



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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Perspectives of Catalunya's Struggle for Independence

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- * 150th Anniversary of Das Kapital
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The picture on the cover shows the Spanish police attacking peaceful demonstrators in Catalonia on 1 October 2017. Source: Twitter.com #Catalanreferendum

Revolutionary Communism is the monthly English-language journal published by the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT). The RCIT has sections and activists in Zambia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Tunisia, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico, Aotearoa/New Zealand, Britain, Germany, and Austria.

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Editorial: Expansion of our Publications

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 28.11.2017

Dear readers,
We are glad to announce a change in our hardcopy publication system. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) started with the publication of an international English-language journal six years ago. Initially we were able to publish the *Revolutionary Communism* journal only irregularly. At that time we were a very small group struggling to become a real international tendency. Today, the RCIT has grown substantially both in numbers as well as in geographically spread. Today, we have sections and activists in more than a dozen countries on all continents.

As a result, we have massively increased the number of articles and essays which we publish. The RCIT considers it as one of its crucial tasks to follow the important world political events and to respond to them with serious analysis and revolutionary programmatic answers. Likewise we regularly elaborate more thorough essays and books on central questions which political life pose to the Marxist theory.

Based on such an understanding, we have produced – with increasing frequency – 75 issues of our international English-language journal since the autumn of 2011.

However, despite the fact that we publish the journal on a monthly basis, we increasingly face the problem that we do not have sufficient space for the increasing number of articles and essays which we produce. Hence, we have increasingly been forced to produce two issues per month or to leave various articles out.

Therefore we have decided to change the RCIT's hardcopy publication system. From now on we will publish two different international English-language publications. On one hand we will continue to publish a journal on a monthly basis. This journal will be called "*Revolutionary Liberation*" and will contain the RCIT's reports, statements and articles on actual political developments.

In addition we will publish a theoretical magazine. This magazine will continue to appear with the name "*Revolutionary Communism*" (*New Series*). It will contain the RCIT's longer, more theoretical articles and essays. It will appear irregularly but we assume that we will be able to publish it several times a year.

We appreciate comments, criticism and feedback from our readers!

Books of the RCIT

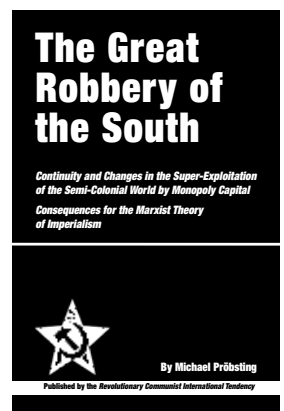
Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH*. The book's subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital*. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is *Michael Pröbsting* who is the International Secretary of the RCIT.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. The Great Robbery of the South shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin's theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions. *The Great Robbery of the South* demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before

has such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future. Order your copy NOW! \$20 / £13 / €15 plus p+p (21\$ for US and international, £9 for UK, €10 for Europe)



Catalunya's Struggle for Independence and its Pseudo-"Left-Wing" Critiques

On the nature of the Catalans' liberation struggle, the particular character of the imperialist Spanish State and the perspectives for revolutionaries

by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 27.10.2017

Introduction

Without any doubt, the focus of Europe's class struggle currently lies in Catalunya (we use here the Catalan name for Catalonia). This is a struggle for national self-determination and freedom against the most obvious and blatant violation of fundamental democratic rights at the hands of the Spanish State.

The RCIT has always supported the right of national self-determination for the Catalan people, as well as that of the Basque people, including the right to form their own state. When, through mass mobilizations of no less than one million people, it became clear that the majority of the Catalans and Basques desire separation from the Spanish oppressor state and wish to create their own republics, the RCIT unequivocally supported their demand for independence.¹

During the recent escalation we have unconditionally supported the Catalans' struggle for independence and combined this with a revolutionary perspective of class struggle for a Catalan Workers' Republic, in contrast and as opposed to bourgeois nationalism.²

Such an approach is not only the sole way to satisfy the wishes of the Catalan people, but also to create a fraternal unity of the Catalan and the Spanish working class based on freedom and equality and without any discrimination and mistrust.

Our program in support of the national liberation struggle of the Catalan people is based on the communist tradition. Lenin elaborated the Marxist position on the right of national self-determination in his writings:

*"Victorious socialism must necessarily establish a full democracy and, consequently, not only introduce full equality of nations but also realise the right of the oppressed nations to self-determination, i.e., the right to free political separation."*³

Later, this approach was included in the official program of the Bolshevik Party in 1919:

*"In order to remove mistrust felt on the part of the working class masses of the oppressed countries towards the proletariat of those states which oppressed them, it is necessary to abolish all privileges of any national group, to proclaim the full equality of nations and to recognize the rights of colonies and dependent nations to state separation."*⁴

In the following essay, we want to elaborate some thoughts on the meaning of the national liberation struggle of the Catalan people. In particular, we will debate some arguments which have been raised by "Marxist" opponents or half-heartedly supporters of the Catalan's struggle for independence.

The pseudo-leftists case against the Catalan's struggle for independence as a supposed uproar of a privileged province

Some pseudo-"Marxists" denounce the Catalan struggle for independence as the uproar of a privileged province. They claim that this struggle is primarily motivated by their desire to pay fewer taxes to the central Spanish government as well as by the Catalan people's disdain for poor provinces like Andalusia. As a result, such critics equate the Catalan independence movement with the Lega Nord in Italy's Lombardy and Veneto.

Here are a few examples. Dimitris Bellantis, an ex-member of the Central Committee of SYRIZA in Greece, recently published an article at the website of the left-wing US magazine *CounterPunch*. He reminds his readers of the supposedly reactionary secessionist movement of the Kosovars against the Serbian state – in fact he is only reminding us of his Greek chauvinist adaption to the Serbian oppressor state which brutally subjugated the Kosovo Albanians for nearly a century. Concerning the Catalans' desire for independence he writes:

*"Without the misuse and usurpation of that radical Catalan tradition of the past how different and how much more radical would the Catalan independence cause look than the cause of the Lega Lombarda's "free Lombardy" in Italy or the cause of "free Flanders" in Belgium? How much more supportable? Isn't it a case of the living wearing the dresses of the dead, as Marx formulated it in his classic work 'The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte'?"*⁵

The British pseudo-Trotskyist grouplet "*Socialist Fight*" is blowing into the same horn. Remaining faithful to its social-imperialist disdain for revolutionary democratic uprisings of oppressed peoples, like those in Syria, *SF* goes even further. Quoting approvingly a prominent representative of the neoliberal chauvinist Spanish *Ciudadanos* party, which supports the Rajoys coup, and with the help of the notorious Article 155, they unconvincingly suggest that we compare the Catalan independence movement with the semi-fascist EuroMaidan movement in the Ukraine in the spring of 2014!

"Win or lose, separatists could still take to the streets, warned Francesc de Carreras, a constitutional lawyer who helped launch Ciudadanos, a party firmly opposed to independence. "We should at least be ready for a Catalan version of Maidan," he said, referring to the square in Kiev that became the centre of the Ukrainian 'revolution' in February 2014. "It could create an even more unpredictable and tense situation," he said. "But the right to protest must also be respected in a democracy." And there you have the rightist essence of the movement, as in the Maidan, a few foolish leftists were swept along with that movement in February 2014, as they were in the "revolution"

against Morsi in Egypt a year earlier. When all those right-wing mass movements went so horribly wrong, in fact revealed their essence in the outcomes they produced, our “Marxists” were totally unable to explain and refused to examine their own errors.”⁶

It is certainly true that those Catalan capitalists and their compatriots of the upper-middle class who support the call for independence have not only national self-determination but also their own economic advantage in mind, like hoping to pay fewer taxes. This is, however, true for every capitalist and upper-middle class in all countries of the world where people who are discriminated against desire independence! The Chinese capitalists, the Irish middle class or the African businessmen who gave tacit support for the anti-colonial struggle in the 20th century certainly did this for similar selfish reasons! It is only the foolish Stalinists and petty-bourgeois nationalists who believe in the selfless motives of the bourgeoisie and the upper-middle class (in order to justify their own illusions), which in turn leads to the political subordination of the working class to these privileged classes.

In other words, for Marxists, the support of sectors of the capitalists and the upper-middle class for an independence movement is in itself neither an argument for nor against support by us. The decisive issue is whether a given movement for national self-determination represents or does not represent the desire of an oppressed or “dependent and underprivileged nation” (Lenin).⁷

Can Catalunya’s case for independence be compared with the reactionary Lega Nord campaign in Lombardy and Veneto?

Hence, any analogy between the situation of Catalunya and the reactionary Lega Nord campaign in Lombardy and Veneto is, in the best case, an expression of pure ignorance and, in the worst, a chauvinist assault against the Catalan people.

First, the Catalans constitute a nation. Even Spain’s anti-democratic post-Francoist constitution of 1978 recognizes the existence of the Catalans and the Basques as nationalities. The inhabitants of Lombardy and Veneto, while possessing a specific regional and cultural identity, do not constitute a nation separate from the Italian nation. Leaving aside the leaders of the extreme right-wing and racist *Lega Nord*, no one in Italy would characterize the people of Lombardy and Veneto as separate “nationalities.”

Secondly, the Catalan (as well as the Basque) minorities have been historically oppressed and underprivileged nations. For centuries they have been discriminated against by the Castilian-dominated ruling class of the Spain state and its centralist bureaucratic apparatus. Their language and their culture have been suppressed and historic Catalan leaders, like Lluís Companys, have been murdered by Madrid.

This is why Marxists, as Trotsky already elaborated in his writings on Spain in the 1930s, have historically recognized the duty to defend the Catalan’s national and democratic right against the imperialist Spanish State.

“But what has been said does not at all diminish the progressive revolutionary-democratic character of the Catalonian national struggle—against the Spanish great-power spirit, bourgeois imperialism and bureaucratic centralism. It must not be left out

of sight for a minute that Spain as a whole and Catalonia in particular are at present governed not by Catalonian national-democrats but by Spanish bourgeois-imperialists in alliance with the landowners, old bureaucrats in general, with the support of the Spanish national-socialists. This whole fraternity stands, on the one hand, for the continued subjugation of the Spanish colonies and, on the other—for the maximum bureaucratic centralization of Spain itself, that is, for the suppression by the Spanish bourgeoisie of the Catalonians, the Basques, etc. At the given stage of developments, with the given combination of class forces, Catalonian nationalism is a progressive-revolutionary factor. Spanish nationalism is a reactionary-imperialist factor. The Spanish Communist who does not understand this difference, ignores it, does not advance it to the front rank, but on the contrary, covers up its significance, risks becoming an unconscious agent of the Spanish bourgeoisie and is lost to the cause of the proletarian revolution.”⁸

Nothing like this can be said about the Italian provinces Lombardy and Veneto. The North has always dominated the country since the foundation of the modern Italian nation-state in 1870 and if there is something like a historically discriminated part of Italy, it is the South. The Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci even characterized Italy’s South – the *Mezzogiorno* – and its islands like Sicily and Sardinia as “internal colonies”. In his famous study on “*The Southern Question*”, he elaborates on the Italian communists’ statement written in 1920: “*The Northern bourgeoisie has subjugated the South of Italy and the Islands, and reduced them to exploitable colonies.*”⁹

Catalunya – a wealthy province compared to Madrid?

Another argument of the pseudo-Marxist opponents of Catalunya’s independence is that the region is wealthy with a higher income per capita than the average for Spain. It is certainly true that Catalunya belongs to the economically most developed parts of Spain. Without going into details, we note that this is part of the historic peculiarities of the Spanish state. Both most oppressed parts—Catalunya and Euskadi (Basque Country)—are those areas where capitalism and the creation of a proletariat took place much earlier than in other parts of the country. The Castilian ruling class in Madrid, with its backward and enlarged absolutist state apparatus, had to impose a bureaucratic centralist control on the country resulting in national oppression of these nationalities in order to profit from their advanced economic development.¹⁰

With 7.45 million people, the province of Catalunya accounts for 16% of Spain’s population and generates more than one-fifth of the Spanish GDP. It has a GDP per person of €26,996 while the country’s average is €22,780. Its exports of €65.2bn represent more than one-quarter of Spain’s total. Likewise it attracts more than one-quarter of inward investment to Spain. Furthermore, Catalunya has lower unemployment and generally less income inequality than the rest of Spain. We add, as a side note, that the Basque territories Euskadi (Basque Country, in Spanish: País Vasco) and Navarra, have an even higher per capita incomes (€29,683 and €28,124 respectively).

However, while Catalunya has a per capita GDP greater than the Spanish average, it is worth noting that it is significantly lower than that of Madrid – the dominant region of the country – which is indisputably the wealthiest

of all. (See Table 1)

In other words, even if Catalunya is relatively a wealthy region, the Castillian oppressor in Madrid is even wealthier.

Irrespective of this, it is nonsensical for Marxists to judge the legitimacy of a people's desire for independence according to the level of economic development. As every historian knows, Poland and Finland were economically much more developed than the Russian Empire before 1917, since capitalist development started in these two former countries earlier. This however, did not prevent the Russian Bolsheviks from fighting for Poland's and Finland's rights to separate from Russia and to create their own state. Lenin emphasized this internationalist and anti-chauvinist position numerous times:

*"Russian socialists who do not demand freedom to separate for Finland, Poland, the Ukraine, etc., etc. — that such socialists act as chauvinists and lackeys of bloodstained and filthy imperialist monarchies and the imperialist bourgeoisie."*¹²

Does Catalunya already have sufficient autonomy rights?

Some argue that Catalunya already has sufficient national rights. But let's examine the reality. The Catalans approved a new *Statute of Autonomy of Catalonia* by referendum, with a ¾ majority, in June 2006. This new law, among others, accepted the existence of Catalunya as a nation. However, the Castillian-dominated Constitutional Court of Spain effectively smashed this law in 2010 which provoked the regular mass mobilizations of more than one million people which we have witnessed in the region since then. These mobilizations took place under the apt slogan *"Som una nació. Nosaltres decidim"* ("We are a nation. We decide"). Catalunya's subordinated position is even clearer in the present situation. Just take the brutal assault of the paramilitary Guardia Civil against the independence referendum on 1 October which resulted, according to the Catalan health department, in 1,066 people injured (23 of them older than 79 years of age and two under 11)!¹³ What was the crime of the Catalan people? Exercising their right to vote peacefully in a referendum! And there are numerous other examples like the imprisonment of the

ANC leader (Jordi Sànchez) and Òmnium Cultural's (Jordi Cuixart) for purely political reasons and the closure of 140 pro-independence websites.¹⁴ The hatred of Castillian chauvinists for the Catalans even takes such bizarre proportions as the opening of disciplinary proceedings against the Catalan club *Reus* by the Spanish Football Federation for displaying a large *senyera* (official Catalan flag) at a football match, on the grounds that this could provoke *"violence, racism, xenophobia or intolerance"*!¹⁵

How can a people be free if the central government has the power, under Article 155 of Spain's constitution, to dissolve, with one stroke, the regional government and parliament, to transfer the regional treasury to the finance ministry in Madrid, to pressurize companies to leave the region¹⁶, etc.?!¹⁷

Finally, take the Spanish constitution, which legitimizes all these rabid chauvinist forms of oppression against the Catalan people as well as against the Basque people. It explicitly states *"the Spanish Nation"* (a formulation which explicitly denies the fact that the Catalans and the Basques are separate nations) constitutes an *"indissoluble unity"*. It states in Section 2:

*"The Constitution is based on the indissoluble unity of the Spanish Nation, the common and indivisible homeland of all Spaniards."*¹⁸

This formulation means nothing less than the rejection of any nationality within the Spanish state to exercise its right of national self-determination which, by definition, includes the right to secede from the state. In short, Catalunya is not free – neither in legal nor in practical terms.

Is the big Catalan bourgeoisie the driving force behind separatism?

Another argument by the pseudo-Marxist opponents of Catalunya's independence is the claim that the big Catalan bourgeoisie is behind the mass campaign for separation. This is however not true, as the Josep Maria Antentas, a progressive professor of sociology at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, points out in an informative article published by the US-American *Jacobin* magazine:

"The high bourgeoisie has opposed the independence process"

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*Written by Michael Pröbsting
(International Secretary of the RCIT)*

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from the beginning and consistently attempted from behind the scenes to derail it.”¹⁹

This has been also been demonstrated by the mass and rapid departure of about 700 corporations that transferred their headquarters out of Catalunya in the past weeks. The big capitalists’ opposition to independence also becomes clear when we see the huge pressure they placed on Catalunya’s Prime Minister Carles Puigdemont resulting in his vacillation on declaring independence. This reactionary opposition of big capital against independence also became evident during the general strike on 3 October when the bosses exerted huge pressure on the workers not to join the protests.

No, the social basis of the mass movement for independence is the lower middle class, the youth and the majority of the working class. The involvement of the proletariat is particularly remarkable given the strong pressure of the reformist, pro-Spanish chauvinist trade union bureaucracy of both federations, the CCOO and UGT, against the independence movement. This however did not prevent the pro-independence trade union activists from organizing themselves as the left-wing *Alternative Interunion Committee of Catalonia* which unites numerous branches of different trade unions in the region.

Is the Spanish State is a “normal” capitalist state or is it an imperialist “prison of the people”?

It is important to bear in mind that Spain is not a “normal” capitalist state for two reasons. First it is an imperialist state with a long and extremely brutal history of colonialism in Latin America, Africa and Asia. In Latin America, Spanish colonial rule led to the death of 8.5 out of 10 million indigenous people in the years 1519 to 1564. While its capitalist economy developed belatedly and, hence, as a weaker imperialist state compared with, let’s say, France or Germany, it has nevertheless the fourth-

largest economy in the Eurozone. It is home for a number of globally active multinational corporations like *Banco Santander*, *Telefónica*, or *BBVA-Banco Bilbao Vizcaya* which were ranked among the top 100 corporations in the *Forbes Global 2000* list in 2011.²⁰

Capital export plays an important role in big Spanish capital, as is reflected by its Foreign Direct Investment Outward Stock being 41.9% of its GDP, which is higher than the level of Italy (24.9%) and Germany (39.4%).²¹

In short, the Spanish state is an imperialist power, albeit not of the first order like the US, UK, Germany or France.

In addition, the Spanish state is not even a bourgeois democratic republic, but a state which combines parliamentary democracy with a reactionary monarchy at its top. The recent speeches of King Felipe VI, with his chauvinist denunciation of the Catalan’s desire for independence, are a powerful demonstration of the reactionary nature of this monarchy. Catalunya’s struggle for independence has therefore also an additional democratic character, as it is a struggle to free the Catalan people from the monarchist system.

Furthermore, it is a state with a large share of minority nationalities and, for this reason, a strong tradition of bureaucratic centralism and rabid chauvinism. According to official figures Catalan (or Valencian) is spoken by 17%, Galician by 5% and Basque by 2% of all Spaniards. In fact, these numbers could be higher, as a report published by Catalunya’s government indicates. (See Table 2)

“In Spain there are 18.4 million people living in regions with more than one official language. This represents 41.3% of the total population of the State, which includes the regions of the autonomous communities of Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, the Comunitat Valenciana, Galicia, the Basque Country and Navarra. It is also necessary to highlight two other regions, with 2.3 million inhabitants, where in addition to Castilian other languages are spoken which have not achieved official status in their respective autonomous statutes. These are Aragon (where

Table 1. Spain: GDP per person in selected regions of Spain, in Euros, year 2014¹¹

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Madrid | 31,004 |
| País Vasco (Basque Country) | 29,683 |
| Navarra | 28,124 |
| Catalonia | 26,996 |
| Andalusia | 16,884 |
| Spain average | 22,780 |

Table 2. Autonomous communities in which there is more than one official language²³

| Autonomous Community | Population | % of Spain |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Catalonia | 7,134,697 | 16.0 |
| Balearic Islands | 1,001,062 | 2.2 |
| Comunitat Valenciana | 4,806,908 | 10.8 |
| Galicia | 2,767,524 | 6.2 |
| Basque Country | 2,133,684 | 4.8 |
| Navarra | 601,874 | 1.3 |
| Total | 18,445,749 | 41.3 |

Castilian, Catalan and Aragonese are spoken, in different parts of the region) and Asturias, where Asturian is spoken.”²²

If we add to this the fact that 11-12% of Spain’s population are migrants, it becomes even more obvious that the country’s population has an extraordinary multinational composition. Hence, the dominance of the Castilian-dominated bourgeoisie and its state apparatus can only be maintained by massive national oppression and bureaucratic centralism of these minorities.

In other words, it is crucial to understand that the Spanish state is not a “normal” capitalist state. It is a state dominated by the imperialist Castilian bourgeoisie which, from its inception, discriminated and oppressed ethnic and national minorities like the Catalans, the Basques or the Galicians.

While it would take us too far afield to go into this in detail, we wish to remark that this Castilian chauvinist character of the Spanish state is a result of its peculiar history. The total defeat of an early bourgeois revolution of the cities in 1520/21 as well as of later rebellions against the absolutist reign in Madrid – both in Catalunya as well as other parts of the country – helped to foster a strong and arch-reactionary feudal regime with very strong ties to the Catholic Church. The notorious Spanish Inquisition which began in 1478 and was absolutely abolished only in 1834, and which prosecuted about 150,000 persons, was also an important feature of the absolutist monarchy in Spain.

Likewise there was the vicious campaign of coerced Christianization, accompanied by numerous pogroms, which finally resulted in the complete expulsion of its non-Christian minorities like the Muslims (up to one million people) and the Jews (up to 350,000 people). This, too, was an early and bloody hallmark of Spanish chauvinism.

Furthermore, the Spanish state was characterized by its late unification with the long enduring relative autonomy of the Kingdoms of Aragon and Navarra. At the same time, it was precisely the regions of its ethnic/national minorities – such as the Basque Country, Catalunya, and Galicia – which experienced an industrial revolution in the 19th century earlier than in the rest of Spain. In the second half of the 19th century, about 80% of Spain’s industry was located in these regions (40% in Catalunya alone) and only 20% in the central regions of the country.²⁴

Hence, a Castilian-dominated backward center in Madrid could only keep power over the economically more advanced minorities by imposing strict authoritarian centralization over them.

For all these reasons the Spanish state has always been a “prison of the people” and remains so until today.

Would an independent capitalist Catalunya constitute a small imperialist state?

Let us deal in this context briefly with the question what would be the class character of an independent Catalunya. Given the fact that this region is an industrial and commercial center and home to many domestic and foreign corporations, it is a realistic possibility that an independent capitalist state Catalunya could become a small imperialist state.

We don’t need to repeat that socialists in Catalunya have to fight strongly against such an outcome. They have

to rally the working class against not only the Spanish bourgeoisie but also against the Catalan bourgeoisie. They have to strive for the creation of an independent Workers Republic of Catalunya.

However, we remark en passé that the possibility of a failure of such a perspective and the creation of a capitalist or even imperialist independent Catalunya certainly would not constitute a legitimate reason to withdraw support for the national liberation struggle. Is a strong imperialist state of Spain better? Anyway, socialists can only influence the outcome of the independence struggle if they join the popular masses fighting for their legitimate national rights and not by staying aside.

Nevertheless we want to point out that it is by far not certain that an independent capitalist Catalunya would have an imperialist character. Given the current massive flight of capital from Catalunya (as we stated above about 700 companies have already departed in the past weeks) when the independence process has only be announced but by far not implemented and given the opposition by most of Catalunya’s big bourgeoisie, it is not very likely that an independent capitalist republic would have an imperialist character. This is even more the case if the imperialist European Union continues its unconditional support for the Spanish state and its suppression of the Catalans.

Therefore, one has to take into account the negative economic effects of an ongoing hostile stand of the Spanish state as well as the European Union against an independent capitalist Catalunya. Hence, it is quite possible that such an independent capitalist Catalunya would be rather an advanced semi-colonial country.

Let us remark as an aside that it has always been a daydream of the bourgeois Catalan nationalists that they could achieve independence with the consent of Madrid and Brussels so that they could start a happy life as a new capitalist state “as part of the European family”. Spain’s ruling class can not accept independence because it would weaken its state and economy too much and furthermore it could encourage similar mass movements for national self-determination in the rest of Spain (as we have seen above there are several other discriminated people in the Spanish state). And the European Union does not want to recognize Catalunya’s independence because it needs a strong Spanish state and because it fears that this could encourage similar movements in other European countries.

Does the independence struggle split the working class of Spain?

Let us finally deal with another argument of the pseudo-Marxist opponents of Catalunya’s independence. They refer to the multi-ethnic character of the working class in Catalunya as well as to the dangers of a split of the proletariat in Spain along nationalist lines.

For example the *League for the Fifth International* (L5I), which increasingly forgets its revolutionary roots, writes: “Nevertheless, we also need to be aware that this conflict could well unleash dangerous and destructive forces of national chauvinism, dividing and poisoning the consciousness of the working class and youth of the entire Spanish state. It is no wonder that both Rajoy and Puigdemont head neoliberal, right

wing, bourgeois parties and will be delighted to see the workers and other progressive forces divided and pitted against one another.”²⁵

And in another article, these comrades state: “Therefore a unilateral and irrevocable declaration of independence by the parliamentary majority, let alone by Carles Puigdemont as President of the autonomous regional authority, would run the danger of splitting the population into those for and against complete independence. (...) Given the circumstances in which the referendum was organised and conducted, the result, whilst high, is not a qualitative change from the 40 to 45 per cent reputable opinion polls showed to be in favour of independence, and is clearly not a mandate for secession. (...) The relatively weak response of the organised working class on October 3 indicates that any unilateral declaration of independence, which Puigdemont insists will come in a few days, will not have the support of a majority of Catalans or of the working class of the province. (...) The first victim of the conflict between Spanish chauvinists and Catalan nationalists has been the working class across the peninsula.”²⁶

As a matter of fact we have to point out that the multi-ethnic character of the working class in Catalunya is not a new phenomenon but has been the case throughout the whole history of the region’s capitalist development. Such, for example, in 1900 23% of all workers in Barcelona and 31% in 1920 came from other provinces.²⁷

This, however, has never stopped Marxists to support Catalonia’s right of national self-determination. Trotsky made this very clear in his programmatic work on the Spanish Revolution in 1931.

“However, precisely in order to draw the line between the nationally, oppressed workers and peasants and their bourgeoisie, the proletarian vanguard must occupy the boldest and sincerest

position in the question of national self-determination. The workers will fully and completely defend the right of the Catalonians and Basques to lead an independent state life, in the event that the majority of these nationalities have expressed themselves for complete separation.”²⁸

Of course, Marxists do not light-mindedly support the separation and the creation of a new state. They do so only if the majority of a given nation wishes to do so. In the 1930s, Trotsky did not positively advocate Catalunya’s independence as he did not consider it as clear that the majority of the Catalan people wish for this.

Today, we have a different situation. Contrary to the mythology which is spread by various economists like the LSI, the Catalan people have made clear their wish for independence. They have done this by regular mass mobilizations of more than a million in the past years – when, in comparison, the pro-Spanish chauvinists never achieved any mobilization in a similar size. Their by far most successful show of force was their demonstration on 8 October which was attended by not more than 350.000 people (including unashamed Franco admirers and Neo-Nazis). It is however important to bear in mind that this demonstration included many non-Catalan participants which were transported with buses from outside of Catalunya. In other words, even this demonstration does not reflect the real state of weak support for the pro-Spanish sector.

The Catalan people have shown their wish for independence when they elected a parliament in September 2015 in which the pro-independence parties have a majority of deputies. They have shown this even more in the historic referendum on 1 October, when more than 92.01% voted Yes for independence. The turnout

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Greece - A Modern Semi-Colony

The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – GREECE: A MODERN SEMI-COLONY. The book’s subtitle is: *The Contradictory Development of Greek Capitalism, Its Failed Attempts to Become a Minor Imperialist Power, and Its Present Situation as an Advanced Semi-Colonial Country with Some Specific Features*. It contains six chapters (144 pages) and includes 12 tables, 35 figures and 4 maps. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

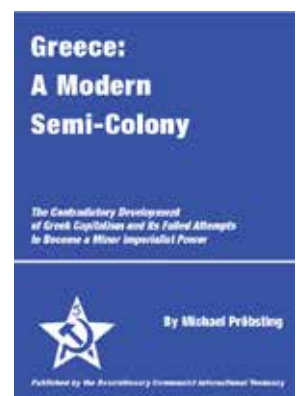
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

Greece is at the forefront both of the capitalist crisis in Europe as well as of the class struggle. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that what the Arab Revolution has been for the world in the past few years, Greece has been for Europe.

Subsequently, the question of the class character of Greece is of crucial importance both for the domestic as well as for the international workers movement: Is it an imperialist

state, a semi-colonial country or something else, and what are its specific features?

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Marxists’ theoretical conception of imperialist respectively semi-colonial states. In Chapter II we give a brief historical overview of the development of Greek capitalism. In Chapter III we deal with Greece’s failed attempt to become a minor imperialist power. In Chapter IV we outline the historic crisis of Greek capitalism from 2008 until today. In Chapter V we elaborate the most important programmatic conclusions and in the last Chapter we present a summary in the form of theses. The book contains 12 Tables, 35 Figures and 4 Maps. ■



of the referendum was 43.03% - despite a massive and brutal repression by the Spanish police. As a result of this repression the ballots of many voters were destroyed or they were actually hindered to vote at all. All in all the Catalan government estimates that 770,000 additional voters - 14.5% of all registered voters - would have been able to have their votes counted. It is simple logic that the 770,000 votes which could not be counted would have a similar 90% pro-independence result as the rest of the votes. This means an additional 13% in favor of independence to the counted 43%. Add to this the many people which did not go to the polls out of fear of repression. In short, this referendum made very clear that the majority of the Catalan people support the creation of an independent state.

This was finally confirmed once more by the huge and militant general strike on 3 October which was a powerful demonstration that the majority of the Catalan working class supports independence despite the repression of the state and despite the bureaucratic sabotage of the trade union leaderships.

Naturally, Marxists must not discount the negative influence of bourgeois Catalan nationalism. They must wage a program for full equality for all ethnical and national groups in Catalunya - in particular the numerous migrants. There are strong starting points for this since Barcelona is home of the most powerful pro-refugee solidarity movement in the whole of Europe. This has been demonstrated in numerous mass demonstrations in defense of the rights of refugees and against the imperialist fortress Europe. This shows, by the way, how absurd the accusations of numerous pseudo-left fools are which accuse the Catalan national movement as "chauvinist" and "xenophobic". In fact, the Catalan national movement in its majority is clearly progressive and anti-racist. And it is in particular very progressive and anti-fascist if we compare it with the arch-reactionary and chauvinist pro-Spanish unity demonstrations which are always a pole of attraction for the Franco supporters!

Likewise, as we elaborated in various statements in recent weeks, Marxists in Catalunya should argue for a joint perspective of struggle of the workers in the whole of Spain.

But we strongly reject the idiotic argument that Marxists should oppose independence because it would split the working class. The working class is first and foremost split by national oppression and capitalist exploitation! It is united not by the boundary posts of an imperialist monarchy but by the struggle for joint goals against a common enemy. Such joint goals could be demands like democracy and freedom, equality, higher wages, etc. The current high state of mobilization of the Catalan working class around the issue of independence - as well as the broad sympathies they receive from the brothers and sisters in Euskadi and Galicia - are a strong factor for a higher stage of class struggle in the whole of Spain.

Some final remarks on the perspectives for revolutionaries

In fact, Catalunya is close to a pre-revolutionary situation - the first time since a very long time that we experience such a development in Western Europe! This reflects that the struggle for national liberation can be an excellent starting point to advance the class struggle. It is not a factor for splitting and weakening but of strengthening and advancing the working class struggle!

It would be foolish to underestimate the meaning of the Catalan liberation struggle not only for the class struggle in Spain but for the whole of Europe. This is a major popular uprising in one of the core countries of the imperialist European Union. This is why the political establishment of the EU unconditionally sides with the new Bonsai-Franco in Madrid. The disintegration of the Spanish State would substantially weaken the imperialist fortress Europe and could encourage popular uprisings in other countries.

It seems likely that the current crisis in Catalunya will not be over soon. Given the coward bourgeois leadership around Puigdemont and the vacillating petty-bourgeois and left-wing forces (ERC, CUP, etc.) inside the Catalan mass movement, a quick victory for the independence struggle looks unlikely. On the other hand, the central government in Madrid can not operate in political conditions - both in Spain as well as in Europe - which would allow to quickly smash the Catalan independence movement with full military force. A protracted political crisis is therefore the most likely scenario for next few months.

It is crucial that revolutionaries use the time to organize the revolutionary democratic struggle independent of and in opposition to bourgeois nationalist forces and combine it with a socialist perspective. Naturally, working inside a mass movement is impossible without applying the united front tactic towards other forces that are a legitimate part of it. Naturally, there is nothing wrong with working together with such non-revolutionary forces inside the popular movement against Rajoy's anti-democratic coup. But the most decisive task now is to organize the workers and oppressed independently of those bourgeois forces, to build mass popular assemblies and self-defense units and, most importantly, to advance the formation of a revolutionary party.

This necessitates the formulation and propagation of a clear revolutionary strategy and program. The Bible's saying "*In the beginning was the Word*" is a basic truth in revolutionary politics. Hence, it is of crucial importance for revolutionaries to spread a clear set of tactics and strategies, to fight for them inside the mass movement for independence, to bring together activists with a like-minded outlook and to create a first organized nucleus of militants on the basis of a joint program. At the beginning such a group might be small but the clarity of its program, combined with a determined intervention in the mass struggle, will assure that a larger organization and finally a combat party will emerge out of such a collective work!

In summary, authentic revolutionaries must wholeheartedly support the mass movement for Catalunya's independence. They must fight against the influence of bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois forces inside the movement. They should advocate a program

of intransigent class struggle as an alternative to the left-reformist adaption of CUP, despite the fact that it contains many socialist and revolutionary-minded activists in its ranks, towards the bourgeois forces of the *Junts pel Sí* (JxSí) alliance. Revolutionaries should argue against bourgeois nationalism and for an internationalist program of struggle for the whole of Spain and Europe. They should also unite in a revolutionary party in order to fight in an organized way against the Spanish state and against the vacillating influences inside the pro-independence popular movement. As part of such a perspective, revolutionaries must also strongly reject the arguments of the pseudo-leftist opponents of the Catalan's independence struggle.

* * * * *

For the RCIT's analysis of Catalonia's struggle for independence, we refer readers to the following documents:

RCIT: Catalonia: Puigdemont & Co. fear the Consistent Struggle for Independence! After postponing the Declaration of Independence by the Catalan Government – Only Mass Actions of the Militant and Self-Organized Working Class and Oppressed can open the Road to Victory! Fight for an Independent Workers Republic of Catalonia! 11.10.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/puigdemont-fears-the-consistent-struggle-for-catalonia-s-independence/>

RCIT: Catalonia after the Referendum: Forward to Independence! 02.10.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/catalonian-referendum-was-popular-uprising/>

RCIT: Catalonia: Support the Democratic Right for Independence! For an independent Workers' Republic of Catalonia (and the Basque country)! 26.09.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/support-catalonias-independence/>

Almedina Gunić: Catalonia: This is what Democracy looks like. The Spanish ambassador in Britain explains bourgeois democracy, 23 September 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/spanish-state-in-catalonia-this-is-what-democracy-looks-like/>

Manfred Maier: 1 October 2017: Big Decision for Catalonia, 21.09.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/big-decision-for-catalonia/>

RCIT: Catalonia: For the Immediate Release of All Arrested Officials! Stop the Criminalization of the Independence Referendum and its Supporters! Participate at the referendum and vote "Yes" for independence! Organize immediate self-defense units! 21 Sept 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/repression-against-catalonia/>

RCIT: Theses on Recent Major Developments in the World Situation. Escalation of Inner-Imperialist Rivalry Marks the Opening of a New Phase of World Politics, April 2014, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 22, pp. 44-45, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-april-2014/>

RCIT: The World Situation and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Communists, March 2013, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 8, p. 40, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-march-2013>

Footnotes

1 For example, in 2014 we wrote: "Against the backdrop of the deepening economic and political crisis of capitalism, the *national question in Europe* takes on greater significance. As in all other democratic issues, Marxists have to differentiate between the aspirations of an oppressed, discriminated against, or non-equal nation and those of oppressor or privileged nation. Therefore the RCIT supports the legitimate struggles of the former and vehemently opposes those of the latter. We support the right of national self-determination for the discriminated nations. This means that we call for equality in terms language rights, access to the state resources, etc. In those cases where the majority of a non-equal nation wishes an independent state, Marxists have to support this. Thus they call for an *independent workers' republic* for the given nation and combine this with the slogan of *United Socialist States of Europe*. Furthermore, they have to launch vehement *agitation* against nationalism and for the international unity of the working class. In other cases, Marxists will support the call for autonomy and forms of self-government of the respective territories. Such support for national and democratic rights has to be applied to all non-equal nations, irrespective of whether they are situated within imperialist or semi-colonial states, and regardless of whether they would, after secession, find themselves within another imperialist or a semi-colonial state (if the working class cannot take power in time). This is only logical since all democratic demands against discrimination – like equal rights for women, youth, lesbian and gays, etc – apply not only to the working class members of these groups but also those of the middle class and the bourgeoisie. Based on this methodological approach, the RCIT supports the desire of the Basque and the Catalan people to leave the oppressive Spanish state and to form their own republics. We say: "For an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia and of the Basque Country!" The harsh long-time suppression of the Basque nationalists by the Spanish state and the recent decision of Madrid to ban the planned referendum on independence in Catalonia demonstrate that the national question in Spain has an explosive democratic character. The Spanish workers' movement must mobilize against the reactionary Spanish state and at the same time advocate the joint workers' struggle against the austerity offensive of the PP government. On the other hand, there are also reactionary separatist movements like the Venetian one. This is reactionary campaign of a privileged non-nation which must be resolutely opposed by the workers' movement." (RCIT: Theses on Recent Major Developments in the World Situation. Escalation of Inner-Imperialist Rivalry Marks the Opening of a New Phase of World Politics, April 2014, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 22, pp. 44-45, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-april-2014/>)

2 On this, see the various RCIT documents on the recent crisis in Catalonia cited at the end of this article.

3 V. I. Lenin: The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (1916); in: LCW 22, p. 143

4 Program of the RKP(B): adopted March 22, 1919 at the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party; in: Robert H. McNeal and Richard Gregor: Resolutions and decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Vol.2, The Early Soviet Period: 1917-1929, University of Toronto Press, Toronto 1974, p.61

5 Dimitris Bellantis: On Catalonia: Debates in the Greek Left, October 18, 2017, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2017/10/18/on-catalonia-debates-in-the-greek-left/>. A similar point is made by an US academic, Benjamin Studebaker: "But this isn't really about Catalonia versus Madrid—it's about Catalonia versus Andalusia. (...) In the Catalan case, an independent Catalonia would mean that the Spanish government would have less tax revenue to redistribute to poor and working people in places like Andalusia." (The Left-Wing Case Against Catalan Independence, 22.9.2017, <https://benjaminstudebaker.com/2017/09/22/the-left-wing-case-against-catalan-independence/>)

6 Socialist Fight: The Rights of Nations to Self-

determination: Catalonia's Referendum and the Spanish State, 06/10/2017, <https://socialistfight.com/2017/10/06/the-rights-of-nations-to-self-determination-catalonias-referendum-and-the-spanish-state/>

7 V. I. Lenin: Draft Theses on National and Colonial Questions for the Second Congress of the Communist International (1920), in: Lenin's Collected Works (LCW), Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, Vol. 31, p. 148, <http://marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/jun/05.htm>

8 Leon Trotsky: The Progressive Character of Catalan Nationalism (1931), in: Leon Trotsky: The Spanish Revolution (1931-39), Pathfinder Press, New York 1973, p. 110, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1931/spain/spain03.htm>

9 On this see, e.g., Antonio Gramsci: Some Aspects of the Southern Question (1926), in: Antonio Gramsci. Selections from Political Writings 1921-1926, Lawrence and Wishart Ltd, London 1978, pp. 441-462

10 On this see, e.g., Angel Smith: The Origins of Catalan Nationalism, 1770-1898; Julie Marfany: Land, Proto-Industry and Population in Catalonia, c. 1680-1829 An Alternative Transition to Capitalism? Ashgate Publishing Limited, Farnham 2012; Albert Balcells: Catalan Nationalism - Past and Present, Palgrave, New York 1996; Walther L. Bernecker, Horst Pietschmann: Geschichte Spaniens - von der frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart, Verlag W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1993

11 Instituto Nacional de Estadística: Spanish Regional Accounts. Base 2010. Regional Gross Domestic Product. Year 2014, 27 March 2015, p. 3

12 V.I.Lenin: The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination (1916), in: LCW Vol. 22, p. 154.

13 On this see the excellent and highly informative blog of Dick Nichols, the European correspondent of the Australian left-wing paper Green Left Weekly, who is stationed in Barcelona: "Live Blog: Catalonia independence struggle", <https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/live-blog-catalonia-independence-struggle>. We rote, as an aside, that the massive scale of the brutal attack by the Guardia Civil against the Catalan referendum does not stop the ex-Trotskyist "League for the 5 International" to belittle this horrific events of 1 October, claiming that the police made no serious effort to stop the referendum: "That explains the fact that the police operation on Sunday, whilst incontestably brutal, was more about making a demonstration than actually suppressing the vote. The vast majority of the police remained confined to quarters, and the Spanish state made no serious effort to actually stop the vote going ahead." This is consistent with the idea of this organization, which is opposed to Catalunya's independence, that the Catalan people

in their majority are opposed to independence: "Had a legal and democratic referendum taken place, it would likely have gone against the separatists and settled the question." (L5I: Defend democracy in Spain and Catalonia, 04/10/2017, <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/defend-democracy-spain-and-catalonia>)

14 ANC is the Catalan acronym for *Assemblea Nacional Catalana* (Catalan National Assembly).

15 See Live Blog: Catalonia independence struggle

16 Even the car manufacturer SEAT, based in the Catalan city of Martorell, denounces the Spanish government and its "monarchical" pressure to relocate its headquarters out of Catalonia! See on this Dick Nichols Live Blog

17 On Article 155 of the Spanish Constitution, see: Creede Newton: What is Article 155 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution? Al Jazeera, 19.10.2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/article-155-spanish-constitution-171019100117592.html>

18 La Moncloa. Constitution of Spain, Preliminary Title, http://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/espana/leyfundamental/Paginas/titulo_preliminar.aspx

19 Josep Maria Antentas: Catalonia's Decision, Jacobin, 2 October 2017, <https://jacobinmag.com/2017/09/catalonia-independence-referendum-spain-podemos>

20 Forbes: Forbes Global 2000, Values calculated April 2011, <http://www.forbes.com/global2000/list/>

21 UNCTAD: FDI outward stock as a percentage of GDP 1990-2016, <http://unctad.org/en/Pages/DIAE/World%20Investment%20Report/Annex-Tables.aspx>

22 Generalitat de Catalunya: Catalan, language of Europe, p. 25

23 Generalitat de Catalunya: Catalan, language of Europe, p. 26

24 Walther L. Bernecker, Horst Pietschmann: Geschichte Spaniens, p. 245

25 L5I: Spain: Defeat Rajoy's coup against Catalonia, 21/09/2017, <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/spain-defeat-rajoy%E2%80%99s-coup-against-catalonia>

26 L5I: Defend democracy in Spain and Catalonia, 04/10/2017, <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/defend-democracy-spain-and-catalonia>

27 Walther L. Bernecker, Horst Pietschmann: Geschichte Spaniens, p. 249

28 Leon Trotsky: The Revolution In Spain (1931), in: Leon Trotsky: The Spanish Revolution (1931-39), Pathfinder Press, New York 1973, p. 78, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1931/spain/spain04.htm>

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Interview with Russian Marxists: Imperialism, Authoritarian Regime and the Left in Russia

Below we publish an interview with the Marxist Group “Class Politics”, a Marxist organization in Russia. Their website is <https://mgkp.github.io>

Question: How do you view the present political situation in Russia under the Putin’s rule?

Answer: It’s better to answer on every of these questions by separate article. But as we don’t have such materials for this moment and we have only plans to write them we will answer in short now.

In Russia we have an authoritarian regime which serves the interests of big capital. Some time ago we had the anniversary (18 years) of Mister Putin coming into power in the country and there is whole new generation grown which doesn’t know anybody as the actual head of the state except this “national leader”. A part of this generation is coming out now to the street politics. One of the main reasons why they go out to the streets is that there is no possibility to change toppings of power.

In our opinion, it’s wrong to describe this regime as “totalitarian” or stable. Despite of public opinion polls official data which speak about high level of support of Putin by Russian citizens, the regime has to falsify the results of elections and have to make vicious propaganda in mass media. These actions are connected with constant growth of those forces which are in opposition to the current authorities. The main reason of this is the rapid fall of the living standard which is associated with the permanent economic decline in the last three years.

The relative instability of regime is compensated by the absence not only of any genuine revolutionary party of the working class here in Russia (currently, there is no such party in the world too). Moreover, there is not even a reformist (and any other bourgeois) workers’ party in Russia. Thus, the working class is unorganized. Even parties of the petty bourgeoisie and middle bourgeoisie are small and follow the more organized class – bourgeoisie – and they don’t have big public support yet. As a result adopting of such laws as the infamous “Yarovaya package” – which sells total surveillance for Russian citizens to them as a security measure – becomes possible.

However, we think that the next “elections” of president Putin which will take place in the spring of 2018 will be an important political event which, we think, will be accompanied with mass protests. We expect that these protests will be accompanied with repression by the authorities and could provoke growth of disagreements and radicalization of the masses. At this moment, we can see elements of such oppressions in the constant state and police brutality against followers of Navalny (court investigations, beatings, arrests of estates and computer office equipment and agitation materials), and in the form of some last new tendencies when FSB (Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation), political police (centers for fighting “extremism”) with participation of pro-authority right-wing ruffians “Cossacks” shut

down summer camps of so called “revolutionary left organizations” and feminist women (there were three cases during one month in Russia: in Crimea, Krasnodar region and near Moscow).

Question: How do you see the role of bourgeois opposition forces?

Answer: The bourgeois opposition is represented by few organizations that have petty-bourgeois character. The most famous representative of it and the current factual leader of a big part of this opposition is Alexei Navalny. His organization is opening regional offices for his president election campaign all over Russia with the main goal – fighting “corruption” in the state apparatus. Last time they could organize two very large street actions with this slogan which involved new people to the political fight.

Notably, there was mass participation of secondary school and university students in these protests.

This increase of political activities is mainly caused by the rapid fall of living standard of the masses which has been dropping since 2014.

The so-called left parties and organizations generally aren’t ready to transform this growth of dissatisfaction into class struggle for power and influence in working population. As result such dissatisfied groups lend support to opposition factions of the bourgeoisie. At this moment, it is these forces which help to raise the political consciousness in the masses and direct this hatred against “corrupt politicians” but at same time they help that this process is beneficial for the capitalist class.

Question: What have been the most important protests of workers and poor in the last 12 months?

Answer: If we characterize protests of truck-drivers as worker protests, as some of the “lefts” do, we could apply this as an example to answer to this question. But we don’t count participants of these protests as part of the working class. They are mainly self-employed drivers who work using their own or leased trucks. The employed drivers of large transport companies don’t participate in these protests massively.

In some sense the protests of heavy cargo truck-drivers can be categorized as protests of poor. For example, most self-employed truck-drivers in Dagestan do not work as employed workers at large companies so that the introduction of this tax which they oppose, dramatically shrinks their incomes. Moreover, this region has a high official level of unemployment, which implies a low living standard there.

Our observations suggest that in such a situation when there is no organized mass protest of workers and poor, their dissatisfaction find indirect expression at political meetings of Navalny. Dissatisfied with their position and living standard, they come out to join protest actions organized by him. The majority of participants at such actions see the main reason for their worsening living standard not in the agonizing capitalist system, but in “bad politicians”.

Despite that we can’t give any noticeable examples of important protests in last 12 month from our point of

view. However, we think that it is more important how the geography of protests is changing in total. According to data of Center of Social and Labour Rights in 2017 there is an almost finished process of spreading of protests through almost all regions of Russian Federation (before they were registered in majority of regions). Such situation creates conditions for united actions through all country.

Question: What is the state of the trade union movement in Russia? Are there any independent and militant trade unions?

Answer: As before Russians do not know much about trade unions or count pseudo-trade-unions of Federation of Independent Trade Unions (FNPR) as trade union one. FNPR is descendant (with ideology and property legacy) of the bureaucratic "trade unions" of VTsSPS (All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions). Subjects of FNPR are not trade unions due to formal reasons too because they usually have in their ranks employers and employees at the same time. But according to International Labour Organization (ILO), trade union is an organization in which only employees can have membership. Ironically, the Russian Federation has adopted ILO conventions. Despite that the FNPR faces situations when "trade union" consisted of workers and at the same time those who manage them when they are exploited. In illustration of it there is such an example: some time ago one of our comrades came to a human resources office of an industrial enterprise (controlled by the state) and saw there such a hilarious picture: on the wall near the working place of HR worker there was the information: "Do not forget to tell new worker to join the trade union!". As rule, such "trade unions" are organizing assignments to sanatoriums and giving of presents on celebration days - in general that's all of their "trade union" work.

Speaking about the workers movement we also have to point out that there is widespread unofficial employment in Russia. According to some records there 22.5 millions of those who can work were not registered in the state insurance system in 2014. In other words, there is no clear official information about their duties. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of officially registered employees at work have received parts of their payment under the table. So these workers can't join trade union and have no opportunity to fight for their basic labour rights in official space. Such a situation is very profitable for the national bourgeoisie.

In our opinion, trade unions could not be independent from one or another ideology. In other words trade union leadership could be under influence of bourgeois ideology and such parties or it could be under the influence of a proletarian party. Because there is no revolutionary party of working class that has proletarian ideology, all Russian trade union movement participants now experience noticeable influence of ruling bourgeois ideology and only small part of it can be called as formally independent of parties.

If we count independent trade unions there are those who are active in fighting for the economic interests of workers. An example for a union which propagates and uses strikes as means of fight, is the trade union Confederation of Labour of Russia (KTR). However, is it really independent from the ruling class we'll see if we take the following example: the president of KTR, Boris Kravchenko, wrote at

the end of 2011 about the killing of protesting oil company workers in Zhanaozen (West Kazakhstan) and blamed the Committee for Workers' International (CWI) for the provocation of Kazakhstan authorities of such actions. We have another example – the political evolution of the famous trade union activist Alexei Etmanov (Interregional Trade Union "Worker Association" (MPRA)). First he "always supported Communist Party of Russian Federation during elections", later he guaranteed that the A Just Russia Party will receive the vote of all four thousand MPRA members and their families and at last he joined the electoral list of Yabloko party at the last election. What does this say about the independence of these forces?!

Question: What is your opinion on the situation in Chechnya? What is your stance on it?

Answer: To answer to this question we need to start from relations of different parts of society to this question. Nationalist rhetoric is that Russia pays to the Chechnya for defeat at war in the form of subsidies from budget because of that Kadyrov was in armed resistance (which according to propaganda most people in Russia counts as "bandits") and later switched to federal forces. This position usually does not separate the armed underground, people of Kadyrov and the whole Chechen people. On the background of such extreme Chechenophobia in society this absurd position does not meet almost any criticism (except by official pro-Putin patriots). As an argument they say that Kadyrov's people use imaginary unlimited power in Chechnya when they do not permit to come representatives of central offices of Ministry of Internal Affairs, Federal Security Service and Public prosecutor's office that is against any understanding of law and order. Liberals in their rhetoric use this as populist argument for their position that in Russia there is feudalism and they are for transition to the "genuine" capitalism and presenting Kadyrov as feudal overlord. For example Alexei Navalny not so far ago repeated the widespread common misbelief that Chechnya is getting the highest subsidies among all regions of Russia. This is a clear lie which could be ruined by simple internet search. But during many years most of these right-wing populists couldn't accomplish such simple task. Vast majority of them believes in the myth about highest subsidies for Chechnya.

There is also the position of human rights activists (this position is shared by Russian LGBT organizations in connection with situation with homosexuals in Chechnya). They speak about total human rights defeat, tortures, mass false blaming about terrorism and repressions to the relatives of those who are guilty according to local authorities. But at that time their demands are limited to demand to ensure execution of Russian Federation laws in Chechnya. At the same time they appeal to EU and such organizations but say nothing about reasons of problems with law and order there.

But in reality these reasons are in need to support occupation regime of Kadyrov in Chechnya. Chechen people fought for the independence for centuries. To uphold the occupation under these conditions demands extreme repressive control by the regime and at the same time the imitation of independence of Chechen people from the other: in fact all representatives of Russian regime are Chechens (but it is tactics of all occupants when they set natives as their representatives), showing care about

supporting of Chechen traditions (sometimes too much) and representing themselves as defenders of Chechen and all other peoples from discrimination and keepers of "traditional values".

At the same time, Kadyrov actively uses the imperialistic confrontation between USA and Russia. For example, he claims that any opposition, demands of human rights and progressive tendencies in society are results of activity of the "West" which is headed by USA. On the other side bourgeois opposition, pointing to Kadyrov, tries to represent all Chechens as barbarians who solve all questions by armed means and that they are guilty that Putin is still in power (according to data of Central Election Commission about 98% of electorate voted for Putin in Chechnya). Among bourgeois opposition there is firm opinion that all Chechens support Putin. And this is a reason why Chechens do not want any association with such opposition - and after that it's too late to blame anyone about absence of open support of them in Chechnya.

Unfortunately, we don't have much knowledge about the situation in Chechnya: how many Chechens are against regime there, what is their level of organization and which ideology unites them - all of it is unknown mainly because of closed character of Chechen society due to Kadyrov's repressions.

We support the right of nations to self-determination (including secession) but this doesn't mean that Marxists always support its realization.

In case of Chechnya we are for the liberation of Chechen people from power of Putin's representatives. Only Chechen people can do this themselves. Other peoples of Russian Federation could help by means of overthrowing current regime in Russia. But splitting of large states for creation of many small national bourgeois states can't be the goal for Marxists. Our goal is - socialist federation of Caucasus peoples.

Question: How do you assess the class character of Russia's capitalism? Do you see it as a semi-colonial, a sub-imperialist or as an imperialist state?

Answer: The Russian Federation is an imperialist state, which is distinguished by the close connection of a large monopoly capital with the state apparatus.

The leading sectors of the Russian economy, except the military, are energy corporations — oil and gas. These industries, because of their nature, have also huge political influence.

For example, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) during the period of 2012-2016 conventional arms transfers worldwide reached the highest level since the end of the cold war. In the global arms market imperialist Russia takes the second place after the USA: 33% and 25% respectively. The reason for this is the fact that the Soviet Union invested heavily in the production of arms, which had created a huge complex for the production and development of all types of weapons (one of the main tasks of the USSR was at any cost to become the leader in the arms race). Current adventures in Syria serves as a testing ground for the newest weapons and combat training of the army. Thanks to this "strengths and weaknesses of the new weapons are identified, design is improving", a lot of new contracts for the supply of weapons are signed, tactics are changing and training of military pilots is improving. Russian propaganda does not

hesitate to emphasize this fact.

Another example is how the Russian government deals with debts of the world's largest oil company Rosneft. The state spends huge funds because after the sanctions it faced limitations to obtain loans from banks of corresponding countries. The cause of this debt is buying of shares in foreign oil monopolies. The goal of such economical policies is to achieve dominance on the oil market. Moreover, all enterprises of the nuclear industry of the Russian Federation are part of the state corporation "Rosatom". In 2016, it took first place in the world by the number of nuclear power units abroad. A crucial technical feature of these nuclear reactors is that they can only work with Russian nuclear fuel and during the whole period of NPP operation the buyer country will have to import it from Russia. It's possible to explain so many orders by the fact that the Russian Federation fully credits the construction and maintenance of NPPs. The loans are often forgiven in exchange to political services.

In the last three years Russian imperialism has been on the rise. Especially noticeable are the gains of the imperialist bourgeoisie in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the CIS countries. Imperialist Eurasian Union was created, as means for strengthening of oppression, robbery and exploitation of the workers of the countries of the former Soviet Union and some satellite countries. All this is accompanied by strengthening of the Russian military machine, which has not happened without the increase of the chauvinistic and militarist state propaganda, which exploits the symbols of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union.

Russian imperialism clearly enjoys great prestige all over the world. In countries which experience a weakening of the grip of local authorities or where the local bourgeoisie is forced under pressure of class struggle or crisis to change its course, the Russian Federation starts to actively influence the internal affairs of this country. This happens in the Philippines, Moldova, Bulgaria and Qatar. This, of course, occurs as a sharpening of intra-imperialist rivalry with the US, EU and Japan, as well as the growing convergence with imperialist China. We are witnesses of the rapid formation of new political blocks, which inevitable will provoke many wars in the future.

Question: What is your opinion on Russia's military intervention in Syria and its support for the Assad regime?

Answer: Assad's regime support and military intervention is directly interconnected with interests of the Russian capital. At this moment, the Russian bourgeoisie actively expands economical, military and political influence in Syria. For example, journalist's investigations demonstrate how entrepreneurs closely associated with state apparatus get oil and phosphate fields under their control. Moreover, the Russian bourgeoisie doesn't hide engagement of its private military goons in their affairs. These facts are clearly evident in the perspective, that the main target of their current military operation is to take important crude oil production areas under control. Oil from this region according to trade deals will be in hands of Russian imperialists.

At the same time the Russian Federation dramatically increases control over the Syrian military apparatus. Even Russian military specialists admit their strong influence

on its army.

This happened not only because of Russian military might, but because of clear unwillingness of Syrians to serve Assad's regime.

Military adventures of Russia did not pass without a trace for the political situation in the Middle East. Russian imperialists have gained huge authority and influence in the region. Even major regional powers such as Turkey and Iran have to make behind-the-scenes deals with Russia. At the same time, such agreements lead both of these countries into direct confrontation with the US and the EU interests. Such situation will force Turkey and Iran in the foreseeable future to join a strategic military-political alliance of imperialistic Russia and China.

Question: How do you characterize the official Communist Party of Gennady Zyuganov (KPRF)?

Answer: The KPRF is communist only by name. It is bourgeois party that supports the current regime in Russian Federation. In fact, this party discredits communist ideas by presenting it's migrantophobia, servility to the Russian Orthodox Church, Russian nationalism, bourgeois patriotism and state Stalinism as "Marxism of our times". The KPRF doesn't focus on the labor movement. Rather, it's mostly the party of patriots and elder citizens who have nostalgia for the USSR. Over the time the influence of KPRF has reduced and probably will continue to do so in the future, but despite of these changes the authorities of Russia will support KPRF, because of its support for the regime.

Question: Could you give us an overview of the left? As far as we know there are a number of orthodox Stalinist parties as well as some Trotskyist groups.

Answer: The situation in the "left" movement is defined not by random events but by objective conditions which formed in the Russian Federation. There was the Stalinist official ideology that dominated in the USSR for decades. After the collapse of the USSR together with this ideology many started to search information about history of their country and answers to their questions. Most of those who didn't choose liberalism and Stalinism were searching for answers in religions, sects, anti-science and conspiracy theories. Also at that time (and this is still the case now) there was a widespread apathy and almost total absence of any fight and, as a result, scepticism about possibility to change anything.

In the Russian Federation some small (because of this reasons) sections of international political organizations came into existence. So in Russia communist traditions that were crushed by Stalinism there were imported. But these international organizations have brought not only positive aspects but also brought their inconsistencies and opportunism. As a result after series of splits from them to the right in Russian Federation their descendants appeared to move further to the right. There are many reasons for it: Russian organizations have got these principles as something external, they didn't have experience to apply them in practice in conditions of absence of mass worker movement so they didn't understand its meaning in our conditions. A shift to the right took place after they became independent from these international organizations. After such splits these groups have denied tight principles for race to the "wide left" with the aim to create mass "left" organization as soon as possible.

All of this was caused by the absence of a mass worker movement in this country after the final loss of illusions about possibility to turn history back to restore USSR. At the same time "lefts" were unpopular in particular because of their firm associations with Stalinists, patriots, Russian nationalists and fascists - defenders of "soviet" Supreme Soviet in 1993 had such contingent. To add that because of the legacy of the Stalinist USSR Marxism became unpopular as a theory that, in the eyes of the majority, was defeated in practice.

In short we can formulate the conditions for opportunism in Russian "left" movement: small amount of "left" activists, their low knowledge of theory, absence of serious experience of participation in mass movements in particular because of absence of wide worker movement in Russian Federation.

Activists act in closed circle - their extreme small number operating in unfortunate conditions do not open opportunities to practice full activity and hence do not give the opportunity to expand and to change external conditions. Many activists try to come out of these circles by increasing their numbers by any means. For those who do not know theory well it seems as good solution but in practice this only worsens the political problems of this eternal circle existence.

Because of this common low level of development of movement there are many problems - from denial of defending of oppressed groups (in the case of the "Revolutionary Workers' Party" (RRP) and "Left Block") to tolerance to the sexism in their own ranks that do not leave the women's movement any other possibility than to separate from such "leftists".

The evident manifestation of all our analysis is clear ignorance among "leftists" about maintaining secrecy and information security. For communications and information exchange they use such unreliable means as vkontakte social network, Telegram, Skype, e-mail, websites of organizations without https encryption. Some of them publish openly photos of members of organizations and videos of their meetings in social networks. Another feature that characterizes the level of development of the "left" movement is absence of using of free means of encryption. Passers-by when they enter the pages of these organizations in social networks have the feeling (which is not so far from truth) that these political groups are not so serious. Their extreme openness and constant intention to inform about their routine inner organization activity is strange and dramatically ease the job for the bourgeois repressive apparatus. And this is not a technical question for political organizations and it is more important for revolutionary ones.

The goals of every revolutionary are in opposition to the goals of the ruling regime and it is the cause which provokes the repression apparatus. Therefore it is hard to call someone a revolutionary who does not intend to make the job for the police difficult and who makes it, contrary, easier.

In general, many organizations try to present themselves as parties or large political organizations but in fact their activities do not go further than propaganda and at the same time they often do not have a well defined political line.

All above illustrates the general situation among the "left".

In our opinion we should also characterize their political position and activities. One of questions dividing the "left" in Russian Federation and worldwide is if it is correct to characterize the Russian Federation as an imperialist state. "Worker Platform" (a split from "Russian Socialist Movement" (RSD)) does not think so and many Stalinists do so as well. The "International Marxist Tendency" (IMT), presenting many counter-arguments on their website in fact is also on the side of Russian imperialism when they support DNR and LNR (Donetsk People's Republic and Lugansk People's Republic).

Those "leftists" who characterize the Russian Federation as imperialist state are not for the defeat of it in the Syrian war.

Among all organizations that pretend to follow the traditions of Bolshevism in practice do not use tactics of the united front and do not implement the full transitional program in their work in workers' and other movements.

As we have mentioned, some of those organizations which intend to grow very rapidly have formed as blocks ("Left Block"). But in this case the size and influence of such organizations are very small too. The reasons are the same - there is no deep understanding how to organize this block and which tasks it has. In practice all activities of block are going in form of separate organizations that constitute itself as if there doesn't exist any block.

In most "communist" organizations there exist different kinds of Stalinism which dominates there. From apologetics of Stalin to mutations that trying to fix contradictions between Stalin and Trotsky. A good recent example for this is the "Lenin Crew" which are constructing definitions like "deformed socialist state".

And there are organizations that unconsciously use tactics of Stalinists either due to their low level of understanding of Bolshevik tactics or because of their opportunism. For example, the "Red Guard of Spartak" (KGS) moves away from Stalinism on an ideological level but supports at the same time sectarian tactics of the Stalinist "Communist Party of Greece" (KKE).

Concerning Trotskyist organizations we need to start from the question which organizations can we call as Trotskyist? Here it is possible to the analogy with the KPRF - it has a communist name but isn't communist in essence. So such groups that call themselves as Trotskyist in fact are not.

For example many pseudo-Trotskyist organizations do not use the tactics of united front, tactical and strategic achievements of the first four congresses of the Third International. So, how can we call them Trotskyist after that?

Partly, the reason for this is simply their lack of knowledge and understanding of the classic Marxist works; others are simply opportunists. For example, the Russian section of the IMT, together with RRP and other "left" organizations, deliberately hides the symbols of their organizations at mass meetings. Some of the Russian pseudo-Trotskyists more correctly call themselves social-democrats. The best example of these reformist politicians under the mask of "Marxists" is the RSD (Russian Socialist Movement). They call the program of the British Labour Party leader Corbyn as "socialist". At the same time their opportunism is not very smart. For example their program contains the "formal" support for the right of nations to self-determination as well

as right-wing imperialist economism - they think that for small regions such as Chechnya it's better not to separate because they couldn't implement independent politics due to their small size and weak economy. "Socialist Alternative" (Russian section of "Committee for Workers' International" (CWI)) prolongs the "great" traditions of CWI - if their US comrades supported during president election campaign Bernie Sanders, a the representative of the bourgeoisie, SA in Russian Federation gives electoral support to Yabloko party candidate since several years.

Thus, there is no proletarian party in Russian Federation. The majority of so-called "left" parties suffer from clear opportunism and sectarian policies. Moreover, Stalinism is still dominating in "communists" circles and "Trotskyist" organizations are clearly Bolshevik-Leninists only by name.

Question: What are, in your opinion, the main issues of a revolutionary program for the class struggles in the coming period?

Answer: We think that the elaboration of a program of the revolutionary working class is the deed of a party of the working class and there is evident a need to create it. Small Marxist group can only elaborate principles on which a pre-party organization can be build.

Here are several key points that in our view must be the basis of the new (something that is well forgotten) revolutionary movement:

Fight for the independence of the working class!

Fight against opportunism and reformism within the workers' movement!

For implementation of united front tactics in the workers' and other movements!

Build organizations that will be the basis for the creation of the revolutionary party of the working class!

For the creation of an international revolutionary organization!

Fight for the full transitional program in the trade unions and other organizations of the working class, youth and oppressed!

Thanks for the interview!

Das Kapital – 150th Anniversary of a Milestone in Class Struggle

On 14 September 1867 the most famous book
by Marx was published for the first time

by Almedina Gunić, Revolutionary-Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 14 September 2017

Das Kapital (*Capital*) is not only well-known by socialists, it is more or less general knowledge that Karl Marx is its author and that it explains the nature of capitalism. On its 150th anniversary, we take a brief look at the coming into being of probably the most famous book in revolutionary history. First, it is necessary to understand that Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were not academics sitting in some ivory towers. Both were serious revolutionary militants who were able to contend with various propagandistic, theoretical and practical tasks. Therefore, it is also important that we deal with a number of developments in the lives of the two founders of dialectical materialism and scientific socialism.

The first volume of *Das Kapital* was published on the 14 September 1867 – after more than two decades of intense, but at times interrupted, studies, countless notes and drafts which were continually being revised and often torn up by Karl Marx.

In 1844, a 26-year old Marx openly discussed his ideas on the nature of capitalist economy, more or less for the first time. At this young age, Marx was already banned from pursuing an academic career by the Prussian government which, in 1841, had declared him a left-wing Hegelian. He worked, therefore, first as a journalist and later as the editor-in-chief of the radical opposition paper *Rheinische Zeitung* which was heavily and repeatedly censored. However, under the intelligent leadership of Marx (beginning from October 1842) the newspaper continued to be published in an increasingly polemical and radical manner against the will of the government. The publication was eventually shut down by the furious Prussian government in April 1843. One year later Marx moved to Paris together with his wife and political comrade-in-arms, Jenny von Westphalen. He started the journal *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* together with the 41-year old Arnold Ruge, a former editor-in-chief of the journal *Halleschen Jahrbücher für deutsche Kunst und Wissenschaft* which had also been banned.

Ruge was himself a Young Hegelian and collaborated with Ludwig Feuerbach, the Brothers Grimm and other famous philosophers and literary men in the publication of *Halleschen Jahrbücher für deutsche Kunst und Wissenschaft*. However, very quickly the paths of Marx and Ruge at *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* parted, as the latter became a bourgeois democrat while Marx was developing towards the ideas of communism. Nevertheless, this very short episode opened the door to a life-long comradeship, both politically and personally, between Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. They began corresponding because of two articles written by Engels for the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*.

1844 - The idea for *Das Kapital* is born

In September 1892, nine years after the death of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels wrote in a letter to Franz Mehring: “Marx was then a Hegelian and that passage was pure heresy to him. He knew nothing whatever about political economy and could not have had any idea about the meaning of a term like ‘economic form’. Hence the passage in question, even if he had known it, would have gone in one ear and come out the other without leaving a perceptible trace in his memory. But I greatly doubt whether traces of such views could have been found in the works of the romantic historians which Marx read between 1837 and 1842.” (Marx Engels Collected Works [MECW] Vol. 49, p.550)

It was to a large part the influence of and discussions with Engels which inspired Marx to deal with economic theory and to elaborate a socialist stance on it. Marx had already written some very first ideas in the so-called *Pariser Manuskripte* in May and June 1844, but more to clarify ideas to himself than to publish. For this reason these notes were never completed by Marx nor have they ever been published in their entirety, as some parts were lost. Marx’s new comradeship with Engels changed his ideas on the meaning of a detailed elaboration of economic theory. This was not the only occasion on which Friedrich Engels inspired Marx to deal with certain issues. Their comradeship and mutual friendship were based on each brilliant man’s inspiring the other to develop to his very best. It is therefore very characteristic that Marx wrote to Engels in July 1864: “As you know, 1. I’m always late off the mark with everything, and 2. I invariably follow in your footsteps.” (MECW Vol 41, p.546)

It was exactly two decades earlier that Engels – after he met Marx in person and spent time with him in Paris, realizing that they share the same ideas – wrote to Marx in October 1844: “I have not been able to recapture the mood of cheerfulness and goodwill I experienced during the ten days I spent with you. I have not as yet had any real opportunity of doing anything about the establishment we are to establish.” (MECW Vol. 38, p.6)

So, like the serious political person that he was, and most likely in the same cheerful mood as that which Engels enjoyed during their first ten day sojourn together, Karl Marx began to delve into economic theory by reading a huge number of books and publications by the most famous economic theorists of that time. He also studied a countless number of empirical publications on various aspects of bourgeois economy. In the end, Marx’s entire life circled around the economic studies he later published, all in all, in the three volumes of *Das Kapital* and his *Theories of Surplus Value*. During the decades of elaborating what would later become known as *Marxist Economy*, he and with him Engels, suffered in different ways because of this tremendous project. Friedrich Engels had to repeatedly demand and plead with Marx to finalize his studies in a

publishable form.

Engels was probably the most patient, but was far from being the only person demanding that Marx finish his study. Wilhelm Liebknecht (to name just one of many), for example, wrote to Marx in September 1864: "*Ceterum censeo oeconomiam esse perficiendam.*" ["Furthermore, I consider that the (studies on) economy must be finished", originally in Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe (MEGA), Dritte Abteilung, Briefwechsel Band 12, Brief 415, Zeile 14-15, p.643, our translation]

Ambitious plans at the beginning

Marx, from his perspective, explained in various ways why his ideas were still not ready to be seen by the public. After many years he became so frustrated that he once wrote: "*As soon as peace is restored, I shall devote myself to the fair copy of the beastly book, which I intend to hawk round Germany myself.*" (MECW Vol. 41, p.481)

However, Marx's theoretical achievement implemented over so many years in *Das Kapital* started rather inauspiciously. Originally, Engels thought (as did Marx himself) that they would eventually publish a sort of lengthy essay on economic theory, sooner rather than later. However, after he began work on the first draft, Marx preferred publishing his study in a more extended form.

At the beginning of 1845, he came to an agreement with the publishing house of Karl Wilhelm Leske to publish two volumes called "*Kritik der Politik und Nationalökonomie*" (*Critique of Politics and Political Economy*), closing the deal with the receipt of an advance payment. This was also the goal very much encouraged by Engels, who wrote to Marx in January 1845: "*Do try and finish your political*

economy book, even if there's much in it that you yourself are still dissatisfied with, it doesn't really matter; minds are ripe and we must strike while the iron is hot. (...) We German theoreticians — it may be ludicrous, but it's a sign of the times and of the dissolution of the German national filth — cannot yet so much as develop our theory, not even having been able as yet to publish the critique of the nonsense. But now it is high time. So try and finish before April, do as I do, set yourself a date by which you will definitely have finished, and make sure it gets into print quickly. If you can't get it printed in Paris, have it done in Mannheim, Darmstadt or elsewhere. But it must come out soon." (MECW Vol 38, p.17)

Although a contract was signed between the publishing house and Marx, Leske never received any draft from the latter. Instead, Marx wrote him several times promising in various manners to finish a first volume of *Kritik der Politik und Nationalökonomie*, including his letter to Leske in August 1846: "*The revised version of the first volume will be ready for publication at the end of November. The 2nd volume, of a more historical nature, will be able to follow soon after it.*" (MECW Vol. 38, p.51)

Theory needs practice

We needn't be surprised that the contract between Leske and Marx was soon terminated. Parts of Marx's notes were later published in the pamphlet *Ökonomisch-Philosophische Manuskripte aus dem Jahre 1844 (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844)*. Critics of Marx have joked that, at that point in time, Marx may have been a weak theoretician, as he was finding it so difficult to complete his study in economics. Such conjecture, at any point in the life of Marx after 1844, is complete nonsense. Aside from the huge delay in publishing *Das Kapital*, both Marx and Engels were

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of Organized Struggle for Bolshevism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a book called *BUILDING THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE*. The book's subtitle is: *Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism*. The book is in English-language. It contains four chapters on 148 pages and includes 42 pictures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)* continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past

25 years.

In Chapter I we outline a summary of the Bolshevik- Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevik party and their meaning for our future work.

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/rcit-party-building/> ■

Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

Looking Back and Ahead after 25 Years of organized Struggle for Bolshevism



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

very prolific and wrote a number of significant theoretical works from this time forth. Even at the very beginning of their collaboration and their joint development towards scientific socialist ideas, they already wrote a number of important ideological polemics.

After they first met in Paris 1844, Marx arranged for a publishing house to print their first coauthored book only a few weeks later, *Die heilige Familie, oder Kritik der kritischen Kritik. Gegen Bruno Bauer & Consorten* (*The Holy Family*). Indeed, this book was published in the spring of 1845 by the publishing house Literarische Anstalt (J. Rütten). They next jointly elaborated *Die Deutsche Ideologie* (*The German Ideology*) between 1845 and 1846, the main part of which was written by Marx. This manuscript was only partially published during Marx's lifetime, while the entire work was released following his death. In 1845, Marx also wrote his famous *Thesen über Feuerbach* (*Theses on Feuerbach*) which were also only published after his death. At this time Marx was writing for the weekly newspaper *Vorwärts!* bringing a socialist influence to this German radical-democratic paper. For this work he was exiled by the Prussian regime and moved to Brussels at the beginning of 1845.

Aside from his literary activity, Karl Marx was, like his comrade Friedrich Engels, also a man of practice. He and Engels met with a revolutionary wing of the *Chartist Movement* in London in the summer of 1845. Half a year later, at the beginning of 1846, they launched an initiative for founding a joint organization for all revolutionary workers in Germany and other countries, calling it *Kommunistisches Korrespondenz-Komitee*. Both joined the socialist *Bund der Gerechten* in 1847 and they managed, primarily due to the efforts of Marx, to transform this organization into the *Bund der Kommunisten* (Communist League), with Marx writing *Das Kommunistische Manifest* (*The Communist Manifesto*) which was published in the revolutionary year of 1848. Among Marx's many activities from this period were the lectures he prepared. His essay *Lohnarbeit und Kapital* (*Wage Labour and Capital*) was based on a number of lectures on capitalist economy that Marx delivered to workers in 1847.

Interruptions and delays

The revolutionary year of 1848 and the counterrevolutionary developments of the following years had their impact on the work of Marx and Engels. With the turbulent times, Marx's further elaboration of economic theory was continually postponed. Furthermore, after his arrest in Brussels and his forced exile from Belgium, Marx moved to Paris at the invitation of the new provisional government of the French Republic. He also participated in the German revolution in March 1848, leading the revolutionary movement in Cologne and founding and serving as editor-in-chief of the daily socialist newspaper *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. In April 1849, before the counter-revolutionary forces succeeded in repressing the uprising of the workers and poor, *Lohnarbeit und Kapital* was published in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. The writing of this series of articles explaining the fundamental method of the capitalist economy was interrupted by the need to focus on propaganda addressing current developments. However, in the end, the series of articles was never

resumed as the reactionary Prussian regime returned to power and permanently shut down the publication of the newspaper in May 1849.

The publication of the complete text of *Lohnarbeit und Kapital* remained unfinished even after Marx's death, as no previously unpublished notes had survived. Engels edited the later version, published in 1891, consistent with the development that Marx' theory on the capitalist economy had taken in the 1850s: "Marx, in the '40s, had not yet completed his criticism of political economy. This was not done until toward the end of the fifties. Consequently, such of his writings as were published before the first installment of his **Critique of Political Economy** was finished, deviate in some points from those written after 1859, and contain expressions and whole sentences which, viewed from the standpoint of his later writings, appear inexact, and even incorrect. Now, it goes without saying that in ordinary editions, intended for the public in general, this earlier standpoint, as a part of the intellectual development of the author, has its place; that the author as well as the public, has an indisputable right to an unaltered reprint of these older writings. In such a case, I would not have dreamed of changing a single word in it. But it is otherwise when the edition is destined almost exclusively for the purpose of propaganda. In such a case, Marx himself would unquestionably have brought the old work, dating from 1849, into harmony with his new point of view, and I feel sure that I am acting in his spirit when I insert in this edition the few changes and additions which are necessary in order to attain this object in all essential point. ." (MECW Vol 27, p.194)

This brief explanation which Friedrich Engels makes *en passant* includes a crucial point for our understanding of the very long time that *Das Kapital* took before it was ready for publication. Karl Marx in the 1840s had not yet developed the theoretical understanding of capitalist economy which Karl Marx in the late 1850s had. The whole process of analyzing the capitalist economy down to its DNA and understanding the dialectical mechanism of it took its time.

Beginning in 1849 Marx was exiled from France and took up residence in London where he lived for the remainder of his life. Aside from numerous, very impressive and important publications like *Der achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Bonaparte* (*The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*) which was published in 1852, Marx elaborated a number of articles on the economy of several European countries, which were published in the *New York Daily Tribune* starting from 1852. In the period after 1858, he intensified his studies on the capitalist economy and further developed his understanding of it. To Ferdinand Lasalle, who put pressure on Marx to finalize his writings on economy, he wrote in 1858: "1. It is the product of 15 years of research, i.e. the best years of my life. 2. In it an important view of social relations is scientifically expounded for the first time. Hence I owe it to the Party that the thing shouldn't be disfigured by the kind of heavy, wooden style proper to a disordered liver." (MECW Vol. 40, p.354)

In 1859, Marx's work *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (*Critique of Political Economy*) was published, marking a new stage of his studies. However, as the man of practice that he still was, Marx brought the *Deutscher Arbeiterbildungsverein* in London to support the Polish uprising of January 1863. Last but not least, the *First Internationale* was found in 1864 in which Marx and Engels fought for a revolutionary

communist orientation. Thus, a milestone was set in the history of the revolutionary struggle of the working class.

In addition to the developments mentioned above, far more propaganda, theoretical work and practical tasks were done by Marx in the years before the publication of the first volume of *Das Kapital* in 1867.

The scientific artist and the creation of a *Weltanschauung*

True, the major economic study of Marx was not published as originally planned in 1845. It is also true that his publication plans were repeatedly delayed because Marx continued to fool himself into believing that he would finish the work by the next planned due date; this resulted in the postponing of its publication again and again. However, in retrospect, we can understand that this lengthy series of delays is in no way a reflection of some general theoretical weakness on Marx's part, but was rather due to the enormity of the tasks that both Marx and Engels had set for themselves: developing a whole new movement while taking the communist ideas of the utopian socialists and placing them on firm materialistic grounds.

Both contributed, in their close and rare comradeship, to the founding of an entirely new political movement. Marxism is – as is said in German – not just an idea, but a *Weltanschauung*, which literary means something like a worldview, but which includes far more than just simply observing the world. It is the result of a systematic and thorough engagement with various ideas and philosophies, culminating in the realization of one's own view, which is compared with the perception of others in order to elaborate a deep and vivid understanding of the dynamics of the world and the human society. *Weltanschauung* is something that needs the exchange, the comparison with, and the battle against other ideas.

In this sense *Weltanschauung* is nothing that you can get as a gift from others or that is passed on to you by pure tradition. It is rather something that you have to earn by your own efforts and which permanently evolves during your lifetime. In the best case scenario, your *Weltanschauung* gives you the answer to the universal question: "Who Am I and Why Am I Here?" All the weaknesses in developing *Das Kapital*, all the problems and nerve wrecking situations are just the price Marx and Engels had to pay in order to sustain the building of a new political movement, to develop a new *Weltanschauung* and with this the developing of a deeper analysis and understanding of the capitalist economy.

Marx himself became an expert on everything that was published by famous and not so famous bourgeois economics before and during his lifetime. He wrote in 1851 to Engels: "Ça commence à m'ennuyer. Au fond,⁹ this science has made no progress since A. Smith and D. Ricardo, however much has been done in the way of individual research, often extremely discerning." (MECW Vol. 38, p.325)

Today, it is easy to compare the writings on capitalist economy of both authors, Adam Smith and David Ricardo, with the collected works of Marx and Engels. It is very easy to differentiate these authors from one another. The style and rhetoric of Smith and Ricardo are smooth compared to the elaboration in *Das Kapital*. However, the elaborations of Marx (and Engels) are far more brilliant and capture the

true nature of capitalist economy. They are written on the basis of *dialectical materialism*, the scientific method that allows us to understand the contradictory developments of society. Marx and Engels turned the dialectical idealism of Hegel around and placed it firmly on materialistic grounds. They created a whole new – and until today – revolutionary philosophy.

To laugh about Marx's insecurity, his occasional confusion and his overall struggle in developing a deep understanding of the way the capitalist economy operates based on a fundamental understanding of class society is comparable to laughing at Einstein about his doubts on *the cosmological constant* or laughing about Michelangelo who believed that he is not skilled enough to do the fresco paintings in the *Sistine Chapel*. Hence, Marx was both a scientist and an artist, forming the sculpture of a whole new *Weltanschauung*. Beside him remains Friedrich Engels who, aside from numerous brilliant writings of his own, organized the publication of the second and third volumes of *Das Kapital* after Marx's death. He collected what Marx had elaborated and revised it as he always did, even Marx's lifetime. As a result, thanks to Engel's enormous efforts, today we are able to read the second and third volumes of *Das Kapital*. And indeed, we should read them!

What *Das Kapital* means to us workers

As a Marxist worker, your *Weltanschauung* saves your every day – every single day. In this thick fog arising from forced production and reproduction that engulfs you as a worker and makes your world so small that you barely see your own hand in front of your face, a Marxist *Weltanschauung* is like a sword with which you can cut through the thick curtain of fog and help you to see how big and sunny the world can be.

Das Kapital like anything else written by Marx and Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, as well as other communist revolutionaries should not be read like some holy, God-given document. It definitely has its shortcomings and, as it explains in extreme detail the dynamics of the early stages of capitalism, it is partly outdated. For this reason it is important to also read further developments of Marxist economy by later revolutionary communists, including the elaborations for today in the RCIT publication *The Great Robbery of the South*. However, the fundamentals of Marxist economy explained in *Das Kapital* and various other writings by Marx and Engels are essentially still correct today.

When Marx believed that we, as workers, will understand his analysis of capitalist economy, he was right. We understand it out of the daily experiences we have. We understand it and at the same time shake our heads over the writings of Smith and Ricardo, which make a mockery of us in their explanations of the capitalist economy, to say nothing of all the bourgeois charlatans since them. Maybe it takes time to learn all the terms that are used in political economy. Maybe it takes serious effort and patience to understand such matters. Yet we must remember that It took Marx 22 years to finalize the first volume of *Das Kapital*, so we don't need to worry that we don't understand every single word with the first, second or third readings of it.

But if there is a class which can understand it, it is us – the working class!

The Deadly Breath of Imperialism

Pollution caused the Death of 9 Million People in 2015: It is Urgent to Save the Lives of our Brothers and Sisters in the South! It is Urgent to Rescue Planet Earth!

Commentary by Almedina Gunić, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 23.10.2017

In Ancient Rome people said: “*Aegroto, dum anima est, spes est*” - “As long as the sick can breathe, there is hope.” But what if people become sick *because* they breathe? Air pollution as well as water pollution are the main causes for the death of more than 9 million people in 2015! This is the result of a new study by the *Lancet Commission* published on the 19th October this year. The number of premature deaths by pollution is 16% of all deaths worldwide. It is estimated that these numbers will increase by at least 50% until 2050.

Furthermore, it is not surprising that nearly 92% of the 9 million dead lived in so-called low- and middle-income countries. These are mainly the semi-colonial countries - the poor, exploited and oppressed in the current world order. In some of the affected countries, pollution is the cause for more than one in four deaths. The urban and rural poor living in China, and the youngest of the imperialist states, are highly affected as well. Hence, it is not surprising that the pollution is causing such a high number of annual deaths facing the extensive exploitation of the Earth by the capitalists of the imperialist countries. The biggest emitters per capita are USA with 19.8 tons per year, Russia with 16.22 tons and Japan with 10.54 tons. Emissions are the reason for both massive air pollution and global warming.

Multinational corporations are the big beasts in polluting the earth and damaging our health. 12.5% of worldwide industrial carbon pollution since 1854 is caused by *Chevron, ConocoPhillips, BP, ExxonMobil* and *Shell* alone. However, it is not the people living in the United States or in Europe who suffer mainly from the pollution caused by these American or respectively European corporations. The case is different in China which is damaging its own population far more than the older imperialist countries are damaging their populations. No wonder then, that smog masks are so omnipresent that Chinese designers created various styles of them for fashion shows. But it is not only air pollution that caused the 9 million dead in 2015, it is also the pollution of water.

Black Africa has the highest share of deaths due to water pollution worldwide with Niger, Chad, Somalia, Central African Republic, Eritrea and the Republic of South Sudan leading this specific death toll in the continent. Pollution of water is mainly caused by tons of sewage and other effluents as well as industrial and agricultural wastes draining into the drinking water resources. It is estimated that half of all hospital beds in the world are filled with people being sick because of unsafe water resources.

The imperialist epoch as the last stage of capitalism is nothing else than a brutal mass murderer of billions of people since more than a century. It is only a question of few years until it reaches a new quality as the climate catastrophe is nearing. While our brothers and sisters in the South are the main labor force which creates the capitalist value of global production, they are super-exploited by the parasitic imperialist rulers. In addition, they are and will

be mainly affected by health damaging effects of pollution and climate change caused by the capitalist production.

It is highly urgent that all authentic revolutionaries join forces to fight for the rescue of the lives of all oppressed and the planet Earth as such. As part of the revolutionary program to save our lives and the Earth, we need to fight for the following demands:

* *Immediate expropriation of all polluting multinational corporations without any compensation for the owners and managers! These corporations must be put under workers control and their production restructured to stop polluting the environment. A jury elected by the labor movement and all people affected by the polluting corporation should decide on reparation payments by the expropriated owners and managers for all the damage they caused.*

* *Immediate cancellation of all “debts” of the semi-colonial countries towards the imperialists and their institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank! For massive reparation payments from the imperialist countries and multinational corporations to the semi-colonial countries!*

* *All industrial and agricultural methods must be based on a minimum use of water and other resources. Sustainable production must be developed and implemented in all areas. Scientists, trusted by the workers and oppressed should elaborate concrete measures in collaboration with the workers in the factories and in agriculture in order to establish a sustainable production the most effective and fastest way.*

* *For a worldwide public campaign to establish free and sufficient access to clean water resources for all people financed by the expropriation of the ruling classes! In addition safe and sustainable sewage as well as waste recycling systems need to be implemented.*

All these and many more important tasks can only be fulfilled if the imperialist system, and with it, the capitalist production, is smashed by the armed uprising of the workers and oppressed. Only socialism can save humanity and planet Earth!

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Sankara's Legacy: 30 Years on, Africa still needs More Upright Men!!!

By Mainda Simataa, General Secretary of the Economic Liberation Association (Zambia), 16.10.2017

The Revolutionary trailblazer:

Few African leaders, especially those with a military background, have ever truly lived and died for the cause of economically and socially improving the lot of the poor and oppressed masses as Sankara did; not only in word, but in deed...and even in death!

Sankara loved and devoted his heart and soul to the people. He was a rare combination of an intelligent and charismatic military man imbued with a revolutionary political and ideological consciousness. He used the gun, but to one end alone – to bring social and economic justice, peace and prosperity to a country ravaged, corrupted and mercilessly plundered by henchmen of its former colonizer – France. Sankara overthrew and the black puppet regime in a bloodless coup in 1983.

Five years later, on the 15th of October 1987, Thomas Sankara, President and militant revolutionary leader of Burkina Faso, was himself overthrown and assassinated in a bloody coup instigated and sponsored by the French imperialist regime which used the traitor Blaise Compaore, (once Sankara's own comrade in arms in the military) as a pawn in their never ending scheme to re-dominate and continue the exploitation of that nation's resources...and they did so, and still do so today.

But the legacy and revolutionary ideals Sankara left, can never be erased! 27 years later, Compaore the traitor was to be overthrown and sent into exile by Sankara's idea's which had brewed and exploded in the post Sankara young generation of the Burkinabe people!

What Made Sankara Special to the Burkinabe and Africans at Large?

Sankara's very first act when he took over from the local pro-French puppet regime was to change the countries' name from French Upper-Volta, to Burkina Faso – which literally means *Land of Upright Man!*

The agenda behind the name change was a game-changer! It had the following objectives: first, to declare full autonomy and independence of the Burkinabe from the French; and second, to rid the nation of all the corrupt elements and acts of the nations' pro-capitalist class: among them Feudal land Lords who exploited peasants, the Chiefs who demanded tributes from the poor, the comprado bourgeoisie, the intellectual upper and middle class Africans who maintained, oiled and benefited from the French corporations and institutions that exploited the nations' natural and human resources.

Radical 360 Degree Shift in Policies

Upon seizing political power, Sankara immediately set out to implement the boldest and most radical social and economic changes ever attempted on the African continent in the shortest period of time:

1. Cancelled all IMF/foreign loans, denounced foreign aid and pushed for debt reduction!
2. Nationalized all Land and mineral resources!
3. Embarked on agriculture reforms for self-

sustenance and food security!

4. Introduced massive literacy and healthcare programs for all!

5. Cancelled all oppressive and unnecessary taxes!

6. Doubled wheat (staple food) production by expropriating and re-distributing land from feudal landlords to the peasant farmers!

7. Encouraged the people to build schools, hospitals, roads and railroads with their own labour!

8. Promoted women's' rights; banning genital mutilation, forced marriages, polygamy, and encouraging women to learn and work!

9. Pushed for Pan-Africanism and true economic liberation!

10. Denounced the scourge of imperialism and neo-colonialism in underdeveloped countries!

Sankara Shining Legacy

Having done so much in so little time, Sankara's legacy spread far and wide, with world leading revolutionaries like Fidel Castro of Cuba honouring him in life and in death. Many consider Sankara the most outstanding African revolutionary leader to ever set stage on the African continent, having never used his position as national leader and military commander leader to oppress, but rather to liberate. Never did he look for his own material benefit, but rather, he looked out for the material good and well-being of the nation.

Dead but Never Gone nor forgotten

Sankara is Africa's own revolutionary martyr, joining the ranks of Che Guevara, Patrice Lumumba and many other revolutionaries who have died for the cause of liberation and economic and social justice for the people. Sankara's popularity and influence on modern revolutionaries continues to inspire confidence and even rebellion against oppressive regimes the continent over. His Ghost lives on!

Sankara, the Upright Man

In the final analysis, Sankara was and still is the quintessential upright man he set his nation out to be, having practiced what he preached, living for the people, taking nothing from them, but giving everything he had, including his own life in the end.

Sankara has thus laid down the path for modern African freedom fighters to follow and emulate, and he set the bar so high. The best that all African freedom fighters can do, is to try and fulfill the cause he lived for, and as we do so, to try and be Upright men – free of compromise, corruption and self-seeking motives. We must stand tall, stand together, and stand strong in the face of all adversity and hardships! Victory will be ours! Africa needs more Upright Men!

Long Live Sankara!

Long Live the African Revolution!

Aluta Continua!

Remembering Nkrumah's 108th: The Pan-African Socialist Who Never Dies!

By Mainda Simataa, General Secretary of the Economic Liberation Association (Zambia), 18.09.2017

108 years ago on this day (18th September 1909), a world Legend and African Liberator was born! Kwame Nkrumah is to Pan-Africanism, what Jesus is to Christianity – a guiding light that illuminates the path of revolutionaries and righteous men in their quest for the spiritual and material liberation of mankind! Indeed, Nkrumah did for Pan-Africanism, what Jesus did for Christianity – both revolutionized the world and changed the course of political and religious history forever: and though one was a religious specialist, founder and spiritual liberator; and the other a Pan-Africanist specialist, founder and Political leader and liberator, both had that outstandingly rare and remarkable quality of selflessness as evidenced by their having totally and completely devoted their lives (until death) in the service of the poorest and most oppressed of mankind.

And while Christ has been gone for over 2000 years; Nkrumah has only been gone for over 45 years – almost a golden jubilee, and his golden visionary ideas of a liberated and all-powerful United Socialist States of Africa (USSA), has only begun to find their shine and true place in time – amongst a rising tide of radical and restless young Africans who have stumbled upon, and now appreciate Nkrumah's prophecy – namely, "that a nation under the yoke of neo-colonialism is not master of its own destiny" ... and Africa has not fulfilled its destiny yet, Africa continues to be the single most oppressed continent, the single child in the human race who continues to be the servant and victim of all other races! And this notwithstanding the fact that Africa is, in resource terms, the richest continent on earth, she continues to play a 'third-world' role – supplier of cheap raw materials and slave labour! Something went terribly wrong somewhere one would feel, but it is not something that missed the venerable Nkrumah, for Nkrumah foresaw and foretold, long before his death in his epic prophetic book, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, that if independent African nations did not proceed to win Economic Freedom after winning Political Freedom, all the gains that were made at independence would be lost within a generation; and that is exactly what has happened. Africa has witnessed a complete reversal of freedom and a loss of its economic fortunes!

Nkrumah and the Fight against Neo-Colonialism

If Africa's woes can be attributed to any one thing today, it can be attributed to the fact that we the living revolutionaries, and our political predecessors, have forgotten Nkrumah! We have forgotten his warning about neo-colonialism, and we have ignored his appeal to Socialism as the way forward, and all at our own peril! It was Nkrumah who coined the phrase – "*Seek the political kingdom first, and all else shall be added unto you*". Nkrumah, unlike many of his contemporary African leaders then, was convinced, and had no illusions that political freedom was not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Nkrumah knew that the oppression suffered by the Africans was

as a result of the deprivation and systematic robbery of Africa's material resources, and exploitation of her labour resources by the capitalist world.

Therefore, the sole aim of political freedom was, and still is, to accord the African political leaders the power to wrestle back economic power, resources and labour, back into the ownership and control of the Africans; and for the benefit of the Africans. But as late great radical Nigerian musician Fela Anikulapo Kuti once sang, '*Africa missed the road*'. Indeed, we not only missed the economic mark, but we were also messed up by capitalist puppet western-appointed black leaders!

In his last dying days in Exile, in Conakry Guinea, Kwame devoted the latter days of his life to writing and devising methods by which future African revolutionaries could unseat and unhorse what he considered to be Africa's most dangerous enemy – neo-colonialism. In fact, it is recorded that a young band of hot-headed 'firebrand' revolutionaries once organized and armed themselves with AK-47 assault rifles and presented themselves for orders at the venerable Nkrumah's house, urging him to sanction a counter-coup d'état to overthrow the reactionary puppet regime in Ghana that had conducted a coup against him earlier in 1966. Much to the surprise of the small revolutionary army, Nkrumah proceeded to disarm them of their AK-47 assault rifles, and then rearmed them with revolutionary books!

His last words to them were: "*Study the ways of our enemies, before you can conquer them.*" Indeed, true to Nkrumah's prophetic words, the war against Capitalism and the present day economic colonizers – the neo-colonizers, subjugators and aggressors of the African continent and her peoples, calls more for the tactical use of brains than bullets.

Quo Vidas? Where to Now Africa?

Our mission today is therefore as clear and as relevant as it ever was: we Africans must fight to liberate ourselves completely, thoroughly and wholly – to rid our Political, social, and economic systems of western capitalist domination. We must make the education and healthcare and employment conditions of our people better. But to do all this we must remember Nkrumah. We must remember that to conquer the Economic kingdom, we must first seek Political Power; and everything that we want shall be added unto us. With economic power back into our hands, we cannot fail to conquer; we can then determine our own destiny as free people! The tide of history is on our side, and therefore, victory is ours in the final analysis! And for as long as Africa's struggle for true and complete freedom continues, Nkrumah shall never die! His idea's, and his dreams for Africa will live on from one generation to the next generation!

Long live, and a Happy 108th Birthday Nkrumah!
Long Live the spirit of African Unity!
Long live African Freedom Fighters!

The Current Political Crisis in Zimbabwe and the Slogan of the Revolutionary Constituent Assembly

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 24.11.2017

The present political crisis in Zimbabwe opened up on 13 November with the military coup led by General Chiwenga and resulted in the fall of Mugabe. As our comrades in the RCIT's Africa Secretariat explained in their statements on the Zimbabwe crisis, this coup represents primarily a power struggle inside the ruling elite and its ZANU-PF party. Under such circumstances, socialists cannot support any of the rivaling camps. (1) Currently it looks like that the faction around former Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa will succeed in appropriating power.

Among a number of tactics, the RCIT has also raised the slogan of a *Revolutionary Constituent Assembly*. In our statement of 15 November, we defined such an assembly as "a democratic body with delegates who are controllable by those who elected them and who are open to recall by their constituents. The assembly's role will be to debate and decide on a new constitution. It must not be controlled by the ruling class which would only manipulate it in its interests, but it should be convened and protected by workers' and popular militias against any intimidation of reactionary forces."

In discussions with socialists in Zimbabwe some comrades have expressed reservations about the slogan of a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly. Hence, we want to elaborate in this article our considerations why we think it is appropriate to raise this slogan in the current situation. We refer those readers, who are interested in a more detailed explanation of the RCIT's approach to the slogan of a Revolutionary Constituent Assembly, to several essays which we have published in our journals. (2)

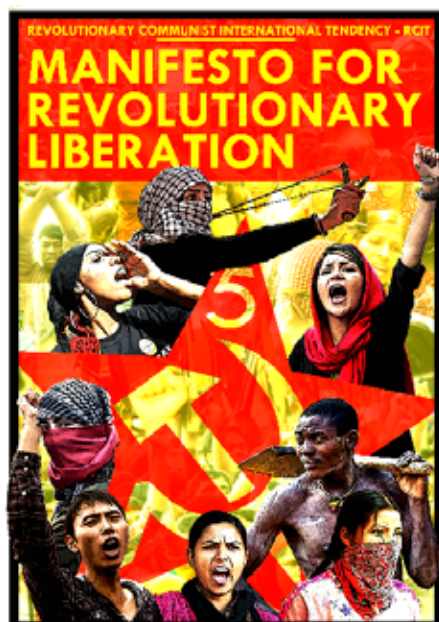
Transfer of Power within the Ruling Elite

All reports from the ground indicate that currently the popular masses hope for an end of the authoritarian regime. After 37 years of Mugabe's regime which led to the killing, imprisonment and torture of tens of thousands of opponents, it is clear that the popular masses hope for "a new era" as many people say. (3) Indeed Mnangagwa tries to channel these hopes into support for his regime.

However, it is clear that Mnangagwa is flesh from Mugabe's flesh. The "Ngwenya" ("the crocodile" in Shona language), as Mnangagwa is often called, had been Mugabe's chief lieutenant in all those 37 years of dictatorship. His regime represents the continuation of the Mugabeist state apparatus without Mugabe. The differences between the successful Crocodile faction and the loosing "G40" faction led by Mugabe's wife Grace centered on one hand around the question who should be the successor of the 93-year old President. On the other hand, Mugabe became an increasingly instable ruler which led China as the dominating imperialist power in Zimbabwe to secretly support the coup of Mnangagwa and General Chiwenga. (4)

The Constituent Assembly as a Revolutionary-Democratic Slogan

It is the task of socialists in Zimbabwe to relate to the hopes and illusions of the popular masses. While it is clear that the coup represented a power struggle inside the ruling elite which for now succeeded in transferring power to



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Introduction * I. Decaying Capitalism * II. Today's Worldwide Historic Revolutionary Period * III. The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class * IV. A Program for Socialist Revolution to Halt Humanity's Collapse into Barbarism * V. The Crisis of Leadership and the Construction of a Revolutionary World Party * VI. Work in Mass Organizations and the United Front Tactic * VII. The Semi-Colonial South * VIII. The Emerging Imperialist Great Powers of the East: China and Russia * IX. The Old Imperialist Great Powers: The EU, North America and Japan * X. Conclusion

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another figure of the ZANU-PF party, it has also become obvious that this crisis provoked a political awakening of the masses. Naturally, given the lack of independent political experience after decades of dictatorship, the workers and rural poor still have many illusions.

However, the task of socialists is not to arrogantly lecture the masses about their "backward" illusions (that would be serious ultra-left error) but to develop slogans which relate to their current hopes and which could help them to begin independent political activities.

One of such slogans, among others, is the Revolutionary Constituent Assembly. Such an assembly represents the highest form of democracy inside the boundaries of capitalism.

Why the highest form? Because such a body has the power to discuss a new constitution and hence all issues of political, economic and social life. This is why the slogan of a Constituent Assembly played such an important role in numerous revolutions starting from the French Revolution in 1789 to the Russian Revolutions in 1905 and 1917 up to today as we saw in various Latin American countries.

True, the ruling class will always attempt to control and manipulate such an assembly. However, this danger exists with all minimum and democratic slogans which we raise and which we have to raise as long as capitalism exists. For example, higher wages can be countered by the capitalists by rising prices. More formal democratic rights can be made ineffective by the ruling class by increasing subtle repression and manipulation.

The answer to this is not to renounce the use of such minimum and democratic slogans but to raise them in a *revolutionary* and not in a reformist way. This means that we raise such slogans not as appeals to the ruling class or in a way which would leave the control over the implementation of an assembly (or any other democratic measure) to them. We rather call the masses to fight for more democracy on the streets, workplaces and neighborhoods by the means of mass demonstrations, strikes, etc. We call for a Constituent Assembly which would be under the control of the armed and organized popular masses. Such an assembly would tremendously weaken the ruling class and open the road for a revolutionary transformation.

Under which Conditions Should Socialists Renounce the Call for a Constituent Assembly?

In our opinion, socialists should renounce calling for a Constituent Assembly only under two conditions: 1) If the popular masses have already overcome their illusions in bourgeois democracy and fight for a higher form of democracy, working class democracy expressed in councils ("*Soviets*" as they were called in Russia); 2) If such councils ("*Soviets*") already exist so that replacing bourgeois democracy with socialist democracy is a task of today.

Neither of these conditions exist today in Zimbabwe. In fact, after 37 years of dictatorship, it is only natural that the masses have huge illusions in bourgeois democracy. Likewise, there are no soviets anywhere in Zimbabwe today which again is hardly surprising given the repressive political conditions.

The Marxist Classics on the Slogan for a Constituent Assembly

The Bolsheviks under Lenin and later the Fourth International led by Trotsky always emphasized the importance of the slogan of the Constituent Assembly. They made clear that while revolutionaries ultimately fight for a workers and peasant republic, they have to utilize all tactics which will weaken the ruling class and strengthening the combat power of the oppressed masses. In his famous book '*Left-Wing' Communism - An Infantile Disorder*, Lenin explained:

"We did not proclaim a boycott of the bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, but said—and following the April (1917) Conference of our Party began to state officially in the name of the Party—that a bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly would be better than a bourgeois republic without a Constituent Assembly, but that a "workers' and peasants" republic, a Soviet republic, would be better than any bourgeois-democratic, parliamentary republic. Without such thorough, circumspect and long preparations, we could not have achieved victory in October 1917, or have consolidated that victory." (5)

The masses will be convinced of the necessity of a socialist revolution primarily not by the revolutionaries' propaganda but rather by their own experience with the limitations of bourgeois democracy. Hence, Trotsky explained to his co-fighters that it is crucial for revolutionaries not to dogmatically counterpose radical socialist slogans to the existing mass consciousness (which usually contains many illusions) but rather to develop democratic slogans which relate to this consciousness:

"The democratic slogans contain for a certain period not only illusions, not only deception, but also an animating historical force. (...) From the political point of view, the question of formal democracy is for us not only that of the attitude to be observed towards the petty-bourgeois masses, but also towards the worker masses, to the extent that the latter have not yet acquired a revolutionary class consciousness. (...) In any case, these results were not attained by simply opposing the soviets to the Constituent Assembly, but by drawing the masses towards the soviets while maintaining the slogans of formal democracy up to the very moment of the conquest of power and even after it." (6)

Given the fact that the slogan of a Constituent Assembly touches the issue of power, Trotsky spoke in this context explicitly about "*transitional revolutionary-democratic slogans*". In the case of China at the end of the 1920s, he considered the slogan of a Constituent Assembly as such a crucial transitional demand:

"The struggle against the military dictatorship must inevitably assume the form of transitional revolutionary-democratic demands, leading to the demand for a Chinese Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal direct, equal, and secret voting, for the solution of the most important problems facing the country: the introduction of the eight-hour day, the confiscation of the land, and the securing of national independence for China"(7)

Based on the experience of the Chinese Revolution of 1925–27 and the disaster of Stalinist policy, Trotsky also emphasized that it is crucial to raise the slogan of the Constituent Assembly not as an appeal to the ruling class but as an organizing slogan for the workers and poor peasants.

"The slogan of the Constituent Assembly becomes an empty abstraction, often simple charlatanry, if one does not add who will convoke it and with what program. Chiang Kai-shek can raise the slogan of a Constituent Assembly against us even tomorrow, just as he has now raised his "workers' and peasants' program" against us. We want a Constituent Assembly convoked not by Chiang Kai-shek but by the executive committee of the workers' and peasants' soviets. That is the only serious and sure road."
(8)

In summary, we think that the positive application of the slogan of the Revolutionary Constituent Assembly by our comrades in the RCIT's Africa Secretariat is an appropriate tactic for Zimbabwe under the present circumstances. We look forward to discuss the thoughts and criticism of socialist comrades in Zimbabwe.

Footnotes

(1) See RCIT and ELA (Zambia): Zimbabwe: The Fall of Mugabe – Victory for the Masses or for the Military-ZANU-PF Alliance? 22.11.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/zimbabwe-after-the-resignation-of-mugabe/>; RCIT: Zimbabwe: Down with the Military Coup! No to the dynastic Mugabe Regime! For Independent Workers' and Poor Mobilisations! For Action Committees of the Workers, Poor Peasants and Soldiers to Advance the Struggle against All Factions of the Ruling Elite! 15.11.2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/against-mugabe-and-military-coup-in-zimbabwe/>

(2) See e.g. Michael Pröbsting: The Struggle for Democracy in the Imperialist Countries Today. The Marxist Theory of Permanent Revolution and its Relevance for the Imperialist Metropolises, in: Revolutionary Communism, No. 39, August 2015, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/democracy-vs-imperialism/> (see in

particular chapter 6 and 8); Michael Pröbsting: The Coup d'État in Egypt and the Bankruptcy of the Left's "Army Socialism", in: Revolutionary Communism, No. 13, September 2013, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/egypt-and-left-army-socialism/> (see in particular chapter IV)

(3) To give just one example: the notorious Gukurahundi massacre, directed against the rivaling ZAPU movement and their supporters among the Ndebele civilians, resulted in the killing of about 20,000 people in 1983/84.

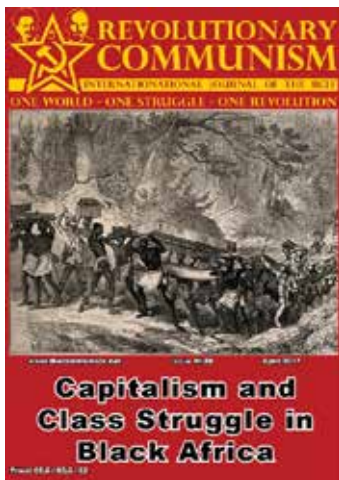
(4) See e.g. Simon Tisdall: Zimbabwe: was Mugabe's fall a result of China flexing its muscle? The 21st century's new global superpower is not just Zimbabwe's 'all-weather friend' and top trade partner, close ties go back to the 1970s liberation era, 17 November 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/17/zimbabwe-was-mugabes-fall-a-result-of-china-flexing-its-muscle>; Tom Phillips: Zimbabwe army chief's trip to China last week raises questions on coup. General met Chinese military leaders and defence minister in Beijing on eve of move against Robert Mugabe, 16 November 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/16/zimbabwe-army-chief-trip-china-last-week-questions-coup>

(5) V.I. Lenin: 'Left-Wing' Communism - An Infantile Disorder, in: LCW Vol. 31, p. 31

(6) Leon Trotsky: The Chinese Question After the Sixth Congress (1928), in: Leon Trotsky: Problems of the Chinese Revolution, Pioneer Publisher, New York 1932, pp. 192-193, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1932/pcr/08.htm>

(7) Leon Trotsky: The Political Situation in China and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Leninist Opposition (1929); Trotsky: Writings 1929, p. 149 (Emphasis in the Original)

(8) Leon Trotsky: The Chinese Revolution and the Theses of Comrade Stalin (1927), in: Leon Trotsky: Problems of the Chinese Revolution, Pioneer Publisher, New York 1932, p. 32, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1932/pcr/01.htm>



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa

*An Analysis of Imperialist Exploitation and Oppression
and the Perspectives of the Liberation Struggle*

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

Introduction * Some Background Notes on Black Africa's Modern History: How Colonial Plunder and Oppression Blocked Independent Development * Popular Struggles against Colonialism Led to Formal Independence * Formal Independence as Disguised Imperialist Dependency * The Reactionary Role of White Settlers * Is Capitalist Black Africa Rising? * Africa in the Grip of Imperialism * China as a new Imperialist Great Power Challenging the Western Domination * The Working Class and the Oppressed * Rising Class Struggle * Key Lessons for a Revolutionary Strategy in Black Africa * Imperialist Domination and Authoritarian Regimes Remain in Place despite Formal Changes * Breaking the Capitalist Chain – The Program of Permanent Revolution * The Revolutionary Struggle against Imperialism * Imperialist Chauvinism and the Anti-Imperialist Patriotism of the Oppressed * The Independence of the Working Class and the Struggle against the Popular Front * The Struggle for Pan-African Unity * The Revolutionary World Party and its African Sections * Footnotes

Anatomy of the Communist Party of Bangladesh

By Apu Sarwar, September 2000

Note of the Editorial Board: Below we republish the English translation of an article written by comrade Apu Sarwar in Bangla language. বাংলা (Bangle) is the common language of the peoples in Bangladesh, West Bengal, Tripura, and Part of Assam (India). The original title of the article was “*Moni Shing’s 100th birth day commemorations and the friends of the CPB*”. The article was originally published in the left wing Bengali journal *Gono Moitry* (People’s Unity / Friendship) in 2000. Later on this article was incorporated into a pamphlet with the title “*The Heritage Marxist Should Denounce*”.

These articles and the pamphlet as a whole will be published in the Bangle-language section of the RCIT website here: <https://www.thecommunists.net/home/%E0%A6%AC-%E0%A6%B2/>

Comrade Apu Sarwar was a left-wing student activist in 1980s in Bangladesh and a member of the currently defunct *Socialist Party of Bangladesh* [BSD(M)], a populist party. He became member of our predecessor organization – the LRCI/LFI in the early 1990s.

A technical note: The English translation is an elaboration of the Bengali-language article with footnotes to make the text better understandable for people who are less familiar with left wing politics in Bangladesh.

The rewriting of history has begun. On 30 June, 2000, the CPB (Communist Party of Bangladesh) arranged a meeting in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Moni Singh’s birth. During the past year a number of other events have been staged, culminating with, a meeting to mark the 101st anniversary of his birth on 27 July, 2001.

Luminaries of the Dhaka political and academic world were invited, as usual, and attended in greater number than ever before. Last year the then prime minister Sheik Hasina sent a congratulatory message and this time Latifur Rahman, chief advisor of the caretaker government, sent greetings.

Moni Singh was involved with the progressive movement since its inception in the days of British colonialism, overcoming much personal suffering and state oppression to further the causes he believed in. There is much that can be said in praise of a unique personality on the left in Bangladesh. The tendency to romanticise and embellish the lives of influential men after their death is understandable in bourgeois circles, but highly dangerous for the revolutionary movement.

The meetings in honour of Moni Singh raise a serious question of political honesty. The present leadership is making great efforts to hide or whitewash his political adventures. As CPB leader, Moni Singh approved the CPB’s repeated betrayals of the working class movement.

Nowadays his disciples are trying to create a new history, one in which Moni Singh did not agree with the tactics carried out by his party.(2) There is no evidence, not a single historical or party document, to prove this, only the claims of his surviving comrades, whose present activities differ little from the good old days.

From 1972 to 1975 the CPB, in line with Soviet foreign policy toward the newly emerged nation, were close allies of the Awami League government under Sheik Muzib. Those years saw a vicious state-sponsored campaign of extermination against the left, especially of the pro-Chinese communist parties.

In 1973 the CPB’s student wing organised a massive rally against the Vietnam War. Muzib, worried about offending the US, ordered tough measures against the protesters and two students were shot dead. People reacted to the deaths by going on the rampage in the streets of Dhaka. Some left groups called for a students’ strike. Yet the very next day top CPB leaders met with Muzib and offered apologies for the turmoil and destruction of the previous day, thus pulling the plug on the strike.

If the CPB had their eyes closed while the “father of the nation” oversaw the “clean up” operation, Muzib himself was not one to shy away from taking credit for his righteous acts. When the CPB joined the government in 1975, they found themselves in the ironic position of applauding Muzib’s characteristically showman-like speech virtually boasting that assassinated Purbo Bangla Shorbohara (Proletarian Party of East Bengal) leader, Siraj Sikder had been taken care of.

Sikder died at the age of 30 under a hail of police bullets after allegedly escaping from custody(3). In 1971 Siraj Sikder led his party and personally fought in the resistance, while other pro-Chinese parties were largely paralysed due to the official position, which supported the Pakistani army. A large number of Awami League leaders sat out the liberation war in India.

The CPB under Moni Singh embarked on a new “path toward socialism” in joining Muzib’s BAKSAL(4) government. BAKSAL - an unholy alliance of the Awami League(5), National Awami Party(6) and CPB, with all other parties outlawed and thousands of activists imprisoned - was a reckless experiment, advocated by the Kremlin and carried out just as unsuccessfully in Bangladesh as in Chile and elsewhere. Hailed as an attempt at creating socialism through parliament, the short-lived BAKSAL system was in reality a dictatorship of the petit bourgeois, which confirmed the bankruptcy of the idea. It took only a few months for the army to move against the “third way-ists”.

The CPB subsequently also lined up behind the dictatorship of General Ziaur Rahman(7), supporting his bid to win public approval by referendum and his early “action programs” such as canal digging.

In a CPB audience with the dictator, Moni Singh expressed the idea that the army in third world could play a progressive role(8). This kind of flattery, however, did not stop the army general from eventually putting leading CPB members, including Moni Singh, behind bars, perhaps as evidence of his progressive ideas in commanding a capitalist state.

Apart from having no qualms about hobnobbing with the most reactionary wing of the bourgeoisie, the CPB ventured so far from its Marxist roots as to imagine that the army, one of the repressive pillars of the bourgeois state, has the potential to work on the side of the masses.

The CPB were apparently not aware of what had recently happened in Chile, and somewhat earlier in Indonesia.

The present leadership has suddenly, but subtly, begun putting a new angle on the story. Moni Singh, they say, never agreed with these mistaken ideas. They claim he steered the CPB into Muzib's ruling alliance - to the point of dissolving the party - and co-operated with Ziaur Rahman to maintain party discipline. The aim is clearly to make the CPB's betrayals eventually disappear, first by absolving the esteemed former leader from responsibility or intent. The new truth is allowed to spread through newspaper tributes and the like.

What kind of revolutionary subordinates principles to discipline? What kind of leader does not stand up for the revolutionary position, even if it puts him in the minority? When almost without exception every member of their party took the side of their own bourgeoisie and voted in the German parliament for war credits, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht took the internationalist stance and voted against. The result was a split in the party, but a principled split, which went on to become the dominant force after the victory of the Bolsheviks.

In 1917 Lenin returned to Russia with his April Theses to find himself in a minority on the central committee. The new ideas he expressed - abandoning the long-held conception of two distinct stages of revolution, which meant not supporting the bourgeois government and calling for the working class to seize state power - were unacceptable to his fellow leaders. Saying they would all end up as antiques in the Bolshevik museum, Lenin strategically turned to the masses for support of his line. In the 1918 Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations with Germany, Lenin again was outnumbered on the central committee. In the first instance Lenin's determined defence of his ideas brought about the revolution, and in the second it saved the Soviet Union.

Revolutionaries should make use of party democracy to defend the class position. If party democracy exists then the handful of members on the central committee can't decide to dissolve the party. The CPB is not the only left party in the world to have shown an eagerness to collaborate with the bosses in the name of "National Democratic Revolution" or "Peoples Democratic Revolution" though this tactic has always spelt doom for the masses. From Indonesia to Bangladesh, wherever the left made alliances with the bosses, the second stage was never reached.

In countries with a belated bourgeois development,

especially the semi-colonial countries, the bourgeoisie no longer has a progressive role to play. Achieving democracy and national emancipation is conceivable only through the working class coming to power not through an alliance with the bosses' class.

In the early 1920s a debate on two-stage revolution emerged in the Soviet party. The "Old Bolsheviks" defended the "two stage revolution" theory, which Lenin had abandoned before the October revolution. In the 1920s, in China the Comintern advocated such way of revolution. The bosses slaughtered thousands of communist workers. In Indonesia, something similar happened.

Moni Singh's family lived on the banks of the Shushong river, which flows from the Garo Hills. Though born with a silver spoon in his mouth, in a Landlord family, he became politically conscious at a young age, rebelling against the social injustice he saw in the Hindu caste system. Later he joined the Communist Party of India. His spirit of determination to break the chains binding society - be it those of the colonial era or the new chains created by globalisation - will always be an inspiring example to us.

After the creation of Pakistan and India, a huge number of communists were forced to leave East Pakistan (East Bengal), which created a huge vacuum in the left movement. However Moni Singh and a few others remained bravely to carry the red flag in East Bengal. Perhaps it is the greatest thing for which Moni Singh can be given credit.

The period Moni Singh was active in the CPI was one of revolution and counter-revolution. In those years debates were raging within the Soviet party on the questions of workers' democracy, the influence of the bureaucracy on the party and the state, world revolution and the programme of the Communist International. On one side were the Bolshevik-Leninists, including Trotsky, who wanted to uphold the red flag of revolution and on the other Stalin and his bureaucratic disciples. The debates going on in the Soviet party and the international communist movement did not take root in the CPI. The limited debates that did enter the party were coloured by the Stalinist leadership before reaching the members. M.N.Roy(9) played a crucial part in the distortion of Bolshevik-Leninism in favour of Stalinism. Moni Singh agreed with the latter. In this way a man who embodied the promise of a great revolutionary was stopped in his tracks.

Moni Singh's adherence to the Stalinist camp - that is, the politics of class collaboration - influenced him throughout



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

The Meaning, Consequences and Lessons of Trump's Victory

By Michael Pröbsting, November 2016

Introduction * I. The Election Outcome * II. Where is the Trump Administration Heading? * III. Global Consequences: The Beginning of a New Era * IV. Lessons and Perspectives for the Struggle * V. Summary Theses * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 40 pages, A4 Format

his political career. He never succeeded in breaking from these ideas. Moni Singh and his co-thinkers in the CPI tailed British imperialism during the Second World War, as the Stalinist parties world-wide lined up with their own ruling classes following the policy of working with "democratic" imperialism. This was contrary to the ideas of Lenin, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, Trotsky and others, expressed on the eve of the First World war in the slogans "The main enemy is at home", "Turn your guns on your own ruling class" and "Not a single penny, not a person for the imperialist war". The CPI supported the creation of a division of British India on the basis of religion. Later, under Moni Singh, the CPB was seduced by Sheik Mujib's socialist rhetoric and the progressive ideas of Ziaur Rahman.

Moni Singh sowed the seeds of revolt against national oppression among the Garo and Hazon(10) minorities. He initiated the organised resistance of these groups, who had suffered for centuries at the hands of the zamindar class. Moni Singh is an example of strength and determination to carry on the struggle despite his family's fury and state persecution. In contrast, the left today plays a shameful role in avoiding the fight for minority rights. The Left Democratic Front(11), including the CPB, today advocates the progressive role of Bengali nationalism(12). In Bangladesh the national minorities are on the verge of destruction. Since independence, the non-Bengali peoples of Chitagong Hill track have been living under army siege. The LDF's voice is not strong as it should be. When a party or a front promotes a specific nationalism that means the door is closed to the other nations. It is ironic that the LDF's teachings are quite the opposite of Lenin's. For a revolutionary party, in any really serious and profound political issue, sides are taken according to class not nationality. Marxism cannot be reconciled with even the "most just" or the "purest" and most refined and civilised brand of nationalism. In the place of all forms of nationalism Marxism advances internationalism.

After the independence of Bangladesh, the CPB under Moni Singh made a deviation to the right. The party became apologists for the Awami League's policies and actions, including the killing and imprisonment of thousands of left-wing activists. In 1975 the CPB dissolved itself to become part of BAKSAL and then worked in parallel with Ziaur Rahman. In the 1980s a new CPB leadership produced a thesis to justify the party's participation in elections under martial law. The CPB abandoned its traditional hammer symbol and instead used the AL's symbol on campaign posters and ballot papers. In a graphic example of the Marxist teaching that communists who deny their identity lose their place in the class struggle, all successful CPB candidates promptly defected to the bourgeois camp.

Evaluating Moni Singh's role in politics, these incidents in the party's history must be kept in mind. To cast him in the role of great left-wing hero solely on the basis of his acknowledged personal sacrifices, and by ignoring his actions on the political stage, is wrong. Moni Singh's personal example is a worthy one to follow, but it is dangerous to emulate the class collaborationist tactics he practised. His political mistakes caused much harm to working class politics in this country. The damage to the movement is yet to be repaired. A true evaluation of Moni Singh's politics can only benefit the left.

In the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a handful of CPB followers joined the AL. Others left to form a new party with Dr Kamal, who was the chief architect of the AL's murderous backlash against the left during 1972-5 as minister responsible for the Special Powers Act. In recent times Dr Kamal has transformed himself into a democrat, becoming a fixture on the left through his party's involvement in the popular front(11) Party Alliance. Those remaining in the CPB continue to use revolutionary propaganda, but the party's actions betray a readiness to accommodate to the ruling party. The major left parties, including the CPB, have met Sheikh Hasina's government (1996-2001) many times in the last five years. The CPB has also joined the AL's chorus to demand the death penalty for the army officers who killed Sheikh Mujib, the first prime minister of the nation. The CPB is demanding the execution of Mujib's killer. What is the CPB's intention in calling for the execution of Sheikh Mujib's killers? Is the party trying to influence the existing bourgeois courts? Revolutionary Marxists demand not only the trial of Sheikh Mujib's killers, but also those of Shiraz Shikdar, Moniruzzaman Tara(13), Abu Thaher(14) and other left leaders, as well as the full disclosure of the documents relating to their imprisonment and deaths. Revolutionary Marxists do not believe in the justice of the bourgeois legal system. The police, army, bureaucracy and judiciary are the main pillars of the oppressive bourgeois state: the bourgeoisie will not allow the pillars of their state to be brought to trial. Justice will only be possible when the working class seizes the power and opens up all the secret documents of the bourgeois state. The CPB's slogan of bringing the killers of Sheikh Mujib to justice serves to strengthen ties with the ruling party. It was in this vein that Sheikh Hasina was invited to the 100th anniversary celebrations of Moni Singh's birth, and why one of her ministers, Motia Chodhuri, was the main speaker at another event in Moni Singh's memory.

The CPB and other Stalinist parties have often declared their determination to carry the red flag. For the Stalinist party it is impossible continue the revolutionary tradition: in words and deeds they are revisionists, placing faith in the bourgeoisie. The Prime Minister's blessing for Moni Singh's birth anniversary meeting is not an isolated incident. It represents the historical bankruptcy of Stalinism. After the death of Lenin, Stalin made a virtue of collaborating with the international bourgeoisie. Stalin's ally Chiang Kai Shek was made an honorary member of the Comintern with only Trotsky opposing. The honorary member went on to order the massacre of the Shanghai Commune in 1927. The French CP missed the chance for revolution in 1936 when it formed a popular front government according to Comintern policy. And in Germany the CP acted shamefully in refusing to join the united front with the Social Democrats against Hitler. During the Second World War Stalin became the friend of "democratic imperialism" resulting in Stalinist parties around the world collaborating with their own ruling class. In the case of India, the CP was rewarded for supporting their colonial masters, the British. The class-conscious rank and file of the Stalinist parties should revolt against the class collaborationist leadership! Rise up in defence of the revolutionary heritage of Lenin and Trotsky! Forge a Leninist party!

Footnotes

(1) Moni Singh was a preminent Bengali Communist politician who was popularly known as Comrade Moni Singh. He was one of the founders of the [Communist Party of East Pakistan](#). He was repeatedly imprisoned for long periods: in 1930-37, 1967-69, 1969-71, and 1977-1981. He was first elected as the head of the Communist Party in 1951, when Bangladesh was part of Pakistan, and led it with one short interruption until his death. After the [Sino-Soviet split](#), Singh took the side of the [Soviets](#).

(2) Daily Janakonotho, 28th July, 2001. An article written by Shontosh Guptha a former CPB member, who was one of the delegates of the CPB who met army dictator Ziaur Rahman along with Moni Shing.

(3) Purbo Bangla Shorbohora (Proletarian Party of East Bengal) was formed in 1969 and played a heroic role in the Liberation war in 1971. After Siraj Sikder's assassination in 1975 the party split into two fractions. Later on both fractions split many times. Still the party is mainly active in the underground. One fraction adopted the Enver Hoxa line; others are loyal to various versions of Mao's protected guerrilla war. One fraction is associated with the Maoist Revolutionary International Movement-RIM based in London. The PBS has a vicious history of killing of their won comrades in inner party struggle.

(4) BAKSAL - Bangladesh Krishok Sromik Awami League (Bangladesh Peasants and Workers Awami League), a ruling alliance formed in 1975 comprising Awami League, National Awami party and CPB. The BAKSAL government banned all other political parties, claiming their policies, the so-called BAKSAL system, was the way to build socialism. All newspapers except for four state run papers were banned.

(5) Bangladesh Awami League (AL) is one of the big bourgeois parties which led the liberation war with the help of Indian bosses. AL was in power in 1972-75 and 1996-2000. In 1975 the AL leader along with his family and relatives were killed during an army coup.

(6) National Awami Party - NAP - was formed in 1957 after a left wing split from the Awami League over the question of supporting

Americas foreign polices. The NAP split in 1965 over the Moscow-Peking conflict. NAP(Bhashani) was a shelter organisation for pro-Chinese communist parties and NAP(Mozaffor) was for the CPB, pro-Moscow party.

(7) General Ziaur Rahman. An army dictator; ruled Bangladesh 1975-1981; assassinated by a failed Army coup. Founder of Bangladesh Nationalist Party-BNP, a bosses' party, was in power in 1976-1982 and 1991-1996. Presently led by Khaleda Zia, widow of General Zia.

(8) Daily Janakonotho, 28th July, 2001. An article written by Shontosh Guptha,

(9) M.N. Roy - The founder member of the Indian CP; sided with Stalin; later on became a humanist.

(10) Garo and Hazon - Minority groups originally living at the feet of the Garo hills in Assam, India. Later they moved into various parts of Mimenshing district of Bangladesh. Together with other 15 non-Bengali minority national groups they have no state recognition.

(11) Left Democratic Front - The LDF is a popular front comprising ten different Stalinist parties.

(12) Left Democratic Front declaration in Bengali, Page 1, published 1994.

(13) Moniruzzaman Tara, was the secretary of Purbo Bangla Communist Party(M-L)[Communist Party of East BengalM-L] which was formed after the Naxalite movements started in West Bengal and elsewhere in India. Moniruzzaman Tara was arrested in Dhaka in early 1975. He was taken from jail and his dead body was found in a graveyard in Sirajgonj District on 22 May 1975.

(14) Abu Thehar a retired Army officer, who played a heroic role in the 1971 war. Came up with ideas to form a people's army. Mozib government and army bosses rejected his ideas. He joined Jatio Samajtantrik Dal-JSD, a left-wing split from the Awami League, recruited solders for a socialist revolution under JSD. They led a "soldier-people" uprising (coup) on 7th November 1975 and handed over the power to General Ziaur Rahman. Later General Zia hanged him for the violation of army discipline in 1976.

**NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!**

World Perspectives 2017: The Struggle against the Reactionary Offensive in the Era of Trumpism

Introduction * I . A New Political Phase Has Opened: The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class in the Era of Trumpism * II. Some Theoretical Question about the New Political Phase * III. The Great Power Rivalry and Its Consequences for World Politics * IV. The Middle East and the State of the Arab Revolution * V. Class Struggle in the US after Trump's Victory * VI . The Reactionary Offensive of the Ruling Class and the Resistance in Latin America * VII. Imperialist Interference and the Struggle for Democracy in Sub-Sahara Africa * VIII. Europe in the Era of Chauvinism, Militarization and Brexit * IX. Russia: Victorious Outcome of NATO's Cold War * X. China: Strengthened as a Great Power but Before a Serious Recession * XI. The Class Struggle in Asia * XII. Perspectives for Building of the Revolutionary World Party Today
* Footnotes

Published as two special issues of RevCom with altogether 56 pages, A4 Format

The Lambertists - Road to Nowhere

The Pseudo-Marxism of the so-called "Fourth International" founded by Pierre Lambert and its historical background

By Yossi Schwartz, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), November 2017

Part I: Historical Background

In 1938 the revolutionary Communists, who opposed counter-revolutionary Stalinism, formed the Fourth International, led by Leon Trotsky. While it was small it had a perspective of becoming a mass party following the war, based on the assumption that Stalinism would not survive the war, and a very sharp class struggle will spread in the world. That would enable the Fourth International to become a mass party of the working class.

However, the Fourth International was unable to function as a world revolutionary party during WWII. Many of its cadres were murdered either by Stalin or the Nazis and its social base was small among the working class. The pressures on the weak sections of the FI pulled the sections of the Fourth International apart. In many ways it was the responsibility of the American SWP, the strongest section of the FI, to keep the FI as a world party. However, the SWP was unable to do so.

That does not in any way diminish the heroic struggle of the Trotskyists during the war, especially in occupied France, where they advocated a unity of the French and German workers.

France was an imperialist country whose capitalist class in its majority collaborated with the Nazis. De Gaulle's small army was fighting to restore French imperialism.

The historian Pierre Broué wrote that in 1940 the French Trotskyists were divided mainly into two tendencies far from that of Trotsky. The majority of the POI, organized around the committees which published *La Vérité*, outlined a strategy according to which the bourgeoisie of an occupied country becomes the natural ally of the workers' movement, and the latter devotes itself completely to "national resistance". On the other hand the *La Seule Voie* (*The Only Road*) group, which became the CCI, denied that an imperialist nation could ever become an oppressed nation following a military defeat, and considered that national demands were "the importation of bourgeois ideology into the proletariat in order to demoralize it."

The Secretary of the Fourth International, Jean Van Heijenoort in New York City, opposed (and correctly so) this line as he wrote:

"The big French bourgeoisie has already succeeded in arriving at an understanding with Hitler. National resistance is concentrated in the poorer sections of the population, the urban petty-bourgeoisie, the peasants, the workers. But it is the latter which give the most resolute character to the struggle and will know how to connect it with the struggle against French capitalism and the Petain government."

Jean Van Heijenoort reminded the Trotskyists of Trotsky line:

"To the fascist 'reconstruction' of Europe; that is to say, to the perpetuation of misery and ruin, we oppose the Soviet United States of Europe [...] In the face of oppression and dictatorship, the workers will not abandon the struggle for democratic

liberties (freedom of the press, of assembly, etc.) but they must understand that this struggle cannot revive the decaying bourgeois democracy which has engendered this very oppression and dictatorship. The only democracy now possible in Europe is proletarian democracy..." (1)

Heijenoort formulated the correct revolutionary position "We give full recognition to the right of national self-determination and are prepared to defend it as an elementary right of democracy. This recognition, however, has no effect on the fact that this right is trodden underfoot by both camps in this war and will hardly be respected in case of an imperialist 'peace.' Capitalism in its agony can meet this democratic demand less and less. Only socialism can give nations the complete right to independence and put an end to every national oppression. To speak of the right to national self-determination and keep silent concerning the only means of its realization, that is, the proletarian revolution, is to repeat a shallow phrase, disseminate illusions, and deceive the workers." (2)

As Daniel Bensaid explained:

"La Vérité, the clandestine organ of the PCI, reappeared in August 1940. The concern to combat chauvinism in the workers' ranks will be concretized in France in 1943 with the publication of Arbeiter und Soldat (...). From the beginning of 1944, La Vérité denounced the projects of 'breaking up' Germany. (...) For the Trotskyist organizations, the war will mark a rupture of generational and organizational continuity. The pioneers and founders disappeared for the most part, either under the blows of repression, or by laxity and demoralization. To the victims of fascist or colonial repression, one has to add the victims Stalinist repression, including Trotsky himself, who was reached by the assassins in Mexico in August 1940." (3)

The SWP was unable to maintain the unity of the revolutionary world party not simply because of legal restrictions that forbade any American party to become part of a world party, but because of political weaknesses that were manifested already a short time after the assassination of Leon Trotsky. In 1941 the US imperialists charged 29 members of the Socialist Workers Party with sedition and conspiracy to overthrow the government. The party's offices in Minneapolis were raided on June 27. The leaders of the party were brought to a trial that lasted one month.

The SWP National Chairman James P. Cannon wrote in 1942 a pamphlet "Socialism on Trial" where he outlined the SWP's conduct during this political trial. It is clear from the pamphlet that the SWP opposed the war drive being conducted by US imperialism under the leadership of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Democratic president since 1933. However, the SWP has not presented the revolutionary position that: "The main enemy is at home," but with the line that the real enemy is German imperialism. The party explained that the coming war had nothing to do with democracy, but everything to do with increasing the wealth and power of the "Sixty Families"—the Duponts, Morgans, Rockefellers and so on—who controlled the

country and who will not fight Hitler. (4)

In reality the American capitalists fought against Nazi Germany and the SWP's line disarmed the working class politically. The positions that the SWP took during the trial point out to the weakness of the SWP as a revolutionary party. Grandizo Munis, a leading Spanish Trotskyist, objected to the terms of the defense of the SWP leaders during the Minneapolis trial, which he regarded correctly as making concessions to Defencism and Social Patriotism.

Manuel Fernandez Grandizo was born at Larena in Estremadura, and joined the Spanish section of the International Left Opposition at its conference abroad in Liege in Belgium in February 1930, where he supported Francisco Garcia Lavid in his disagreements with Andres Nin inside that organization. He also supported Trotsky's policy of the entry of the Spanish section into the youth of the Socialist Party, which he joined in 1935, and opposed the liquidation of the Spanish Trotskyists into the POUM. He left Spain for a brief while to join his family in Cuba, returning on the first boat on hearing of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War.

On his arrival, he reconstituted the Section of the Left Opposition as the Spanish Bolshevik-Leninists, who published the first issue of their paper *La Voz Leninista* on 5 April 1937 after their exclusion from the POUM. They took part with the *Friends of Durruti* in the defense of the revolution against Stalinist provocation during the Barcelona 'May Days' in 1937, but their small group of comrades was penetrated by a GPU spy, Leon Narvitch, and, after he had been killed by a POUM action squad revenging the death of Nin, Munis and his group were arrested on 12 February 1938. They were accused of killing Narvitch and of planning the assassinations of Prieto, Comorera, Negrin, La Pasionara and Diaz. After much torture, including a simulated execution of Munis, their trial was fixed for 29 January 1939 but, three days before this, France's troops entered Barcelona, and both prisoners and jailers made off. Munis escaped to France, and then managed to get out to Mexico, where he led the Spanish Trotskyists in exile and was a close collaborator of Natalia Trotsky". (5)

In the transcript of the trial, we find:

Q: *Is it a question of principle that there should be no compensation for property expropriated from the Sixty Families?*

A: *No, it is not a question of principle. That question has been debated interminably in the Marxist movement. No place has any authoritative Marxist declared it a question of principle not to compensate. It is a question of possibility, of adequate finances, of an agreement of the private owners to submit, and so forth.*

Q: *When you say, "nonsupport of the war", just exactly what would the party do during a war, which would indicate its nonsupport of the war?*

A: *Insofar as we are permitted our rights, we would speak against the war as a false policy that should be changed, in the same sense from our point of view, that other parties might oppose the foreign policy of the government in time of war, just as Lloyd George, for example, opposed the Boer War in public addresses and speeches. Ramsay MacDonald, who later became prime minister of England, opposed the war policy of England during the World War of 1914-1918. We hold our own point of view, which is different from the point of view of the two political figures I have just mentioned, and so far as we are permitted to exercise our right we would continue to write and speak for a*

different foreign policy for Americas

Q: *Now, until such time as the workers and farmers in the United States establish their own government and use their own methods to defeat Hitler, the Socialist Workers Party must submit to the majority of the people—is that right?*

A: *That is all we can do. That is all we propose to do.*

Q: *And the party's position is that there will be no obstruction of ways and means taken by the government for the effective prosecution of its war?*

A: *No obstruction in a military way, or by minority revolution; on the contrary, the party has declared positively against any such procedure".*

Cannon's answers in the Minneapolis' trial are a distortion of Trotsky's *Proletarian Military Policy* and his perspective of the need to prepare for an armed revolution. An article by the Marxist historian Pierre Broué in *Revolutionary History* dealing among other questions with this trial correctly observed: "*The political history of the Fourth International during the Second World War certainly demonstrates the strength of the current, which, under the flag of 'orthodoxy', often confined itself to pacifist positions, considering armed struggle to be participation in the war and in the union sacrée, and an acceptance of the war, purely because it was armed struggle. This current was simultaneously sectarian and conservative.*" (6)

The party known today as the *Independent Workers Party* and prior to that OCI (Internationalist Communist Organization) in France (The Lambertists) is a splitter from the party which was born from the unification of the POI and the CCI in 1944. This splitter, right wing centrist party was shaped by Lambert.

Lambert's real name was Pierre Bousset. He was born in 1920 into a Jewish family which had emigrated from Russia, fleeing the Tsar's pogroms at the turn of the century. At the age of 14, he joined the Communist Party of France, but was expelled a year later for opposing the pact between France and the Soviet Union.

Lambert joined the left socialist party led by Marceau Pivert but was expelled in 1939 along with other supporters of Trotsky for his political position and sentenced to three years in prison. When France capitulated to the Nazis, he escapes and returned to Paris under the German occupation. In December 1943, he joined the *Parti Ouvrier Internationaliste* (POI). Between 1943 and 1944 Lambert helped to unite French Trotskyists in the *Parti Communist Internationaliste* (PCI), which was the French section of the FI.

Pabloism

The restoration of the European capitalist system after the war led to the economic boom in Europe and in the USA. It strengthened Social Democracy in Western Europe. Stalinism was also strengthened as a result of its victory in the war against Nazi Germany. The Social Democrats and the Stalinists derailed the revolutionary wave that swept Europe at the end of the war and deflected the workers' struggle into mere economic demands instead of socialist revolution.

The weak Fourth International that was reunited after the war was also influenced by the boom, and also by the victory of Stalinism over Nazi Germany, and began to develop a political perspective, theories and political

practice in the direction of centrism.

Already in 1946 centrist tendencies were observed in the different sections. In the case of France *"Serious differences arose [...] between the International leadership and the majority of the leadership of the PCI (France) which gained control of the party during its Third Congress (1946). These differences revolved principally around (a) the application of the Transitional Program to the existing conditions in France, and (b) the false policy of the leadership in relation to Stalinism. The International sought to correct the opportunist course of the PCI, its vulgarization of the party's positions reducing the Transitional Program to a mere trade union level and its adaptation to Stalinism."* (7)

Even more serious symptoms were manifested in the letter sent to Tito in 1948 by the leadership of the FI. The letter was written as if the Yugoslavian Stalinist Party was a centrist organization moving to the left. The leaders of the FI wrote:

"Comrades, your Congress which is about to meet, the delegates which will compose it, and the thousands of communist members whom they will represent, find themselves, on this day following the Cominfors full resolution against your party, confronting decisions of truly historical import. Three roads are open to YOU and YOU must choose one of them. Your choice will decide for years, if not Michel Pablo for decades, the fate of your country and of its proletariat, and will exercise a profound influence on the evolution and future of the entire world communist movement. ...[] Finally, there remains the third road, the most difficult, bristling with the most obstacles: the genuine communist road for the Yugoslav party and proletariat. This road is the road of return to the Leninist conception of socialist revolution, of return to a world strategy of class struggle. It must start, in our opinion, with a clear understanding of the fact that the Yugoslav revolutionary forces can only become stronger and consolidate their positions thanks to the conscious support of the working masses of their own country and of the entire world. It means above all to understand that the decisive force on the world arena is neither imperialism with its resources and arms nor the Russian state with its formidable apparatus. The decisive force is the immense army of workers, of poor peasants and of colonial peoples, whose revolt against their exploiters is steadily rising, and who need only a conscious leadership, a suitable program of action and an effective organization in order to bring the enormous task of world socialist revolution to a successful conclusion." (8)

Ironically, the same leadership of the FI that criticized the PCI for adoption to Stalinism and the union bureaucracy adopted itself to counter revolutionary Stalinism in the form of Tito in Yugoslavia.

While this was a serious error that was influenced by the Tito's break with Stalin, only in 1951 the FI became irrevocably centrist. In the third congress of the FI, Michel Pablo, the International Secretary of the FI wrote:

"Can one seriously believe that all the rest, that is to say, the actual transformation of capitalism into socialism is no more than a matter of a few decades?" (9)

"People who despair of the fate of humanity because Stalinism still endures and even achieves victories, tailor History to their own personal measure. They really desire that the entire process of the transformation of capitalist society into socialism would be accomplished within the span of their brief lives so that they can be rewarded for their efforts on behalf of the Revolution. As for us, we reaffirm what we wrote in the first article devoted

to the Yugoslav affair: this transformation will probably take an entire historical period of several centuries and will in the meantime be filled with forms and regimes transitional between capitalism and socialism and necessarily deviating from "pure" forms and norms." (10)

Another revision that came with the perspective of centuries of "deformed workers state", was the deep entryism, a.k.a. *"entryism sui generis"* into the mass reformist parties without struggle for the revolutionary program.

"In order to integrate ourselves into the real mass movement, to work and to remain in the masses' trade unions for example, 'ruses' and 'capitulations' are not only acceptable but necessary." (11)

This Pabloite perspective of centuries of *"politically transitional forms"* (deformed workers states) is the key to the adoption of all centrists to Stalinism, Social Democracy and bourgeois nationalism that allegedly can replace the revolutionary working class and its leadership. Who needs a revolutionary party when the only possibility that is open to humanity is centuries of transitional forms like Stalinism in power?!

This perspective, as we know, was utterly false. The Stalinist bureaucracies faced several attempts of political revolutions by the working class (East Germany 1953, Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980/81) until it collapsed in the Soviet Union and East Europe in 1989-91. Capitalism has been restored in Cuba while Russia and China became imperialist states. The social Democracies or the nationalists have not overthrown the capitalist system and replaced it with deformed workers' states in any place. Thus, authentic Marxism (through its counter-revolutionary negation) has proven that it is a scientific analysis and that revisionism is an enemy of the working class.

Part II: Pabloism and the OCI-PT

When the Fourth International split in 1953 both wings were centrist, far away from Lenin and Trotsky's revolutionary politics. (12) The opposition to Pablo that set up the International Committee of the FI was composed mainly of the American SWP, the "Club" led by Gerry Healy and the French PCI.

Contrary to the legends that different groups who were at one time or another affiliated with the ICFI tell about themselves, the ICFI did not fight the Pabloists on theoretical, programmatic or strategic level, but only on the organizational level as they refused to liquidate themselves into the Stalinist parties.

The SWP began to struggle against Pablo only when the leadership of the SWP discovered that Pablo supports the faction led by Bert Cochran inside the Socialist Workers Party that opposed the leadership of Cannon. The faction accused Cannon of sectarian attitude toward the American Stalinist party.

As to the French section, in 1952 the leaders of the Fourth International (Pablo, Mandel) removed the Central Committee of the PCI and replaced it with Michelle Mestre and Pierre Frank, who accepted the International's policies. This forced them to fight against Pablo and Mandel.

As to the legend of the "anti-Pabloism" of the IC, the leadership of the FI (including the groups that in 1952

formed the ICFI) knew that the POR - the FI section in Bolivia - was politically supporting a popular front government (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario - MNR) that subordinated the working class to the bourgeoisie. The POR claimed that by putting pressure on the MNR, the nationalists will overthrow capitalism. Yet they all kept quiet as it happens in many similar situations, the popular front that demoralized the workers was overthrown by the military.

Furthermore, the Lambertists following the letter to Tito were very enthusiastic about this perspective of courting the Yugoslav Stalinists.

"For a while, activity with the "Titoites" — supporters of the Tito regime in Yugoslavia, which had fallen out with Stalin in summer 1948 — appeared to offer the PCI a way out. Like many Trotskyists, Lambert had been expelled from the CGT in 1950. He started work in Force Ouvrière, and, helped by funds from the Yugoslav embassy, was able to start a newsletter advocating trade-union unity on a democratic basis. The PCI also organized some 300 volunteers to go to Yugoslavia in work brigades. But all that was based on gross illusions about the nature of the Tito regime; ended embarrassedly when Tito backed the USA in the Korean war; and anyway brought the PCI little profit". (13)

As we shall see the Lambertists who refused to liquidate themselves into the Stalinist parties moved in the direction of social democracy. It is not an accident that Lionel Jospin, the social democratic Prime Minister of France in 1997-2002, was in his youth a Lambertist.

Moving in the direction of Social Democracy was not a straight line. In the first few years after the split of the FI, the politics of the Lambertists resembled anarcho-syndicalism more than revolutionary working class Bolshevism. Its paper *La Vérité* featured headlines such as: *"The odious comedy of elections will change nothing. Let's prepare the struggle for power!"* (16 December 1955); *"General strike for bread and peace"* (28 September 1956 and against 19 September 1957); *"War and poverty or socialist revolution"* (27 December 1956); and *"The general strike can win 10,000 francs increase for all and peace in Algeria"* (17 October 1957).

However, when De Gaulle came to power in 1958, the group moved to the right and declared that the working class is incapable to fight politically. The call for a general strike was dropped and was replaced with the call for Constitutional Assembly, their main demand even today in many countries like in Palestine. This resembles Menshevik politics of two stages more than Trotsky's strategy of the Permanent Revolution.

At the time of the split of the Fourth International the French Lambertists called themselves the PCI (Parti Communiste Internationaliste). Later on, in 1967, they changed the name to the *Internationalist Communist Organization* (French: *Organization Communiste Internationaliste*, OCI).

In 1963 the SWP left the ICFI and returned to the International Secretary of the FI. One of the key issues that led to the split in the ICIF was the Cuban Revolution. The leaders of the SWP (Canon and Hansen) claimed that the Cuban revolution was very different from Stalinism (a clear cut Pabloist position). This led the SWP back to the International Secretary of the FI which they had condemned in 1953 as traitors to the socialist revolution.

The OCI left the ICFI in 1971. In 1973 the OCI took the position of defeatism for both Israel and Egypt during the war. This was a clear betrayal of the Marxist position of

revolutionary defeat for Israel, a settler colonialist state, while Egypt is a semi colony.

Lambert split from Healy, rejecting his methods, but by the 1960s Lambert's group, in its internal organisation, had adopted bureaucratic control of the membership much like Healy's and the same bureaucratic regime of Pablo already in the 1950s, when Pablo and Mandel replaced the central committee of the French section.

In 1981, the OCI again renamed itself as the *"Internationalist Communist Party"*. In 1984, it formed a *Movement for a Workers Party*, with different currents including Anarchists and independent socialists. Those who opposed it like Stephan Just were expelled. In 1989, historian Pierre Broué was also expelled.

In 1991, the Movement for a Workers Party declared itself the *Workers Party*. Since 2002 it calls itself the *Independent Workers Party* (POI). The POI is not a party but a political block of four distinct organized "tendencies": the CCI (Trotskyist), "anarchist", "Communist", and "Socialist" tendencies.

The degeneration of the ostensible "Trotskyist" organizations in France has been observed by many:

"But talking of the PG's crisis partly misses the point. The entire French left, after all, is in crisis. From the post-Trotskyist New Anticapitalist Party (NPA) to the Greens (EELV), and the PS, every political organization is hampered by plummeting membership, factional disputes, poor electoral results, and a complete lack of strategic vision for the future. Even the "Lambertist" Independent Worker's Party (POI), one of France's far-left sects that still claims four thousand members, is on the verge of collapse." (14)

Over the years they came under heavy Islamophobic influence:

"Lambert's most famous ally was Alexandre Hébert. Hébert, a self-proclaimed anarcho-syndicalist, was operationally a careerist bureaucrat and the little Napoleon of the Force Ouvrière union in Loire-Atlantique from 1947 until 1992 (now succeeded by his own son, Patrick!). Moreover, as I discovered when I interviewed Hébert in researching a study of May 1968, his attitudes to immigrants are racist. In 1995, he contributed to Jean-Marie le Pen's paper Français d'abord ("The French first"), outlining his hostility towards immigrants. Hébert and his periphery joined the Parti Travailleurs". (15)

What we have seen, whether in the case of the United Secretary of the FI, and in the case of the ICFI, and in the case of the Lambertists, is the forces-at-work of historical laws concerning the degeneration of parties that were once revolutionary. Ironically, they seem very similar to the processes of the degeneration that Stalinism underwent on the political and organizational levels, with the difference of not possessing the power of a state apparatus.

The POI has taken the position of exit of imperialist states from the EU on the grounds that it is the first stage on the road to socialism. A typical Menshevik stagist position!

The Lambertists, like other organizations of the far left, have failed the duty to stand up against imperialist wars with a revolutionary position. As we have written in our *Open Letter to All Revolutionary Organizations and Activists*: *"The centrists of various hues — "revolutionaries" in words, but opportunists in deeds — are part of the problem, not the solution. As a general rule they opportunistically adapt directly to the bureaucratic apparatus of the mass organizations and thus, indirectly, to this or that imperialist Great Power. We specifically*

name, among many others: the CWI led by Peter Taffee, Alan Woods' IMT, the Lambertists as well as the Mandelist NPA in France who consistently fail to support the resistance against the imperialist occupation in those countries which are victim to the imperialist powers (e.g., Afghanistan, Iraq, Mali, etc)." (16)

Those who study the history of the working class know that the POUM, for example, that once declared itself a Trotskyist organization was later denounced by Trotsky himself when they support the popular front in Spain during the revolution of 1936-39, know that the POUM has since disappeared from the historical stage.

These days the Lambertists are trying to penetrate semi-colonial countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. But any honest revolutionary in these continents should ask himself/herself: is the Lambertist politics a way out of the imperialist control of the oppressed people, or just another version of capitulation to imperialism?!

Only the working class in alliance with the poor peasants and the poor urban population, led by a revolutionary party, can liberate the oppressed people in Africa, Asia and Latin America!

Footnotes

(1) Gabriela Liszt: The Trotskyists' Struggle Against Nazism in World War II, <http://www.leftvoice.org/The-Trotskyists-Struggle-Against-Nazism-in-World-War-II>

(2) Ibid

(3) Ibid

(4) Dave Holmes's introduction to the Pamphlet, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/cannon/works/1941/socialism/index.htm#intro>

(5) Grandizo Munis (1912-1989), in: Revolutionary History, Vol.2 No.2, Summer 1989

(6) Pierre Broué: How Trotsky and the Trotskyists confronted the Second World War <https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/revhist/backiss/vol3/no4/brouww2.html>

(7) Fourth International, New York, Vol. IX, No. 8, December 1948, pp. 251-57, and Vol. X, No. 1, January 1949, pp. 28-31.

(8) International Secretariat of the Fourth International: An Open Letter to Congress, Central Committee and Members of the Yugoslav Communist Party, 1948, <https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/fi/yugoslavia/yugo01.htm>

(9) Michel Pablo: On the Duration and the Nature of the Period Of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/pablo/1951/06/stalinism.htm>

(10) Michel Pablo Where Are We Going? (January 1951), <https://www.marxists.org/archive/pablo/1951/01/where.html>

(11) Spartacists: Genesis of Pabloism, <https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/icl-spartacists/1972/genesis.htm>

(12) For a more detailed history of the centrist degeneration of the Fourth International we refer readers to Michael Pröbsting: Healy's Pupils Fail to Break with their Master (Reply to Socialist Fight / LCFI). The revolutionary tradition of the Fourth International and the centrist tradition of its Epigones Gerry Healy and the "International Committee", October 2013, [https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/healy-and-fourth-international/](https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/healy-and-fourth-international/Workers Power (Britain) and Irish Workers Group: The Death Agony of the Fourth International, London 1983)

(13) <http://trotskyist.blogspot.co.il/2008/02/lambertists.html>

(14) <https://tinyurl.com/ybe9lrh4>

(15) <http://trotskyist.blogspot.co.il/2008/02/lambertists.html>

(16) <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/open-letter-revolutionary-unity/>

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Marxism and the United Front Tactic Today

The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today.

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new English-language book – MARXISM AND THE UNITED FRONT TACTIC TODAY. The book's subtitle is: The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony in the Liberation Movement and the United Front Tactic Today. On the Application of the Marxist United Front Tactic in Semi-Colonial and Imperialist Countries in the Present Period. It contains eight chapters plus an appendix (172 pages) and includes 9 tables and 5 figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

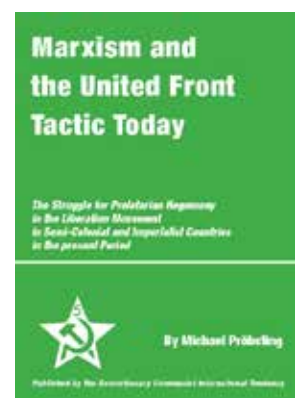
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

The united front tactic is a crucial instrument for revolutionaries under today's circumstances in which the mass organizations of the working class and the oppressed are dominated by social democratic, Stalinist and petty-bourgeois-populist forces.

The purpose of this document is both to summarize the main ideas of the Marxist united front tactic while at the same time explaining its development and modification which have become necessary due to political changes which have transpired in the

working class liberation movement since the tactic's original formulation.

In this book we initially summarize the main characteristics of the united front tactic and elaborate the approach of the Marxist classics to this issue. We then outline important social developments in the working class and the popular masses as well as in their political formations in recent decades. From there we will discuss how the united front tactic should be applied in light of a number of new developments (the rise of petty-bourgeois populist parties, the decline of the classic reformist parties, the role of national minorities and migrants in imperialist countries, etc.). The eight chapters of the book are accompanied by nine tables and five figures.



US Aggression against North Korea: The CWI's "Socialist" Pacifism

Hippie Day-Dreaming is an Impotent Tool in the Struggle against Imperialist War! Authentic Socialists say: Defend North Korea! Defeat US Imperialism!

by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 12.09.2017

The aggression of US imperialism against North Korea is one of the most important issues of the current world situation. US President Trump, as saber-rattling as he is stupid, has repeatedly threatened to attack North Korea so that it will be *"met with fire and fury like the world has never seen."*

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) has repeatedly explained that the only legitimate position of socialists on this issue can be to defend the small country on the Korean peninsula and to call for the defeat of the US warmongers. (See the links to the related documents below.) Such a support for the North Korean people – which must not be confused with political support for the Stalinist-bureaucratic dictatorship of Kim Jong Un – has to take various forms. Starting from the obvious necessary military struggle against the American aggressors in case of a war, such tactics include mass demonstrations and strikes in the US, South Korea and around the world (in particular against industries and transportation relevant for the US war machinery), blockades of the US's THAAD missile system close to Seoul (a number of local protests have already taken place), etc.

Unfortunately, many groups calling themselves "socialists" reject such a set of revolutionary and anti-imperialist tactics. A shameful example of this is the *"Committee for a Workers' International"* (CWI). Instead of a Marxist line, it propagates a program of "socialist" pacifism. This can be effectively demonstrated in an extensive article which this organization recently published. (1)

Given the fact that this is the CWI's first article on North Korea since 2013, that it has been authored by a member of the CWI's International Secretariat, and given its considerable length (more than 3,000 words), we can take this article as a comprehensive and authoritative statement of the CWI's position on this crucial flash point in the world.

Class Character of Russia and China?

In fact, the CWI article is an excellent illustration of centrism, i.e., a pseudo-revolutionary line which in fact adapts to reformist opportunism. While it lists a number of facts and quotes, the CWI author fails to express a clear position of the crucial issues involved. While the article refers repeatedly to the role Russia and China play in the tug of war on the Korean peninsula, it fails to mention even once the class character of these two Great Powers! Are these imperialist states? Are they semi-colonies or something else? The CWI doesn't even attempt to answer this question!

It doesn't require much explanation to understand why this is a crucial issue, given the involvement of several

imperialist powers in the North Korea conflict. (For an elaboration on the RCIT's analysis of the imperialist character of China and Russia see the links below.) It is an important task for a Marxist organization to enlighten the vanguard of the working class and the oppressed and to give it an orientation in the complex convulsions of the global struggle between states and classes. However, despite the length of the article, the CWI author keeps the readers entirely in the dark about such matters.

Which Side Are You On?

Worse still, the CWI fails to state which side the Korean, American and international working class should be on in this conflict! The author swaggers in paragraph after paragraph about how bad US imperialism and the regime of Kim Jong Un are, and how peaceful the world could be under socialism. All this is fine – in fact it is pretty obvious for anyone considering themselves progressive! But what does this mean for today?! In fact, the CWI persistently refuses to say which side it takes: does it take the side of the victim of imperialist aggression and call for the defeat of the imperialist predator, or does it take a neutral position in this conflict? Not a single word in the entire article indicates which side socialists should support in this conflict! It doesn't even call for the removal of the sanctions which the imperialist Great Powers have imposed on North Korea! This is not anti-imperialism but rather adaption to social-imperialism!

All this is no oversight, but rather is consistent with the long-time tradition of the CWI. As we have shown in our book *The Great Robbery of the South* and other documents, the CWI explicitly refuses to take the side of oppressed peoples faced with imperialist aggression. (2) The British attack on Argentina in the Malvinas War in 1982, the US war against Iraq in 1991 and 2003, and the US invasion and occupation of Afghanistan since 2001 are just a few examples of this centrist cowardice.

The Marxist Classics

The Marxist classics of the 20th century – first and foremost Lenin and Trotsky – have made unmistakably clear that the international workers' movement must not take a neutral position in a conflict between an imperialist and an oppressed people. Let us give just a few quotes to demonstrate the Marxist case for anti-imperialism:

"National wars waged by colonies and semi-colonies in the imperialist era are not only probable but inevitable. About 1,000 million people, or over half of the world's population, live in the colonies and semi-colonies (China, Turkey, Persia). The national liberation movements there are either already very strong, or are growing and maturing. Every war is the continuation of politics

by other means. The continuation of national liberation politics in the colonies will inevitably take the form of national wars against imperialism." (3)

In their famous pamphlet *Socialism and War*, Lenin and Zinoviev state that it is the utmost duty of all Socialists to take the side of the oppressed in such wars:

„By a ‘defensive’ war socialists have always understood a ‘just’ war in this particular sense (Wilhelm Liebknecht once expressed himself precisely in this way). It is only in this sense that socialists have always regarded wars ‘for the defence of the fatherland’, or ‘defensive’ wars, as legitimate, progressive and just. For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be ‘just’, and ‘defensive’ wars, irrespective of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slaveholding and predatory ‘Great’ Powers.“ (4)

It was in this same spirit that the Communist International in 1920 called the active support of the national liberation struggle as a duty of every revolutionary in the imperialist states:

“A particularly explicit and clear attitude on the question of the colonies and the oppressed peoples is necessary for the parties in those countries where the bourgeoisie possess colonies and oppress other nations. Every party which wishes to join the Communist International is obliged to expose the tricks and dodges of ‘its’ imperialists in the colonies, to support every colonial liberation movement not merely in words but in deeds, to demand the expulsion of their own imperialists from these colonies, to inculcate among the workers of their country a genuinely fraternal attitude to the working people of the colonies and the oppressed nations, and to carry on systematic agitation among the troops of their country against any oppression of the colonial peoples.” (5)

In a speech at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in 1922, Trotsky stated: „Every colonial movement, which weakens the capitalist rule in the metropolises, is progressive, because it makes the revolutionary tasks of the proletariat easier to achieve.“ (6)

Faced with the lack of support for liberation struggles of the oppressed people by the centrists, Trotsky emphasized this principle of revolutionary anti-imperialism:

“The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A ‘neutral’ position is tantamount to support of imperialism.” (7)

Conclusion

Preaching socialism without naming the necessary tactics in the class struggle today – among which the defense of the oppressed people against imperialism is one of the most central issues – is an impotent tool in the struggle against imperialist war. It is worthless day-dreaming of petty-bourgeois hippies, unworthy of fighters of the proletarian liberation struggle. This is like musing about an excellent food without knowing which steps are necessary in the process of cooking! Such people won’t be able to feed themselves and will die full of nice dreams but hungry.

The working class and oppressed need a revolutionary

organization which knows where to stand and how to act today in order to reach freedom tomorrow! Such an organization has no use for “socialist” pacifists who fail to fight against imperialism and who preach “socialist” dreams just to avoid revolutionary anti-imperialist struggle.

Clearly such a program of anti-imperialism must be combined with the struggle for the replacement of the Stalinist-bureaucratic dictatorship of Kim Jong Un with an authentic socialist government. Our perspective is the revolutionary unification of the Korean peninsula and the creation of a Korean Workers’ and Peasant Republic.

The RCIT calls authentic socialists to rally around the slogan: *Defend North Korea! Defeat US Imperialism!* The struggle for building a *Revolutionary World Party* is inextricably linked with the anti-imperialist program for the liberation of the oppressed people from the yoke of the Great Powers!

Footnotes

(1) Niall Mulholland: North Korea: Nuclear stand-off - dangerous escalation of Washington and Pyongyang conflict, CWI, 09 September 2017, <http://www.socialistworld.net/index.php/international/asia/82-north-korea/9414-north-korea-nuclear-stand-off-dangerous-escalation-of-washington-and-pyongyang-conflict>

(2) Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-exploitation of the Semi-colonial World by Monopoly Capital; Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, RCIT, Vienna 2013, chapter 13, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-of-the-south/>; Michael Pröbsting: The CWI’s “Socialist” Zionism and the Palestinian Liberation Struggle. A Reply from the RCIT, 15.9.2014, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/cwi-and-israel/>

(3) V.I. Lenin: The Junius Pamphlet (1916); in: LCW 22, p. 310

(4) V.I. Lenin/G. Zinoviev: *Socialism and War* (1915); in: LCW 21, pp. 300-301

(5) Communist International: Conditions of Admission to the Communist International, approved by the Second Comintern Congress (1920); in: *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents. Selected and edited by Jane Degras, Volume I 1919-1922*, p. 170

(6) Leo Trotzki: Auszug aus einer Rede zur französischen Frage auf dem IV. Weltkongreß der Kommunistischen Internationale (1922); reprinted in: Jakob Moneta: *Die Kolonialpolitik der französischen KP*, Hannover 1968, p. 22 (our translation)

(7) Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau (1936), in: *Documents of the Fourth International*, Pathfinder Press, New York 1973, p. 99

What the RCIT Stands for

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a fighting organisation for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. It has national sections in various countries. The working class is the class of all those (and their families) who are forced to sell their labour power as wage earners to the capitalists. The RCIT stands on the theory and practice of the revolutionary workers' movement associated with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky.

Capitalism endangers our lives and the future of humanity. Unemployment, war, environmental disasters, hunger, exploitation, are part of everyday life under capitalism as are the national oppression of migrants and nations and the oppression of women, young people and homosexuals. Therefore, we want to eliminate capitalism.

The liberation of the working class and all oppressed is possible only in a classless society without exploitation and oppression. Such a society can only be established internationally.

Therefore, the RCIT is fighting for a socialist revolution at home and around the world.

This revolution must be carried out and led by the working class, for she is the only class that has nothing to lose but their chains.

The revolution can not proceed peacefully because never before has a ruling class voluntarily surrendered their power. The road to liberation includes necessarily the armed rebellion and civil war against the capitalists.

The RCIT is fighting for the establishment of workers' and peasant republics, where the oppressed organize themselves in rank and file meetings in factories, neighbourhoods and schools – in councils. These councils elect and control the government and all other authorities and can always replace them.

Real socialism and communism has nothing to do with the so-called "real existing socialism" in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba or Eastern Europe. In these countries, a bureaucracy dominated and oppressed the proletariat.

The RCIT supports all efforts to improve the living conditions of workers and the oppressed. We combine this with a perspective of the overthrow of capitalism.

We work inside the trade unions and advocate class struggle, socialism and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is a layer which is connected with the state and capital via jobs and privileges. It is far from the interests and

living circumstances of the members. This bureaucracy's basis rests mainly on the top, privileged layers of the working class - the workers' aristocracy. The struggle for the liberation of the working class must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their upper strata.

The RCIT strives for unity in action with other organizations. However, we are aware that the policy of social democracy and the pseudo-revolutionary groups is dangerous and they ultimately represent an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class.

We fight for the expropriation of the big land owners as well as for the nationalisation of the land and its distribution to the poor and landless peasants. We fight for the independent organisation of the rural workers.

We support national liberation movements against oppression. We also support the anti-imperialist struggles of oppressed peoples against the great powers. Within these movements we advocate a revolutionary leadership as an alternative to nationalist or reformist forces.

In a war between imperialist states (e.g. U.S., China, EU, Russia, Japan) we take a revolutionary defeatist position, i.e. we don't support neither side and advocate the transformation of the war into a civil war against the ruling class. In a war between an imperialist power (or its stooge) and a semi-colonial country we stand for the defeat of the former and the victory of the oppressed country.

The struggle against national and social oppression (women, youth, sexual minorities etc.) must be led by the working class. We fight for revolutionary movements of the oppressed (women, youth, migrants etc.) based on the working class. We oppose the leadership of petty-bourgeois forces (feminism, nationalism, Islamism etc.) and strive to replace them by a revolutionary communist leadership.

Only with a revolutionary party fighting as its leadership can the working class win. The construction of such a party and the conduct of a successful revolution as it was demonstrated by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky in Russia are a model for the revolutionary parties and revolutions also in the 21 Century.

For new, revolutionary workers' parties in all countries! For a 5th Workers International on a revolutionary program! Join the RCIT!

No future without socialism!

No socialism without a revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

