



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



www.thecommunists.net

New Series Issue Nr.22

August 2019

Class Struggle in Greece = A Balance Sheet

PLUS: Analysis of Chinese Capitalism * The Left and China
Split in the Argentinean "Partido Obrero" * Book Review

English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.22, August 2019

- China: Another “Success” of the Stalinist-Capitalist Regime
Official Announcement that China has become the world’s second largest bond market p.3
- Sam Williams and “Progressive” Chinese Capitalism
An essay on the theoretical roots of confusion among centrists p.5
- Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry
A Review by Louis Proyect p.11
- Some Thoughts on the Split in the Argentinean “Partido Obrero” p.13
- Class Struggle in Greece – A Balance Sheet
Interview with Kokkino Nima (Greece) p.16
- What the RCIT Stands for p.27

Source of the picture on the cover: Wikipedia, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Syntagma_Square_%27indignados%27.png

Revolutionary Communism is the monthly English-language journal published by the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT). The RCIT has sections and activists in Nigeria, Kenya, South Korea, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Britain, Germany, and Austria.

www.thecommunists.net - rcit@thecommunists.net
Tel/SMS/WhatsApp/Telegram: +43-650-4068314

China: Another “Success” of the Stalinist-Capitalist Regime

Announcement that China has become the world’s second largest bond market

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 3 July 2019

Xinhua, China’s state news agency, recently published an interesting announcement. Referring to information from *Shanghai Clearing House* and the *China Central Depository & Clearing Co*, the agency reported that “China has become the world’s second largest bond market after the United States”. It noted in glowing terms that the confidence of the global financial elite in China’s market has grown to the point that overseas institutions have responded by making substantial investments in Chinese financial assets.¹

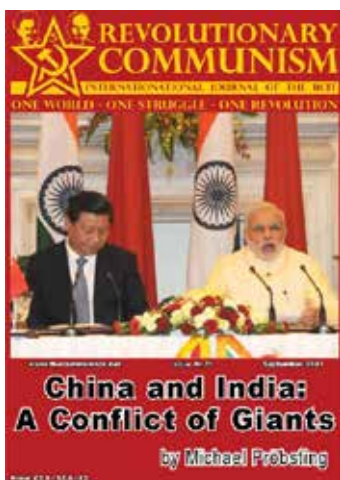
While China’s ruling class has hailed this development as good news, there’s a definite, related downside for the numerous cheerleaders in the Stalinist and Castro-Chavista camp. As we substantiated in our recently published book on Great Power rivalry, these pseudo-socialists have made a habit of kowtowing to the claims of China’s “socialism” for many years.² We Trotskyists have been repeatedly attacked as “CIA agents” and “imperialist provocateurs” because we have always denied any “socialist” character to the Chinese economy and, instead emphasized, by contrast, its capitalist nature.

When we supported our analysis of China’s capitalism with credible data, these Beijing poodles simply denied

them as “capitalist” or “Trotskyist” propaganda. Unfortunately, the authoritative source is now neither a Trotskyist nor a Western think tank highlighting claims concerning China’s capitalist nature but rather the Chinese “communist” authorities themselves. And the “confession” is not an act of contrition but a point of pride.

We ask the Stalinist friends of China: how can a regime that is supposedly “communist” create the world’s second largest bond market that offers huge opportunities to appropriate profits for Chinese and other financial sharks?! Additionally, how can a socialist entity proudly claim credit for such an “achievement”?!

This information about China’s triumphs in the financial markets is not particularly surprising for Marxists. The RCIT has demonstrated in numerous articles, studies, and books that China had become a capitalist state by the early 1990s and, more recently, entered the ranks of imperialist Great Powers.³ We have shown that behind the curtain of “socialist” rhetoric in official media lies the reality of capitalist exploitation. China’s banks and industry – both private and state-owned – operate according to the capitalist law of value.⁴ Capitalist property relations in China have advanced to the point where the country has become



PUBLICATIONS OF THE RCIT

The China-India Conflict: Its Causes and Consequences

What are the background and the nature of the tensions between China and India in the Sikkim border region? What should be the tactical conclusions for Socialists and Activists of the Liberation Movements?

A Pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)

A RCIT Pamphlet, 36 pages, A4 Format

Introductory Remarks * I. Recent Developments * II. The Struggle for Domination of Bhutan * III. The Background: Accelerating Rivalry between China and India in a Period of Capitalist Decay * China’s Belt and Road Initiative * India’s OCOR as an Alternative to OBOR? * India’s Increasing Ties with US and Japanese Imperialism * How are the chances in a military confrontation between India and China? * IV. China as an Emerging Great Imperialist Power * China’s Monopolies * Super-Exploitation of the Working Class * China’s Capital Export * China as a Military Power * V. India: A Peculiar Semi-Colony in the Role of a Regional Power * A Brief Historical Review * The Characteristics of India’s Semi-Colonial Economy * India’s Economic Elites: Many ... and at the same time Few * The Parasitic Nature of the Indian Bourgeoisie * India as a Regional Power and an Oppressor State * Brief Remarks on an Historic Analogy: The Ottoman Empire * VI. Revolutionary Tactics in the China-India Conflict * Appendix: Imperialist vs. Semi-Colonial State: Some Theoretical Considerations * 1. What are the Respective Characteristics of an Imperialist vs. a Semi-Colonial State? * 2. Is a Transition from Being One Type of State to Another Possible? * 3. Is the Category of “Sub-Imperialism” Useful? * Footnotes

a leading global force in terms capitalist value production, capital export, military expenditures, its share of the world's population of billionaires, its *Belt and Road Initiative* project, its increasing dominance in various African and Asian countries, etc.⁵

In short, our analysis of China has stood the test of time. It's been vindicated. In contrast, the Stalinist and Castro-Chavista cheerleaders of Beijing are compelled to bury their heads even deeper in the sand in order to ignore and deny a reality that is plain for all to see!

These are not merely theoretical differences but have major implications for the positioning of any political force in the global class struggle. While the RCIT unconditionally supports the struggles of China's workers and youth against the regime (like e.g. the current mass protests against the extradition law in Hong Kong), the Stalinists denounce them vociferously as "*mob violence*".⁶ Likewise, while we Marxists equally oppose *all* imperialist Great Powers (the U.S., China, the EU, Russia and Japan) in economic, political, or military conflicts – the Global Trade War is an actual example for this – the social-imperialist friends of Beijing and Moscow support them against their Western rivals.⁷

As a result we confront, once more, the two basic truths that must be understood by every Marxist. First, one must not be taken in by the self-serving terms that a given political force uses to annoint itself. It has no meaning if an organization formally gathers under a circus tent they refer to as "Marxism", "Communism" or even "Trotskyism". What counts are the concrete theoretical and practical positions such an entity takes in the global class struggle. Only by studying these positions and their related consequences is it possible to accurately assess if that organization is really adhering to Marxism or if it is, rather, an enemy of Marxism functioning on behalf of one or another section of the bourgeoisie.

Secondly, the analysis of China's class character demonstrates that such theoretical differences result in real positions being taken on opposite sides of the barricades.

All Marxists must internalize these lessons and learn from these experiences to prepare for the class battles and Great Power conflicts that lie ahead of us!

Footnotes

- 1) Xinhua: China becomes world's second largest bond market, 2019/6/29 <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1156182.shtml>
- 2) See on this in particular chapter "VIII. Revisionist Whitewashing: Stalinist and Bolivarian Admirers of Beijing's "Socialism"" in Michael Pröbsting: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective*, RCIT Books, January 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>
- 3) Our documents which analyse China's capitalism and its rise to a new imperialist Great Power in detail are collected in a special section on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>. All publications can be read online or downloaded for free at these links.
- 4) For our analysis of capitalist restoration in China we refer readers in particular to a major study by Michael Pröbsting: *China's transformation into an imperialist power. A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power*, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 4 (2012), <http://www.thecommunists.net/publications/revcom-number-4>.
- 5) On China's current development as an imperialist great Power and a challenger to US hegemony, see e.g. our recently published book by Michael Pröbsting: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* mentioned above.
- 6) See e.g. RCIT: *China: Mass Protests against Reactionary "Extradition Law" in Hong Kong*. For an indefinite general strike to kill the bill and to bring down the Administration of Carrie Lam! 18 June 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/china-mass-protests-against-reactionary-extradition-law-in-hong-kong/>. For Beijing's denouncement of the mass protests in Hong Kong see e.g. the statement by its English-language mouth piece "Global Times": *Say no to mob violence and reclaim order in HK society*, 2019/7/2 <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1156439.shtml>.
- 7) See on this, in addition to the above mentioned new book on Great Power rivalry: RCIT: *Theses on Revolutionary Defeatism in Imperialist States. Resolution of the International Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT), 8 September 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/theses-on-revolutionary-defeatism-in-imperialist-states/>; RCIT: *Global Trade War: No to Great Power Jingoism in West and East! Neither Imperialist Globalization nor Imperialist Protectionism! For International Solidarity and Joint Struggle of the Working Class and Oppressed People!* 4 July 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/joint-statement-on-the-looming-global-trade-war/>

China's transformation into an imperialist power

A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power

By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)

Price: €3 / \$3,5 / £2 (plus delivery charges)

Order the pamphlet via our contact address: rcit@thecommunists.net

Sam Williams and “Progressive” Chinese Capitalism

An essay on the theoretical roots of confusion among centrists

By Petr Sedov, RCIT Russia, 17.07.2019

The current world situation is characterized by a skyrocketing deterioration of the relation between China and USA which is a clear demonstration of a deep political and economic crisis of the capitalist system. The latest news about Taiwan is a clear illustration of the rivalry between Great Powers striving for world domination. [1, 9, 10] Nevertheless, the centrists are unable to elaborate a revolutionary perspective in the current world situation. Quite the opposite, they are repeating a mechanistic dogma about the “U.S. Empire” or are repeatedly producing cyberpunk-like conspiracy fiction about the transnational elite, which is controlling all police with all roads leading to Washington. The latest example of confusion among the left and their view on China is an essay produced by Sam Williams.

In contrast to various “anti-imperialist” conspiracy idiots from RT.com, Sam Williams recognizes a Marxist economic and class-based foundation for the Global Trade War and rising tensions. Unfortunately, it is spoiled by some demagoguery about U.S. Empire and “progressive” Chinese capitalism.

When everyone shall agree

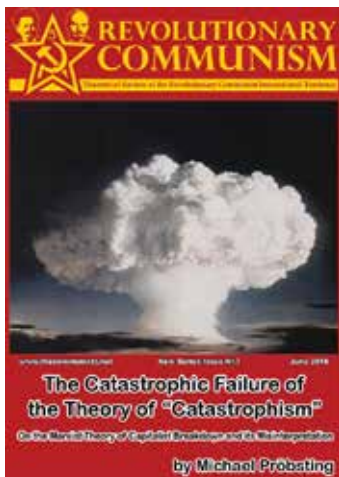
Firstly, we agree with Sam Williams that the Global Trade War is the effect and not the cause of looming economic recession. [11] Thus, we agree with the assessment of a

near recession and the slowing down of the economy. It is also hard not to agree with the following thesis:

“But what happens if the actions of individual industrial capitalists and their bankers are insufficient to suppress competition? This is most likely to be the case on an international level. In that case, capitalists turn to their enforcement arm, the state.” [2]

It is a wide-spread prejudice of various petty-bourgeois ideologists that they refuse to recognize the significant role of the capitalist state in economic politics. The capitalist state is an apparatus of violence. However, it is also serving as a protector of last resort and anchor investor for its bourgeoisie. If we look through the history of capitalism, we can see how industrial and banking capitalists developed and grew behind the wall of protectionist policies, financial diplomacy, and last resort investment during the economic crisis. Sometimes, the state confiscates the property of foreign or native capitalists and transforms it into “public” ownership. However, only quite narrow-minded person and scientists will deny that such action is done for protecting a bourgeoisie as “whole”. Nationalization of unprofitable assets or expenses is also done in the interests of capitalists, who can benefit later from privatizing profits. Thus, here, Sam Williams is correct in his statement.

Secondly, we strongly agree with Williams that the Chinese economy is capitalist, contrary to the claims of



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

The Catastrophic Failure of the Theory of “Catastrophism”

By Michael Pröbsting, May 2018

On the Marxist Theory of Capitalist Breakdown and its Misinterpretation

by the Partido Obrero (Argentina) and its

“Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International”

Introduction * A Note on the PO’s term “Catastrophism” * What did the Marxist Classics Say? A Brief Overview * Empirical Evidence for the Long-Term Decline of Capitalism * What will come after Capitalism? * Epoch and Periods * The Current Historical Period which Opened in 2008/09 * Empirical Evidence for the Decay of Capitalism in the Present Historic Period * The Dialectical and the Mechanistic Interpretation of Cycles on Capitalism * Permanent Collapse? No, there is Collapse and Collapse * Consequences of “Catastrophism” (I): Confusion on Capitalist Restoration * Consequences of “Catastrophism” (II): Confusion on China and Russia as Capitalist Powers * Excuse: The Theory of “Long Waves” and Dialectical Materialism * From Economic Crisis to Revolutionary Situation? * Can the Crisis of Leadership be Solved without an International Democratic-Centralist Organization? * Conclusions * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 32 pages, A4 Format

various Spartacist sects, CRFI and others.

"In China today, the industry is clearly owned and dominated by a class of capitalists, a few of which have become dollar billionaires. There is no monopoly on foreign trade, and Chinese enterprises operate not only in China but around the world. Unlike Soviet state enterprises, today's Chinese enterprises — like Huawei, for example — whether state-owned, owned by stockholders, or privately owned, compete directly with both Chinese and non-Chinese capitalist enterprises for market share, access to raw materials, and labor power in order to maximize their profits." [2]

This becomes also evident when we look at the legal framework of Chinese law, i.e. the constitution:

"Article 13: Citizens' lawful private property is inviolable. The State, in accordance with law, protects the rights of citizens to private property and to its inheritance. The State may, in the public interest and in accordance with law, expropriate or requisition private property for its use and make compensation for the private property expropriated or requisitioned." [3]

Maybe someone is confused with the article on *"Socialist public property is sacred and inviolable"*.

"Article 12: Socialist public property is sacred and inviolable. The State protects socialist public property. Appropriation of or damage to State or collective property by any organization or individual by whatever means is prohibited." [3]

However, Article 11 unmistakably talks about a *"socialist market economy"* where capitalism and socialism are living in harmony, which is the new dialectical invention in *Xi Jinping Thought* added to several articles in 2018. Surely, under the iron fist of Chinese police-state, sorry *"communist party leadership"*, people of all nations and classes can peacefully co-exist like Stalinism with capitalism.

We are aware that some people imagine that a state-owned enterprise might not be part of the capitalist economy. However, we think such a statement is a shame for Marxists and would only make the great thinker turning at accelerating speed in his grave! Engels explained already that the *form* of property (state or privately owned) itself does not determine the class character of a given enterprise. Why shall we even consider an enterprise to be non-capitalistic just because of its public ownership when it is working on the basis of *market and capitalist* production?! It might surprise some critics but large monopolies even in private hands are protected from bankruptcy or losses by Her Majesty Treasury. Otherwise, some strategic industries will fall out of the market and that might be worse for the whole national economy.

Thirdly, we can see that Williams recognizes that the Chinese capitalist firm Huawei is owned by local capitalists while Foxconn is dominated by foreign capitalists (Taiwan).

"Unlike the state enterprises of the former USSR, Huawei operates in a market economy, which forces it to maximize profits. However, unlike Foxconn, Huawei is neither owned by or subordinate to U.S., Japanese or Western capitalists. Instead of producing products that are sold under Western and Japanese brand names like Foxconn does, Huawei is developing its own brand names." [2]

In fact, this is a clear example that China is different from capitalist semi-colonies even if they are as developed as Taiwan.

Williams is going further and identifies the impressive

achievements of productive forces of China: *"Huawei began as a manufacturer of phone switches. But in 2012, it became the largest telecommunications equipment maker in the world. It then overtook Apple as the second-largest manufacturer of smartphones. As the largest producer of telecommunications equipment and the second-largest producer of smartphones, Huawei is not a collaborator of Silicon Valley companies such as Apple and Cisco but rather a competitor. And — at least before Trump launched his anti-China trade war — it seemed well positioned to become the leading company in the coming global switch from 4G to 5G — G being short for generation — technology expected to revolutionize computerized communications in the next few years."*[2]

However, the whole article is going downhill pretty fast when the author transmits his main message about China and the USA.

"Relatively progressive Chinese capitalism"?

While Sam Williams recognizes the capitalist character of China, he considers it as a *"progressive"* force which deserves the support of socialists against the Western imperialists. Such he titles a chapter of his essay: *"The reactionary role of US imperialism versus the relatively progressive role of Chinese capitalism"*

And while Williams favors support for the Chinese workers in their struggles with the Chinese capitalists, he also supports the Chinese state — since it is supposed to represent an *"oppressed nation"* — against their Western rivals: *"We should not idealize Chinese capitalism or confuse it with any form of socialism. Chinese capitalism is subject to all the economic laws described in Marx's 'Capital' that govern the capitalist mode of production as a whole. The Chinese capitalists are just as hungry for surplus value — the unpaid labor of the working class — as any other capitalists. In the struggle between China's growing working class and the Chinese capitalists, we must support our sisters and brothers of the Chinese working class. But our sympathies are with China and other oppressed nations whose capitalists are challenging the thoroughly reactionary monopoly capitalism represented by the 'Western democracies.'"*

What is the theoretical basis of such an outright support for Chinese imperialism? It is related to Williams's failure to understand the Marxist theory of imperialism. Like many modern Marxists he is misreading the works of Hilferding and Lenin and superficially identifies *finance capital* with *banking capital*, which is expressed in his firm belief that industrial capital is subordinated to *"finance capital"*:

"The kind of capitalism represented by Foxconn illustrates the subordination of industrial capitalists to 'finance capital' — a basic characteristic of imperialism according to Lenin — but adds to this the economic subordination of China to the U.S. and other imperialist countries. Foxconn is perhaps the classic example of John Smith's model of early 21st-century imperialism, which differs from the imperialism of Lenin's day in that the bulk of industrial production now is carried out in low-wage oppressed countries. The result has been a dramatically lowering of the value of labor power worldwide."

The RCIT has dealt with this theoretical mistake of Williams and others in past works. [12] We have demonstrated that Marxists in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky consider finance capital as monopoly industrial

capitalism merged with monopoly banking capital. The highest form of such capitalism is state-monopoly capitalism, where the state is playing not only arbitrary but essential work in promoting finance capital via various aid programs, credit, and protectionism in the interests of its own national champions. In this sense, we cannot see any the qualitative difference between the USA, China, Russia, EU, and Japan. The shift of production to the South is a significant development as the RCIT has explained repeatedly. [13] However, it is unable to produce a significant difference to Lenin's time from a fundamental economic point of view. In fact, it only demonstrates how reactionary modern capitalism is.

Bearing in mind such confusion, it is not surprising that Williams sees Chinese capitalism as more "progressive", because it is primarily industrial, not banking capitalism.

"Trump's attack against Huawei is coming at a critical point in the development of the telecommunications industry, the transition from 4th-generation networks to much faster 5G. And it is exactly in this area that Huawei has emerged as the global leader. So far at least, Huawei has shown it can produce advanced communication equipment of the highest quality and at a lower cost price than its U.S. and Western European competitors. Established capitalists are in no hurry to replace fixed capital that represents older but not fully depreciated fixed capital such as 4G telecommunications equipment. Industrial capitalists never junk their fixed capital before it is worn out physically unless forced to by competition."

Why shall we support China because it is making advances in the industry? Applying such a logic, Germany under the Kaiser was avant-gardist given its progressive development in chemistry, industry and other areas. However, it would have been utterly reactionary to support the imperialist plans of German capitalists, just because Haber has made a revolution in fixing nitrogen in ammonia. Or should we have supported Japan when it developed fast in the 1970s and 1980s as a modern economy with a developed technological sector?!

It seems that Williams is falling into the CRFI-type of argument that the expansion of China in semi-colonies

via the construction of railroads and resource extraction is just capitalist but not imperialist expansion, while the USA expansion has an imperialist character because it is striving for the exploitation of cheap labor. [14] Nevertheless, from the perspective of capitalism, both things are the same. The capitalists are investing in extracting industry or road construction to get profits, and they are moving to semi-colonies because they have a lower organic composition of capital with much cheaper labor power. This argument by itself is leading to *tenkō*-style apologies of Japan imperialism that its colonial expansion was progressive because it aided the development of the productive forces.

According to Williams, the USA is not controlling Huawei as it is a Chinese-owned capitalist corporation. Williams is also smart enough to recognize that Chinese capitalists are the same surplus hungry beasts. He also pointed out that the USA will not tolerate competitors:

"But to return to the present day, U.S. imperialism, due to the very nature of the capitalist system and the economic laws that govern it, cannot tolerate China with its huge population — more than a billion people — and continental scope as a rival. Foxconn yes but Huawei no! After all, the U.S. couldn't even tolerate Germany, which compared to China is a European mini-state of around 80 million. It certainly cannot tolerate the competition of a fully developed capitalist China dominated by dynamic companies like Huawei." [2]

However, here, Williams is recognizing that Chinese capitalism is not fully developed. However, at the same time China is a capitalist economy with a dynamic capitalist industry! How it is possible that a capitalist economy in China with the independent bourgeoisie is still lacking in development? In fact, as Williams is forced to recognize, China is a force which is competing against and even able to use some measures against the USA, the strongest capitalist economy:

"However, the Chinese government can and is indicating that it will take other actions to defend Huawei and its economy in general. China is the largest producer of metals called "rare earths." Other countries, including the U.S., also have rare earths but they can be mined and refined only at a much higher



RCIT AFRICA PROGRAM

Manifesto for the Revolutionary Liberation of Black Africa

Adopted at the 2nd World Congress of the RCIT in November 2017

Introduction * Foreign Exploiters – Out of Africa! * The Wealth to Those Who Create It! Economic Freedom Now! * Down with the Capitalist Dictatorships and Corrupt Pseudo-Democracies! * Organize the Workers and Oppressed for the Mass Struggle! * For a Government of Workers and Poor Peasants! For a Socialist Revolution! * For Pan-African Unity! For the United Socialist States of Africa! * For a United Front of Struggle! Overcome the Crisis of Leadership – Build a Revolutionary Party Nationally and Internationally! * Appendix

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A5 Format

cost than the Chinese rare earths. Rare earths have many uses including in tech and in the military. China is hinting that it will begin withholding the export of rare earths if Trump doesn't call off his economic war against China." [2]

It seems that anti-Americanism (instead of anti-imperialism) of Williams pushed him into the option of supporting relatively «progressive» capitalism and some whitewashing of Chinese polices.

Is China imperialist?

According to the essay: "More importantly, Chinese capitalism will hopefully be swept away in all its forms by the combined actions of the working classes of the U.S, Europe, China, Latin America and all other nations before Chinese capitalism can develop into Chinese imperialism. This is the future we must strive for."

Is the author denial of China's imperialist character justified? We don't think so. As the RCIT has demonstrated in numerous documents, China (and Russia) have become imperialist Great Powers in the past one, two decades. [15] Just look at facts that China is one of the largest exporters of capital in the Middle East and North Africa. [4] China is one of the biggest creditors in Latin America. [5] China is so influential in the world economy that some relatively strong imperialist states like Australia are heavily infiltrated by Chinese interests group, which are influencing home policies. [6]

If we analyze investments more closely, we can see how they are interrelated with China's foreign policy for searching of cheap resources (see Figures 1, 2 and 3 in the appendix). *Foreign Policy*, a journal acting as a mouth piece of the U.S., pointed out that for of many countries exports to China are far more bigger than to the U.S.:

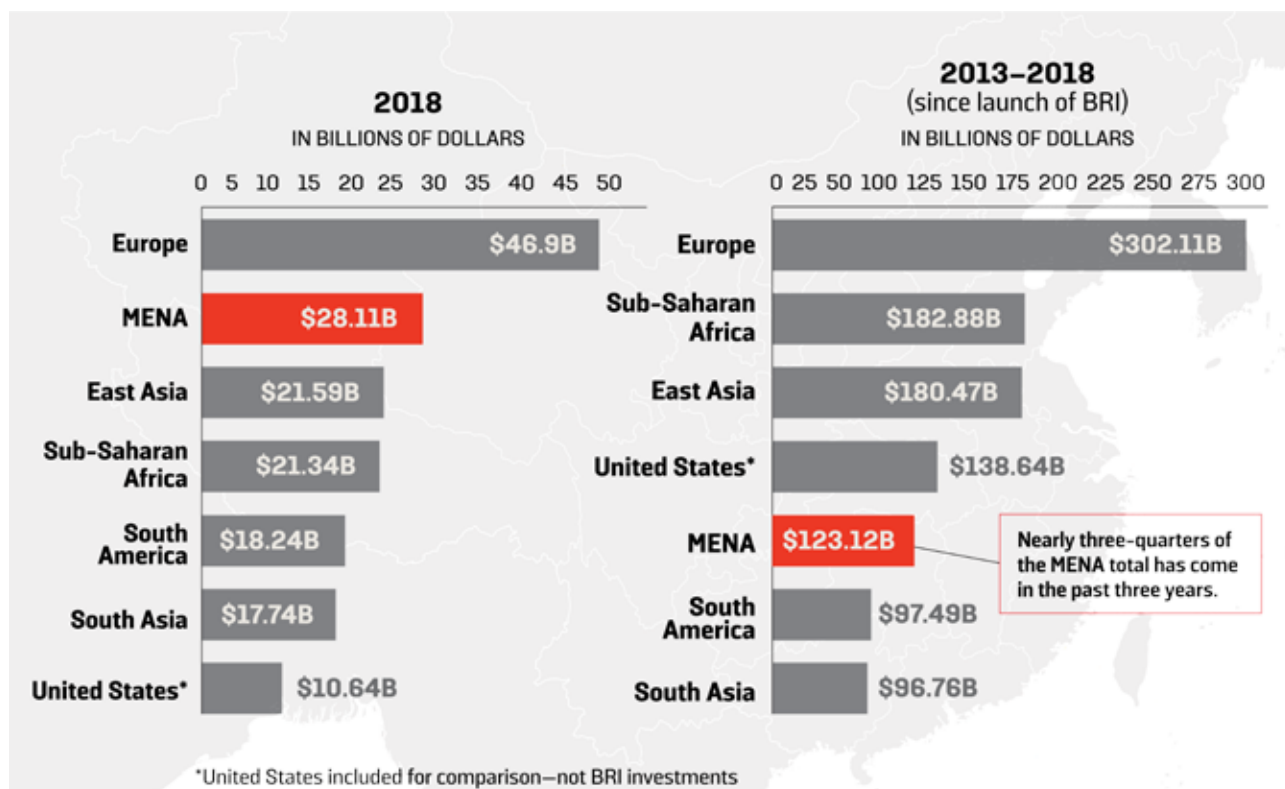
"In some cases, key U.S. allies such as the UAE send nearly

three times more exports to China than to the United States, and for Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman, the gap is even starker, with nearly eight times, nearly nine times, and nearly 28 times, respectively, more goods exported to China than to the United States. For Saudi Arabia, the difference in 2018 was less stark, sending some 30 percent more exports to China than to the United States, according to an analysis of IMF data. Expect this gap to widen as the United States continues to ramp up domestic oil production." [4]

We can also see that investments of Chinese capitalism in Latin America is so large that even *Foreign Policy* is arguing to combat this influence and finally to address the issues of inequality and poverty(!):

"Latin American governments have long lamented their countries' patchy infrastructure. Increasingly, in recent decades, China has stepped in with a solution: roughly \$150 billion loaned to Latin American countries since 2005. About 90 percent of that has gone to boosting the region's energy, infrastructure, and mining sectors. The scale of Latin America's borrowing from China in the past decade is astounding: Venezuela has received \$62 billion; Brazil, \$42 billion; Argentina, \$18 billion; and Ecuador, \$17 billion. Those deeply in arrears to China have sometimes had to take on more loans from the superpower to stay afloat. The example of Ecuador is telling. President Rafael Correa's administration borrowed an additional \$3.5 billion between 2011 and 2015 to bridge the budgetary gaps that resulted from Chinese-financed development projects. (...) At the moment, Latin America lacks the safeguards and planning capacities to ensure that megaprojects have the best possible fiscal, social, and environmental outcomes. The United States, by playing a supporting role in development, could help to lay the groundwork for increased economic connectivity, regional political integration, an approach to growth mindful of and respectful to indigenous communities and the environment, and substantial reductions in poverty and inequality across the

Figure 1. MENA Growing BRI Clout [4]



region." [5]

We can see that the majority of these investments are done for the purpose of finding new cheap resources for Chinese industry and to appropriate wealth of the semi-colonies – in the end not different from the approach of U.S. imperialism. In fact, looking at these developments everyone must update their view that if *"we have some war for oil seek to find Chinese or their Russian friends hand"*! Looking at these facts, can someone still repeat their view that China is better for semi-colonial countries than the U.S.?! It will be hard to explain workers from the Middle East, Africa or Latin America that Chinese investments are done for the purpose of a progressive goal while only the U.S. is stealing national wealth from the oppressed peoples!

Furthermore, Chinese financial capital is not controlled by any foreign powers and was for decades protected from USA banks, which caused some complaints in WTO. [7]

Can we call such a nation with a large amount of investment in semi-colonies, own independent monopolistic and banking bourgeoisie as oppressed by foreign capitalists powers?! We can also add that we are dealing with the power, which has the second-largest military budget on the planet. Of course, if we follow the logic of ICFI, CRFI, and Williams, we shall see only Yankee threat, without asking the question where China will deploy its military and why. [8] Is it not an irony that modern Trotskyism is falling into the narrative of Stalinism seeing only U.S. provocation against China?! It is quite likely to hear in future Molotov-style demagoguery of "strong China is a guarantee of the world peace"!

Centrist confusion

The questions of China, the Global Trade War, the neo-scramble for Africa demonstrate once more the collapse of centrism. For many years organizations like IMT, CWI, ICFI, CRFI, and many others have kept the view of American super-imperialism which dominated world politics. Such an approach allowed them to adapt to the left-wing sub-culture of progressive labor aristocrats and

middle-class youth in universities. Indeed, someone can listen to the 100 best albums in the history of humankind made by "self-defined" music authorities instead leaping into the depth of the avant-garde music to be in "the theme". Until it will not be considered as bad taste and you will find out yourself into the existential confusion.

As such when reality caught up, and capitalism fell into turmoil since 2008 and ongoing, centrism was not able to adapt to crisis and instead repeating the same old formulas about USA imperialist domination and China still is degenerated worker's state (like various Spartacist-type sects) or a still not fully restored capitalism with domination of a "non-capitalist state sector" (like CRFI). However, the inability to grasp reality and real struggle in the whole depth logically created confusion and failure to apply Marxism on the ground.

It is also the basis why so many centrists were not able to understand the Great Arabian Intifada and were blind to policies of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

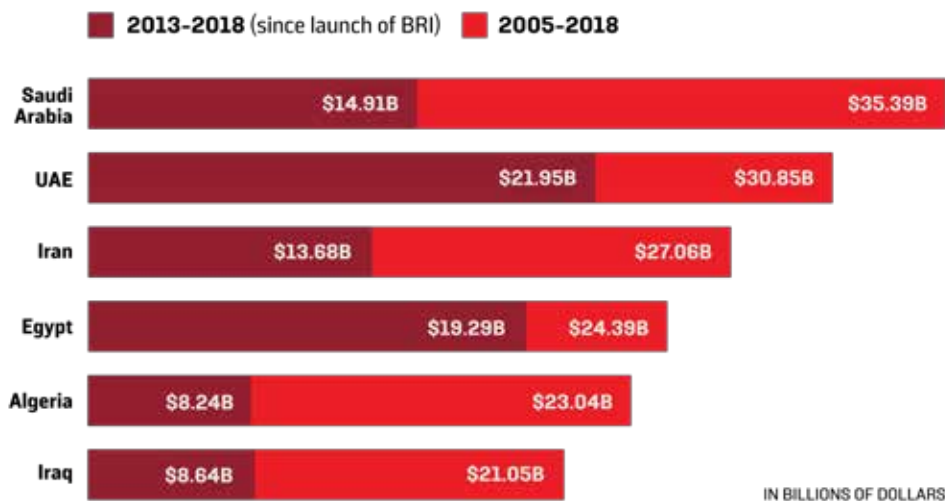
The article of Williams is just a reflection of how painting gray on gray, creating a distorted landscape with the confused interpretation of reality when real facts are interpreted by wrong and mechanistic understanding.

Of course, centrist can follow old pathways. However, the real objective reality will push centrist like a natural force into camps. The question is: will it be a revolution or reaction?

Footnotes

1. China vows to impose sanctions on U.S. firms supplying Taiwan military, 12/07/2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/12/china-taiwan-sanctions-us-firms-military-sales>
2. Political and Economic Crises (Pt 8) Trade war intensifies as U.S. and world economy slows, Sam William, 23/06/2019, <https://critiqueofcrisistheory.wordpress.com/political-and-economic-crises/political-and-economic-crises-pt-8/>
3. [Constitution of People's Republic of China, English translation, with amendments accepted at First Session of the Thirteenth National People's Congress on March 11, 2018,](https://npcobserver.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/) <https://npcobserver.files.wordpress.com/2018/12/>

Figure 2. China investments in MENA region countries [4]



[PRC-Constitution-2018.pdf](#)

4. [China's Global Investments Are Declining Everywhere Except for One Region](#), Afshin Molavi, 16/06/2019 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/05/16/chinas-global-investments-are-declining-everywhere-except-for-one-region/>

5. [How to Respond to Chinese Investment in Latin America](#), Max Nathanson, 28/11/2018 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/11/28/how-to-respond-to-chinese-investment-in-latin-america/>

6. [Australia's China Challenge](#), Damien Cave, 20/05/2019 <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/20/world/australia/australia-china.html>

7. [China's protectionist tendencies will continue](#), Preety Bhogal, 22/03/2017 <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/china-protectionist-tendencies-continue/>

8. [Global military spending tops \\$1.8 trillion, highest on record](#), Niles Niemuth, 30/04/2019 <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2019/04/30/pers-a30.html>

9. [RCIT: World Perspectives 2019: Heading Towards a Volcanic Political Eruption. Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries](#), 2 March 2019, www.thecommunists.net <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2019/>

10. [Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective](#), RCIT Books, January 2019,

<https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>

11. On the RCIT's analysis of the Global Trade War see the collection of our documents here, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-global-trade-war/>

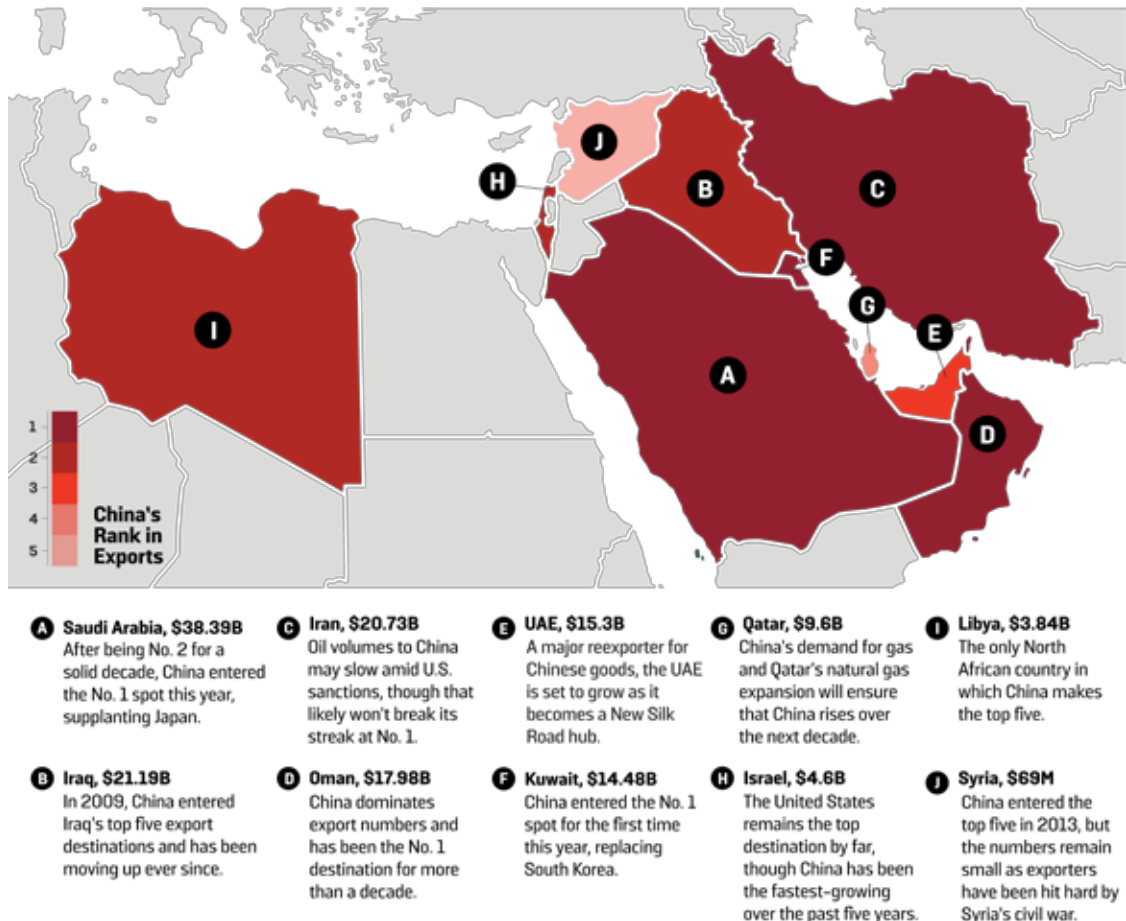
12. See e.g. Part II of Michael Pröbsting: [Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power. On the Understanding and Misunderstanding of Today's Inter-Imperialist Rivalry in the Light of Lenin's Theory of Imperialism. Another Reply to Our Critics Who Deny Russia's Imperialist Character](#), August 2014, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-theory-and-russia/>

13. See e.g. 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 Books 2013, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-of-the-south/>

14. See on our critique of the CRFI e.g. <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/chapter-9/> and <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/chapter-25/>

15. See the collection of RCIT documents dealing with China and Russia as imperialist Great Powers, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>

Figure 3. China is one of the largest import receiver from major MENA powers [4]



Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

Louis Project: The Unrepentant Marxist, April 22, 2019, <https://louisproject.org>

In early February Michael Pröbsting, a leader of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, invited me to read and review his "[Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry: The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective](#)", which I have finally gotten around to. The subject of the book is of keen interest to me since I have written a [couple of articles](#) that concur with Pröbsting. To be honest, I don't make the question of whether Russia (or China, for that matter) a Trotsky vs. Shachtman/Burnham litmus test like he does but his research to support his conclusions is impressive and worth considering as a serious attempt to apply Lenin's theories to the contemporary period.

"Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry" contains 27 tables and 31 figures that detail capital flows, etc., all of which are relevant to the questions at hand. In order to apply Lenin's theories to today's world, it is necessary to continue in the same vein as "Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism" that is replete with the same kind of data. I found this one particularly compelling:

Except for some hold-outs by otherwise sensible people like Michael Roberts, most Marxists concur that China is not only capitalist but a direct challenge to American hegemony as indicated by the chart above. Keeping in mind that Lenin defined imperialism as a system characterized

by the export of excess capital, Pröbsting was careful to document China's growing presence globally. Some on the left hail the new Silk and Road project as a progressive alternative to Western multinationals but the growing resentment in both Latin America and Africa casts a shadow over such optimism.

Referring to the table above, he notes: "When we look at the accumulated stock of FDI's outflows (by 2017) it is interesting to see the rapid catch-up process particularly of China. Despite the fact that China only became an imperialist power about a decade ago, its FDI Outward stock already equals the figures of all other Great Powers (except the U.S.)"

While some might be persuaded that China is becoming an imperialist power, there remain skeptics over whether Russia is as well, especially by those on the left like Roger Annis who have a strong ideological commitment to the Kremlin. For example, Annis [wrote](#):

But while its per capita GDP may be well above that of Ukraine and other former Soviet republics, it's not in the same league, by a long shot, of the imperialist countries. It is roughly one fourth, or less, that of North American and West European countries. It is higher than Brazil's, but a lot lower than Portugal's and just over half of South Korea's.

What about Russia's capital exports, another key indicator of whether a country sits in the ranks of imperialist

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan.
A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective

In *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* Michael Pröbsting analyses the accelerating rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – the U.S., China, EU, Russia, and Japan. He shows that the diplomatic rows, sanctions, trade wars, and military tensions between these Great Powers are not accidental or caused by a mad man in the White House. They are rather rooted in the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist system. This rivalry is a key feature of the current historic period and could, ultimately, result in major wars between these Great Powers.

Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry demonstrates the validity of the Marxist analysis of modern imperialism. Using comprehensive material (including 61 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that a correct understanding of the rise of China and Russia as new Great Powers is crucial for assessing the character of the current inter-imperialist rivalry.

In *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry* Michael Pröbsting critically discusses the analysis of modern imperialism by a number of left-wing parties (left social democrats, Stalinists, Trotskyists and others). He demon-

strates that most of these organizations fail to understand the nature of the Great Power rivalry and, consequently, are not able to take an internationalist and revolutionary stance.

The author elaborates the approach of leading Marxist figures like Lenin, Trotsky and Luxemburg to the problems of Great Power rivalry and imperialist aggression against oppressed peoples. He outlines a Marxist program for the current period which is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

The book contains an introduction and 29 chapters plus an appendix (412 pages) and includes 61 figures and tables. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

**Anti-Imperialism
in the Age of Great
Power Rivalry**

The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry
between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan
A Critique of the Left's Analysis and
an Outline of the Marxist Perspective

By Michael Pröbsting



Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

countries? In 2012, the stock of direct foreign investment in Russia was \$498 billion while the stock of investment abroad was \$387 billion. Compare this to Canada, with about one quarter the population of Russia: \$992 billion (domestic), \$992 billion (abroad). Or Britain, with less than half of Russia’s population: \$1.3 trillion and \$1.8 trillion, respectively (all figures are 2012, from the CIA Factbook).

Pröbsting acknowledges that Russia is weaker than China or the traditional imperialist powers but stresses its military and political weight. Furthermore, if Russia is far behind England or Germany in terms of financial capital—the traditional criterion for judging whether a country is imperialist or not—it is still in second place behind the USA when it comes to the global share of weapons exports (33 versus 23 percent).

While I have not paid the closest of attention to the debates on the left about “sub-imperialism”, I did read Pröbsting’s discussion with some interest since I am close to Patrick Bond as a friend and a comrade. Patrick is probably the highest-profile advocate of the usefulness of this analytical category. Ever the resourceful scholar, Pröbsting ar-

gues that the first instance of its being advanced within Marxism was not by Patrick but by Takahashi Kamekichi in the 1920s who theorized Japan as an example of “petty imperialism”. Since Japan lagged behind the European and American nations in terms of financial capital and capital export, he concluded it “had not yet attained the stage of imperialism”. As such, Japanese socialists should not see the main enemy as being the domestic bourgeoisie, but rather the Western powers. Doesn’t this have a ring? This is essentially the argument of the pro-BRICS left, those who defend Russian imperialism in Syria because it helps the “axis of resistance” to NATO, Western banks, and the whole nine yards. However, Patrick is at the same time one of the sharpest critics of the BRICS as well as a “sub-imperialism” theorist.

These are important questions and Pröbsting has done a good job in trying to provide Marxist solutions. My only advice to offered as a friendly criticism is to drop the terms “pseudo-Marxist” or “pseudo-Trotskyist”. Such terms are redolent of the Socialist Equality Party and should be retired from our vocabulary.

Table 10. Foreign Direct Investment Outflows by Country in 2017
(in Millions of \$US and as Share of Global FDI Outflows)

Country	2017	Share of the Global FDI Outflows
Total	1,429,972	100%
USA	342,269	23.9%
Japan	160,449	11.2%
Britain	99,614	7%
Germany	82,336	5.6%
France	58,116	4.1%
China	124,630	8.7%
Russia	36,032	2.5%

Figure 16. Share of the US and China in World Trade, 2001-2016



Total Trade Values = Import + Export
Source: World Trade Organisation

Some Thoughts on the Split in the Argentinean “Partido Obrero”

by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 10 July 2019

The “Partido Obrero” (PO) in Argentina experienced a major split at the end of June. A “public faction” around its longtime leader Jorge Altamira broke with the majority of the organization after an extended, partly subterranean/partly open, internal struggle. The faction claims the support of nearly 800 militants.¹

This split is a significant event for several reasons. The PO is a longstanding and large Trotskyist organization in Argentina founded in 1964. It is one of the major components of the *Frente de Izquierda y de los Trabajadores* (FIT), an alliance that received 1.2 million votes at the last elections in autumn 2017. It has a number of parliamentary deputies at the national and regional level. In addition to the PO, FIT also includes the *Partido de los Trabajadores Socialistas, Izquierda Socialista*, and, more recently, the *Movimiento Socialista de los Trabajadores*. It is certainly no exaggeration to state that Argentina is currently the country, globally, in which forces considering themselves Trotskyist have acquired the most numerous popular support.

Furthermore, the PO launched an initiative in 2004 that resulted in the creation of the “Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International” (CRFI) – an international organization with sister organizations in a number of countries.

The documents that have been published, to date, reflect a bitter faction struggle.² Altamira attacks the majority for focusing too much on elections as well as adapting opportunistically to petty-bourgeois tendencies. The majority, in turn, accuses Altamira of hypocrisy since they are merely

following a tradition that he established. The only difference, they allege, is that Altamira, 77 years old, is no longer their leading electoral candidate and exercises waning powers in the bureaucratic domination of the party.

No doubt, there is significant truth in the criticism of both sides. The PO leadership has always been known for unprincipled zig-zags and opportunism. Altamira also has a reputation as a *caudillo*, used to running the organization in a top-down way.

Ignoring the Main Issues

However, while both sides continue to trade barbs the whole debate remains one-sided and superficial. Despite the volume of published material – the four documents exceed 36,500 words – the whole debate is focused exclusively on national politics. It seems that for both sides the world does not exist beyond the Argentine border!

This is particularly the case given the perspective developed by the PO and their international co-thinkers. Stuck in a nonsensical theory they call “catastrophism”, the PO has been incapable of understanding fundamental developments of the world situation. Operating on the basis of an *un-dialectical and objectivist fatalism*, the PO leadership legitimates their opportunist adaptations to class-alien forces. “Since capitalism is about to collapse anyway”, the PO/CRFI has manufactured a justification for supporting reactionary forces “in order to give capitalism the final kick”.

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 Bolshevick-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 Bolshevick 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

It is not necessary to elaborate in detail our criticism of the programmatic and theoretical failures of PO/CRFI as we have dealt with these in a substantial recent pamphlet, as well as in our book, *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*.³

We will limit ourselves to addressing crucial issues that comrades of the PO should consider rethinking.

1) The leadership of PO and the CRFI has claimed for decades that capitalist restoration in Russia, China, and other ex-Stalinist countries has not been completed. According to their schema, capitalism has decayed to such an extent that it cannot restore the conditions for exploiting the working class and extracting surplus value in these regions! Hence, they still consider these countries “deformed workers states”. This is a fantasy that they can only entertain by closing their eyes to reality and burying their heads in the desert sands of ultra-sterile dogmatism! As we have demonstrated in our pamphlet, this is simple-minded nonsense. Capitalism was restored in these countries in the early 1990s!⁴ It is therefore consistent that they also reject our analysis that China and Russia have subsequently entered the ranks of imperialist Great Powers.⁵

2) (Dis)armed with such a “theory”, the leadership of PO and the CRFI support Russia and China against the Western imperialist powers. The result? They’ve become the social-imperialist supporters of the Russian and Chinese ruling classes.⁶

3) Related to this is the alliance that Altamira and the leaderships of PO/CRFI have entered into with Russian Stalinists – in particular with the *United Communist Party* (OKP) of Darya Mitina. Mitina’s OKP is a staunch nationalist and supporter of Russia’s “patriotic rights”. She even served for some time as the head of the Moscow branch of the Foreign Ministry of the Donetsk People’s Republic.⁷ Mitina is also a fervent supporter of the barbarous Assad regime in Syria.⁸ Her husband, Said Gafurov, has repeatedly worked as an economic advisor for the Administrations of Primakov and Putin. He also served as a Deputy Chairman of the *Russian Committee for Solidarity with Peoples of Libya and Syria* since its founding – a committee which has unashamedly hailed Gaddafi and Assad from the very first hour.⁹

4) All of this opportunist adaption to reactionary forces is combined with an unashamed disregard for internationalism. The neglect of international issues in the faction documents is not accidental. It reflects the nation-centred outlook of all sides in this faction struggle – both Altamira and his present opponents. The leading cadres of the PO conceive of themselves *Argentinean* revolutionaries, first, and internationalists, second. Hence, the CRFI never functioned as an authentic international body but, rather, as a federation of national organizations that occasionally adopted joint statements.

In the past few years, the international activities of the CRFI have basically collapsed and the Italian component, the PCL, was expelled for its criticisms. Likewise, all former Latin American allies (with the exception of the Uruguayan PT) broke their relations with the PO.

Furthermore, the neglect of international issues in the faction documents also reflects that while the two factions disagree on some issues of national politics, they remain in full agreement about the international and theoretical fundament of their orientation.

Global Crisis of Centrism

The deep crisis of the PO and the paralysis of the CRFI cannot be understood as an isolated phenomenon. It is part of the international death agony of centrism. We have seen in recent years major splits. These include the crisis of the Cliffite SWP/IST current, Alan Woods’ IMT, the Lambertists, Peter Taaffe’s CWI, as well as the dissolution of the US-American ISO (to name only the most significant examples).¹⁰

These developments are not accidental. Marxists define centrism as opportunist vacillation between petty-bourgeois reformism and revolution. Trotsky defined this current as follows: “*The mark of centrism is opportunism. Under the influence of external circumstances (tradition, mass pressure, political competition), centrism is at certain times compelled to make a parade of radicalism. For this purpose it must overcome itself, violate its political nature. By spurring itself on with all its strength, it not infrequently lands at the extreme limit of formal radicalism. But hardly does the hour of serious danger strike than the true nature of centrism breaks out to the surface.*”¹¹

In an essay written shortly before his assassination, Trotsky remarked in a polemic against the French centrist organization *Que Faire* that, “*like all groups lacking a scientific foundation, without a program and without any tradition this little periodical tried to hang on to the coat-tails of the POUM*”.¹² Neither the Spanish centrist POUM nor *Que Faire*, of course, exist any longer but the various centrist forces continue to operate on the basis of the same opportunist methodology. They vacillate and adapt to reformist or left-populist parties or the trade union bureaucracy. In the present instance of the PO/CRFI, they adapt to the Stalinists.

While such opportunism might yield some immediate rewards in terms of positions or financial benefits, such successes are short-term and their demise is guaranteed. Such vulgar violations of Marxist principles remain like the mark of Cain on such organizations.

In convulsive periods the bankruptcy of opportunism is exposed. Centrism then experiences crises and splits.¹³ Trotsky explained, “*As a matter of fact, this is wholly in the nature of things. The contradictions between the petty bourgeois conservatism and the needs of the proletarian revolution have developed in the extreme. It is only natural that the defenders and interpreters of the policies of the POUM found themselves thrown far back both in political and theoretical fields.*”¹⁴

The RCIT has always warned that centrism is a dead-end and that revolutionaries must break with such methods. The split in the PO is neither the first nor will it be the last example of the decline and collapse of the centrist swamp. It is urgent that revolutionaries in such organizations draw the necessary conclusions, break with an incorrect orientation, and unite in order to build an authentic Marxist world party. The RCIT looks forward to collaborating with such comrades!¹⁵

Footnotes

1 POR QUÉ UNA FRACCION PÚBLICA DEL PARTIDO OBRERO. Las 778 firmas que avalan el documento se encuentran al final, <https://altamiraresponde.com/2019-06-30-por-que-una-fraccion-publica-del-partido-obrero/>

2 PO: Altamira y su grupo rompen con el Partido Obrero, 30.6.2019 <https://po.org.ar/comunicados/2396-altamira-y-su-grupo-rompen-con-el-partido-obrero>

3 Michael Pröbsting: The Catastrophic Failure of the Theory of "Catastrophism". On the Marxist Theory of Capitalist Breakdown and its Misinterpretation by the Partido Obrero (Argentina) and its "Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International", RCIT Pamphlet, May 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-catastrophic-failure-of-the-theory-of-catastrophism/>; Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective, RCIT Books, Vienna 2019. The book can be read online or downloaded for free here: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>, see chapter IX. Revisionist Whitewashing: Russia and China are neither Capitalist nor Great Powers (PO/CRFI) as well as chapter XXV. The Left Facing Great Power Rivalry: Pro-Eastern Social-Imperialists (Non-Stalinists).

4 We have analyzed the restoration of capitalism in various places. See e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism, August 2013, RCIT Books, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/cuba-s-revolution-sold-out/>; see also chapter VI (dealing with capitalist restoration in North Korea) in the book by Michael Pröbsting: World Perspectives 2018: A World Pregnant with Wars and Popular Uprisings. Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries, RCIT Books, Vienna 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-perspectives-2018/>; concerning capitalist restoration in China we refer to 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 Books, Vienna 2013, Chapter X, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-of-the-south/>.

5 For an analysis of China as an imperialist Great Power we refer readers, in addition to the aforementioned book "Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry", to the literature mentioned in the special sub-section on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>. In particular we refer to Michael Pröbsting: The China-India Conflict: Its Causes and Consequences. What are the background and the nature of the tensions between China and India in the Sikkim border region? What should be the tactical conclusions for Socialists and Activists of the Liberation Movements? 18 August 2017, Revolutionary Communism No. 71, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-india-rivalry/>; Michael Pröbsting: The China Question and the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, December 2014, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/reply-to-csr-pco-on-china/>; Michael Pröbsting: China's transformation into an imperialist power. A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 4, <http://www.thecommunists.net/publications/revcom-number-4>. On Russia as an emerging imperialist power see: Michael Pröbsting: Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power. On the Understanding and Misunderstanding of Today's Inter-Imperialist Rivalry in the Light of Lenin's Theory of Imperialism. Another Reply to Our Critics Who Deny Russia's Imperialist Character, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 25, August 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-theory-and-russia/>; Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 21, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>.

6 In addition to the aforementioned book "Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry", we refer also to RCIT: Theses on Revolutionary Defeatism in Imperialist States, 8 September 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/theses-on-revolutionary-defeatism-in-imperialist-states/>. We also refer in this context to a

number of statements and articles on the Global Trade War which are collected on a special sub-section of our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-global-trade-war/>

7 See e.g. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darya_Mitina

8 For the evidence see e.g. our book "Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry" (chapter XXIV, p. 293). The RCIT has published a number of booklets, statements, and articles on the Syrian Revolution that can be accessed on a special sub-section of our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/collection-of-articles-on-the-syrian-revolution/>. In particular we refer to RCIT: Save the Syrian Revolution! A call for international solidarity with the Syrian people in Idlib suffering from the barbarous onslaught by Assad and Putin! 04 June 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/call-save-the-syrian-revolution/>; Michael Pröbsting: Is the Syrian Revolution at its End? Is Third Camp Abstentionism Justified? An essay on the organs of popular power in the liberated area of Syria, on the character of the different sectors of the Syrian rebels, and on the failure of those leftists who deserted the Syrian Revolution, 5 April 2017, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/syrian-revolution-not-dead/>; Michael Pröbsting: World Perspectives 2018: A World Pregnant with Wars and Popular Uprisings, February 2018, Chapter V, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/worldperspectives-2018/chapter-v/>; Michael Pröbsting: Syria and Great Power Rivalry: The Failure of the „Left“. The bleeding Syrian Revolution and the recent Escalation of Inter-Imperialist Rivalry between the US and Russia – A Marxist Critique of Social Democracy, Stalinism and Centrism, 21 April 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/syria-great-power-rivalry-and-the-failure-of-the-left/>

9 See e.g. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Said_Gafurov and <https://upclosed.com/people/said-gafurov/>

10 We have elaborated a comprehensive of various centrist organizations in a number of documents. In addition to the aforementioned books "Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry" and "The Great Robbery of the South", we refer readers to: The British Left and the EU-Referendum: The Many Faces of pro-UK or pro-EU Social-Imperialism, August 2015, see in particular chapter II.2., <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/british-left-and-eu-referendum/>; see also RCIT: Crisis in the CWI: For a Marxist Way Out! A proposal to all current members and former members of the CWI to discuss the way forward in these tumultuous times, 29 June 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/open-letter-to-cwi/>

11 Leon Trotsky: Germany: The Only Road (1932), in: Leon Trotsky: The Struggle against Fascism in Germany, Pathfinder Press, New York 1973, p. 300

12 Leon Trotsky: The Class, the Party and the Leadership. Why Was the Spanish Proletariat Defeated? [Questions of Marxist Theory], in: Leon Trotsky: The Spanish Revolution (1931-39), Pathfinder Press, New York 1971, p. 354

13 On our assessment of the current historic period see – in addition to the book "Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry" and the pamphlet "The Catastrophic Failure of the Theory of 'Catastrophism': RCIT: Advancing Counterrevolution and Acceleration of Class Contradictions Mark the Opening of a New Political Phase. Theses on the World Situation, the Perspectives for Class Struggle and the Tasks of Revolutionaries (January 2016), Chapter II and III, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 46, http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world_perspectives-2016/; Michael Pröbsting: World Perspectives 2018: A World Pregnant with Wars and Popular Uprisings; Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South; Michael Pröbsting: Imperialism, Globalization and the Decline of Capitalism (2008), in: Richard Brenner, Michael Pröbsting, Keith Spencer: The Credit Crunch - A Marxist Analysis, London 2008, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-and-globalization/>.

14 Leon Trotsky: The Class, the Party and the Leadership

15 We refer reader to our document: *Six Points for a Platform of Revolutionary Unity Today*. A Proposal from the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), February 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/6-points-for-a-platform-of-revolutionary-unity-today/>. This document has been published on our website in 15 languages.

Class Struggle in Greece – A Balance Sheet

Interview with Kokkino Nima (Greece), July 2019

Editors' Note: Below is an interview with Alexis Liosatos, a member of the temporary Central Committee of *Kokkino Nima*. *Kokkino Nima* is, as the comrade explains in the interview, a Greek Trotskyist organization which split from the Cliffite DEA (the sister organization of the now dissolved ISO in the U.S.) in 2018. The answers of comrade Alexis reflect the general outlook of his organization (to a wide extend). The website of *Kokkino Nima* is www.redtopia.gr.

For the RCIT's analysis of the class struggle in Greece in the past decade we refer readers to various documents which are collected at the following special sub-page of our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/articles-on-greece/>

We also refer readers to our book by 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 Country with Some Specific Features*, November 2015, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/greece-semi-colony/>

* * * * *

Question: Hello, comrades, thanks for taking the time for this interview! Could you first tell us a bit about yourself and your organization?

Answer: Hello comrades! Our organization "*Kokkino Nima*" (it means "Red Thread") was created after a split in DEA, the sister organization of ISO in USA. Of course it wasn't an accident, since we saw recently that ISO, the bigger revolutionary organization in the U.S., collapsed. DEA and ISO split from IST in 2000-2001 promising that they will break with bureaucratic methods but they did not. However the major disagreements were political and not organizational.

DEA's leadership was claiming that it applies a United Front tactics from 2004 while participating in SYRIZA (the current governmental party until the elections of 7 July) and after 2015 in LAE (a left split from SYRIZA in 2015, when SYRIZA capitulated to the ruling class and Western imperialism). There was an increase in DEA's number until 2014 (reaching around 300 members), but then there was a collapse.

Some comrades, members of DEA then, created a faction in the end of 2017 and we made the following criticism:

1) that we were constantly neglecting the independent intervention of the organization and the efforts to build in workplaces and neighborhoods. There was also a collapse of the work in the trade unions and the Red Net (a promising initiative of DEA, a network of non-integrated SYRIZA members that supported DEA and the left wing of SYRIZA, which had reached a membership of 150). Moreover, the local branches weakened significantly, and there was a conscious degradation of the "Deport Racism" initiative, from a significant force in the Greek antiracist movement to a mere "brandname" as it was controlled by alleged "non-trustworthy" (in the eyes of the DEA leadership).

2) that we were constantly retreating against reformism, we were making less and less criticism against it, we were relying increasingly on diplomacy with reformist allies rather than on our own action. So more and more members were leaving DEA, mainly for political retirement. The problem became even larger within LAE, a left patriotic-nationalist front, against the leadership (Lafazanis) of which DEA made almost no criticism, instead they collaborated with Lafazanis harmoniously.

Moreover we tried to explain that this is not in any case a tactics of United Front but a tactics of fusion with reformists, a tactics of "tailing" to them. "United front" does not mean working together with reformists in general, and in the medium term. It is a tactic with two aspects: united actions in concrete battles against the system with simultaneous struggle (not "cooperation") against reformism, with a clear position that the reformist leadership and the reformist program lead to painful defeats. Illusions were cultivated by the DEA leadership that the "broad party" could alter its course "due to our work", "if we put pressure to their members" and win the correlation battle inside SYRIZA, thus making it an appropriate instrument for our class. But if today, that is to say in this historical context, the needs of the struggle are covered by the "broad party", then the need for revolutionary party building is undermined.

Of course when the faction was created, we noticed that there was no "democratic centralism" but rather Stalinist bureaucratic centralism in DEA. Democratic centralism is not "unified thought", nor unity in terms of tactical issues, but unity in action. DEA did not recognize the right of a minority to communicate its views even internally, except in the pre-congress period. Not even when it concerned a minority within the CC! No debate was allowed either in the newspaper or in the review. Horizontal communication between members of various local branches was also not allowed. Although there were always many disagreements within the CC, they were never disclosed to the members. This is one reason for the extremely low political level of our members (in terms of a revolutionary organization). Finally they expelled us against the statute four months after the creation of the faction. The same old history that was characteristic for the IST.

We must say that the financial factor was also important for this political and organizational degeneration of DEA. Especially after 2012, when SYRIZA turned second in the parliamentary elections, DEA received great amounts of cash from parliamentary grants and also increased seriously the number of paid full-time organizers, that were paid by (and inevitably accountable to) reformism.

Nowadays we are a small organization with many difficulties, with organizational and political weaknesses but with a willingness to use our – negative basically – experience from "broad parties", in order to redefine the United Front's tactic in the movement and to emphasize the independent intervention and the building of a revolutionary organization. We believe that we have the potential to answer better than other left-wing forces in Greece the question what went so wrong and while the movement was

constantly going upwards from 2001 till 2012 and the left forces finally reached the government, we resulted in having the left weakened, more disintegrated and devalued than ever before.

We keep a small trade-unionist intervention in few areas of the public sector, and mainly we have kept the "Deport Racism" Movement and "Sunday School of Immigrants", which we have revived today, have rallied and mobilize greater forces of dozens activists and migrant workers, precisely because we supported them more than DEA did. Besides, the anti-racist-anti-fascist movement in Greece is by far the stronger at the moment in Greece (probably because all the left forces agree that this is a serious task and can agree on minimum tasks) and we mainly work on it. We have already organized open discussions events (for "what kind of left we need") and we are involved in various initiatives (against racism, fascism, nationalism, imperialism and war, sexism and homophobia, as well as small-labor mobilizations) along with other organizations, trying to implement "United Front" tactic instead of "broad parties", and the messages from this action so far are positive.

We issue a socialist newspaper every month (*Kokkino Nima*) and we have a website, "redtopia.gr". We are now trying to redefine democratic centralization by asking our members' opinion for a number of issues and being more flexible in publishing members' personal opinions, especially on the site. We have an 8-member temporary central committee and we do not have professional executives, our members are workers in private and public sector, students etc., which in part explains many of our weaknesses (we were educated in a quite different way in DEA). Unfortunately we have not yet been able to make a constitutive plenary and discuss about statute and a lot of issues of our physiognomy. We have organized only our founding conference and in the coming months with articles, discussions and the organization of our constitutive plenary we hope to make significant steps in this process.

We aspire to contribute to the dialogue in both the Greek and the international left. Besides, as we are in a period of crisis, reflection and goal-redefinition of both the Greek and the international left, we could not have all the problems dissolved. We will try to find and consolidate our position in the movement and the left, discussing and at

the same time acting and contributing to the small and big battles of the movement.

Question: The popular masses in Greece experienced a series of attacks in the past years. Could you summarize what have been the major consequences for the social and economic situation of the workers and poor?

Answer: The labor and popular masses after the memorandums have lost on average about 50% of their purchasing power. There have been large wage cuts in the public and private sector, pensions have fallen considerably, retirement age limits have risen, public schools and hospitals have reached the brink of collapse, social services have shrunk, poor people's taxes have risen seriously, many small businesses were forced to close, several public enterprises have been privatized and many people have lost their jobs. Unemployment rose to 30% and among the youth to 60%. Today, 600-700,000 people, mostly but not only young, have migrated abroad, most in the years of the crisis. SYRIZA prides itself on reducing unemployment rates, but it is a symbolic reduction. New recruitments involve flexible working relationships and part-time jobs. The only sectors that maintained their privileges and the gross state funding (also during SYRIZA government) were the church, the army, the police, the judges.

Against all this, the people rose up, demonstrated, stroke and strengthened the SYRIZA left, especially with their vote and mostly not with their active enlistment. They believed they could change the situation. Today, unfortunately, the climate has been reversed, the world has embraced SYRIZA's doctrine that "there was no alternative" and faces the new state of austerity and poverty as the "new normal".

Already since 2012 the working class had put most hopes in the parliamentary change via a "left-wing government". SYRIZA attempted to strengthen this complacency between 2012 and 2015 - its strikebreaking attitude to the great strike of teachers in 2013 is characteristic. Finally, in 2015 SYRIZA signed the continuation of the memoranda and betrayed the referendum in the summer of 2015. But the ordinary people in the past years recognized Tsipras as their sole and indisputable leader and did not have as an option of a visible anti-capitalist alternative. The non-SYRIZA left largely assumed a passive role by cursing

REVOLUTIONARY LIBERATION - The RCIT's Monthly Journal

<p>www.thecomunists.net Issue No:76 December 2017</p>		<p>www.thecomunists.net Issue No:77 January 2018</p>		<p>www.thecomunists.net Issue No:78 February 2018</p>		<p>www.thecomunists.net Issue No:79 March 2018</p>			
<p>Kenya: Down with the pro-imperialist Kenyatta Regime!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The Gnassingbe Regime in Togo * Zambia: Still Not Free * Interview with Ghana's CPP * Interview with Ghana's CPP 		<p>Support the Liberation Struggle of the Palestinian People!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Interview with Ghana's CPP * Syria: Liberation Struggle at a Crossroad * Brazil: The Shadow of a Military Coup * Catalonia's Struggle for Independence 		<p>The Imperialists Enslave the African People - Then as Now!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Successful 2nd RCIT World Congress * MGKP (Russia) & RCIT collaborate * Syria: No to Turkey's Attack on Afrin! * Tunisia: Solidarity with the Protest! * Palestine: Free Ahead Tamimi NOW! 		<p>The Syrian Revolution is in mortal Danger!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Balfour's Declaration - Myths vs. Fac Six Points for Revolutionary Unity * Italy sends Soldiers to Niger * Class Warfare in Zambia * Liberte: American Puppet President! * UK: Carillon Crisis 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Palestine: PA collaborates with Israel * South Africa: Down with Ramaphosa! * Ethiopia: No to the State of Emergency * Liberia: 'Liberated' But Looted! * Brazil: Presidential Elections 2018 	
<p>Workers and Oppressed United! Price: €3 \$3.5 £2 ₺ and Oppressed United!</p>		<p>Workers and Oppressed United! Price: €3 \$3.5 £2</p>		<p>Workers and Oppressed United! Price: €2 \$2.5 £1.5 and Oppressed United!</p>		<p>Workers and Oppressed United! Price: €2 \$2.5 £1.50</p>			

SYRIZA and waiting that its "betrayal" would show that it was "justified", while SYRIZA's left wing essentially functioned as Tsipras's tail. It left SYRIZA (with 40 parliamentary deputies, 5 ministers and the President of the Parliament, as well as 3 European deputies) too late, without a plan, and after swallowing all the maneuvers of Tsipras in the past three years. Eventually the left people were disappointed but re-voted Tsipras in September of 2015 as the "lesser evil" (many also turned to abstention) and the other left-wing parties did not really get anything. LAE, of course, gained 2.9% and lost by 0,11% its entry into the Parliament, but it also lost it quickly, presenting the same pathogeneses and right adjustments with SYRIZA, as well as an excessive "left" nationalism in the name of the struggle for "national liberation" against the "European Union occupation", that led LAE's leadership make criticism to SYRIZA from a right-wing point of view. So they sent hundreds or even thousands of activists to the retirement, and made tens of thousands of voters even more disappointed. In any case, there was a gravestone in the resistance movement ... minimal labor mobilizations took place between 2015-2019 and they were even less successful.

Ultimately, the world was tired of the "left" austerity and turned again to the right (as the European elections / and finally the parliamentary elections of 7 July showed, which the right won with 40%).

Hundreds of thousands people demonstrated in the nationalist rallies that organized parts of the bourgeois and state mechanism with the right and the far right against SYRIZA for "Macedonia". Ultimately it seems that a conservative and reactionary wind of change in a considerable percentage of people's consciousness prevailed – a wind that blew to the right. In miniature (or maybe let's say in exaggeration) it is the same "mechanics" that turns the revolution into counter-revolution. When people are disappointed by the left, it is easy to turn in a reactionary direction.

From what has already been said by the leader of the right (K. Mitsotakis), it will be a war machine of capital, with a revanchist character against the workers and the poor (who dared to challenge the dominant bourgeoisie plan in 2010-2015) and against anything that resembles resistance movement and left. And this is a right with a strong far-right wing within it, whatever that means for social rights, dealing with immigrants and "national issues", social freedoms etc. Mitsotakis has already given ministries to far-right representatives and "technocrats"- which represent directly capitalists.

Question: Could you describe the situation of migrants and refugees in Greece? As you are heavily involved in anti-racist activities, please tell us a bit about this.

Answer: Before the financial crisis (2008), more than 1 million immigrants lived in Greece (about 10% of the population). Mostly economic migrants from Albania, Bulgaria and the former USSR countries, but also (mainly after 2001) refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh and others. The Greek state has always faced migrants and refugees with racism, because they needed them as cheap workforce - and the best way to achieve this is racism. In the 1990s Albanian immigrants suffered but gradually assimilated and state racism against them moderated. However, racism against (basically Muslim) refu-

gees from the Middle East increased in the 2000s. The refugees used Greece mainly as a passage to go to northern European countries but were trapped in Greece because of various racist European "directions". Refugee workers were not legalized, prosecuted and imprisoned by the police, working illegally and in conditions of slavery. Legalization rates were very low and slow and Greece's granting of asylum to refugees was the lowest in Europe. Greek employers have been enriched by the hard work of migrants and refugees, and many jobs in Greece could not exist without them (e.g. in the fields/agriculture or in the construction of buildings). After the crisis, economical immigrants have been reduced (since jobs in Greece were reduced leading them to migrate elsewhere) but Greece has welcomed new waves of refugees (mainly from Syria, from Africa and other Middle East countries) due to the crash of "Arab Spring" and imperialist interventions there. The attacks of the police and the fascists multiplied. In 2016 a huge wave of refugees from Greece passed. About 50,000 of them were found trapped in Greece after the EU-Turkey agreement (signed by the "left" Tsipras) and closed in concentration camps under terrible conditions. This agreement has led to even greater repression on Greek borders and even more deaths-drowning of refugees. SYRIZA continued to grant asylum "with the drop-per" and did not allow their journey to the West, since it is a fanatical defender and ally of the EU.

Greek society is divided over immigrants. In the right-wing section of society, racism is exacerbated, but there is also a serious part in the centre-left section that still stands in solidarity with refugees. In 2016, a year of large-scale transit of refugees from Greece, tens of millions of portions of food and clothing were offered by Greek workers and poor, relieving a bit of the refugees' suffering. The EU-Turkey agreement provided for large funding for the Greek state in cooperation with NGOs for the management of refugees' lives. So SYRIZA succeeded in integrating part of the solidarity movement through professional ties. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the largest amount of money for refugees is not directed to the needs of refugees but is subjected to speculation and misuse by state and NGOs. Even today, however, there is a large network of independent anti-racist and movement initiatives that take care of improving the lives of these people.

We participate in the solidarity movement through *Sunday Immigrants School (SIS)*, which operates since 2004. SIS operates weekly, every Sunday. The idea is that migrant and refugee workers can come and learn Greek for free in order to be better integrated into Greek society, to facilitate their communication with Greek workers. The SIS has been a great success, with hundreds of migrants being taught Greek each year by dozens of volunteers, it is the most successful school of such kind in Greece, and the only one that is almost always present in every major labor mobilization. Since 2004, hundreds of volunteers and more than 10,000 refugees and immigrants have passed from its processes. SIS also has a legal support team for immigrants and refugees and in recent years it also organizes free classes for Greek poor and immigrants. Its main income is a big annual festival that it organizes and an anti-racist calendar it issues. Meetings, theoretical discussions, demonstrations, and other activities are organized in the direction of unity of foreign and Greek workers.

Question: There exist significant fascist forces in Greece like "Chrysi Avgi" (Golden Dawn). Could you say a few words about the latest developments of the fascist danger and about the most important anti-fascist activities?

Answer: Due to a large international section of the radical left integrating and retreating after the SYRIZA's betrayal after 2015 as well as the defeats and breakdowns of the "pink" governments in Latin America, all Europeans nationalists and extreme right-wing racists have found the opportunity to claim social influence with self-confidence, enhancing logics of social cannibalism and "civil war between the poor". In Greece LAOS was already before economical crisis in the Greek Parliament, a party of "fascists with ties" which took about 5.6% in parliamentary elections and 7.15% in the Euroelections in 2009. This party participated in the government with PASOK (centre-left/social democracy) and New Democracy (Right) and voted for the first memorandum. It was one reason that gave the criminals and paramilitary neo-Nazis of Golden Dawn the opportunity to enter the Greek Parliament with 7% in 2012.

The Golden Dawn immediately attempted to take advantage of its entry into the House to dominate the streets, even to claim the hegemony in the right from New Democracy. The hundreds of anti-fascist committees that sprang up in all the cities of Greece managed to limit them partially. In 2013, Golden Dawn battalions murdered an anti-fascist musician, Pavlos Fyssas. The system tried to protect the GD and conceal the crime, but a massive anti-fascist uprising broke out. For a month, tens of thousands of people were demonstrating and attacking the fascist offices all over the country, demanding that the Golden Dawn leadership and its murderers should be imprisoned. Ultimately, the state was forced by the broad antifascist rage and mobilization to capture the leadership of the GD and partly squeeze the privileges the gang enjoyed for 35 years. The trial in the court has been deliberately delayed by the state and has not yet been completed, but it has nevertheless brought the fascists into a difficult position and has led to the reduction of their electoral influence and the creation/enhancement of new far-right groups. Golden Dawn in Greece is currently debilitated by the criminal or-

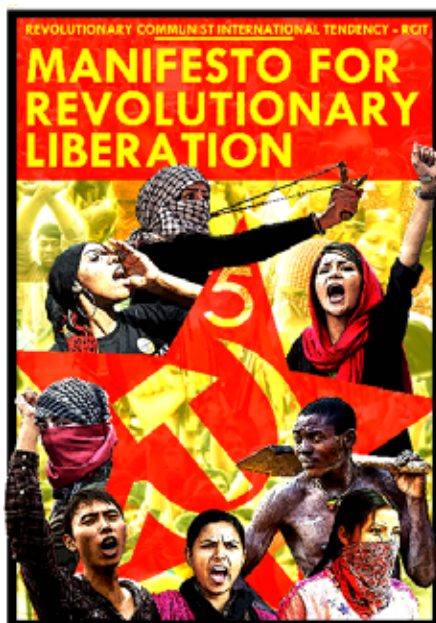
ganization's trial and is decimated by the continued withdrawal of its leading members.

In the last year they tried to re-emerge, taking advantage of the government's right-ward policies (anti-Turkish and anti-Macedonian imperialism and nationalism, concentration camps, deportations, turning a blind eye to torture and murders of refugees etc). They attempted to re-activate the paramilitary battalions and escalate their fascist attacks. They didn't make it well. The antifascist movement answered massively in the streets, usually gaining the majority of the society, a lot of resolutions of sympathy etc.

In the parliamentary elections of 7 July there were good news concerning GD: They stayed out of office with 2.9% while another party of "fascists with a tie" (the party of Velopoulos, ex-LAOS and ex-New Democracy, friend of Golden Dawn until recently) took their place with 3.7%, after its success in the Europarliament. Also a lot of members abandoned it and the only one Europarliamentary member declared his independence from GD. There is no room for complacency. The fascist far-right retains its electoral power in about 7%, a large part of society (which mostly voted for the right against Tsipras) agrees with them, there is a number of fascist groups (including G.D.) that will go on attacking with their battalions and in the next period they will have a lot of opportunities to enhance their influence and power in the streets, given the crisis of the left and the movement.

It is of great importance that the GD is convicted in the ongoing trial, but even this will be a result of pressure from below: anti-racist campaigns and anti-fascist responses where fascist attacks occur. In case another wave of economic crisis arrives given the present state of the left, the far-right will have the potential to grow.

As "Deport Racism" we say that to stop them, a precondition is the activation of the forces of the movement and the left, so as not to give public space to the fascists, as well as our unity in action to move forward. Such a mobilization is able to marginalize neo-Nazis in the neighborhoods and lead to their weakening at the ballots. The left must highlight the criminal nature of the Nazis, but we cannot limit ourselves to just this. We must prove the systemic



PROGRAM OF THE RCIT

Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation

Adopted at the 1st World Congress of the RCIT in October 2016

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

A RCIT Pamphlet, 36 pages, A5 Format

character of the extreme right-wing, of their nature as hostile forces to the interests of the working class and the poor. It is no coincidence that the Golden Dawn members are working with the ship-owners in Perama, setting up a strikebreaking "union" of henchmen and at the same time a job-finding agency with poor pay and no rights.

The co-operation of systemic mechanisms, parts of New Democracy and Neonazis, as in the town of Ptolemaida (where I live), is also something which must be denounced. We must also denounce the close relationship of mutual support between them and the armed forces (e.g. police). But the left also needs to confront the Social Democrats' attempts to create a "progressive pole" against the far right. No anti-fascist pole can depend on inhumane concentration camps for refugees in the Aegean islands, the operations of the police against refugees or closed borders, as the SYRIZA government did. No anti-fascist front can be made with those who evict refugees from apartments and throw them in the street. SYRIZA's leaders have strengthened their relations with priests friendly towards the Golden Dawn and have made common appearances with Golden Dawn deputies, especially around "national issues." No kind of antifascist "United Front" can be built with the chosen government of Greek capital and Western imperialism, with the oppressors of the social majority and the torturers of immigrants. United Front, though, can be built in local initials with the rank-and-file of SYRIZA. The only "progressive pole" that can be set up against the far-right is the one of the movement in the streets and workplaces, of solidarity towards refugees, resistance to the racist policies of Greece and European Union and the demand for open borders and the free movement of victims of poverty and war.

The antifascist movement has definitely succeeded in shrinking of G.D. via a lot of victories in the streets. There are plenty of examples of cities that have recalled permits for the events of Golden Dawn due to a general outcry of society and the mobilization-demonstrations of the left. When there is a major mobilization of G.D., antifascist mobilization is much larger and usually don't permit them to parade militarily (because the police stops them). Moreover, after the riot following the assassination of P. Fyssas, antifascist movement succeeded to lead most of Golden Dawn's offices-basements to close, to its crisis and to its eradication in areas such as Saint Panteleimonas (which they had once fully controlled and practiced terrorism there). The last months, in the town of Ptolemaida (close to the border with the state of Macedonia, where the system has consciously cultivated nationalism against the neighboring state) provides an example of how to deal with fascists: after targeting a member of "Kokkino Nima" by the block of right and far right, we moved forward addressing organisations, movements and unions, and we received 23 resolutions of sympathy, calling all the left and antifascists for united action in the streets to break right wing terrorism. The result was a very massive event for the town's size. This campaign led to the far-right (of right-far right) front to be marginalized and ultimately to shrinking, crisis and splits. The big party of the right (New Democracy) and institutional pillars (Media-Municipality-Church) were forced to withdraw from the common front leaving a handful of Fascists and the Nazis shouting but no longer having a chance of success in their goal of dominating the

city. In 29-30 June, we finally succeeded for the first time in Ptolemaida to organize a two-day antifascist festival, where totally 500 people participated. It is probably the most massive movement event in the town, despite the general crisis of the movement and the left.

The same days antiracist and antifascist festivals were organized in many cities, as it happens every year, where thousand people discuss against fascism and enjoy together. This year the participation was one of the greatest of the last years.

Question: The SYRIZA-led government is associated by many as a "left-wing" government since SYRIZA is part of the ex-Stalinist "Party of the European Left". What are your characterizations of SYRIZA and the politics of the government?

Answer: SYRIZA was a left front that was founded in 2004 and we participated in it from the beginning. Its largest component was Synaspismos, a reformist party of the European Left. Synaspismos and SYRIZA between 2004 and 2008 made a left turn and supported the movement; it had very radical and even anti-capitalist elements in its program and was considered dangerous by the system, which accused it as a "terrorist party". It was the period with the great movement of students' occupations in the universities (which finally won and SYRIZA was the only force to support it) and the uprising of December 2008 (where SYRIZA broke the "national unity" and was again the only force that supported it). This period of SYRIZA's radicalization and system targeting was vital to winning the majority of the struggling people in 2010-2012: the people chose a left-wing front that supported their struggles and was considered dangerous by the system.

Here is a lot of talk about what reformism is today. "Traditional" reformism is characterized by a militant and organized-trade unionized working class struggling for better working conditions within capitalism, even if it needs to go against its leadership, at least in part. SYRIZA was never in these terms a mass reformist workers' party, although it had a very strong (mostly electoral) resonance in the world of the movement. DEA had then had the analysis for SYN about "left-wing reformism." In general, the tradition of IST in Greece (SEK, DEA) considered even PASOK (the Social Democratic Party that ruled over Greece for 20 years before collapsing with memorandums and losing its electoral clientele to SYRIZA) until at least 10 years ago as "right reformist", "bourgeois-labor", degenerate social-democratic party. For PASOK, of course, this has been a basis, as PASOK was actually gathered in its lines pieces of the class that often strike and win against PASOK governments. PASOK still has a much greater power in labor unions than SYRIZA, which strength within the trade unions are weak, sometimes weaker than the revolutionary left's, especially in the private sector, despite the fact that SYRIZA has been a government party for years. SYRIZA always had a very small labor-based base, its party base was mainly petty-bourgeois and mainly had passive members. After 2015, the overwhelming majority of SYRIZA's labor and fighting elements was thrown out of the party, with about 10,000 members (out of a total of 35,000) abandoning it, probably its most militant and politicized members (If we want to compare with PASOK, think about that this once reached the 1 million members

...).

SYRIZA, in order to have a reason to exist as an opponent of the “unpopular right”, is struggling to show that it is “socially sensitive”, but having accepted the whole basic framework of memorandums and neoliberalism. We call its policies “social-neoliberal” since they have nothing to do even with Keynesianism. As a government, SYRIZA has given some petty subsidies to weak social groups, while NDemocracy said it would cut them, SYRIZA is a bit more tolerant of movements and rights (e.g. LGBT), although it has also attacked several times on demonstrators, SYRIZA was by far the most pro-imperialist and pro-U.S. government in the region, there are such minor differences. In all these cases, we did not see either SYRIZA’s base-membership being revolted or any leftist tendency inside it, but whenever it was necessary, it played a reactionary and strike-breaking role.

On the other hand, the workers and the poor who claim to be left still vote for it massively, and they regard it as a “brake” against the right-wing counter-attack, as the “less evil”, with “greater social sensitivities.” In the elections, the left-wing people voted by an overwhelming majority for SYRIZA against the right and despite its wear it rose by about 8% compared to the European elections that had been conducted one month ago. When a movement breaks out (very likely soon, now that the right will unleash its attacks as a new government), the majority of workers on the streets will have surely voted for SYRIZA. Some say that the reformist parties today generally do not have the mass and the relationship with the trade unions they had earlier, so that SYRIZA in this sense is part of the reformist tradition, that “this is the reformism of our era.” Some other left-wing organizations say that SYRIZA is a bour-

geois party.

So there is a discussion about the nature of SYRIZA within us. One central comrade has recently written that SYRIZA is a degenerate reformist-social democratic, “bourgeois workers party”. Other comrades have reservations, as they feel that SYRIZA has no really organized base and organic relationship with our class to press it from below and it resembles more a bourgeoisie party.

Personally, I have not clarified my views on this issue. It looks to me like a hybrid with elements from both types of parties, in the best case. If we make a comparison with the 1936’s Popular Front in France, I would say that SYRIZA today is more like the Radical Party and not the Socialist Party. A bourgeois party with a petty-bourgeois passive base and few possibilities for mobilization, “progressive” and a party of the “political center” but not enough to call it a workers’ party. We would also like to know your own view on this!

To make a comparison: the Democrats in the U.S. always appeared as a progressive counterpart to the Republicans (and Trump today). However, for ISO (our former sister organization, which 4 months ago declared its dissolution to “reconstitute” within DSA and the left-wing of the Democrats ...) argued that the Democrats were traditionally a bourgeois and imperialist party, not a bourgeois workers party, although an overwhelming majority of left-wing people found shelter in it against Republicans.

The discussion about SYRIZA’s character matters, because it affects our tactics towards it. Today, the choice of one or another attitude must be accounted for mainly by how it will be able to connect mainly with SYRIZA’s voters, not with its members, who are inactive, petty-bourgeois or paid and rarely stand in any movement process

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.

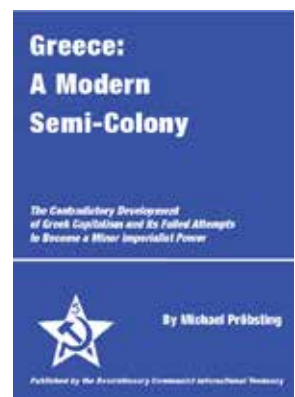
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which gives an overview of its content.

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. ■



(e.g. in Ptolemaida 4-5 leaders of SYRIZA participated as observers once or twice each in the dozens of anti-fascist meetings and actions we did, no ordinary member of its party "base" participated), so to discuss about United Front with its (party) "base" to strengthen the movement is rather funny.

Even if SYRIZA is a bourgeois-workers party today, this does not mean, for example, that we will ally with its central leadership. PASOK ruled since 1981, but after 1985 it has consistently applied austerity policies. Although the SEK (IST) comrades (and later also the DEA) considered it as a bourgeois-workers party, they did not call for voting it after 1996, and of course it was eliminated from central alliances (although PASOK also avoided them). Instead, they could work with PASOK's trade union factions on various movement actions, and they did it right, when they did not undermine their criticism on PASOK. There is, therefore, a limit beyond which reformism is shifting to the right, especially when it governs with unpopular policies, so that it does not allow generalized partnerships with the leaders. This is our case now: SYRIZA's leadership has followed its alliance with the bourgeoisie and imperialism between 2012-2015 (with secret and obvious meetings with them), abolishing piece by piece the elements of its program that led to rupture with the Greek bourgeois and the EU, pause of debts payment and deletion of public debt, "tearing" - cessation in one day of all the memorandums, striking on the rich for the redistribution of wealth etc. The Tsipras team practically drove the decision-making center off the majority of the old leadership of SYRIZA and organized a parallel center that did whatever it wanted in SYRIZA and only accounted for the bourgeoisie. Eventually, in 2015, it was a classic social-liberal government that continued with Memoranda 1 and 2 and voted third. It expelled the party's most militant part and legitimized the "There is no alternative" in the name of the left, put a gravestone to the movement consciously, and massively disappointed the left, putting the left on the system frame, exhausting the "moral burden" of the left (in all this contributed the inability of the other left too, including ours together, but this is another discussion). It ruled un-popularly, pro-imperialist, anti-immigrant for four years. We had a slogan in 2012 that said "no truce with the government of memoranda - no tolerance to neo-Nazis". I think it was right and it also matched the SYRIZA government period. And I think it is true today, with SYRIZA as a major opposition. On specific conditions, we could discuss an alliance with parts of its - relatively small - base, as I have said, on specific issues, in the context of United Front tactics.

Question: Greece has still a strong orthodox Stalinist party - the KKE. What is your view of this party?

Answer: It is a party of the classic Stalinist reformism, with all that this implies: until a few years ago it supported the "theory of stages" for Greece, divides every labor movement and strike, and accepts no co-operation even in single struggles, moves everywhere alone and with only guided its parliamentary support while being super-patriotic, even criticizing SYRIZ's government from a right point of view on "national issues", with rhetoric often reminiscent of the far right (as did LAE as well). In 1989-90 KKE ruled with PASOK and the right, although it last-

ed only about one year. It was near to dissolve and then did an "ultra-left turn", so it managed to survive. It was then that the collaps in the USSR transformed the Stalinist parties all over the world into classical social democratic parties. In Greece, a split took place, and Synaspismos was the component that followed the "Euro-communist" direction. However, the KKE, at major moments of the movement, stood firmly against it: such was the case during the occupations of the universities in 2006-7, the youth rebellion in 2008, the 2011 "squares" movement, the "NO" (No to 3rd memorandum) referendum in 2015. As a consequence, several times the system congratulated KKE and recognized how much it was a "responsible" party. It is also basically a conservative party, it does not participate essentially in anti-fascist, anti-racist, anti-war, anti-nationalist or anti-sexist movements (although many feminicides have occurred in Greece in recent years). It does not fight against the church and keeps as a major representative on TV a MP (former reporter of the right and still nationalist) who maintains ties to the Church.

Nevertheless, it is probably the only mass reformist-workers party in Greece. It still has very deep roots in the Greek society as a result of the struggle against the German Nazis (when the KKE reached 400,000 members and Greece was on the verge of "popular power"). Today, it probably has about 10,000 members, it can mobilize up to 50,000 in its mobilizations, it gains high electoral results in universities and trade unions of public and private sector, and it succeeds in the elections steadily around 5% in recent years. It still mobilizes important forces even though these people (workers, petty bourgeoisie, youth, retired people) are usually mobilized ceremonially, controlled and without faith that the struggles can win. There is evidence that the KKE people is "communicating" with the rest of the movement, even though the KKE leadership is trying to cut communication ties in any way. In the upcoming moments of the movement, the KKE people participated in various battles against its leadership, they sometimes pressed KKE to participate in common demonstrations and strikes, many voters abandoned it after 2009 (over 8%) due to its conservatism and turned to SYRIZA, while in 2015 the people of the KKE by 80-90% voted NO in the referendum against the KKE line (which proposed "void"). However, in conditions of the fall of the movement, it usually does not have difficulty in having the first role in the left and regrouping its world in part, trapping a significant part of the fighters who could participate in the revolutionary Left.

Our line has traditionally been a line of unity and call to action on its base and leadership, with the prospect of linking with some KKE militants who think in terms of class unity and the accumulation of forces. And the same must be the whole left's direction today, even though we know that the current leadership of the KKE is immovable. In addition, there are several departures from the KKE from time to time and it is important that they do not end up inactive "at their home".

Question: Greece has seen a series of general strikes in the past decade. However they did fail to defeat the austerity of fensive. What have been the main reasons for this? And what are, in your opinion, the main lessons to be drawn?

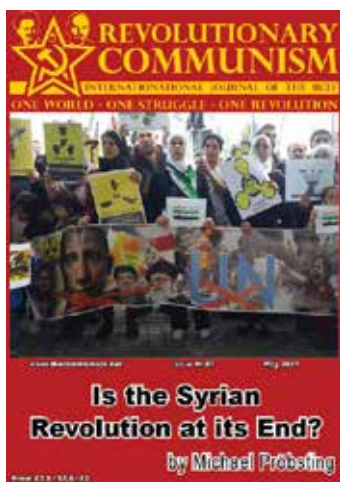
Answer: Basically, the period you are referring to is the three-year period 2010-2012, where there were 30 (!) general strikes. These strikes were combined with enormous workers-popular demonstrations that sometimes exceeded 200-300,000 people. It was the time when PASOK collapsed, the Social Democratic prime minister resigned and a non-elected banker (!) took over, when PASOK co-governed with the right and far right, while the left enhanced greatly its forces. At that time the ordinary people showed that classical "class struggle" is far from finished. The people of work fought for their lives, against the big cuts (in salaries, pensions and social insurance, social services etc), and "spontaneously" came out on the streets. In the summer of 2011, it was estimated that 2-3 million people participated in the "squares" movement. Another highlight was the 28th of October (National Day and Parade), where large groups of citizens demonstrated booing against the rulers throughout Greece, sometimes accompanied by throwing of objects and beating against them, while in the booing-protests the students who parade were massively involved! But the "spontaneous" is never "spontaneous", it is built on the experiences and struggles of the previous period, it is influenced by the attitude and the action of the left in the previous and the current period etc. It was therefore a period when the movement of the workers and the poor was combined with the action of the left and caused a massive left-wing electoral shift in 2012. Here, however, the good news stops.

Tsipras reformists had a plan to extinguish the great movement through the electoral path and organize the capitulation with the bourgeoisie. But what did the rest Left,

to stop them? It failed and was overwhelmingly defeated by Tsipras.

The movement, through the dynamics of the workers and the poor, showed that it had the winning ground, but did not have the right leadership. Tsipras gained the leadership of these people, not a well-rooted revolutionary left that puts an anti-capitalist outlook, the prospect of "we have the power to take everything back", to win even more and to build a society without bosses, to unfold a plan for coordination of the struggles, occupations of workplaces, moves to declare a general long-term strike, etc. The movement pointed out slogans as "to leave everyone by helicopter" but did not have a positive project, such as the expropriation of wealth and banks, the "workers power" or the government of workers and the left and the massive meetings in the Squares. None of them ever claimed that they would constitute an alternative of power nor did they try to transfer the movement into the workplaces. Of course, we can say that the revolutionary left did not have the strength to do so, it was proved to be weak, multi-divided, without experiences, with many mistakes and pathogens that made it largely a passive observer and a "tail" of the movement, spurred by "spontaneous". Even united and ready to drive a United Front tactic, I do not know if its power and experience would suffice to respond to such great revolutionary tasks. But it could certainly play a more serious role in the movement, it could definitely play a more important role in those and the later developments.

Eventually the "spontaneous" deflated, as it was reasonable that will do at some time, with Tsipras dominating



Publications of the RCIT

Is the Syrian Revolution at its End? Is Third Camp Abstentionism Justified?

By Michael Pröbsting, April 2017

An essay on the organs of popular power in the liberated area of Syria, on the character of the different sectors of the Syrian rebels, and on the failure of those leftists who deserted the Syrian Revolution

Introduction * The Nature of the Local Coordination Councils in Syria * The Contradictory Nature of the Petty-Bourgeois Rebel Factions * A note on the adjectival juxtaposition of "progressive" to liberal democrats versus "reactionary" to Islamists * Hayyat Tahrir al-Sham and Other Islamist Militias * The Role of Religion in Democratic and National Liberation Struggles * Some Arguments on the Ongoing Progressive Character of the Syrian Revolution * Have the Rebels Become Agents of US Imperialism and Regional Powers? * On Foreign Powers' Support for Liberation Movements p* Lenin and Trotsky on Liberation Struggles and Imperialist Interference * What Did Lenin and Trotsky Say about Getting Support from Imperialists? * Imagining Two Different Scenarios of the Revolution's Success & Failure * A Period of Defeats and Retreats: What Are the Reasons? * Some Thoughts on the Future Prospects of the Arab Revolution * The Urgent Need for a Revolutionary Party * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

with the proposal for “left-wing government - abolition of the memorandums.” And it was clear from the beginning that Tsipras did not care about a left-wing and workers government for rupture and overthrow but for consensus with the system, management, realistic negotiation (with capital and imperialism) in alliance with social-democrats. This was finally achieved by completing the right turn in 2012-2015, consciously organizing the cut-off of labor-popular expectations and the marginalization or satellification or integration of its left wing (so I refer you to the first answer), so Tsipras got the “green light” from bourgeoisie to rule. Nevertheless, even in 2015, the movement had not extinguished, yet hoped that Tsipras would collide. The referendum of the summer of ‘15 (when people voted ‘No in Memorandum 3’ despite the massive terrorism of the system, the capital controls in the banks, the propaganda of local capital, all media, imperialism, and even top executives of SYRIZA itself) showed what the resistances of these people, and how much they had believed in the overthrow of the memorandums, they showed that they felt ready to “revolt” if their leader would call them to do. About half a million attended Tsipras’s speech two days before the referendum and urged him to come into conflict. Tsipras, for his part, made the referendum to lose it, and when he failed to do so, he simply cancelled the referendum and agreed to the third memorandum two days later. So we end up again on the issue of leadership.

Anarchists say that people or the movement does not need leadership to defeat. The reality is that in capitalism the working class always had, in one way or another, a leadership since it is an exploited class which does not participate directly in politics. Usually this leadership is reformist. If they do not have another visible alternative for leadership, i.e. a massively rooted leadership based on a revolutionary working class strategy, then reformism will prevail in one way or another and disappoint the masses. The movement does not go up or down by pressing a button. The “spontaneity” of the class struggles does not continue forever, it deflates at some point if it does not find the proper leadership. If a leadership turns against the movement and there is no real alternative to its left, then there will be a period of passivity and despair, perhaps even “counter-revolutionary despair” (this is a serious basis for today’s rise of the far right internationally).

The development of the revolutionaries does not automatically take place in a period of movement, but even if it comes, time of a few days or months (“the moment of the movement”) is not enough to overcome the ultra-multiple influence of the reformists who have established a correlation for decades. To do this, a “critical mass” needs to be built before the “moment” of a relatively large, rooted and recognizable organization, properly trained and oriented. As Trotsky said clearly, if the hunter arms at the moment he sees the bird in front of him, when he arms, the bird will already be gone. We must have armed before the bird passing in front of us.

Historical experience shows that if this revolutionary “seed” is not built, our class is condemned in times of crisis to go back again and again, to lose, to be impoverished, to be bloodshed. The real goal must be to build a revolutionary party, but we are far away from it. Is it worth trying? I answer ‘yes’. The tasks of the small (and defeated ...) organizations of the revolutionary left today

have to take stock of the past and their mistakes. Between 2001 and 2012, we were constantly on the rise of social-class struggles in Greece and a great political radicalization to the left. Why did we lose? Even worse: why has the revolutionary left weakened and much more divided, instead of strengthened, more resonant, with greater roots and prestige in the working class? We didn’t make it. We must now take care of our preparation for the next round of confrontation with the system by upgrading the political debate about tactics but also about revolutionary theory, modern communist strategy and plan alongside the support of existing resistances and initiatives to give these resistances a winning direction. The best thing we have to do as revolutionaries today, as Trotsky writes about the revolutionaries in France (“*Once again: where is France going?*”, March 28, 1935) is the effort to “state what is”. For those who understand themselves as revolutionary communists, the duty is “sowing” in periods of “lull” to “express” the maximum of dynamics from below, to organize and give political perspective to the best class moods when the “moment” comes again.

Question: The so-called Macedonian question has always played an important role in Greek politics and has been an issue of many chauvinist mobilizations. What is your view of this?

Answer: At the end of the 19th century, the geographic and then ethnic consciousness of the Macedonians began to form in territories that were later annexed by Greece. The ruling class of Greece either tried to exterminate, to evict or to assimilate (“make Greek”) the Macedonians, and by 1990 it had succeeded it in to a large extent. Most of the Macedonians fled north of the border of Greece in the decades of 1920, ‘30 & ‘40 and formed the “Socialist Republic of Macedonia” within the framework of the United Yugoslavia under Tito administration. Greece did not have a problem with the name “Macedonia” at all this time. Only after 1990, the division of Yugoslavia and the declaration of an independent Macedonian state, the Greek bourgeoisie’s “appetite” woke up to conquer the neighbor state militarily and organized rallies of hundreds of thousands, threatening to invade in Macedonia with “tanks and weapons”, because “Macedonia is one and Greek” (using the “argument” that there is also a region in Greece called Macedonia, because ... Alexander the Great talked about 2,000 years ago in Greek and lived in today’s Greek lands and because Macedonians ... want to conquer Greek ground). “Arguments” which are ridiculous and unbeatable, but they managed to persuade the overwhelming majority of popular masses to agree with this). Finally, in the 1990s, Macedonia retreated to Greek pressure, changed its name, constitution and flag, and mostly granted much of its economy to Greek capital, which became the first “investment” force in Macedonia (succeeding in taking control of about 20% of Macedonian economy) and one of the largest in the Balkans. (Even today Greek capitalists are super-exploiting the Macedonian workers, with a salary of around 150-200 Euros.)

Tsipras, in the last year, wanted to close Macedonian’s pendency with a new deal. This deal concerned the better penetration of Greek capital in Macedonia, but also NATO’s aim to block Russian capital’s penetration. SYRIZA promoted this agreement as “peaceful” and “international-

alist", but in fact it was a "cosmopolitan" deal in favor of Greek capital and Western imperialism. The agreement definitively changed the name of the neighboring country ("Northern Macedonia" from now on), its constitution, street names, airports, history books, statues, gives Greece the right to interfere continuously in the internal affairs of B. Macedonia, to control its airspace, to make a series of business agreements favorable to the Greek capital (which have already begun, for example, the Greek public electricity company has acquired the largest Macedonian one) and so on. The case also concerns agreements on gas pipelines in cooperation with Western imperialism.

The right decided to make a nationalist opposition for electoral reasons (The right in the past has proposed similar to what Tsipras agreed). Eventually, large rallies were organized mainly in Northern Greece (the largest reached 250,000 in Thessaloniki), where the right, fascists, church, military and police organizations, cultural clubs, football hooligans etc "fought" together "against the national betrayal of Tsipras". Macedonia today is a small state on the northern border of Greece. Their basic "argument" was today the same: that "Macedonia is threatening Greece". An equally ridiculous argument. While Greece is one of the most militarized states in Europe (the first in the EU in terms of military expenditure per GDP), Macedonia is one of the weakest military countries. Macedonia has 1/20 of Greece's GDP, 1/60 of its military expenditure and 1/30 of its military aircraft. In the overall military rankings their respective positions are 28/136 versus 118/136 (according to the site "globalfirepower").

The rallies gave the fascists the opportunity to escalate terrorism and violent attacks on activists, immigrants,

movement spaces etc.

SYRIZA defended the deal with patriotic-nationalistic, pro-NATO and pro-capitalist arguments, legitimizing right-wing and far-right nationalist arguments.

But the worst is the attitude of the left. KKE, LAE and other forces of the left (apparently mainly belonging to Stalinist tradition) criticized SYRIZA from a right point of view, making criticism similar to that of the right and far-right, with some of them standing friendly or even openly participating in rallies with all the reactionary, fascist, state and para-state patchwork. Their argument was "anti-NATO" and that Macedonia can threaten us with the help of NATO ... Full reversal of reality. It was one of the reasons why the left-wing people with anti-nationalist reflexes did not vote for this left, but for SYRIZA and Varoufakis.

Our opinion is internationalist, we defend the joint struggle of Macedonian and Greek workers against our bosses in both countries and Greek imperialism (our bosses in the two countries are to a great extent common, Greek businesses) against NATO and the EU, we are inspired by an old-formulated vision for a red socialist all-Balkan federation. Greek workers have nothing to gain from the super-exploitation of Macedonian workers from Greek capital. On the contrary, the escalation of nationalism and the intensification of inter-imperialist rivalries (NATO-EU on the one hand, and Russia-China on the other) bring war closer to our region, and the war always results in the slaughter of workers from all countries.

We recognize no "agreement" on issues concerning the neighboring people. Right to self-determination of Macedonian workers and the poor, war against our government, "our" austerity and "our" own nationalism- the

Books of the RCIT

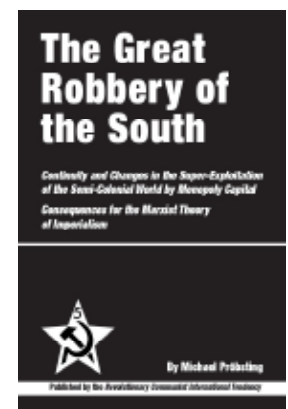
Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

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)



enemy is in our own country. Struggle for peace, equality and friendship of the peoples in the Balkans, war on our memorandums. Stop the expansion of Greek capital and NATO. With these positions we stepped out openly, took initiatives, debated and protested alongside other left-wing organizations. One result of all this was that I was personally attacked and had my professional place vandalized by the fascists and part of the system in the town I live.

Question: What are the main tactics and slogans which *Kokkino Nima* raises in the present situation to give the workers movement a new orientation?

Answer: We try to strengthen the existing resistance by trying in parallel to influence politically. Today in Greece, there is a relatively powerful anti-racist and anti-fascist movement, in which we intervene with one of the most known anti-racist forces, the Movement "*Deport Racism*". We support *Sunday School of Immigrants* who teaches Greek to immigrants and refugees as well as foreign languages to "foreign" and Greek poor.

Also the anti-sexist and anti-homophobic movement has become stronger, particularly in the last year that women and homosexuals were murdered. In all these interventions we try to strengthen the logic of connection with the workers' movement, the struggle against the government, the memorandums and the austerity. The last year the Macedonian (but also the Greek-Turkish conflicts) dominated in the political agenda, and we participated in protests against war and nationalism. We stood against anti-Macedonian and anti-Turkish hysteria. Turkish and Macedonian workers are our class brothers and sisters and we don't gain anything to turn against each other.

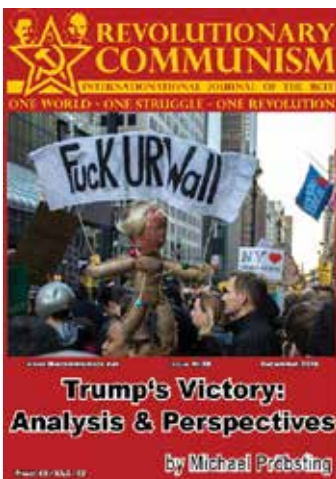
We played an active role in the mobilizations of "temporary" teachers-contractors (which work with flexible working conditions) and employees in the insurance funds (where we played a prominent role in the occupation of a central insurance funds building, resulting in prosecution of one member of *Kokkino Nima* by the courts, however the solidarity succeeded to acquit the prosecuted) and we participated in most of the other central labor demonstrations or sectoral ones (with the largest probably being these of couriers in the private sector, the workers-contractors in local authorities-municipalities and the employees of one of the four big Greek banks) that were organized in the last year.

We organized some events-debates with other organi-

zations and just ourselves. Much of the debate is about "which left we need", "what went wrong and why did we loose from SYRIZA", "why is the left in crisis", and the attempt to bring some left-wing organizations back and find a common space on some movement and political issues in the next period, as ANTARSYA and LAE especially after the latest results are in serious crisis and possibly on the verge of dissolution. This is a necessary debate, because a new anti-popular attack is coming with the new government, so we need to response with the maximum of coordination.

In the elections we called for voting for the left (KKE, LAE, ANTARSYA, preferring the latter because of its internationalist position in Macedonian case) and in the local municipal elections (2 months ago) we participated with candidates in some united left fronts, where LAE and ANTARSYA gave the electoral battle together.

Our slogans are 1) defensive ones that have to do with the period (e.g. "Against the dissolution of the insurance", "Not to the change of the penal code" (which led to lower penalties for fascists, tougher penalties for the movement, higher rates of acquittal for rapists - the movement withdrew the last order, which was a victory) etc, 2) transitional demands such as fighting against Memoranda, austerity, struggle for increases in pensions and wages, mass recruitment of permanent staff against unemployment and flexible working relationships, heavy capital taxation and tax exemptions for the popular classes, more money for public health and education, not for military and police equipment etc., against nationalism, war and fascism, for open borders and asylum, equal rights for refugees and immigrants etc, tough penalties for killers of Golden Dawn etc. And 3) political direction slogans. Before the European elections, we had slogans such as "neither Tsipras nor Mitsotakis, for a class internationalist Left, social justice will be won in the streets, with our resistance. After the European elections and the surely coming victory of the right in 7 July, the cover of our newspaper came out with a slogan: "Black" (it means something like "no way vote") on the right and the far right. The response will be given by a resistance movement, not by the memorandum centre left. We explained that a revengeful counter-attack of the Right and escalation of the attack on capital is coming (after 9 years of constant questioning of the "traditional" bourgeois political forces) and that the reconstruction of the anti-capitalist left and the movement is urgent.



PUBLICATIONS OF THE RCIT

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

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!

