today, it is not a leader in strategies for armed struggle in Latin America" (A-I, 12).

The United States was seen as the core of imperialism in Latin America, although the guerrillas did not take seriously the possibility of direct U.S. military intervention in Uruguay. Instead, the Tupamaros envisioned that the United States would encourage vicarious imperialism through Brazilian or Argentinian military intervention (A-I, 10; VI, 2; B-18; F-I, 1, 2). However, they were not afraid of such a possibility: "Foreign intervention may mean an immediate military defeat but at the same time an enormous political challenge that would in turn generate unified military action from all nationalist forces. Imagine the city of Montevideo occupied by foreign troops with the inevitable consequence on people's feelings about their country . . . and, given that, an armed revolutionary group with good bases throughout the city" (B-21). The Tupamaros would then be seen as a true national liberation movement.

The Tupamaros were also aware of yet another intriguing possibility: The success of the Brazilian military regime in controlling that country and practically eliminating all political opposition (including its guerrillas) was viewed as "an example that our local oligarchs might want to imitate" (F-I, 2). In other words, they did consider the possibility of a coup by Uruguay's oligarchy and/or part of the military in an attempt to follow the totalitarian example set by Brazil and Paraguay and, to a certain extent, Argentina.

In one of the last Tupamaro documents the formation of a Committee on International Affairs was announced.<sup>4</sup> Among its goals were the following: to obtain arms and money from abroad, to facilitate the movement of members across borders, and to establish a transnational network of intelligence. The Tupamaros were interested in establishing firm contacts with certain governments—especially those of Cuba, Chile, Peru, and Ecuador but also Algeria, the Soviet Union, and China—and with revolutionary movements in other Latin American countries. This illustrates to what degree the Tupamaros were politically, ideologically, and militarily independent (as of 1972) of foreign governments, since not until the very end did they find it necessary to formulate a policy of foreign relations.

All of the above highlight some international dimensions of the Tupamaros' ideology: it identified both enemies against whom the struggle was to be organized and friends with whom alliances were to be established. Naturally the strategies of the Tupamaro movement regarding its relations with foreign countries and revolutionary

movements were dictated by the objectives of nationalism and socialism.

### El Salto

Earlier, strategies were defined as medium-range goals to be attained under certain historical circumstances so as to make possible the implementation of the ultimate objectives of an ideology. It was also indicated that the seizure of power was contemplated as necessary for the realization of those objectives. The salto, literally a leap or escalation, was a strategy to be applied (given the appropriate coyuntura) immediately before power seizure.

Military and political strategies would someday make it possible for the confrontation to make a salto. This leap is the ability "to go to greater and higher levels of armed struggle, a definite spreading of the war, the direct harassment and destruction of the [government's] armed forces and, therefore, a greater degree of polarization, a radicalization of the [revolutionary] process, and a fuller use of available human resources and arms" (A-VI, 11). Many conditions, of course, would contribute to the existence of this favorable coyuntura: the extent of the guerrillas' resources (manpower, arms, leadership, hideouts), the establishment of power duality, the intensity of popular discontent and mobilization, the availability of manpower for and morale of government forces, the ease of interaction between the guerrilla organization and the various sectors of the population, the possibility of armed foreign intervention, and the degree of popularity and acceptance of the Tupamaros.

When all these political and military conditions were present and favorable, the strategy of the (salto) would be called for to turn the struggle into a popular uprising, an insurrection of the masses led by the Tupamaros (A-VI, 10, 12; B-5, 6, 9; F-III, 5). The Tupamaros viewed this final leap as a natural end product of their military and political strategies, whereby the masses identify with the guerrillas and perceive their alternative political order and normative system as viable and desirable. The Tupamaros believed that such a mass popular uprising would lead to the seizure of power and thus to the establishment of a new social-political-economic order in which the final ideological objectives, which in the past served only as a model for action, would begin to be implemented.

### CONCLUSIONS

The Tupamaros believed that under the present societal conditions of Uruguay their ideological objectives could not be achieved

through the use of peaceful, constitutional means. Therefore, strategies had to be devised such that power could be seized by other means. The use of political violence was seen not only as a perfectly legitimate, but also as the most efficient, way to gain power and thus implement the ideology's ultimate objectives. This violence was to be channeled through the application of guerrilla warfare and, given Uruguay's geographic and demographic peculiarities, through urban guerrilla warfare. These military strategies were designed to do two things: first, they were to discredit, weaken, and eventually destroy the monopoly of the use of force and the claims of legitimacy of the Uruguayan government; and, second, they were to create power duality. Power duality was defined as the ability of the guerrillas to muster both relative immunity from government control and power to operate within the same territory. However, these military strategies were inextricably linked with the more political strategies of aggregate and sectoral mobilization. These latter strategies were to increase the Tupamaros' power base and the credibility of their claims to legitimacy. Power seizure, however, was not viewed as a merely military process whereby the government's forces were defeated in battle or a coup whereby the government was replaced. Rather, it was an intensely political process facilitated only by military successes on the part of the guerrilla forces. Indeed, most military and political strategies were to make it possible for the struggle to take a final leap forward, a salto. All this meant that a military and political struggle spearheaded by the Tupamaro urban guerrillas would be turned into a popular uprising, an insurrection of the masses, and a true revolutionary experience. Power would be seized, and the necessary foundations for the attainment of nationalism and socialism could at long last be built.

### NOTES

1. For a discussion of the concept of coyuntura in a much broader theoretical context, see T. Moulián, "Acerca de la Lectura de los Textos de Lenin: Una Investigación Introdutoria," Cuadernos de la Realidad Nacional (Chile), 1972, pp. 189-204. According to Moulián, for Lenin the coyuntura meant the rational implementation of available means within given historical circumstances so as to obtain certain ultimate objectives. See also N. Poulantzas, Clases Sociales y Poder Político en el Estado Capitalista (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1969), pp. 100-16.

2. J. Moreno, "Che Guevara on Guerrilla Warfare: Doctrine, Practice, and Evaluation," Comparative Studies in Society and History, 12, no. 2 (1970), p. 117.

3. Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros, Actas Tupamaras (Buenos Aires: Shapire, 1971), p. 10.

4. Written for internal circulation only in early 1972 but captured by the police and released to the press on May 7, 1972. It was published by La Mañana (Montevideo), May 8, 1972, p. 5.

This chapter attempts to describe two important characteristics of any social movement: its composition and its internal organization. This study of the membership of the Tupamaro movement seeks to document its broadness and range—that is, the extent to which the ideological objectives, strategies, or tactics of the Tupamaros attracted support from individuals with different backgrounds. The data do not, however, indicate the degree of ideological commitment, the extent of participation, or the reasons for the involvement of each person included in this sample. Nonetheless, one would like to ascertain the quantifiable peculiarities of those involved in the Tupamaro movement as a means of establishing some of the very scarce facts that can be obtained about the composition of this clandestine movement.

As for the internal organization of the Tupamaro movement, the aim is to discover how its membership was grouped and structured in order to achieve a strategic success. In other words, how the Tupamaros established decision-making bodies, lines of authority, division of labor, and levels of organizational involvement so as to harness the manpower at their disposal and organize it to carry out tactical operations. In so doing, the set of organizational techniques applied by the Tupamaros to insure the survival of their social movement will be depicted.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Tupamaro membership is generally thought to have been quite diverse: from semilliterate peasants to distinguished intellectuals and professionals; from unemployed and similarly socially isolated individuals to the relatives of the highest government officials; from

students in their late teens to mothers of over fifty. To what extent is this widely held impression correct? It is very difficult—if not impossible—to obtain past or current data on the precise composition of any clandestine movement. This is true in the case of the Tupamaros, since membership information is neither freely available nor reliable. This absence of indicators has narrowed the choice of statistically meaningful methods to just one, the gathering of data on convicted and killed Tupamaro members and collaborators. This method can provide only a very rough outline of Tupamaro membership, since it is not based on a random sample. Nevertheless, it does enjoy some approval on the part of both government officials and Tupamaros. The former recommend it because information on convicted guerrillas is the only factual piece of evidence and has generally not been the target of misinformation charges or credibility complaints. The Tupamaros, on the other hand, have stated that "the origin of comrades who were captured can be taken as a reference point" for getting an idea of actual Tupamaro membership.<sup>1</sup> Hence, this data will be presented and analyzed, with a warning to the reader of the unavoidable statistical pitfalls involved.

A compilation was made of all information released to the press by Uruguay's police and armed forces concerning both guerrillas captured and later convicted and guerrillas killed in action. There are 648 individual entries covering the period from December 12, 1966, until June 22, 1972; omitted from the sample are what appeared to be contested or very incomplete entries. This sample represents the great majority of Tupamaros captured during that period but, as a whole, constitutes roughly 15 percent of the total number of Tupamaro members and collaborators incarcerated through the beginning of 1973. In other words, the sample excludes some 4,000 Tupamaros reportedly being held by military authorities as of the time of this writing (May 1973), because many of them have not been convicted, information on others has not been made public, and the credibility of military sources in general has been severely questioned.

The data were broken down according to the following categories: occupation, age, sex, and national origin. The results of the statistical analysis are shown below.

#### Occupation

Out of a total of 648 entries, 336 contained information on occupation. Four categories were devised: student (S), professional or technician (PT), worker or employee (WE), and other (O).<sup>\*</sup> As can

<sup>\*</sup>"Student" covers both secondary-school and university students; "Professional or Technician" includes anyone with a university

TABLE 1

Occupations of Captured Tupamaros, 1966-72

Year	S	PT	WE	O	Sample Total
1966-69	21	12	17	4	54
Percent	38.9	22.2	31.5	7.4	100.0
1970	27	18	27	5	77
Percent	35.1	23.4	35.1	6.5	100.1*
1971	22	19	16	4	61
Percent	36.1	31.2	26.2	6.6	100.1*
1972	29	60	49	6	144
Percent	20.1	41.7	34.0	4.2	100.0
Total	99	109	109	19	336
Percent	29.5	32.4	32.4	5.7	100.0

<sup>\*</sup>Due to rounding.

"S"-student; "PT"-professional or technician; "WE"-worker or employee; "O"-other.

Source: Prepared by the author from his own research.

be seen in Table 1, roughly a third of captured Tupamaros were professionals or technicians, another third were either workers or employees, and almost 30 percent were students. The data, broken down by year, show two relatively clear-cut trends.\* One was the steady decrease in the proportion of students, which fell from a 1966-69 high of almost 40 percent to a 1972 low of only 20 percent. Another was the steady increase in the proportion of professionals and

degree or anyone likely to have completed a course of study at a trade or technical school (such as nurses, priests, artists, mechanics, journalists, and carpenters); "Worker or Employee" covers farm and factory workers and employees and, generally, anyone employed in the services sector who cannot be classified as a technician (such as salesmen, secretaries, and clerks); "Other" includes housewives, soldiers, policemen, businessmen or land-owners, and the unemployed.

<sup>\*</sup>Because the sample was so small, the data for 1966-69 were combined.

technicians captured, going from a low of about 22 percent in 1966-69 to a high of almost 42 percent in 1972. The worker-employee figures fluctuated without any readily apparent trend.

### Age

Data on the guerrillas' ages was available for 515 of the entries. As Table 2 shows, the age range increased steadily from 18-43 to 18-59. This forced the median age up from a 1966-69 low of 30.5 to a 1972 high of 38.5. As for the mode, with the exception of the bimodal distribution corresponding to 1966-69, it consistently turned out to be 21 years. Finally, the arithmetic mean tended to be located between 25 and 28 years, with no trend readily apparent. In other words, captured Tupamaros were usually in their mid-twenties, although the most frequently reported age was 21; however, one could have found guerrillas who were as young as 18 or as old as 59, although it was uncommon for captured Tupamaros to have been in their forties or fifties.

### Sex

The data on 618 captured Tupamaros for which this information was provided show that roughly a fourth of all guerrillas were women. This female participation ratio is much higher than might have been expected in Uruguay or for any clandestine armed group anywhere.

TABLE 2

Ages of Captured Tupamaros, 1966-72

Year	Mean	Mode(s)	Median	Range	Sample Total
1966-69	26.7	22, 27	30.5	18-43	72
1970	27.1	21	33.0	18-48	83
1971	25.2	21	35.5	18-53	112
1972	28.3	21	38.5	18-59	248
Total					515

Source: Prepared by the author from his own research.

Furthermore, as the data are broken down, it is readily apparent that the female participation ratio tended to grow from an original low of about 10 percent (1966-69) to an average high of over 27 percent (1970, 1971, 1972). (See Table 3.)

### Nationality

The 648 captured Tupamaros were overwhelmingly Uruguayan in national origin and citizenship. Only 12 out of the total, or about 1.8 percent, were foreigners—all of whom had a long residency record in Uruguay—five Spaniards, three Brazilians, two Argentinians, one Venezuelan, and one Egyptian. For a country such as Uruguay, whose population is about 40 percent of Spanish descent and is surrounded by Argentina and Brazil, the Spanish or Latin American background of Tupamaros of foreign origin is not at all surprising.

If one assumes that the figures on captured Tupamaros do shed some light on the true Tupamaro membership, the conclusions are inescapable. The Tupamaros drew members from a variety of social groups and from a wide range of individual backgrounds. Specifically, they tended overwhelmingly to be Uruguayan, mostly in their twenties,

TABLE 3

Sex of Captured Tupamaros, 1966-72

Year	Male	Female	Sample Total
1966-69	60	7	67
Percent	89.6	10.5	100.1*
1970	60	25	85
Percent	70.6	29.4	100.0
1971	101	40	141
Percent	71.6	28.4	100.0
1972	240	85	325
Percent	73.9	26.2	100.1*
Total	461	157	618
Percent	74.6	25.4	100.0

\*Due to rounding.

Source: Prepared by the author from his own research.



with a considerable female membership, and a high proportion of educated people.

The data presented above do not, however, provide information on captured Tupamaro leadership. Unfortunately, they did not originally discriminate between those individuals belonging to the highest decision-making bodies and those participating in the lower ranks of the Tupamaro organization. However, an informal survey of the best-known and most important Tupamaros captured indicates that they tended to be in their thirties, were mostly male, and belonged overwhelmingly to the professional-technician group. In addition, they were all of Uruguayan origin.\*

### INTERNAL ORGANIZATION

This section deals with the guerrillas' internal structure.<sup>2</sup> It consisted of different levels of organizational involvement and of specific bodies with distinct purposes and responsibilities.

The fundamental operational units of the Tupamaros were the cell, the column, the Executive Committee, and the National Convention. The cell consisted of at least two but usually not more than six members. Each cell had a leader appointed by a higher body, usually the Executive Committee. However, whenever cell members so requested, the leader could be removed and the Tupamaro authorities would appoint a new one. Cell members did not know each other's true identity, and they were given nicknames and false identification papers from the very beginning of the recruiting process. Each cell specialized in either commando-type operations or service-type work. The former cells were staffed by "combatants," the more experienced, reliable, and dedicated Tupamaros who were in charge of military actions. Usually they worked full-time for the Tupamaro organization, and most of them lived clandestinely. They were to carry out the various supply, propaganda, reprisal, and sabotage activities approved by the leadership of the movement. (See Chapter 4.) The latter were staffed by "activists," who devoted themselves to providing for the basic necessities of combatants. In other words, they obtained meeting places, constructed hideouts, purchased food and clothing, gathered intelligence, provided medical treatment, manufactured explosives, obtained and maintained arms and ammunition, repaired vehicles, and solved transport and communication problems.

\*This refers to such well-known leaders as Raúl Sendic, Jorge Maneras Lluveras, Marenales Sáenz, Juan Almiratti, Héctor Amodio Pérez, Raúl Bidegain, Alberto Candan Grajales, and Lucía Topolanski.

Each cell, whether commando-type or service-oriented, was encouraged—and, indeed, found it necessary—to establish its own information and propaganda network. In other words, they had to build contacts and to enlist the aid of "peripherals" and of "sympathizers." Peripherals were usually those who worked part-time for the Tupamaro organization and did not live clandestinely. They were responsible for distributing propaganda, contacting sympathizers within the population at large, obtaining new supply sources, recruiting, and developing sources of information and intelligence. Sympathizers were those who, in one way or another, aided the Tupamaros by knowingly supplying "inside" information; selling them arms, ammunition, chemicals, and other needed raw materials; suggesting potential recruits; and assisting in the provision of medical and legal aid. On the basis of intelligence gathered through the aid of peripherals and sympathizers, cell leaders were in a position to make suggestions to the Tupamaros' Executive Committee as to particular tactics to be adopted or individual actions to be undertaken. The activities of every cell were coordinated and supervised by the guerrillas' higher authorities, the Executive Committee.

Several cells made up a column, a purely administrative entity that was responsible for and in control of activities in a given geographical area. For instance, several columns operated in Montevideo, and about seven more existed in Uruguay's countryside. Tupamaro columns were formed because of tactical advantages such as the division of labor and familiarity with the people among whom and the area within which its actions took place. However, in the case of Montevideo's columns, where geographical specialization was not as essential as in suburban and rural areas, an entire column might specialize in a given type of activity; such was the case of a captured medical column that ran a complete underground medical center.

Hence, columns were not decision-making units but administrative entities put together to facilitate and coordinate the action of individual cells. There was no column leader and no hierarchical relationship within a column; information flowed from the cell and through the cell leader to the Executive Committee and vice versa. In fact, contact among the cells of a given column was permanently minimized according to the principle of compartimentación (compartmentalization), which prohibited the supplying of information to any single Tupamaro member beyond what was necessary for him to be operational. Therefore, members of a column did not know each other; and only the cell leaders, if anyone, knew how to contact other cell leaders within the same column.

The Executive Committee was the Tupamaros' leadership, a decision-making body with confidential membership that could be

changed only by a unanimous vote of the Committee itself or by the National Convention. Its members were called "leaders," and they were in charge of the overall military and political direction of the guerrilla movement. They may or may not have been living clandestinely, and they need not all have worked full-time on the Tupamaros' behalf. As individuals Committee members sought suitable targets for guerrilla action and initiated and elaborated military plans for such action. The Executive Committee as a whole directed the entire Tupamaro organization, setting priorities and evaluating and approving plans for military and political activity submitted by its members. It had the power to create or eliminate any cell, column, or other unit it deemed necessary; to make appointments; to determine who in the organization would be responsible for carrying out particular assignments; to take disciplinary action whenever necessary; and to administer the guerrillas' finances and all other material and human resources at its disposal. Each cell was in contact with the Executive Committee through the cell leader or a column representative.

The National Convention, at least nominally the Tupamaros' highest governing body, was a gathering of representatives from all of the guerrilla units. It was to meet, conditions permitting, once every 18 months and whenever the Executive Committee or one-third of the Tupamaro membership requested it. The Convention met at least twice, in January 1966 and in March 1968. Its main duties were to appoint a new leadership group for the Executive Committee and to deal with broad ideological issues, such as strategies to be pursued or attitudes to be taken. My research would seem to indicate, however, that the intensity of the struggle between the Tupamaros and the Uruguayan police and army made it impossible for the Convention to function—simply because of the risks involved in a gathering of this sort. The Tupamaros seem to have phased out the National Convention at the beginning of the 1970s as a practical, decision-making body; in its place the Executive Committee began the practice of circulating numerous documents, essays, and working papers for discussion and feedback. It was through this indirect—and considerably less risky—method that the Tupamaros attempted to communicate and discuss important ideological issues among themselves.

In studying the Tupamaros' internal organization, it is important to realize that a structure such as the one described must have fulfilled certain tactical requirements. It had to solve, for instance, the problem of recruitment. As was pointed out, Tupamaro peripherics did most of the recruiting; but there were also those who sought to enter the guerrilla organization and were brought in by whatever Tupamaro they happened to know about or stumble upon.

The security needs of the guerrilla group made entry into the organization usually a rigorous and lengthy procedure. Sponsorship apparently was necessary in most cases; and the recruit's sponsors had to submit an exhaustive report on the candidate's life, habits, political and occupational background, personality, friends, health record, and all other aspects that might be significant. Among the character traits deemed most propitious were discipline, physical strength, obedience, technical abilities or skills, and the capacity to adapt to a hierarchical command system. The personality traits deemed most disastrous were the lack of caution and prudence. As was noted in a Tupamaro instruction sheet written for recruits, "Remember that your worst enemies are boasting, the lack of discretion, the lack of discipline, and gossiping. Don't ask, don't tell, and don't let anyone talk you into anything."<sup>3</sup> Or, as it was put in another document, "If you are not discreet and feel swayed to talk about what you do, then all your other qualities become worthless."<sup>4</sup> After the necessary security clearance had taken place, the recruit was usually assigned to work as an activist, that is, doing service work in such areas as intelligence gathering, repairs, and communications. Meanwhile, he or she underwent a rigorous training program that centered on the acquisition of paramilitary skills. From then on, each new Tupamaro was given the opportunity for increasing participation in activities that carried greater responsibility and greater risk.

The Tupamaros who were full-time members or who had to live clandestinely seemed to live quite ascetically. Captured hide-outs reveal great physical sacrifice in terms of lack of comfort and absence of leisure and private life; however, food, clothing, and medical attention appeared adequate. Each Tupamaro who lived in hiding received a cash allowance according to need rather than rank.<sup>5</sup> Discipline was very strict for the sake of both survival and efficiency.

The Tupamaros' internal structure had also to fulfill the essential security requirements of any clandestine organization. As was pointed out, the principle of compartmentalization—the internal censorship of all information except what is necessary for the individual guerrilla to carry out his work—was applied throughout the Tupamaro organizational structure. Like other armed groups elsewhere, the Tupamaros had to defend themselves from infiltration attempts and the possibility that captured guerrillas would provide—or be forced to provide—the legal authorities with information that would make it possible for other Tupamaro militants to be arrested. Known examples of compartmentalization are that Tupamaro members did not know each other's true identity; that communication among guerrillas from different cells was minimized to include only those topics concerning the task to be done; and that when a group of guerrillas



was moved from one hideout to another, they were many times taken blindfolded.

But compartmentalization had also its disadvantages. For instance, it demanded great obedience and promoted such a degree of interdependence that every guerrilla felt that he or she was only a small part of the giant Tupamaro machine. It reminds one of a group of people each of whom holds a single piece of a puzzle; no one can get anywhere without everybody else's cooperation. Since many daily or routine tasks were undertaken by a single Tupamaro cell, compartmentalization did give each guerrilla the opportunity to plan jointly with his or her fellow cell members; but it did not give him or her the power to decide which mission to carry out or what target to hit. When several cells came into contact for a specific tactical operation—especially the more notorious and famous ones—compartmentalization could have been, and sometimes was, a great hindrance if plans went awry; since the guerrillas from different cells did not know each other, and even the cell leaders might not have known each other, it was difficult to reestablish order and determine who the commanding officers were.<sup>6</sup> Also, compartmentalization seemed to work much better at the bottom than at the top of the organizational scale. It proved to be a very effective way of guarding against informers and infiltrators at the bottom of the ranks. If, for instance, the authorities captured either an entire Tupamaro cell or individuals from different cells, compartmentalization made it almost impossible for the police or army to go any further. On the other hand, if upon capturing a cell leader or, say, three out of five members of a single cell, the authorities moved quickly enough, it was probable that the entire cell would be caught. Moving up the Tupamaros' internal structure, however, compartmentalization seemed to be increasingly less effective. For example, should more than one leader be captured or turn out to be an informer, it became possible for the security forces to begin to weave information together. But, of course, Tupamaro leaders were less likely to give any kind of useful information even under severe and prolonged interrogation.

In summary, then, the Tupamaros had built an organizational structure such that at least three fundamental objectives of a clandestine, armed social movement were simultaneously attained: (1) a structure that allowed for continuous and efficient military action through the use of a hierarchical command system and specialization according to both skill and the degree of organizational involvement; (2) a structure that was built so as to insure the guerrillas' physical survival through the application of the principle of compartmentalization; (3) a structure that was geared to providing a steady flow of fresh recruits so as to guarantee the Tupamaros' endurance.

## CONCLUSIONS

A study of almost 650 captured Tupamaros over the period December 1966–June 1972 shows that the guerrillas were almost without exception Uruguayans. Although there was a steady increase (up to 42 percent of the total) in the number of highly educated people (professionals and technicians), there was a large (but rapidly falling) number of students along with a more or less steady share of workers and employees (about one-third of the total). Most guerrillas were in their twenties, but many age groups were represented. At least a fourth of the guerrillas were women.

The Tupamaros were well-organized, with a hierarchical command structure that established many degrees of organizational involvement. They combined the organizational rigidity and secrecy necessary to insure the movement's clandestineness with an apparent flexibility that recognized varying talent, experience, and commitment by allowing for an elaborate division of labor and involvement of individuals through both full-time and part-time work.

## NOTES

1. From an interview with a high-ranking Tupamaro, published in Tricontinental Bulletin (Havana), 6, no. 58 (January 1971): 4.
2. Much of the information presented here comes from personal interviews and from the following written sources: C. A. Aznares and J. E. Cañas, Tupamaros: Fracaso del Che? (Buenos Aires: Orbe, 1969), pp. 87–89; O. Costa, Los Tupamaros (Mexico City: Era, 1971), pp. 87–91; A. Labrousse, Los Tupamaros (Buenos Aires: Tiempo Contemporáneo, 1971), pp. 219–32; A. Mercader and J. de Vera, Tupamaros: Estrategia y Acción (Montevideo: Alfa, 1969), pp. 95–117; and Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros, Actas Tupamaras (Buenos Aires: Schapire, 1971), pp. 41–42. Also, on documents captured by the Uruguayan authorities and released to the press, see La Mañana (Montevideo), May 12, 1972, p. 7; and June 11, 1972, p. 1.
3. Mercader and de Vera, op. cit., pp. 106–07.
4. See the captured document published in La Mañana, May 12, 1972, p. 7.
5. El País (Montevideo), August 19, 1969, p. 6.
6. As in the case after the seizure of the town of Pando on October 8, 1969, when something went wrong and armed resistance by over a dozen Tupamaros from different cells became a shambles because of the limitations imposed by compartmentalization. See M. E. Gilio, La Guerrilla Tupamara (Montevideo: Marcha, 1971),

pp. 117-48; or its English translation, M. E. Gilio, The Tupamaro Guerrillas (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1972).

Tactics are those methods that translate broad strategic objectives into specific actions. They are dictated by, and must be in accordance with, the social movement's strategic scheme and its ideological tenets. Just as strategies are the means to attain the ideology's objectives, tactics are the means to secure a strategic success. In the specific case of the Tupamaro guerrillas, tactics played a double strategic function: first, they sought to discredit, weaken, and, eventually, destroy both the monopoly of the use of force and the claims to legitimacy of the Uruguayan government; second, they were to increase the power base of the movement and the credibility of its own claims to authority and legitimacy. Certainly every social movement wishes to grow and to weaken its ideological enemy. But these latter and rather general tactical goals became a subset of the two strategic functions just mentioned. What were, then, the tactics employed by the Tupamaros in a manner such that their strategic requirements would be fulfilled? I have classified them as supply actions, propaganda actions, intimidation and reprisals, and sabotage. The reader must realize, however, that these broad conceptual classifications are meant to cover, as a group, almost all of the Tupamaros' actions. This does not imply that many of the guerrillas' tactical operations may not be fitted under more than just one category. I shall discuss each type of tactic, noting how it fits into the general Tupamaro strategic scheme as well as how it was actually undertaken during the 10 years of Tupamaro existence.

#### SUPPLY

Supply actions are those designed for the procurement of all elements having a bearing on the logistical maintenance and growth

of the Tupamaro guerrilla. Probably the most crucial supply action of an urban guerrilla is the acquisition of financial resources. As the Tupamaros wrote, comparing their experience with the Cuban one, "the urban guerrilla has to purchase his own 'Sierra Maestra' with cash."<sup>1</sup> In other words, much of the shelter provided by nature to the rural guerrilla must be bought by his urban counterpart. Money was essential for the Tupamaros to obtain shelter, food, clothing, and false documents; to make repairs; to bribe people, and to prepare and distribute propaganda. Indeed, just as important to the urban guerrilla, or even more so, than the existence of a steady flow of new recruits is a steady flow of money with which to meet his expenses and help guarantee his survival.

The manner in which the Tupamaros went about obtaining those financial resources is unusual. They believed that it is the wealthy and the government who must provide the money for their own destruction: "We do not go outside the country to seek financing for our revolution, but seize from our [ideological] enemies the money to mount the necessary revolutionary campaign."<sup>2</sup> To justify this method they said: "We must make a clear distinction between what the bourgeoisie's property and the workers' property really is. The former is, beyond doubt, the outcome of workers' exploitation; the latter is the result of work and individual effort. Therefore, the bourgeoisie's property is our natural fountain of resources and we have the right to expropriate it without compensation. [Our] revolution puts to use the surplus of the privileged."<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly the Tupamaros engaged in a long series of robberies—or, as they called them, "expropriations"—as a means to obtain money. They robbed dozens of private and government-run banks, casinos, and wealthy individuals. For instance, there was the robbery of U.S. \$230,000 (in Uruguayan pesos) from the San Rafael Casino on February 18, 1969; \$400,000 (in pesos, British currency, and gold bars and coins) from the Mailhos family mansion on April 4, 1970; and about \$6 million (mostly in jewelry) from one of the branches of the government's Banco de la República on November 12, 1970—the largest jewel robbery anywhere in modern times.<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that in these instances the robberies were made possible through the proven collaboration of insiders.<sup>\*</sup> Although this

\*Corruption was usually based on ideological reasons rather than financial rewards, and collaborators many times joined the guerrillas and went clandestine after the robbery. In the case of the San Rafael Casino, the collaborator was a disgruntled employee; in the Mailhos robbery it was R. Barbeito, a clerk who had worked for the family for some 12 years; in the \$6 million case an employee named P. Ginopart provided the necessary inside information.

does not appear to be the case in the majority of their bank robberies, it was true of the more spectacular and financially rewarding ones. In most cases each robbery entailed a complex guerrilla operation that included the temporary kidnapping of bank officials and/or the extensive use of disguise. The preferred tactic was not based on a massive show of force but, rather, on confusing bank officials and personnel with various disguises (such as posing as policemen, repairmen, and the like) and abducting only those who had keys to and knew the combination of the bank's vault.<sup>5</sup>

Another important supply action was the acquisition of arms, ammunition, and explosives. The Tupamaros obtained these both by purchasing and by stealing them. Arms and ammunition were usually stolen from private collectors and gun shops, although there is one well-known instance of the Tupamaros' robbing a Uruguayan navy garrison of some 450 guns together with an appropriate supply of ammunition.<sup>6</sup> Explosives were frequently stolen from construction and demolition companies. Chemicals were stolen from chemical and pharmaceutical manufacturing plants.\* The purchase of arms and ammunition took place in Uruguay itself and also in neighboring Argentina and Brazil. In the latter case the Tupamaros managed to smuggle them across Uruguay's rather poorly guarded borders.

It is worth noting here that no evidence has been found that the Tupamaros ever received either money or arms from other countries or from social movements abroad. This fact is in accord with the Tupamaros' own philosophy regarding the source of supplies for their guerrilla struggle.

The Tupamaros also engaged in the tactic of freeing imprisoned guerrillas—something considered here as another type of supply action. They succeeded in rescuing almost 180 Tupamaros from prison, particularly captured leaders. There were four mass jail-breaks: 13 guerrillas from the Women's Prison on March 9, 1970; 38 from the same prison on July 20, 1971; 106 from the maximum-security Punta Carretas Prison on September 6, 1971; and 15 from the same prison on April 12, 1972. Besides these there were at least two other important escapes, by Tupamaro leaders J. Almiratti (May 26, 1971) and R. Bidegain (July 18, 1971). The first mass escape was accomplished by the clever use of police disguises; in the other three cases the guerrillas were freed from the outside by fellow Tupamaros who had constructed tunnels of excellent engineering quality from sites within Montevideo's sewer system.<sup>†</sup>

\*The Tupamaros manufactured their own explosives.

†For at least the largest escape it seems quite certain that the Tupamaros had bribed and/or intimidated a few of the key prison guards.

Transportation means are very important tools to the urban guerrilla. The Tupamaros solved this problem too by means of theft. One of the best-known procedures was for a small group of Tupamaros to approach a person about to start his or her car, demand that he or she surrender the keys and allow the guerrillas to get in the car, and then drive off. Somewhere in the city the driver and a few guerrillas would be dropped off, and the driver would be forced to accompany them for a walk, to the movies, a restaurant, or some other place. After an hour or so the owner would be freed and encouraged to report to the police. Meanwhile the other guerrillas would take the car to a previously agreed-upon site where, in turn, another commando would take the vehicle and use it for whatever purpose it was needed. The commando would then abandon it and, if need be, pick up another car that would have been delivered for the occasion. The entire operation would take little time, and few cars were held for more than a few hours. Another standard procedure was for a group of Tupamaros to storm a garage or parking lot, especially during the night, abducting the attendant for a short time and then driving off with several vehicles.

To survive and operate effectively the urban guerrilla needs a large and steady flow of intelligence and information. The Tupamaros solved this problem by stealing or otherwise obtaining through bribes or intimidation the facts necessary for them to plan and execute their actions. For instance, they secured a complete collection of detailed military maps and aerial photographs of all of Uruguay and its cities, maps of Montevideo's sewer network and electricity and telephone cables, and diagrams of government buildings. They also updated these collections through field research of their own. More long-term intelligence-gathering networks and propaganda outlets were in existence thanks to the establishment of Committees in Support of the Tupamaros (C.A.T.'s) in many business firms and government agencies. Among other functions these underground committees served as channels through which Tupamaro sympathizers and collaborators could transmit information and intelligence to the guerrillas' leadership. However, much information was gathered ad hoc, after the target for guerrilla action had been determined. If, for example, a gun shop was to be robbed, the necessary information and intelligence were collected a few weeks or days in advance.

As for other necessary supplies for the Tupamaros to maintain and expand their guerrilla operations (such as food, shelter, clothing, and medicine), these were usually purchased by the guerrillas. However, there were several instances of the Tupamaros' stealing medicine from drugstores, police and army uniforms from the security forces' own tailor shops, and identity cards and other official

documents from the government's own document-issuing centers and printing offices.

## PROPAGANDA

Propaganda actions are tactical operations meant to publicize the existence, ideology, and power of the guerrillas; to persuade the masses that they present a credible threat to the security forces in particular and to the government and power elite in general; and finally to convince the population at large that the guerrillas' ideology is an attractive one and should therefore be welcome.

There were many ways in which the Tupamaros made sure that their movement and ideas became known throughout Uruguay. During 1968-69, the guerrillas sent letters and communiqués and also granted interviews to the mass media. But when the government convinced itself that all this "free advertising" for the Tupamaros should not continue, strict censorship was imposed on news of guerrilla actions and on the publication of their communiqués. The Tupamaros were then forced to develop their own media as well as to find ways in which to make government press censorship ineffective. They began printing and circulating communiqués by the thousands, distributing them in public places, affixing them on bulletin boards, and mailing them to homes and offices. They also started the practice of taking over cinemas, factories, and other businesses in order to hand out their communiqués and deliver harangues to the shocked but captive audiences. They also stormed radio stations during prime time and, after subduing the staff, would broadcast their own communiqués and news bulletins.\*

The Tupamaros also engaged in tactics that were meant both to publicize the group's existence and to demonstrate its power. Political kidnapping was one such tactic: among its victims were government officials, businessmen, landowners, and foreign diplomats.†

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\*Outstanding examples are the Tupamaros interruption of the transmission of a soccer match (May 15, 1969) and the broadcast on an F.M. station that was providing background music for all of Montevideo's department stores (May 24, 1969).

†They include U. Pereyra Reverbel (1968 and 1971-72), head of the state telephone and electricity corporation and a close friend of the then President Jorge Pacheco; G. Pellegrini Giampietro (1969), a banker and newspaper owner; D. Pereyra Manelli (1970), the judge most often involved in the prosecution of captured Tupamaros; D. A. Mitrione (1970), an Agency for International Development security

Kidnap victims were held up to 14 months in the Tupamaros' "people's jail," which consisted of small cells constructed underneath basements or in other underground locations. Ransom was sometimes demanded and obtained, but a Tupamaro kidnaping was usually meant to be a show of force and a publicity stunt. People abducted were those whom the Tupamaros' ideology identified as enemies—members of Uruguay's oligarchy or those representing foreign nations accused of exercising a neocolonial influence. The choice of specific individuals to be kidnapped was a function of such "wrongdoings" as suspected corruption, alleged torture of jailed guerrillas, or accusations of behavior detrimental to the well-being of workers. Potential good bargaining pieces were also picked, as was the case during July-August 1970, when the Tupamaros kidnapped several foreign officials so as to force the Uruguayan government to free its imprisoned guerrillas. Since the Uruguayan authorities did not accept the guerrillas' demands, after that incident most abductions were meant either to influence labor disputes or to deliver revenge. The Tupamaros were no exception to the pattern set by guerrillas in many countries, in that kidnapping was seen as a means of political blackmail. One journalist has evaluated kidnapping by the Tupamaros in the following perceptive statement: "It was used as a bloodless way of eliminating individual enemies and exposing the government's soft spots: as a terrorist weapon calculated to excite maximal fear and confusion amongst those close to the presidential palace, and minimal horror among the public in general."<sup>7</sup>

There were other propaganda actions besides kidnapping that were meant to discredit government authorities and the security forces. Probably the most famous such action was the breaking into

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expert and advisor to the Uruguayan police; C. L. Fly (1970-71), a U.S. soil expert working for the Uruguayan government; G. J. Jackson (1971), Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Uruguay; G. Berro (1971), Uruguay's Attorney General; R. Ferrés (1971-72), a wealthy industrialist and conglomerate owner; C. Frick Davies (1971-72), landowner and former Minister of Agriculture who had been forced to resign (but was not prosecuted) following a major financial scandal; J. Berembau (1971), and young owner of a large textile business; H. Fariña (1972), newspaper editor and President of the state water company; N. Bardesio (1972), a police photographer who had evidence of illegal activities by Montevideo's Police Department and the Minister of the Interior; and H. G. Ruíz (1972), President of Uruguay's House of Representatives. Only D. A. Mitrione was killed (August 9, 1970) when the Uruguayan government refused to bargain with the Tupamaros on the conditions for his release.

the offices of one of the largest illegal loan companies. The Tupamaros took with them a set of highly confidential account books, and they supplied evidence of the misuse of public funds and the involvement in illegal lending and currency speculation of several important government officials. They forwarded the account books to a judge, and the ensuing investigation caused a major scandal that forced the resignation of the country's Minister of Agriculture and other officials who were among the company's owners.\*

The Tupamaros engaged in other Robin Hood-type propaganda actions, such as the hijacking of delivery trucks loaded with milk, food, or blankets. The guerrillas would then drive them to the outskirts of Montevideo and give the contents to the impoverished people living there.<sup>†</sup> However, the Tupamaros themselves realized that this was quite a childish propaganda action and only a stage in the sophistication of the guerrillas' tactics; besides, it was like giving "bread for today and hunger for tomorrow" and later became a seldom-employed tactic.<sup>8</sup>

#### INTIMIDATION AND REPRISALS

The Tupamaros knew that psychological warfare is an important component of any type of struggle and that fear is a powerful weapon. Hence, intimidation and reprisals constitute an essential guerrilla tactic, in that they can lead to the moral defeat of key components of the security forces or the government machine. The Tupamaros distinguished two types of intimidation/reprisal tactics: those of "direct" and "indirect" approach. Direct approach meant that the target of guerrilla action was the "guilty" party itself; for instance, a police officer who was accused of being a torturer was shot dead. Indirect approach meant that people related to the "guilty" party were punished precisely because of their association with

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\*The company was the Financiera Monty, and the Tupamaros' robbery took place on February 14, 1969; among those involved were Minister C. Frick Davies (later kidnapped by the Tupamaros), former presidential candidate Jorge Batlle, presidential advisor U. Pereyra Reverbel (later kidnapped by the Tupamaros), and well-known architects Pintos Risso and Perez Noble, who have also held important government or business posts. Monty's owners did not inform the police about the robbery; after the company's books turned up at a judge's home, an "accidental" fire destroyed all other records at Monty's management offices.

<sup>†</sup>Montevideo has its share of shantytowns, called cantegriles.



someone accused of doing something wrong; for instance, the bodyguards of an army or police officer accused of doing his job "too well" were shot. In other words the purpose of the indirect approach was to isolate specific government and military authorities from their friends, consultants, bodyguards and even relatives.

Intimidation and reprisals took many forms. The more important ones were bombings, kidnappings, and killings. The Tupamaros threw bombs—usually tar bombs—in the homes of selected army, police, government, and business leaders. They also kidnapped people whom they accused of specific wrongdoings. The guerrillas also shot a number of police and army officers accused of ill-treating captured Tupamaros by using torture or denying medical attention. Another frequently employed tactic was that of publicly humiliating individual police officers. For instance, several Tupamaros would surround a policeman on the street and force him to give up his gun; or they would "search" a policeman's home, frightening his family and taking with them his uniform, gun, and ammunition.

Selective terror against men in uniform and government and business leaders was, in summary, an essential component of the Tupamaros' tactical aims.

#### SABOTAGE

Sabotage is a very powerful tactic, in that a few people are able to do a great deal of damage at relatively little financial expense and personal risk. Furthermore, if sabotage is widespread or is carried out so as to interrupt much of the normal functioning of a society, it forces government authorities to take a stand. Most frequently governments tend to overreact or underreact. "Overreaction is often interpreted by the population as panic; underreaction as ignorance of the real situation, or softness, hence both situations can play into the hands of the terrorists."<sup>9</sup> Although the Tupamaros made relatively little use of this type of tactic, they mentioned it in their documents several times and distinguished three types of sabotage. First, sabotage that destroys a source of employment or affects a large portion of the population, such as the wrecking of a factory or the cutting of telephone and electricity lines. Second, sabotage that damages only the state or a member of the "oligarchy" (government officials, business leaders, and landowners) and does no direct harm to the population at large. Third, sabotage against military and police installations.<sup>10</sup>

During the 10 years of their existence the Tupamaros felt that the use of sabotage was not really warranted and that it could prove counterproductive, in that it would give rise to ill feelings among

Uruguay's public. Hence, sabotage was used very sparingly. Of the three kinds of sabotage mentioned above, they really made use only of the second type, sabotage that damaged foreign and national members of the oligarchy. For instance, the Tupamaros committed arson against the management offices of Uruguay's General Motors plant (June 20, 1969) and the warehouse of Sudamtex (October 10, 1970), one of the largest (and mostly U.S.-owned) textile plants in Uruguay. These fires caused damage estimated at over \$1 million each; but (supposedly) they did not directly affect—or politically alienate—the workers involved, since the factories themselves were purposely undamaged. Similarly the Tupamaros believed that wherever their ideological enemy (the oligarchy) met for pleasure, it had to be attacked. Hence, the guerrillas partially or wholly destroyed such places as Uruguay's only Bowling Club (October 6, 1970), Montevideo's Golf Club, and several fashionable and expensive nightclubs. Indeed, the Tupamaros asserted that urban guerrillas must make full use of the fact that they can hit almost any target they wish: "Our enemy must spread itself thin trying to guard thousands of potential targets. The representatives of the existing regime have to turn to living almost an underground life. . . . restricting their movement, being constantly protected by bodyguards even in their own homes."<sup>11</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS

Social movements conceive of tactics as means to insure the group's survival and as instruments to pursue their ideological objectives. As such, tactics are generally expected to be in accord with the movement's strategies. Yet even though tactics are constrained by a strategic order, they permit choices in the targets to be hit as well as possibilities for ingenuity and innovation in the manner in which those targets are struck.

To what extent were the Tupamaros careful to follow their strategic scheme and ideological objectives? As previously noted, those tactics should have been designed to implement the movement's military and political strategies, with the guiding principle being seizure of power in Uruguay. As was to be expected, many of the tactics were conceived to allow for growth of the Tupamaro movement and for an increase in its power base. Others were to widen the movement's claims to legitimacy and authority. Finally, many others were to weaken and destroy the government's monopolistic use of force and coercion. In general the evaluation of the manner in which those tactics were actually applied seems to indicate a close parallel between the Tupamaros' tactical operations and their strategic scheme. Their ideology called for a violent struggle

aimed directly at the country's oligarchy, the representatives of foreign neocolonial influence, and government forces in general. Tupamaro tactics did reflect this: they were undertaken with great marksmanship, avoided the use of indiscriminate violence, and concentrated on delivering one individualized blow after another. The victims of Tupamaro tactical operations were indeed the country's government officials, police and armed forces, businessmen and landowners, bankers, and diplomats from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Brazil. Moreover, Tupamaro tactics became well-known both in Uruguay and abroad for their avoidance of extensive terrorism, their ingenuity and innovative character, and a display of sophistication previously unknown in urban guerrilla warfare.

#### NOTES

1. Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros, Actas Tupamaros (Buenos Aires: Schapire, 1971), p. 17.
2. From a communiqué published in Tricontinental Bulletin (Havana), 5 no. 46 (January 1970): 44.
3. From the document "Rules of the Organization," published in O. Costa, Los Tupamaros (Mexico City: Era, 1971), p. 92. In all of this the Tupamaros were in agreement with the principles set out by the late Brazilian urban guerrilla leader Carlos Marighela; in his "Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla" he wrote that "the great expenses of the revolutionary struggle must fall on the capitalists, the imperialists, the landowners, and also the federal and state government, since all of them are exploiters and oppressors of the people." Tricontinental no. 16 (January-February 1970): 21, or the manual's translation into English, C. Marighela, For the Liberation of Brazil (London: Penguin, 1971).
4. N. McWhirter and R. McWhirter, Guinness Book of World Records (New York: Bantam, 1971), p. 357.
5. For a detailed account of several important bank robberies as told by the Tupamaros themselves, see Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros, op. cit.
6. This took place on May 29, 1970, with the collaboration of an insider, a sailor named F. Garín, who then went into hiding. See his open letter, "A Mis Compañeros y al Pueblo," in O. Costa, op. cit., p. 166.
7. R. Moss, Urban Guerrillas (London: Temple Smith, 1972), p. 230.
8. See the statements published in Al Rojo Vivo (Montevideo), no. 18 (March 18, 1969), and reprinted in O. Costa, op. cit., p. 134.

9. M. Oppenheimer, The Urban Guerrilla (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969), pp. 77-78.

10. Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

11. Ibid., p. 18.

THE GOVERNMENT  
VERSUS  
THE TUPAMAROS

Thus far, this study has centered on an analysis of the Tupamaro movement itself, while neglecting the obvious interactions that took place between the guerrillas and the government of Uruguay. It is now time to turn to an examination of the way in which the country's police, armed forces, and various branches of its government reacted to and tried to deal with the growth of the Tupamaro movement. Specifically, I intend to point out the extent of various legal and coercive measures adopted by Uruguay's executive branch and the nation's security forces over the 1962-72 period. In so doing I seek mainly to document and inform rather than to assess the actions and efforts of the government of Uruguay in attempting to contain and eliminate the Tupamaro guerrillas.

An examination of Uruguay's political history over the 10 years of Tupamaro activity suggests the existence of two interdependent processes. On the one hand, the period starting in 1962 and ending sometime in early 1971 was one in which the country's political scene was characterized by Uruguay's National Police and the nation's executive branch playing the leading role in the struggle to defeat the Tupamaros. On the other hand, 1971 and 1972 were marked by the highest level of confrontation ever between Uruguay's armed forces and the Tupamaros, with the latter's destruction in late 1972. Mostly as a consequence of this heightened confrontation, 1971 and 1972 saw the definite entrance into Uruguay's political picture of the country's armed forces, as well as a gradual deflation of Presidential power and a definite decay of Uruguay's traditional political institutions.

For the purposes of this analysis, I have decided to treat these two processes separately. Hence, this chapter is divided into the period when Uruguay's police and the country's executive branch led the struggle against the Tupamaros (1962-70) and into that when



Uruguay's armed forces led the effort for the elimination of the guerrillas (1971-72). These two stages in Uruguay's political history are, of course, inextricably linked. Therefore, the reader ought to be warned about the inevitably artificial division of the country's historical continuum.

#### 1962-70

The period 1962-70 was one of growth and consolidation for the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional-Tupamaros. As has been pointed out, the movement was formally established sometime at the beginning of 1962 by a small group of Montevideo intellectuals, peasants from the country's northern areas, labor union organizers, and friends of leader Raúl Sendic. From 1962 to 1968 the Tupamaros concentrated on giving greater specificity to their ideology, building a strategic scheme, tentatively applying various urban guerrilla tactics, and ensuring the survival of the expanding guerrilla organization. It was a period of maturation, during which the Tupamaros established supply sources and strengthened the ideological basis of their movement. Supply tactics seem to have taken up most of their time, particularly the slow but steady accumulation of arms, ammunition, explosives, money, and information and intelligence. Thefts were used sparingly and publicity was usually shunned. Clashes with police forces were mostly accidental, as exemplified by the first Tupamaro death (December 22, 1966), when C. Flores, pursued by the police for driving a stolen car, was killed while resisting arrest. Although the Tupamaros appear to have been responsible for a number of tar and Molotov cocktail bombings against U.S.-owned property and the homes of some local businessmen and politicians, in the longer-run perspective these bombings appear incidental and more like target practice than anything else.

During 1969 and 1970, however, the Tupamaros began applying the full range of guerrilla tactics in accordance with their strategic scheme. Robberies of money and arms became a monthly and then a weekly event; political kidnapping was launched and repeatedly applied; propaganda actions were initiated and continued until, by the end of 1969, the existence of the urban guerrilla organization could escape no one and "Tupamaro" became a household word. The confrontation was on, and month by month it became increasingly violent and severe. By mid-1970 the Tupamaros were known internationally not only because of their daring, innovative, and successful actions but also because of their abducting two American officials and a Brazilian diplomat.

The structure of Uruguayan society began to shake, and the power and authority of the country's government were clearly being challenged. How did it attempt to cope with the attack that was being launched by ideological enemies? During 1962-70 Uruguay's government relied on the country's police forces and on Presidential decrees in an attempt to curb the Tupamaros' activities.

#### The National Police

In 1970 Uruguay's National Police numbered about 17,000 men, 40 percent of whom were assigned to urban areas. About 3,500 men, or over 20 percent of the total force, were assigned to and stationed in Montevideo, the capital city and the center of Tupamaro activity.<sup>1</sup> The National Police has six branches or directorates, which are supervised by the Ministry of Interior, which is mainly responsible for domestic law enforcement.

During 1962-70 Uruguay's National Police received a comparatively large amount of money and training from abroad—almost exclusively from the United States through its Agency for International Development's Office of Public Safety. It is worth noting that, as can be seen in Table 4, Uruguay's law enforcement agencies were granted, over the 1961-71 period, more financial aid from the United States than any other of the 18 Latin American countries for which data are available. These funds were used to assist in the purchase of modern transportation vehicles; to improve communication facilities, patrol capabilities, investigative procedures, and riot control; to hire U.S. public safety technicians and consultants, and to train Uruguayan police officers. By 1971, 113 policemen had received training in the United States and over 700 had been trained in Uruguay.<sup>2</sup>

Uruguay's National Police, trained, equipped, and advised by the United States, became thoroughly involved in an attempt to preserve law and order in the face of rising Tupamaro urban guerrilla activities. Specifically, two branches were given the task of containing and eliminating the Tupamaros: the Information and Intelligence Directorate and the Metropolitan Guard. The former is composed of eight departments, one of which, the Department of Intelligence and Liaison, headed by Alejandro Otero, conducted most of the investigative work related to the Tupamaros. Mr. Otero became well-known throughout Montevideo as one of the very few police officers who from the very beginning took the Tupamaros seriously, studied and understood their ideology, respected Tupamaro prisoners and never ill-treated them, and was always careful to undertake the necessary "Sherlock Holmes"-type investigation and laboratory work.<sup>3</sup> In

TABLE 4

## Uruguay's Police: Trends and Foreign Assistance, 1967-72

	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	Total	Rank
Police enrolled in training schools								
Latin America	60,266	69,434	61,255	11,131 <sup>a</sup>			325,864	
Uruguay	957	2,411	3,588	1,676 <sup>a</sup>			10,465	3 <sup>b</sup>
Police trained under U.S.A.I.D. sponsorship in the U.S.								
Latin America	395	275	265	1,564			3,543	
Uruguay	9	9	10	15			92	6 <sup>c</sup>
U.S. police aid, by fiscal year and in thousands of dollars								
Latin America				4,235	3,397		51,262 <sup>d</sup>	
Uruguay				285	619		1,836 <sup>d</sup>	1 <sup>e</sup>
Resident U. S. public safety advisors								
Latin America								
Uruguay		90 <sup>f</sup>						9 <sup>g</sup>
U. S.A.I.D. public safety program expenditures, by fiscal year and in thousands of dollars								
Latin America								
Uruguay						2,850		
						225		4 <sup>h</sup>

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Note: Unless otherwise specified, totals shown are since inception of program.

<sup>a</sup>January 1, 1970-August 31, 1970.

<sup>b</sup>In 1970 out of 15 Latin American countries.

<sup>c</sup>In 1970 out of 24.

<sup>d</sup>1961-71.

<sup>e</sup>In 1971 out of 18.

<sup>f</sup>As of June 30, 1968.

<sup>g</sup>On June 30, 1968, out of 20.

<sup>h</sup>Out of 15.

Sources: H. J. Rosenbaum, *Arms and Security in Latin America: Recent Developments, International Affairs Series*, no. 101 (Washington, D. C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1971) pp. 27-28; U.S.A.I.D. Statistics and Reports Division, A.I.D. Operations Report, data as of June 30, 1971, and previous editions, cited in *NACLA Handbook: The U.S. Military Apparatus* (Berkeley: NACLA, 1972), pp. 58, 59; A.I.D. Office of Public Safety's request to the U.S. Congress during fiscal 1972, cited in *NACLA Newsletter*, 5, no. 4 (July-August 1971): 16.

January 1970 Mr. Otero was arrested for three days and later was transferred to another post because of statements he had made about the Tupamaros to an Argentinian weekly. But this incident seems to have been just an excuse, since his superior officers reportedly were impatient for more arrests and disagreed with his practice of being "soft" on captured guerrillas. On the other hand, Mr. Otero was supposedly upset by his superiors' lack of support for detailed and patient police laboratory work as well as by the introduction and extensive application of torture by fellow police detectives and American police advisor Dan A. Mitrione.<sup>4</sup> Once Mr. Otero left the Department of Intelligence and Liaison and his methods were abandoned, it would seem that Montevideo's police lost most chances of defeating the Tupamaro guerrillas.\*

The Metropolitan Guard is a paramilitary organization headed by army officers and intended to be an elite police corps. Its members have all met strict physical requirements (height, build, appearance) and have had special training in the use of machine guns and gas weapons to control riots and mass gatherings. Whenever an arrest was to be made or a clash between police and the guerrillas took place, the Metropolitan Guard was called in. The Tupamaros intensely disliked the Guard and repeatedly accused it of killing guerrillas who had surrendered, ill-treating captured guerrillas on the way to police headquarters, and torturing Tupamaros being questioned. Several times the Tupamaros executed the Metropolitan Guard's commanding officers and selected guardsmen.

How did Uruguay's National Police and, specifically, its Information and Intelligence Directorate and its Metropolitan Guard go about trying to control Tupamaro activities? Generally speaking, the country's police became well-known among the population for extensive and routine use of torture as well as for heavy-handed, citywide search operations. Indeed, the police contributed very little to the long-run defeat of the Tupamaros but are remembered for contributing greatly to a climate of repression. As the attacks by the Tupamaros grew in intensity, insistent reports of alleged police torture circulated quite often throughout Montevideo. In response to the public outcry, an all-party ad hoc commission of the Uruguayan Senate was established to study the case. Its comprehensive report, released after six months of research, concluded that the use of torture by Montevideo's police had become "habitual," "frequent," and

\*Three months after Mr. Otero's dismissal, one of his superior officers, H. Morán Charquero, who had taken over the anti-Tupamaro work, was shot and killed by the guerrillas because of his alleged use of torture on captured Tupamaros.

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even "normal"; that it was being applied to innocent people, non-political prisoners, women, students, and labor leaders; and that torture had become a routine application of electric shock, beatings, burns, starvation, and other cruel interrogation methods.<sup>5</sup>

Montevideo's police, in cooperation with the country's armed forces, conducted, during and after 1970, extensive and repeated house-to-house searches. For instance, during August 1970 the police conducted some 20,000 house searches—trying to find the Tupamaros' kidnap victims.<sup>6</sup> Conducted clumsily, at all hours of the night, and reportedly many times without appropriate warrants, these massive searches created great resentment among Montevideo's population and failed to turn up any Tupamaro.

As was explained in the study of the Tupamaros' strategy of sectoral mobilization (see Chapter 2), the guerrillas always took a hard-line attitude toward the country's police force. They believed it corrupt and, in general, incapable of realizing that the Tupamaros were not just smarter-than-usual common criminals but, rather, that they were waging a political struggle aimed at facilitating the seizure of power in Uruguay. Tactics of intimidation and reprisals were constantly applied by the Tupamaros in response to the use of torture by police officers. The Tupamaros felt that these tactics did work; and although it is difficult to find corroborative evidence, there are instances when it seems that they did.<sup>7</sup>

In any case the anti-Tupamaro work of Uruguay's National Police was deemed so clearly insufficient, inadequate, misguided, and unpopular by government officials that it gave way to the appointment of the country's military to deal with the problem. Meanwhile, the President was busy trying to devise political measures to stop the growth and renown of the Tupamaro guerrillas.

### The Presidency

On December 6, 1967, President Oscar D. Gestido died of a heart attack and Vice-President Jorge Pacheco Areco, a largely unknown ex-journalist, former Congressman, and amateur boxer became the head of Uruguay's government. Until that date the country's executive branch had not found a need to take any specific action that would stifle the growth of the Tupamaro movement. Pacheco suddenly found himself ruling a country in very deep economic trouble and with strikes, consumer and producer complaints, and student unrest. Worst of all, there was talk of violent rebellion and radical political change.

Faced by a hostile Congress and a general paralysis of the country's political decision-making institutions, he began a term of

forceful leadership and virtual rule by executive decree. Less than a week after taking office, Pacheco banned—for the first time in Uruguay's history—six minor leftist political parties because of their alleged support of armed struggle as a means to introduce political change. He also closed down two leftist newspapers for writing about the possibility of armed conflict in Uruguay and one of them for publishing an open letter from the Tupamaros. Both actions raised a storm of controversy and bitter criticism, since Uruguay has no statute that allows the executive branch of government to shut down a newspaper, nor had the country's government ever so severely breached the right of political association. It was all to no avail, since these actions became the beginning of four years of harsh rule.<sup>8</sup>

The country's economic problems worsened during 1968. Inflation was running at the rate of about 10 percent per month; and President Pacheco decided to put an end to this untenable condition by instituting, in mid-1968, a price and wage freeze. Partly because he suspected that the freeze would not be welcomed by the workers—who had been suffering from a loss of purchasing power—and partly because of student unrest, Mr. Pacheco declared the establishment of security measures (June 13, 1968), which are emergency powers granted to the President by Uruguay's constitution. They were in effect until March 3, 1969, and were used to quell student and worker demands as well as to silence opposition newspapers. (See Table 5.) In fact, routine press censorship was formally established on September 24, 1968.

In mid-1969, after only three and a half months of normal constitutional rule, Mr. Pacheco again declared the need for emergency powers; and security measures were reinstated (June 24, 1969). Faced by threats of labor unrest, the President "militarized" (placed under military rule and military justice) the country's police (July 7, 1969). A few days later, with the start of a crippling strike by Uruguay's bank employees, President Pacheco "militarized" the workers for three months and forced them back to their jobs (July 26–October 15, 1969).\*

Just as President Pacheco thought that he had the domestic political scene under control, the Tupamaros decided to make themselves known to the entire nation. They kidnapped a leading banker, G. Pellegrini Giampietro (September 9, 1969), took over the town of Pando (located near Montevideo), for a few hours on the second anniversary of "Che" Guevara's death (October 8, 1969), and initiated a

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\*Congress passed a law rescinding Mr. Pacheco's decree, whereupon the President immediately reissued it (August 6, 1969).

TABLE 5

## Government Closure of Uruguayan Newspapers, 1967-70

Closure Date	Newspaper	Closure	
		Temporary	Permanent
December 12, 1967	El Sol		x
December 12, 1967	Epoca		x
August 4, 1968	Izquierda	x	
August 10, 1968	El Diario	x	
August 21, 1968	Marcha	x	
October 21, 1968	Extra	x	
October 21, 1968	El Popular	x	
November 11, 1968	Extra	x	x
June 17, 1969	Extra <sup>a</sup>		
July 8, 1969	Acción	x	
July 8, 1969	Democracia		x
July 11, 1969	Izquierda		x
July 17, 1969	Los Principios	x	
September 10, 1969	De Frente	x	
September 10, 1969	Nuevo El Plata	x	
October 11, 1969	De Frente	x	
October 11, 1969	Marcha	x	
October 24, 1969	Marcha	x	
February 13, 1970	El Popular	x	
February 13, 1970	De Frente	x	
February 16, 1970	BP Color	x	
April 13, 1970	De Frente		x
May 22, 1970	Ya!	x	
June 25, 1970	El Popular	x	
June 25, 1970	El Debate	x	
July 25, 1970	El Popular	x	
July 29, 1970	Universal <sup>b</sup>	x	
July 30, 1970	Al Rojo Vivo	x	

<sup>a</sup>This closure was nullified by the General Assembly (July 8, 1969), but the order was ignored by the executive branch.

<sup>b</sup>A radio station.

Source: Prepared by the author from his study of newspaper accounts.

number of other actions. The President ordered massive house-to-house searches and cracked down on Uruguay's already censored press with the determination of literally eliminating the word "tupamaro" from people's minds. To that end he forbade the press to use words such as "cell," "commando," "terrorist," "extremist," "subversive," "political" or "ideological delinquent"—and, of course, "Tupamaro" (November 30, 1969). Uruguay's newspapers started to refer to the guerrillas as "the nameless ones."

During 1970 presidential decrees and police action were not nearly enough to stop the Tupamaros or to make people forget them. On the contrary, the establishment of the Tupamaros' own counter-media (see Chapter 4) and the escalation of urban guerrilla warfare to encompass weekly robberies, several prison escapes, frequent abductions, and a number of famous propaganda actions brought the Tupamaros to the center of Uruguay's attention and made them well-known abroad.\*

## 1971-72

The years 1971 and 1972 were crucial for the Tupamaros and for Uruguay. Urban guerrilla activity in the country rose to its zenith, political violence in general was rampant, and the nation's armed forces were compelled to take up law enforcement tasks while becoming irreversibly involved in Uruguay's political life. Around September 1971 the Tupamaro onslaught was unilaterally stopped for five months to allow a more peaceful political climate to prevail during Uruguay's national elections (November 28, 1971). Meanwhile, the armed forces began preparing for the postelection showdown that they suspected would take place between them and the guerrillas. The government's security measures (a quasi state of siege) continued, and the elections took place amid press censorship and other restrictions of political freedom. Although documented charges of electoral fraud went unanswered, Mr. Pacheco passed the country's presidency on to his handpicked successor, Juan M. Bordaberry,

\*Two other Presidential actions are worth noting. First, Congress's Permanent Commission, which legislates during the summer months of recess, lifted the President's emergency powers (March 5, 1970); but the order was ignored by Mr. Pacheco, in clear breach of the country's constitution. Second, Congress agreed to the President's request to cancel individual liberties for 20 days following the execution by the Tupamaros of kidnap victim Dan A. Mitrione (August 10-August 30, 1970).

who had won by a small margin. A little over a month after Mr. Bordaberry's inauguration, the Tupamaros launched what turned out to be their last military attack. This was met by the government's declaration of a state of internal war, under which individual liberties were canceled and the armed forces were free to launch a sustained and definitive anti-Tupamaro campaign. By the end of 1972, the Tupamaro organization as such had been virtually destroyed.

For the Tupamaros 1971 began with the abduction of British Ambassador G. Jackson (January 8, 1971) and was followed by five other kidnappings, dozens of substantial robberies, and many other actions. By May of that year, London's *The Economist* was editorializing that "Uruguay's urban guerrillas, the Tupamaros, can no longer be shrugged off as a gang of romantic conspirators, out of touch with the people. In Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay, they are running what is virtually a parallel government, and the country is facing the threat of an armed takeover of power."<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the guerrillas had been able to set up a system of power duality and thus pursue all of their military strategies simultaneously. In the political realm they continued applying their strategies of aggregate and sectoral mobilization. (See Chapter 2.) After the escape of over 100 Tupamaros from the country's maximum-security prison (September 6, 1971), the guerrillas declared a unilateral cease-fire so that the nation's elections could take place in relative calm. They reasserted that elections could not bring about the revolutionary changes that their ideology had set forth; nonetheless, they expressed the hope that the government would not postpone the elections, and they welcomed the merging of liberal-leftist political forces.<sup>10</sup>

During 1971, however, violence erupted throughout Uruguayan society in many other forms. First, several smaller urban guerrilla groups had come into existence: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Orientales (F.A.R.O.) and Organización Popular Revolucionaria-Treinta y Tres (O.P.R.-33). They were sometimes formed by ex-Tupamaros who disagreed with the movement's ideological objectives or with its strategies; and among the dissidents were anarchists, Maoists, and those belonging to other shades of the political left. These smaller organizations were also responsible for a share of the lawlessness in the country, and each could boast a number of robberies and even some kidnappings of its own.\*

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\*O.P.R.-33 abducted four prominent businessmen who had had disputes with their labor unions or were holding out against labor demands: A. Cambón (1971), L. Lladó (1971), J. Pereyra González (1971), and S. H. Molaguero (1972).

Second, violence was also carried out by certain extreme-right groups that were most active during 1971 and had flourished in opposition to the Tupamaros, particularly Juventud Uruguaya de Pie (J.U.P.) and Comando Caza Tupamaros ("Tupamaro-Hunting Commando"). These groups were allegedly established with the support and encouragement of the Ministry of Interior and various law enforcement officials. J. U. P., for instance, became well-known for its disturbances in Montevideo high schools, where its members would battle and/or beat leftist teen-agers suspected of collaborating with the Tupamaros. The situation reached epidemic proportions; for example, by June 1, 1971, fully 11 out of 30 Montevideo high schools were closed because of violent disturbances between rightist and leftist students or between them and outsiders. J.U.P. also became known for its harassment of the families of captured Tupamaros and of other individuals freed by the courts. The Comando Caza Tupamaros was an underground organization of the extreme right that went as far as murdering at least two young men suspected of being or of having been Tupamaros.\* In addition, during 1970-71 at least 15 innocent people were accidentally killed by policemen or soldiers while engaged in searches, arrests, and patrol operations.<sup>11</sup> All these acts of violence of course accelerated the rapid decay of whatever was left of law and order in Uruguayan society.

After the national elections were over and prior to President-elect Bordaberry's taking office, the Tupamaros kidnapped a police officer and photographer, N. Bardsio (February 24, 1972). He confessed that he had been an active member of the extreme-right anti-Tupamaro groups in existence but that he had been ordered to do so; moreover, he provided much written and photographic evidence—which the Tupamaros later forwarded to the press and several legislators—that high government officials had provided arms, money, and training and were actually leading those anti-Tupamaro groups. A few weeks later, on April 14, 1972, the Tupamaros issued a communiqué sentencing to death a number of police, navy, and air force officers as well as one former government official for their collective responsibility in the killings committed by the Comando Caza Tupamaros' Within a few hours four of them were killed as they left their homes for work.<sup>†</sup>

From this time on, however, the Tupamaros had to deal with Uruguay's armed forces, for ever since the guerrillas' September

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\*Killed by the Comando Caza Tupamaros were M. Ramos Filipini (July 31, 1971) and I. Gutiérrez (February 28, 1972).

†They were police officers O. Delega and A. Leites, navy Capt. E. Motto, and former Undersecretary of Interior A. Acosta y Lara.



1971 mass prison escape, the nation's military had taken full charge of the anti-Tupamaro campaign. In fact, while the Tupamaros had declared their unilateral cease-fire (September 1971-February 1972) and the country was busy with the campaigning for the national elections, the Uruguayan armed forces were quietly preparing themselves for the Tupamaro attack they knew would soon come.

When the Tupamaros did strike, they found, to their surprise, that the armed forces were ready and had become the staunchest supporters of the country's political institutions. During and after April 14, 1972, the Tupamaros began a series of battles with the armed forces that left 19 dead within 4 days. A state of internal war was declared by Congress, and the final confrontation between the Tupamaros and the security forces was on. By June 2, 30 people (guerrillas, soldiers, policemen, and innocent civilians) had been killed, many more were wounded, and over 500 Tupamaro members and collaborators were detained at military bases. By the end of 1972, over 5,000 people had been arrested by the military and the Tupamaro organization was virtually destroyed.

### The Presidency

During 1971 President Pacheco used his power to try to play down the Tupamaros and to make it as difficult as possible for the country to find out exactly what the Tupamaros were doing.

One of the tactics used by the President in his struggle against the guerrillas was to provide financial incentives for supplying information on the Tupamaros. Rewards of \$20,000 were established for information leading to the rescue of kidnap victims; but as the number and importance of the abduction victims increased, rewards were raised to \$40,000 (May 22, 1971). About a month later the figure was up to \$90,000 through the contribution of \$50,000 by kidnap victims' families. Aside from these rewards an \$8,000 prize was offered by the Ministry of Interior for information leading to the arrest and conviction of any Tupamaro. Yet as far as I have been able to determine, none of these rewards was ever collected.

The President also continued his policy of trying to isolate the guerrillas from the population at large by ever-expanding news blackouts. On April 12, 1971, a decree was issued that prohibited all news about guerrilla activities except that supplied by the government. This resolution was later expanded to include the banning of all information dealing with labor strikes and union meetings, decisions, and activities as well as about other similarly "subversive" activity (August 11, 1971). Another decree was issued a few days later allowing censorship of mail and banning the entrance into

Uruguay of books, magazines, pamphlets, and other printed material dealing with armed insurrection, guerrilla warfare, and political violence, as well as materials printed in "nondemocratic," "totalitarian," and "subversive" countries (August 16, 1971)—read here Cuba. On December 15 Mr. Pacheco's last decree on this subject outlawed the printing, distribution, and sale of any publication treating topics such as revolutionary warfare and subversion. Finally, on various occasions during the year, four newspapers were permanently shut down and many more were forced to close temporarily because of violations of censorship regulations.\* (See Table 6.)

Two sets of intragovernmental incidents are worth noting here. On July 14, 1971, a joint meeting of Uruguay's Senate and House of Representatives (the General Assembly) voted to lift Mr. Pacheco's security measures—something that Congress is entitled to do in accord with the constitution's article 168/17. President Pacheco immediately reissued them. In an unprecedented act of bravery, the House of Representatives formally voted to impeach him. However, the Senate did not complete the impeachment procedures, perhaps because new elections were scheduled to be held within four months.

The second set of government decisions was more directly related to the guerrillas. Because of actual Tupamaro prison escapes and attempted jailbreaks, the country's penitentiaries were moved from under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Culture to the presumably stricter care of the Ministry of Interior (January 21, 1971). Later, when 106 Tupamaros escaped from Montevideo's maximum-security penitentiary, the President transferred Uruguay's prison system to the responsibility of the armed forces (September 9, 1971). In fact, on that same date the armed forces were officially put in charge of the entire anti-Tupamaro campaign.

The national elections were held on November 28, 1971; and Mr. Pacheco's handpicked successor, Juan M. Bordaberry, took office on March, 1972. By that time, however, events were completely out of Presidential control. Indeed, the country's republican system had become so badly damaged that only the Tupamaros and the armed forces had a strong claim on Uruguay's political destiny and its institutional future.

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\*In addition the Cuban press agency Prensa Latina was forced to shut down and reporter O. Contreras was expelled from the country (June 16, 1971).

TABLE 6

## Government Closure of Uruguayan Newspapers, 1971-72

Closure Date	Newspaper	Closure	
		Temporary	Permanent
February 16, 1971	Yal <sup>a</sup>		x
June 28, 1971	La Idea		x
July 2, 1971	Acción	x	
July 2, 1971	El Espectador <sup>b</sup>	x	
July 2, 1971	Teledoce <sup>c</sup>	x	
July 12, 1971	Cuestión	x	
August 12, 1971	El Oriental	x	
August 12, 1971	Para Todos	x	
September 3, 1971	La Idea	x	
September 3, 1971	Ahora	x	
September 3, 1971	El Popular	x	
September 3, 1971	El Eco	x	
September 18, 1971	Acción	x	
September 30, 1971	La Idea		x
October 16, 1971	El Socialista	x	
November 6, 1971	El Eco	x	
December 30, 1971	El Eco		x
April 25, 1972	Acción	x	
August 18, 1972	Ultima Hora		x

<sup>a</sup>This closure was nullified by the Legislature's Permanent Commission, but the executive branch reissued the closure

<sup>b</sup>A radio station

<sup>c</sup>A television station.

Source: Prepared by the author from his study of newspaper accounts.

## The Armed Forces

By 1970 Uruguay's armed forces numbered about 17,000 men, with almost two-thirds of them in the army. Although the government's military expenditures have steadily risen since 1967, as a proportion of gross national product they have shown little increase. (See Table 7.) The country's armed forces received some foreign military aid and training, particularly from the United States.

TABLE 7

## Uruguay's Armed Forces: Facts, Trends, and Foreign Purchases and Aid, 1967-71

	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	Total	Rank
Armed forces, in thousands							
Latin America				957			
Uruguay				16			12 <sup>a</sup>
Armed forces, per 1,000 population							
Latin America				3			
Uruguay				6			3 <sup>a</sup>
Military expenditures, in millions of dollars							
Latin America	2,198	2,270	2,486	2,931			
Uruguay	29	24	37	44			9 <sup>a</sup>
Military expenditures, as percent of G.N.P.							
Latin America	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.1			
Uruguay	2.0	1.5	1.9	2.1			6 <sup>a</sup>
U.S. military assistance program deliveries, by fiscal year and in millions of dollars							
Latin America	59.1	72.8	37.9	27.4	21.2	773.6 <sup>b</sup>	
Uruguay	1.6	2.0	1.6	1.7	1.2	42.3 <sup>b</sup>	7 <sup>c</sup>
Deliveries of U.S. excess defense articles, by fiscal year and in millions of dollars							
Latin America	2.72	3.50	0.65	1.52	2.77	65.12 <sup>b</sup>	
Uruguay	0.04	0.04	0.13	0.25	0.84	3.64 <sup>b</sup>	1 <sup>c</sup>
Deliveries of U.S. military sales, by fiscal year and in millions of dollars							
Latin America	24.52	47.26	35.27	36.52	32.34	427.46 <sup>b</sup>	
Uruguay	—	0.02	0.03	0.17	1.40	3.93 <sup>b</sup>	6 <sup>d</sup>
U.S. and foreign personnel strengths of U.S. military assistance advisory groups, military missions and military groups, as of July 1, 1971							
Latin America					531		
Uruguay					24		10 <sup>e</sup>
Students trained under U.S. military assistance program, by fiscal year							
Latin America						50,581 <sup>f</sup>	
Uruguay						1,591 <sup>f</sup>	13 <sup>e</sup>

<sup>a</sup>In 1970 out of a total of 23 Latin American countries.

<sup>b</sup>fiscal years 1950-71.

<sup>c</sup>In 1971 out of 21 countries.

<sup>d</sup>In 1971 out of 22 countries.

<sup>e</sup>In 1971 out of 17 countries.

<sup>f</sup>fiscal years 1950-69.

<sup>g</sup>During 1950-69 out of 20 countries.

Sources: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, *World Military Expenditures* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1972), pp. 11, 19, 27; U.S. Department of Defense, *Military Assistance and Foreign Military Sales Facts* (Washington, D.C.: Defense Security Assistance Agency 1972), pp. 7, 9, 17; *NACLA Handbook: The U.S. Military Apparatus* (Berkeley: NACLA 1972), p. 42; H. J. Rosebaum, *Arms and Security in Latin America: Recent Developments* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1971), p. 23.

Deliveries of U.S. military purchases and excess defense articles have risen quite sharply, yet overall Uruguay's military can be said to depend comparatively little on American financial support. In fact, it has endured on a relatively modest budget and without the benefit of compulsory military service.

Uruguay's armed forces had always enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most apolitical in Latin America. Small in numbers and low in budgetary priority, effectively barred from political maneuvering and government posts, and subjected to close scrutiny and supervision by the executive and legislative branches of government, the armed forces were known for their passive attitude toward political events. Indeed, the record shows that Uruguay's 20th century tradition as a republic and a democracy was never stained by military intervention in political life.

Beginning around 1958 and prior to the birth of the Tupamaro movement, the armed forces were slowly but steadily forced to become more involved in Uruguayan political and social affairs.<sup>12</sup> The country's deteriorating economy, particularly in the areas of rising urban unemployment and shrinking purchasing power, gave rise to many and varied forms of social conflict. Union-management confrontations, student uprisings, consumer rebellions, and other forms of heated protest became commonplace. Increasingly Uruguay's military found itself involved in law enforcement activities and becoming an active rather than passive back-up force to the country's National Police. Independent of Tupamaro activities, soldiers were often called to patrol Montevideo streets and guard communication centers, power facilities, commercial banks, and government buildings. Sometimes they were also called upon to man government services and key public utilities as replacements for striking workers. Furthermore, the security measures instituted by Mr. Pacheco and his predecessors required military participation in law-and-order activities and, sometimes, military supervision of civilian employees. Unavoidably the armed forces were increasingly seen by the people as middlemen bent on protecting narrow political interests and the health of the business community.

The growing intensity of Tupamaro activities also had a compelling effect on the military to become involved in political affairs. On the one hand, the armed forces were on one occasion the direct target of Tupamaro action. On the evening of May 29, 1970, the guerrillas captured the navy's training barracks in Montevideo, taking with them hundreds of rifles and machine guns as well as large quantities of explosives. The shame and anger of military officers probably never subsided; thus, understandably, they became emotionally involved in the country's anti-Tupamaro campaign. On the other hand, President Pacheco involved the military using its manpower in the

setting up of roadblocks and in the conduct of citywide search operations.

The increased drawing of the military into Uruguay's political affairs appears to have been received with mixed feelings in the barracks. Some military officers seem to have welcomed the recognition of the armed forces as a potentially significant force in the defense of the nation's institutions and government and to have wished for a greater involvement. Others were clearly troubled by what they saw as an unhealthy relationship between the traditionally apolitical armed forces and a corrupt and increasingly oppressive regime. But there appears to have been a prevailing climate of discomfort and disillusion among military officers with the in-between role that they were being asked to play; some demanded more responsibility in law enforcement tasks while others wanted the armed forces to be left alone. Such dissatisfaction is exemplified by the resignation (November 5, 1968) of General Liber Seregni, who had been commander-in-chief of Uruguay's key Military Region no. 1, which encompasses the southern tip of the country and includes Montevideo. His resignation was deemed to have come about as the result of his disagreement with the government and with other military officers over the use to which his men were being put.\*

The direct involvement of the armed forces in anti-Tupamaro work had its formal beginning during September 1971, when President Pacheco, having given up all hope that the National Police would ever contain or eliminate the guerrillas, called on the military to do the job. Although the President's resolution coincided with the declaration of a unilateral cease-fire by the Tupamaros, the Army Intelligence Service carefully began to prepare the ground for a future military offensive. Using information provided by the police's Information and Intelligence Directorate, a select group of military officers prepared the background information and plans for counter-insurgency operations. It must be pointed out that at this time the armed forces were still internally divided over the extent to which they should intervene in the nation's political affairs and the form (if any) of such intervention. But one thing is certain: forced by the circumstances to take a stand and do their duty, the armed forces soon reached a consensus as to the necessity to put an end to the nation's rampant political violence. And, certainly, that had to begin by putting a stop to the single most important source of organized violence: the Tupamaros.

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\*Three years later Seregni ran as the Presidential candidate of the liberal-leftist coalition Frente Amplio.



On April 14, 1972, the Tupamaros, having resumed their activities, assassinated four alleged leaders of an extreme right-wing anti-Tupamaro group. Among the victims was a navy captain, who became the first armed forces officer killed by the Tupamaros. In response the military demanded the declaration by Congress and newly inaugurated President Bordaberry of a state of internal war, under which the armed forces merged into a unified anti-Tupamaro command and were set free to pursue their counterinsurgency objectives without regard for judicial accountability or individual rights. They began by indiscriminately arresting left-wing sympathizers and activists while initiating a systematic and harsh interrogation process. The Tupamaros struck back, setting ambushes and killing and wounding a number of military officers and their accompanying soldiers. Violence was met by more violence, and within weeks the casualties on both sides could be counted in dozens.

The armed forces' counterinsurgency efforts were based mostly on the systematic use of interrogation and torture. The military was much more thorough than the police in the extent to which it interrogated yet more careful in the degree to which it did so. Broadly speaking, Uruguay's police had become known for their haphazard and brutal interrogation sessions. Depending on judicial constraints and the individual's notoriety or influence, suspects and captured guerrillas were subject to relatively short but brutal interrogation. With the armed forces interrogation became much more prolonged, systematic, and "sophisticated." For instance, suspected Tupamaro collaborators were said to be subjected to a routine consisting of, perhaps, two days of planton (prolonged standing without food), a week of capucha (completely blindfolded imprisonment), and a few mornings of submarinos (immersion of the prisoner's head in water, up to the point of asphyxiation, every half hour or so). During the interrogation proper, prisoners were supposedly beaten in ways that are hard to trace—for instance, by simultaneous blows against the ears. Forms of psychological torture (such as interruption of sleep, withholding of food or drink, and threats) and drug-induced confessions were also frequently reported. Although these alleged routine interrogation methods usually produced no victims and left few traces, there have been "accidents." Among the best-known cases of irreversible damage reported in early 1972 are those of writer M. Rosencof (cerebral paralysis), physician N. Bonilla (total paralysis), and L. C. Batalla (death).<sup>13</sup>

Although total press censorship had been reinstated by President Bordaberry in April 1972, accusations of torture began to be voiced by Congressmen at almost every legislative session. Following Batalla's death, the legislature called for those responsible not only to be punished but also to be named publicly. As one more

instance of the growing involvement of the military in politics, almost 600 military officers met and drafted and approved a resolution condemning any censure of active officers and opposing the public naming of officers investigated or punished by military courts.<sup>14</sup>

The armed forces were also fortunate to obtain the willing collaboration of a top Tupamaro leader. H. Amodio Pérez is widely reported to have supplied the military with information on the whereabouts of at least 30 guerrilla hideouts, a main field hospital complex, a number of arsenals and documentation centers, and the Tupamaros' famed "people's jail," where hostages U. Pereyra Reverbel and C. Frick Davies were being kept (May 27, 1972). This major betrayal caused much permanent and long-term damage to the Tupamaros. Although the guerrillas were internally organized according to the principle of compartmentalization, this *modus operandi* is much less effective in preventing information leaks from the top of the organizational hierarchy than from its bottom. (See Chapter 3.) In other words, compartmentalization made it difficult for the security forces to get much useful information from Tupamaro cell members or cell leaders. However, internal secrecy could not have been, and was not, as prevalent in the guerrillas' highest ranks, where Amodio Pérez was working. Hence, his betrayal led to the security forces' gaining a very important understanding of the missing links and key Tupamaro decision-making relationships. Beyond the discovery of a relatively small number of hideouts and arsenals, the information supplied by this man led the military to acquire an in-depth understanding of the workings of and individuals involved in the Tupamaro organization.<sup>15</sup>

Another major success of the military was in eliminating the Tupamaros from the country's rural areas and smaller cities. As was mentioned in Chapter 2, the Tupamaros wanted to experiment with the establishment of guerrilla units in Uruguayan cities beside Montevideo as well as in strategic places in the countryside. However, the experiment clearly failed. Tupamaro guerrillas and collaborators were more identifiable in smaller towns and rural areas, since their activities and movements were much more easily detected and, in general, they were not operating "like fish in the water." The army was very much in its element when sweeping the countryside; and it became a relatively easy task to spot suspects, trace leads, and discover underground hideouts.

Finally, organizational problems set in during 1971 and 1972 as a result of the escape from Uruguayan prisons of some 180 captured Tupamaros. (See Chapter 4.) Although these jailbreaks were seen by the Tupamaros as successful supply and propaganda actions, they may well have turned out to be quite damaging in the long run. First, captured guerrillas obviously got to know one another well

during their imprisonment. Hence, upon their release and reintegration into the ranks of the Tupamaro organization, the guerrillas' security network was unavoidably broken, because one of the basic operating rules of the Tupamaros was that members were not to know each other's true identity.

When the military started to recapture some of these Tupamaros, it may have proven quite easy to extract accurate descriptions and true identities, and hence to obtain valuable information about individuals in different cells and columns. Second, the reintegration of freed guerrillas into the organization's ranks caused rivalries and some ill feelings. Indeed, among the escapees were many Tupamaro leaders and individuals with seniority who may have wanted or have been granted leadership positions in detriment to those who had remained free. It is possible that these frictions may have accounted for more betrayals or quicker confessions than would otherwise have been the case.

Slowly but steadily the Tupamaro machine began to crumble, and the Tupamaro organization came to a halt. Surprised by the speed and strength of the armed forces' counterattack, weakened by information leaks extracted through torture and betrayals, disappointed by the ease with which bases in the countryside collapsed to the military, and plagued by organizational difficulties, the Tupamaros ceased activity and retreated into hiding. Although by the end of 1972 thousands of Tupamaros were imprisoned, many leaders, collaborators, and sympathizers probably remained free.

#### NOTES

1. T. E. Weil et al., Area Handbook for Uruguay (Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1971), p. 371.
2. From A.I.D., Office of Public Safety's project data for Uruguay, published in NACLA Handbook: The U. S. Military Apparatus (Berkeley: NACLA, 1972), p. 30.
3. See, for instance, Mr. Otero's statements about the Tupamaros in A. Mercader and J. de Vera, Tupamaros: Estrategia y Acción (Montevideo: Alfa, 1969), pp. 63-78.
4. See the statements of Mr. Otero in Jornal do Brasil, as reported in Latin America (London), 4, no. 34 (August 28, 1970): 272.
5. An abridged version of the Commission's final report is published in Marcha (Montevideo), June 5, 1970, pp. 12-15. See also Núcleo de Estudios Nacionales, Torturas: Uruguay 70 (Montevideo: Grito de Asencio, 1970).
6. Latin America, 4 (December 18, 1970): 405.

7. For instance, during June 1970 some 40 police officers belonging to the Republican Guard, another of the National Police's six units, were collectively arrested when they refused to follow the rule that uniforms had to be worn on the way home. It seems that they were quite afraid of being recognized as police officers once their duty was over—thus increasing the possibility of being the target of reprisals. Marcha, June 12, 1970, p. 18.

8. For an evaluation of Uruguay's political decay, see R. H. McDonald, "Electoral Politics and Uruguayan Political Decay," Inter-American Economic Affairs, 26, no. 1 (Summer 1972): 25-45.

9. The Economist, 239, no. 6664 (May 15, 1971): 16.

10. They did so in two communiqués. The first was issued in December 1970 and appeared in Marcha, January 8, 1971, p. 7; in O. Costa, Los Tupamaros (Mexico City: Era, 1971), pp. 204-06; and was translated into English in Tricontinental Bulletin (Havana), 6, no. 62 (May 1971): 42-45. The second was issued on September 8, 1971, at the time of Ambassador Jackson's release; it appeared in the Chilean press on September 12, 1971, and was later published in Granma (Havana, English edition), September 19, 1971, p. 9.

11. Marcha, 33, no. 1571 (November 26, 1971): 19.

12. For a comprehensive account of Uruguay's armed forces and their changing political role, see G. Ramírez, Las Fuerzas Armadas Uruguayas en la Crisis Continental (Montevideo: Tierra Nueva, 1971); and L. de Ríz, "Ejército y Política en Uruguay," Revista Latinoamericana de Sociología, 6, no. 3 (September-December 1970): 420-39.

13. Information on torture by the military was obtained through interviews with former prisoners and from the following sources: Tricontinental no. 32 (September-October 1972): 135-38; Latin America, 6, no. 9 (September 1, 1972): 279; and Marcha, 33, no. 1586 (March 24, 1972): 14 and 15, and no. 1595 (June 2, 1972): 11.

14. Latin America, 6, no. 28 (July 14, 1972): 221.

15. Mr. Amodio Pérez's betrayal became well-known in Uruguay. See Latin America, 6, no. 19 (September 1, 1972): 279. It was rumored that it had come about for two reasons: first, that his authority had been reduced by the Tupamaros because of his personal ambition; and/or second, that he became convinced that political change in Uruguay could come about faster by trying to influence and work with the armed forces as agents of political reform.

During February 1973, Uruguay's army and air force—later joined by the navy—staged what some called a "soft coup."<sup>1</sup> Essentially, President Bordaberry was allowed by the military to remain in office in exchange for most of his constitutional powers. The military rebels required Bordaberry to set up a "security council," which was to include both civilian ministers and high military officers; its task would be to act as the highest government decision-making authority and, in effect, to rule the country. Hence, Uruguay's exceptionally long tradition of civilian and democratic government came to a formal end.

To Uruguayans the military's move came as no surprise. The armed forces had been given sweeping powers by both former President Pacheco and President Bordaberry in order to destroy the Tupamaros. As many expected, some of the generals developed a taste for power and a contempt for the (nonfunctional) traditional democratic institutions. The *New York Times* summarized the situation in an editorial that read as follows: "There is irony in the fact that Mr. Bordaberry is now a victim of the very success of his decision to supplant the police by the armed forces in his 'internal war' against the Tupamaros. In the course of destroying the guerrilla organization, the military leaders themselves became painfully aware of the defects of Uruguayan society which the Tupamaros had exploited."<sup>2</sup> Or, as *Latin America* put it, "Bordaberry's current situation is no more than the logical working out of the situation created by himself and Pacheco over the past four years."<sup>3</sup>

As has been seen, Bordaberry answered the Tupamaros' onslaught of April 1972 by declaring a 'state of internal war' and by unleashing the armed forces to confront and eliminate the Tupamaro guerrillas. That action was followed by legislature's approval, at the request of the President, of a harsh 'law of state security' in exchange for a lifting of the President's emergency powers (July 1972). That law institutionalized many of the tough antisubversion measures that Presidents Pacheco and Bordaberry had put into effect by decree, and it also broadened and stiffened prison sentences—a maximum of 30 years' imprisonment for revolutionary activities, 18 years for mere association with subversive groups, and up to 2 years in jail and heavy fines for journalists committing "press crimes."<sup>4</sup> In carrying out the President's mandate of destroying the Tupamaros, the armed forces were put in a position to

become, and did become, the leading cast of actors in Uruguay's political scene.

In their struggle against the Tupamaros, however, the armed forces became increasingly disillusioned about and contemptuous of traditional politicians. It appears that during the lengthy questioning of captured Tupamaros, the guerrillas provided the military with ample evidence on the extent of corruption in high political and business circles. Curious about the possibility of such widespread corruption, a few military officers began turning their attention to these embarrassing matters. They arrested several well-known businessmen and questioned a number of politicians. The military soon had its worst suspicions confirmed and began to undertake an increasingly broad and deep anticorruption campaign. Among the most notable casualties was Jorge Batlle, a prominent politician, former Presidential candidate, and a member of a distinguished family of statesmen that had contributed three Presidents to Uruguay's political history.<sup>5</sup>

In the end a number of the more nationalist-minded and younger military officers probably realized that there was much more in common between them and the Tupamaros than between either of them and many traditional politicians. Many of the jailed guerrillas seem to have decided that influencing and encouraging military officers to take over the country's government could well be one fruitful way of introducing political and economic change. Frustrated in its attempt to seize power, the captured Tupamaro leadership probably decided that it would be better to try to sway political events from behind bars than to watch all its carefully and patiently amassed political power and prestige go to waste.

The armed forces' take-over of power was triggered when, during January and early February 1973, a series of scandals involving government corruption was revealed.<sup>6</sup> A confrontation between President Bordaberry and a number of military officers ensued because of the latter's insistence on a thorough investigation and punishment of the guilty parties. The President and his predecessor, who for years had relied only on executive decrees and on the strength of the National Police and the armed forces, could count on help neither from the judicial or legislative branches nor from the population at large. The armed forces lacked ideological unity and a strong or charismatic leader but were elated by their successful anti-Tupamaro campaign and proud of their growing image as purgers of corruption and injustice. Hence, the battle lines having been drawn, the military attacked.

The policy changes advocated by the armed forces upon seizing power were set forth in a communiqué issued by army commander General Hugo Chiappe Pose and air force commander General José

Perez Caldas. Among the policy demands were land reform, a more equitable tax system, the elimination of private monopolies, workers' participation in their own businesses' decision-making, the cancellation of the country's foreign debt, and reform of the domestic banking and credit system.<sup>7</sup> Certainly it is very difficult to forecast the political future of Uruguay, particularly since among the nation's military officers neither a clear-cut ideological consensus nor an outstanding set of leaders has yet emerged. Thus, it is unknown whether the country's military, which is now de facto in charge of running the government, will actually carry out the reforms it has advocated. Nonetheless, it is very important to point out here that the military's demands and plans for reform do happen to reflect a few of the broad and many of the more specific ideological objectives originally put forth by the Tupamaros. (See Chapter 1.) For instance, "nationalism" and "socialism" seem very much a part of the military's underlying policy objectives—despite its formal condemnation of Marxist-Leninist political ideas. This is surely an ironic yet important coincidence. Indeed, it is interesting to note how the Tupamaros, even in their military defeat and yet also because of it, appear to have been so instrumental in shaping the ideological course of Uruguayan political events.

Given Uruguay's recent political history, what lessons have the Tupamaros taught us? First, that it is possible for a determined and intelligent group of urban guerrillas to endure, grow, and reach a position of dual power even within a considerably democratic and politically stable and advanced country. In other words, that it is possible for them to pose a credible threat of an armed take-over of power and to operate as a shadow, parallel government. Second, that a powerful urban guerrilla group can be defeated only through one of the following means: (a) by the guerrillas' lack of popular support, in which case the population itself rejects the social movement and becomes a willing partner in counterinsurgency operations; (b) by the government's instituting some or all of the ideological objectives sought by the guerrillas, thus robbing the social movement of its *raison d'être*; or (c) through ruthless repression, which of necessity bypasses individual liberties and constitutional rights. In the latter case, which reflects Uruguay's experience, one cannot forget that democracy and liberty are very much fated to become the casualties of counterguerrilla operations and their aftermath. And, third, that the failure of a guerrilla movement to achieve political power does not mean that it cannot influence a country's course of political events. In other words, and as is well known, ideas can last longer than organizations, and ideologies can survive longer than social movements do. In this sense Uruguay's Tupamaros are, yes, alive and well.

In a broader context the Tupamaros made an original and important contribution to the theory and history of revolutionary warfare. Stemming from their ideas and actions is what may become recognized as a new and rich chapter in the theory and practice of urban guerrilla warfare. By showing that a clandestine urban social movement can survive and grow, given appropriate strategic, organizational, and tactical schemes, they established the viability of revolutionary action within urban societies. Hopefully, the Tupamaros will not be taken as a model of what a revolutionary group ought to look like or even aim for. They are an example of how far a social movement can get when it does not follow established patterns and standard models. Their very survival and success must be taken as a lesson in how important it is for social movements of any ideological persuasion to establish their own realistic *modus operandi* according to each country's societal conditions. *Coyuntura* evaluation was, after all, a *sine qua non* Tupamaro principle. Also, they may well have taught us that social movements aiming to seize political power must remain flexible and eager to adapt to changing conditions. A revolutionary struggle, whether violent or not, is essentially a political struggle: it need not be won by defeating armies or eliminating government officials. Ideologies can grow and spread faster than formal power can be seized, and ideas can conquer minds just as thoroughly and permanently as swords can penetrate bodies.

## NOTES

1. *Time*, February 26, 1973, p. 37.
2. *The New York Times*, February 16, 1973, p. 36.
3. *Latin America*, 7, no. 7 (February 16, 1973): 49-50.
4. The complete text can be found in *Acción* (Montevideo), July 7, 1972, p. 7.
5. Mr. Batlle was arrested after delivering a broadcast denouncing military interference in politics. He probably knew that, with the help of the Tupamaros, several military officers had collected incriminating evidence linking him with illegal currency transactions and assorted profiteering. *Latin America*, 6, no. 4 (November 3, 1972): 345-46. Mr. Batlle's speech appeared in *Acción* (Montevideo), October 26, 1972.
6. *Latin America*, 7, no. 7 (February 16, 1973): 49-50.
7. *Ibid.*

A. "Documento No. 5," written in early 1971 and captured by the police on June 26, 1971. After its capture, the document was reprinted by the Ministry of Defense and circulated on a "Secret" (confidential) basis. Shortly thereafter, on July 16, 1971, it was released to the press and appeared in *La Idea* (San José, Uruguay) on July 17, 1971; *Cuestión* (Montevideo), 1, no. 8, August 28, 1971: 22-34; O. Costa, *Los Tupamaros* (Mexico City: Era, 1971), pp. 228-50; and A. Labrousse, *Los Tupamaros: Guerrilla Urbana en el Uruguay* (Buenos Aires: *Tiempo Contemporáneo*, 1971), pp. 285-322. The sections are numbered as follows I, "Situación Continental"; II, "Situación Nacional"; III, "Tesis Política"; IV, "Análisis de los Sectores Fundamentales"; "Tesis Económica"; "Tesis Militar"; VII, "Conclusiones."

B. "Treinta Preguntas a un Tupamaro," based on an interview with a high-ranking Tupamaro. It was originally published in "Los Tupamaros y la Lucha Armada," *Punto Final* (Santiago, Chile), June 2, 1968, pp. 1-5. It was reprinted in O. Costa, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-77; in A. Labrousse, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-79; in E. Mayans, ed., *Tupamaros* (Cuernavaca: Centro Intercultural de Documentación, 1971), 4/15 = 4/23; and also translated into English in J. Gerassi, ed., *The Coming of the New International* (New York and Cleveland: World Publishing, 1971), pp. 525-33. Since it is not divided into sections, the number of the question is referred to.

C. "Programa de Gobierno del MLN," written and released to the public by the Tupamaros on March 20, 1971. It was published in *Cuestión* (Montevideo), 1, no. 2 (April 14, 1971); in O. Costa, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-21; in Mayans, *op. cit.*, pp. 6/7 = 6/9; and translated into English in *Granma* (Havana), English ed., March 28, 1971, p. 12; and also in *Tricontinental Bulletin* (Havana), 6, no. 62 (May 1971): 46-48. Since it is relatively short, it was not divided into sections.

D. "Reglamento de la Organización," written at an unknown date. It circulated in Montevideo and was published in O. Costa, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-91. It is divided into 8 sections with 34 articles.

E. "Carta Abierta a la Policía," the earliest public statement by the Tupamaros. It was a letter written to the editor of *Epoca* (Montevideo), and was published on December 7, 1967—the

signatures being withheld. It is reprinted in O. Costa, op. cit., pp. 100-02, and in Mayans, op. cit., pp. 7/1 = 7/2. Since it is relatively short, it is not divided into sections.

F. "Documento No. 1," written in March 1972 and captured by the police on April 14, 1972; it was released to the press on May 2, 1972. It was published in La Mañana (Montevideo), May 3, 1972, p. 5; and in Marcha (Montevideo), 33 (May 5, 1972): 22-23. It is divided into four chapters with multiple subsections.

G. "Plan Tatú," probably written in March 1972; it was captured by the police in April of the same year and released to the press on June 10, 1972. It was published in two parts by La Mañana (Montevideo), June 11, 1972, p. 1, and June 12, 1972, p. 2. Its sections are numbered as follows: I, "Organización del Interior"; II, "Breve Fundamentación de la Necesidad de Instalar un Segundo Frente en la Campaña Uruguaya."

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