



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



www.thecommunists.net

New Series Issue Nr.32

February 2020

Ecology: Save the Planet from Capitalist Destruction!

**PLUS: The Near-War between U.S. and Iran * China as a Great Power
Elections in Britain and Zionism * Global Trade War: Temporary Truce**

English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.32, February 2019

- What did the latest Near-War between the U.S. and Iran Reveal?*
Some Notes on the Inner Contradictions of the US Policy in the Middle East p.3
- On the Elections in Britain and the Role of Zionism* p.7
- A Temporary Truce ... to Prepare for another War*
On the Meaning of the "Phase One" Deal for the U.S.-China Cold War p.9
- A Very Self-Confident Imperialist Great Power*
Some notes on China's self-image as a leading actor of the global order p.12
- Save the Planet from Capitalist Destruction!*
Thesis on Ecology p.14

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

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What did the latest Near-War between the U.S. and Iran Reveal?

Some Notes on the Inner Contradictions of the US Policy in the Middle East

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 11 January 2020

As is well known, the U.S. and Iran avoided in the last 48 hours only by a whisker a full escalation of their conflict. Since the beginning of the conflict in May 2018, when the U.S. withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran and imposed massive economic sanctions, there have been a number of confrontations.

However, the latest cycle of tensions provoked undoubtedly a situation which brought the US and Iran closer to war than at any point in the past four decades. The latest escalation began on 27 December 2019 with an attack of Iraqi militias (with close links to Teheran) on the K-1 Air Base in Iraq which killed an American contractor. In response, the U.S. launched airstrikes across Iraq and Syria, killing 25 Iran-backed Kata'ib Hezbollah militiamen. Days later, thousands of demonstrators attacked and even entered the U.S. embassy in the Green Zone in Baghdad.

On 3rd January, the U.S. killed General Qassem Soleimani – one of the most influential leaders of the ruling elite in Teheran –, the Iraqi PMF commander Abu Mahdi al Muhandis and other commanders. In response, Iran launched five days later numerous ballistic missiles at two U.S. military bases in Iraq. However, despite claims of Iranian television that there were 80 U.S. deaths, in fact these attacks caused no casualties. It is with almost certainty that Teheran deliberately avoided casualties in their operation – something which has been speculated not only by various non-Iranian sources but which has been also acknowledged by General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Aerospace Force.¹ Teheran even informed the Americans – via Iraqi and Finnish offices in Baghdad – about this attack in advance.² After this development, both sides signaled that they do not intend, for now, to continue military operations against each other.

Marxist stance

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) has always opposed the U.S. sanctions and military aggression against Iran.³ Our position has not been based on any sympathy for the reactionary Mullah regime. On the contrary, we have always supported popular protests against the regime including the latest uprising in November 2019.⁴

Likewise, we fully support the heroic Iraqi masses protesting against the corrupt capitalist government in Baghdad. This struggle which started in October last year is still continuing despite the brutal repression by the police and pro-Iranian militias which have already killed more than 500 demonstrators.⁵

Likewise, revolutionaries also support always the struggle of oppressed people against imperialist powers. This is why we defended Iraq in 2003 against the U.S. invasion as well as the subsequent popular resistance struggle against the occupation forces and their proxies.⁶ We supported, for the same reason, the recent mobilizations against the U.S. embassy in Baghdad.⁷

Irrespective of our opposition to the reactionary regime in Teheran, we defend Iran against any aggression – economically, politically or military – by U.S. imperialism. This position is rooted in the Marxist analysis of the class character of the countries involved. While Iran is a semi-colonial capitalist country, the U.S. is, in contrast, the biggest imperialist Great Power.⁸ In conflicts between (semi-)colonial and imperialist countries, revolutionaries are obliged to side with the (semi-)colonies against the Great Powers.⁹

Hence, during the recent escalation the RCIT called for the military defeat of U.S. imperialism and sided with Iran resp. the pro-Iranian militias in Iraq without lending any political support to their reactionary leaderships.¹⁰

Did Trump win the showdown?

However, in this article we intend not to deal with questions of revolutionary tactics. Rather, we want to discuss the inner contradictions of the US policy in the Middle East and their consequences for future developments. It should be pretty evident why this issue is highly relevant.

- 1) The U.S. is the largest imperialist state on the globe;
- 2) The Middle East is a region where the interests of all Great Powers – the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan – clash;¹¹
- 3) Finally, the Middle East is that world region which has experienced the largest number of revolutionary uprisings and civil wars in the last decade.¹² This is all the more relevant since the global wave of class struggles and popular uprisings which began in autumn 2019 has opened a new stage in world politics characterized by a pre-revolutionary dynamic.¹³

The latest cycle of tensions has thrown light on the inner contradictions of the U.S. policy in the Middle East. On the surface the Trump Administration appears to come out as a strong force. It has killed a leading figure of the Iranian elite and, in return, it only lost a few military installations in Iraq. However, this would be a highly superficial and misleading view.

This is the case, first, because it is very unlikely that the Iranian missile strike has been the end of the retaliation. Senior IRGC commanders already warned of “harsher revenge soon” and said that “Wednesday’s missile strikes were only the start of a series of attacks across the region.”¹⁴

Lebanese Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has also called for the ouster of US forces from the region in response to the assassinations of Soleimani and al-Muhandis. He warned: “The suicide attackers who forced the Americans to leave from our region in the past are still here and their numbers have increased.”¹⁵ In addition, leaders of Iraqi militias also announced strikes in retaliation. Iraqi militia commander Qais al-Khazali said: “The initial Iranian response to the assassination of the martyred commander Soleimani has happened. Now it is time for the initial response to the assassination of the martyred commander Muhandis. And because Iraqis are brave and zealous, their response will not be any less than that of Iran’s. That is a promise.”¹⁶

No doubt, these Iranian, Iraqi and Lebanese leaders are under massive pressure from their supporters to fight back after the U.S. killed several of their commanders. They would massively lose their prestige if they would not strike back after this unprecedented provocation.

The Trump Administration is in a similar situation. Its primary motivation for the killing of General Soleimani was simply to increase the slim chances of the Mad Man to secure his re-election in November this year. As a President who is threatened with impeachment by the Congress and who is highly unpopular among both the American people as well as the establishment, Trump must grab every chance to boost his prestige. After the killing of a U.S. contractor and the storming of the embassy, Trump was close to his "*Benghazi moment*".¹⁷ This is why the White House ordered the killing of Soleimani. However, for the same reason, Trump will be forced in the next months to strongly react to any other attack by the numerous opponents of the biggest Great Power. And such attack will inevitable take place!

In principle, neither Washington nor Teheran want a full-scale war. However, the political logic of the conflicting interests and the driving forces behind make such an escalation a very realistic possibility in the near future.

Preparing the withdrawal?

Washington faces a fundamental and irresolvable problem: As the RCIT has elaborated in several documents, U.S. imperialism is trapped in a long-term process of decline. Its days are over when it enjoyed absolute hegemony. This is true on a global scale where its leading position is challenged by Chinese and Russian imperialism. And this is also true for the Middle East.

While Trump superficially appears as the "strong man" after the killing of Soleimani, a closer look reveals that this event, in fact, has aggravated the fundamental problems of U.S. imperialism in the Middle East. The following developments in the last days demonstrate this pretty clear.

Firstly, the Iraqi Parliament formally called for the expulsion of all American troops from Iraqi soil. True, the resolution was not binding. Trump also reacted by threatening to demand billions of dollars in compensation from Iraq or to impose "*sanctions like they've never seen before*" – a particularly cynical demand from an occupying colonial power which invaded Iraq in 2003 against the will of the people! However, the political and symbolic importance of this resolution should not be underestimated. It has opened a process which will massively increase the political pressure by the Iraqi people to end the U.S. occupation.

Secondly, in reaction to the events on 3rd January, Iran announced it will no longer abide by the limits contained in the 2015 nuclear deal. "*Iran did not elaborate on what levels it would immediately reach in its program. Tehran has already broken some of the deal's limits as part of a step-by-step pressure campaign to get sanctions relief. It has increased its production, begun enriching uranium to 5% and restarted enrichment at an underground facility. While it does not possess uranium enriched to weapons-grade levels of 90%, any push forward narrows the estimated one-year "breakout time" needed for it to have enough material to build a nuclear weapon if it chose to do so.*"¹⁸ France's Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian nervously warned that "*within a fairly short period of time,*

between one and two years, [Iran] could have access to a nuclear weapon."¹⁹ It does not need any explanation that such a development would dramatically change the relation of forces in the Middle East – to the detriment of the U.S., Israel and their allies.

Thirdly, the latest escalation obviously reinforced the desire of the White House to massively reduce its military presence in the Middle East. It is well known that the U.S. is negotiating with the Taliban on the concrete terms of the withdrawal of American troops.²⁰ President Trump has also repeatedly announced his desire to withdraw U.S. troops from Syria.²¹

Characteristically, only one day after the Iraqi parliament voted for the expulsion of U.S. troops from its country, the U.S. military circulated a letter announcing the complete withdrawal of its troops from Iraq. While they later claimed that this was only an "unsigned draft letter" which was "mistakenly" sent to the Iraqi government, this incident demonstrates clearly that the Pentagon gears itself for the withdrawal of its troops.²² Naturally, this will only embolden the determination of the Iraqi forces – and all other opponents of U.S. imperialism in the region – to intensify their efforts to expel that Great Power from the Middle East which once dominated undisputedly this region.

One should interpret Trumps proposal to expand NATO to include Middle Eastern states in the same context.²³ His pressure to increase NATO involvement in the Middle East, i.e. a stronger participation of other states, is only a pretext to withdraw American troops.

Shock in Israel

It does not need much explanation that a withdrawal of US troops from Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan would have dramatic consequences for Israel. Until now, the Zionist Apartheid state could rely on the unwavering and massive political, economic and military support of the most powerful imperialist state.²⁴

It is therefore hardly surprising that the Zionist establishment reacts with shock to the "unsigned draft letter" which reflects once again the erratic Middle East policy of the Trump Administration. An Israeli journalist with close connection to the military elite reported about the reaction: "*The content of the letter — that the Americans were preparing to withdraw from Iraq immediately — turned on all the alarm systems throughout the Defense Ministry in Tel Aviv. More so, the publication was about to set in motion an Israeli "nightmare scenario" in which ahead of the upcoming US elections President Donald Trump would rapidly evacuate all US forces from Iraq and Syria.*"²⁵

The RCIT has repeatedly drawn attention to the decline of U.S. imperialism and the desire of the Trump Administration to withdraw from several hotspots. In our last World Perspectives document published nearly a year ago we wrote: "*Anyway, the Trump Administration tries to deal with the decline of the U.S. with an inconsistent mix of aggressiveness and foreign policy conciliation. As already indicated, the U.S. will withdraw a number of troops from Syria and Afghanistan. It is forced to negotiate with the Taliban. Washington is facing defeat by an opponent it overthrew when it first invaded Afghanistan in 2001. We are heading towards a repetition of Saigon, 1975. Likewise, the Trump Administration has become*

conciliatory towards North Korea. This is despite Trump's bombastic threats of only a year ago and reports that North Korea has continued building nuclear weapons." ²⁶

And a few months ago, when Trump suggested withdrawing all U.S. troops from Syria, we spoke about another "Saigon moment". We think that the recent developments strongly confirm this analysis.

In summary, while the latest escalation did not result in a full-scale war between the U.S. and Iran for now, it is clear that further clashes and even a war are a highly realistic possibility in the course of this year. In any case, we are in the midst of dramatic changes of the political relation of forces in the Middle East.

In our New Year Greetings 2020 we wrote: "We are heading towards a political volcano eruption." ²⁷ A few days later, the world was close to a full-scale war between the U.S. and Iran. Such dramatic developments and instability are the ferment for wars and revolutions. Revolutionaries need a clear analysis of the driving forces of these ruptures as well as a consistent program for socialist transformation of the Middle East. The RCIT is committed to build a Revolutionary World Party fighting for such a perspective!

Footnotes

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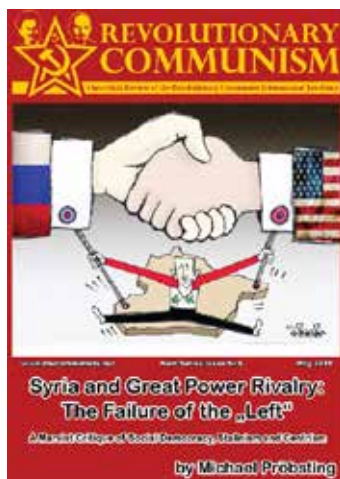
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Syria and Great Power Rivalry: The Failure of the „Left“

By Michael Pröbsting, April 2018

*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*

Introduction * The liberation struggle of the Syrian people against Assad retains its just character * Against all imperialist aggressors! * Old and new Great Powers * The Ex-Stalinist turned social democrats: "God save the United Nations" * The Stalinists (and some caricatures in Trotskyist camouflage): social-imperialist servants of Assad and Putin * The Morenoite LIT, UIT and FLTI: the heart on the right place but not their brains * CWI and FT: failure to understand the imperialist nature of China and Russia * CWI / SWP(UK) / FT: refusing to support the Syrian Revolution * Conclusion * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

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9 This has been always the position of Marxists as we have demonstrated in numerous publications. To give only one example, Trotsky elaborated in 1938 on a possible conflict between semi-colonial Brazil and imperialist Britain: *"I will take the most simple and obvious example. In Brazil there now reigns a semi-fascist regime that every revolutionary can only view with hatred. Let us assume, however, that on the morrow England enters into a military conflict with Brazil. I ask you on whose side of the conflict will the working class be? I will answer for myself personally—in this case I will be on the side of "fascist" Brazil against "democratic" Great Britain. Why? Because in the conflict between them it will not be a question of democracy or fascism. If England should be victorious, she will put another fascist in Rio de Janeiro and will place double chains on Brazil. If Brazil on the contrary should be victorious, it will give a mighty impulse to national and democratic consciousness of the country and will lead to the overthrow of the Vargas dictatorship. The defeat of England will at the same time deliver a blow to British imperialism and will give an impulse to the revolutionary movement of the British proletariat. Truly, one must have an empty head to reduce world antagonisms and military conflicts to the struggle between fascism and democracy. Under all masks one must know how to distinguish exploiters, slaveowners, and robbers!"* (Leon Trotsky: Anti-Imperialist Struggle is Key to Liberation. An Interview with Mateo Fossa (1938); in: Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-39, p. 34)

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On the Elections in Britain and the Role of Zionism

By Yossi Schwartz, *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)*, 28.12.2019

The defeat of the Labor party by the Tories led by Boris Johnson, a racist Islamophobe, in the general elections in England will encourage the reactionary forces in other countries. Hence we will see further attacks on the social and democratic rights of the masses in countries like USA, Israel, India, Phillipine, Brazil, the Arab states and Iran. However, there we can also expect that the masses will fight back in this period of sharper class struggles.

Various reasons caused the defeat for the Labor party and most importantly its reformist wishy-washy program and policies. (1) Instead of rejecting both capitalist options leaving or staying in imperialist EU and mobilizing the working class in a general strike for a workers government, Corbyn attempted to appease both sides: those who supported leaving and those supporting staying in the EU by simply calling for a new referendum. Instead of kicking out the Blairites - the right wing of the party that their place is with the Tories - he removed some left wing figures known for their pro-Palestinian positions. In July 2017, Labour's leadership - the National Executive Committee (2) - adopted the so-called *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance* (3) *Working Definition* (4) that includes the notion that criticism of Israel can amount to Anti-Semitism. In February and July 2019, complaints of Anti-Semitism led to a process where 350 members resigned, expelled or received formal warnings. Thus even on the issue of Zionism Corbyn caved in and even apologized to the Zionists.

In this period of high uncertainty and insecurity the working class and the poor in the rural areas and in the

cities are seeking a strong firm leadership and since the Labor party was unable to provide it there was a shift to the right, especially among older people.

The role of the mass media in this election was clear: as mouthpiece of the capitalist class they all attacked the left wing of the Labor party because they do not trust the left wing of the Labour Party to control the masses in this historical crisis of capitalism.

It will be stupid to believe that Israel and the Zionists are the major reason for the victory of the Tories but it is clear that they have played a role in it.

At a time real Anti-Semites kill Jews and vandalize synagogues and graveyards, Simon Wiesenthal Center allegedly a Nazi Hunter organization accused Corbyn as the most dangerous Anti-Semite of our time: "No one has done more to mainstream anti-Semitism into the political and social life of a democracy than the Jeremy Corbyn-led Labour Party," said the Simon Wiesenthal Center. "Members and staff who have dared to speak out against the hate were purged, but not those who declared 'Heil Hitler' and 'F--k the Jews.'" (5)

The British chief rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, accused Corbyn of mainstreaming anti-Semitism which was an indirect call to vote for racist Johnson who said that Muslim immigrants lack "loyalty to Britain" because of their religion: "Islam is the problem," he wrote. In his past he wrote an article describing Africans as "pickanninies" (6) with "watermelon smiles." (7)

The immediate reaction of the Israeli government was to hail Johnson winning as a defeat for Anti-Semitism. "Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said the Conservatives' win in the polls was "not just a political victory, it is first and foremost

Books of the RCIT

Yossi Schwartz: Palestine and Zionism

The History of Oppression of the Palestinian People.

A Critical Account of the Myths of Zionism

In *Palestine and Zionism* Yossi Schwartz provides a critical analysis of numerous Zionist myths about the Jews as well as about the Palestinians. He demonstrates that the Zionist claim that Palestine is the historic homeland of the Jews lacks any serious basis.

Palestine and Zionism shows that the history of Zionism in the 20th century is a history of colonialism in the service of the Great Powers and directed against the native population - the Arabs. In *Palestine and Zionism* Yossi Schwartz deals with key events - the "Nakba" in 1948, the wars in 1956, 1967 and 1973, more recent events like the Lebanon War, etc. - which were decisive for the expulsion of most Palestinians from their homeland.

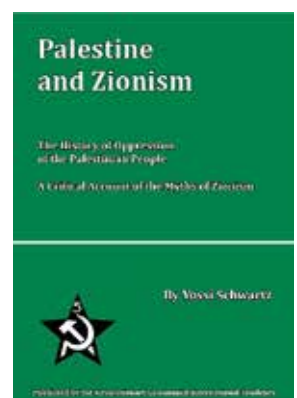
Yossi Schwartz also shows that the Palestinian people have heroically resisted against the occupation resulting in two Intifadas as well as the successful defense of Gaza against the Israeli aggression in three wars (2008/09, 2012, 2014). The author also analysis the shameful betrayal by the PLO leadership by signing the Oslo Agreement in 1993.

In *Palestine and Zionism* Yossi Schwartz defends the right of national self-determination for the Palestinian people and

outlines a socialist perspective. He emphasizes that the only solution is the right of millions of Palestinian refugees to return to their homeland and to replace the Zionist entity with one democratic state from the river to the sea - a *Free Red Palestine* with equal civil rights to the Arabs and the Israeli Jews.

The book contains an introduction and 7 chapters (112 pages) and includes 7 Tables and 3 Maps. The author of the book is Yossi Schwartz, a leading member of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency and its section in Israel / Occupied Palestine..

You can find the contents and download the book for free at <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/palestine-and-zionism/>



a victory of values"... "The spectre of anti-Semitism loomed large over this campaign and the British public overwhelmingly voted against it," Katz said." (8)

It should not surprise us that Israel and the Zionist movement are in the front line of the reaction in the world. In its political appearance it is very similar to racist Hindutva in India, even though Israel is an imperialist state and India is a semi colony. In September 2019 Zionist Professor Gadi Taub and Dr. Subramanian Swamy held a discussion in the University of Mumbai on Zionism and Hindutva. On the posters announcing the event we can see the picture of the Zionist Theodor Herzl alongside Hindutva ideologue V.D. Savarkar. The official symbol of the Israeli state is on the poster. In addition Vaibhav Purandare, a right wing journalist and the author of *Savarkar: The True Story of the Father of Hindutva* was the moderator.

"Gadi Taub, kept the audience spellbound with his interpretation of nationalism and the similarities between Zionism and Hindutva"... "This is the first time in recent years we are seeing such a provocative and supremacist tone of discussion. Israel has been working very hard on Brand Israel, portraying it as a liberal and progressive country. This talk is telling in that at its root it remains a country that practises apartheid and is completely supportive of the Hindutva ideology," said Apoorva P.G., coordinator with the Palestinian BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) National Committee." (9)

Israel is a close ally not only of racist Shri Narendra Modi but of other authoritarian leaders - such as the far-right Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro who visited Israel in March 2019. The far-right leader was asked on during his visit to Israel if he agreed with the claim by his foreign minister, Ernesto Araujo, that the Nazis were leftists. "There is no doubt right?" Bolsonaro replied, according to Reuters. (10)

It is interesting to observe how all these authoritarian politicians use very similar verbal tricks. Netanyahu for example said that Hitler got his idea of exterminating the Jews from the Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin. In the real world long before Haj Amin arrived in Germany the Nazis were killing the Jews.

"Prime minister tells World Zionist Congress that Hitler only wanted to expel the Jews, but Jerusalem's Grand Mufti convinced him to exterminate them, a claim that was rejected by most accepted Holocaust scholars". (11)

Other close friends of Israel in addition to Trump are Hungary's Viktor Orban, Italy's Matteo Salvini, Russia's Vladimir Putin and the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte.

The Zionists have an interest in defeating every progressive democratic movement and to create a great fear among the Jews of another Holocaust, in order to push them to Israel. Yet because of the nature of Israel as a society of settler colonialists they ally themselves with the real Anti-Semites of the far right. This is very dangerous not only to the international working class and the oppressed but also for the Jewish masses.

The collaboration of the Zionist leaders with the most reactionaries began with its historical leader Theodore Herzl. Herzl offered the Russian Tsar who was behind the pogrom of Kishinev in 1903 his service to isolate the Jews from the revolutionary movement for supporting his plans for his colonialist project to form a Jewish state in Palestine. (12) The collaboration of the Zionist with the Third Reich continued until WWII. (The Transfer The Haavara Agreement (Hebrew: *התרבות פקס*). (13)

The way things go very soon even mentioning this agreement would be considered by the Zionists and their friends as an Anti-Semitism. The more the real nature of Israel is exposed the more the friends of Israel will try to crack down on its opponents.

To fight against imperialism and the real racism it is necessary among other things to defeat Zionism.

Footnotes

- 1) <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/politics/jeremy-corbyn-news-election-labour-general-election-2019-uk>
- 2) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Executive_Committee
- 3) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Holocaust_Remembrance_Alliance
- 4) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Working_Definition_of_Antisemitism
- 5) Corbyn-Led British Labour Party Named No. 1 Anti-Semitic Threat Worldwide, 12/12/2019, https://baltimorejewishlife.com/news/news-detail.php?SECTION_ID=3&ARTICLE_ID=125272
- 6) https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/boris-johnson-track-record-on-race_uk_5de7dfce4b0913e6f895667
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- 8) FRANCE 24, 13/12/2019, <https://www.france24.com/en/20191213-israel-hails-johnson-win-as-defeat-for-anti-semitism-1>
- 9) Anupama Katakam: Zionism and Hindutva: Communal cousins, Front Line : September 27, 2019, <https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/article29390909.ece>
- 10) <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-brazil/brazils-president-calls-nazis-leftists-after-israel-holocaust-museum-visit-idUSKCN1RF1QD>; Josefin Dolsten: "Bolsonaro says Nazis were 'leftists' following visit to Yad Vashem", The Times Of Israel, 4 April 2019
- 11) Netanyahu: Hitler Didn't Want to Exterminate the Jews, Haaretz Oct 21, 2015, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/netanyahu-ab-solves-hitler-of-guilt-1.5411578>
- 12) See on this e.g. Yossi Schwartz: The Origins of the Jews, chapter III and IV, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/origins-of-jews/>
- 13) David Yisraeli: "The Third Reich and the Transfer Agreement", in: Journal of Contemporary History 6 (1972), S. 129-148; see also: Tom Segev: The Seventh Million: Israelis and the Holocaust

The RCIT has published a number of booklets, statements, and articles on Israel, Anti-Semitism and the liberation struggle of the Palestinian people. In particular we refer to:

Yossi Schwartz: Palestine and Zionism. The History of Oppression of the Palestinian People. A Critical Account of the Myths of Zionism (Book), April 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/palestine-and-zionism/>

Yossi Schwartz: The Origins of the Jews (Pamphlet), <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/origins-of-jews/>

Yossi Schwartz: Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism, 16 November 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-semitism-and-anti-zionism/>

Yossi Schwartz: Zionism and Anti-Semitism, 21.03.2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/zionism-and-anti-semitism/>

Yossi Schwartz: On Anti-Semitism and Zionist Racism, 22.12.2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/on-anti-semitism-and-zionist-racism/>

The program of the RCIT's section in Israel / Occupied Palestine can be read here: <http://www.the-isleague.com/our-platform/> and <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/summary-of-isl-program/>

See also Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War of 1948 and the Degeneration of the Fourth International, <http://the-isleague.com/1948-war-5-2013/> and <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/israel-s-war-of-1948/>

Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine, <http://the-isleague.com/zionist-oppression-and-permanent-revolution/> and <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/permanent-revolution-in-palestine/>

A Temporary Truce ... to Prepare for another War

On the Meaning of the “Phase One” Deal for the U.S.-China Cold War

by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 17 January 2020

US President Donald Trump and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He signed a so-called “phase one” trade agreement on 15 January. This deal shall ease the trade war between the largest imperialist Great Powers which began in early 2018.

The deal includes a commitment of China to buy an additional US\$200 billion in US exports based on 2017 levels in the next two years. This shall include an additional \$32 billion in agricultural goods, \$52.4 billion of energy exports, \$77.7 billion of manufactured goods and \$37.9 billion of services.

In exchange, the Trump Administration has already frozen planned tariffs worth \$160 billion on Chinese imports, which were due to kick-in on December 15. Duties imposed in September on Chinese goods such as electronics and apparel valued at up to \$120 billion will be halved to 7.5%. Beijing didn't commit to specific reductions of tariffs on over \$100 billion in US goods under the agreement.

In addition, the agreement includes some vague references to technology transfer and Intellectual Property. To oversee the accord, a *Bilateral Evaluation and Dispute Resolution Arrangement* has been put in place, allowing both parties to monitor the implementation of the phase one deal.¹

This deal does not mean an end of the trade war between U.S. and Chinese imperialism. According to Hannah An-

person, global markets strategist from JP Morgan Asset Management, “the US tariff rate cut included in the agreement only reduces the average tariffs on Chinese imports to 19.3 per cent (from 3.1 per cent before this trade war started). And the key issues in the US-China economic relationship remain un-addressed.”² Likewise, the Chinese tariffs on U.S. imports also remain in place.

A Compromise

The “phase one” deal represents a compromise with no side as a clear winner. Trump initially thought that “trade wars are easy to win” and hoped to bring China's leadership to their knees. He rejected any partial agreements. However, China's resilience, another Great Recession beginning, the dramatic consequences of the trade war for U.S. farmers – a core electorate of Trump – and the fact that Trump faces Presidential elections in November with dim prospects, has forced him to accept such a compromise. Likewise, the Xi Administration did look for a compromise given the slowing down of the Chinese economy in the past 12 months. Today, the *National Bureau of Statistics* in Beijing announced that China's economy grew by 6.1 per cent in 2019, the lowest annual growth rate for 29 years.³

Sectors of the capitalist class on both sides are not satisfied with the compromise. A day after the United States

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

and China signed the trade agreement, American industry leaders were urging talks for the next phase to begin. The US Chamber of Commerce, which represents three million companies across U.S. industry, urged “both parties to begin negotiations on phase two as soon as possible”.⁴

Likewise, “there are elements of the Chinese commercial establishment – strong interest groups and state industry – that feel that they gave away too much,” Dane Chamorro, a former US diplomat and senior partner with risk consultancy firm Control Risks, said. “They feel like they were strong-armed or railroaded into something, even if the terms are reasonable.”⁵

As a result of dissatisfaction among sectors of the U.S. corporations, Trump is pushing now to start a new round of talks right away. However, China has already rebuffed this proposal.

For that reason, a number of bourgeois experts have a rather sober assessment of the deal. Bates Gill, an expert on Chinese security policy at Macquarie University in Sydney, said of the initial trade deal: “The broader, darkening picture is not going to be brightened much by this deal.” And Wang Heng, a professor at the University of New South Wales in Sydney who studies the China-U.S. economic relationship, said: “We can see Phase 1 as an emergency treatment to lower the temperature, but it has not addressed the fundamental problems.”⁶

Capital Economics, a London-based research consultancy, stated that it is highly sceptical that the planned negotiations on a more comprehensive “phase two” agreement will ever take place: “There is no timetable for further negotiations on state subsidies and the other structural concerns of the US side. Talks may resume at some point but a substantive phase two deal on structural issues is unlikely ever to be signed. (...) The two sides’ inability to reach agreement on structural issues means that the shadows these are casting over the bilateral relationship will remain.”⁷

Inter-Imperialist Rivalry

The compromise character of the “phase one” deal becomes even more evident if we look at the background of the conflict. As Marxists have explained for a number of years, the past decade has seen the rise of China as the second-largest imperialist economy only behind the USA. China has already overtaken its rival in world trade and industrial production. Washington is even more worried by the fact that Chinese corporations are becoming leaders in high-technology sectors like 5G – the latest generation

of mobile networks – or in Artificial Intelligence.

Neither is this conflict restricted to the economic level as the political and military tensions in the South resp. East China Sea demonstrate. Hence, as the RCIT has elaborated in a number of documents, the Global Trade War is only one element of a comprehensive rivalry between the two largest imperialist Great Powers.⁸

These developments reflect one of the most important characteristics of the historic period which opened in 2008: the emergence of China (and Russia) as a new imperialist power and the drastic acceleration of the inner-imperialist rivalry between the Great Powers and, in particular, between the U.S. and China.⁹

Conclusion

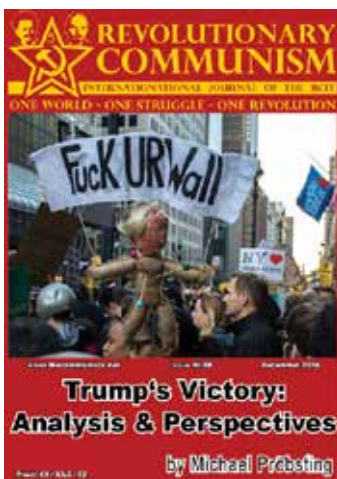
In conclusion, we can say that the truce is with utmost certainty only a temporary ceasefire. Since the fundamental causes of the bitter rivalry are still in place and since we are at the beginning of another Great Recession with dramatic consequences for the whole capitalist world economy, the antagonism between the two powers will break out again rather sooner than later. Hence, both Washington as well as Beijing are preparing for the next and probably more explosive round in their Cold War.

As an example, we draw attention to a remark in an editorial of the *Global Times* – the mouthpiece of the Stalinist-capitalist regime in Beijing – on the “phase one” deal. In this article, the pen pushers of the regime suggest that Beijing might finance the increase of U.S. imports by substantially reducing its US treasury bonds. As China is the largest foreign holder of U.S. government debt, this could put substantial pressure on its rival.¹⁰

Last but not least we want to point out that the truce in the Global Trade War reflects that Washington has not succeeded to bring Beijing to its knees. This is another important confirmation of the RCIT’s analysis that China is neither a “semi-colony” nor a “sub-imperialist” country – as various socialists mistakenly believe – but rather an imperialist Great Power which can stand up against the long-standing Western hegemon.

It is crucial for socialists to understand the imperialist character of *all* Great Powers – those in the West as well as those in the East. Without such an understanding, they are in danger to side with one of these imperialist camps and, thus, to become social-imperialist fellow-travellers.

In contrast, the RCIT advocates intransigent opposition



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

against all imperialist Great Powers. As we said in our programmatic statement on the trade war: *"No to a global trade war! Oppose Great Power jingoism in West and East! Against militarist saber-rattling! In imperialist states, socialists say: "The Main Enemy is at Home!" In case of sanctions or a trade war between the U.S., China, European Union, Russia, Canada, Japan, or other powers, socialists in all countries involved must oppose such sanctions."*

This was and remains the only Marxist program to fight against the imperialist Great Powers and their Global Trade War!

Footnotes

1 Economic and Trade Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the People's Republic of China, <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/china-mongolia-taiwan/peoples-republic-china/phase-one-trade-agreement/text>

2 Quoted in Sidney Leng: China phase one deal with US will allow chance for domestic reform, despite short-term sting, 16 January 2020 <https://www.scmp.com/economy/global-economy/article/3046427/china-phase-one-deal-us-will-allow-chance-domestic-reform>

3 Orange Wang: China GDP growth last year was 6.1 per cent, slowest rate for 29 years, 17 January 2020 <https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3046476/china-gdp-growth-last-year-was-6-1-cent-slowest-rate-29-years>

4 Quoted in Jodi Xu Klein: What does American business call the US-China trade deal? A start, 17.01.2020, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3046467/what-does-american-business-call-us-china-trade-deal-start>

5 Quoted in Nile Bowie: Phase one fanfare masks phase two gloom, 16.01.2020, <https://www.asiatimes.com/2020/01/article/phase-one-fanfare-masks-phase-two-gloom/>

6 Quoted in Andrea Shalal, Cate Cadell: Trade deal no panacea for rocky U.S. relations with China, 16 January 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trade-china-relations/trade-deal-no-panacea-for-rocky-u-s-relations-with-china-idUSKBN1ZF1E5>

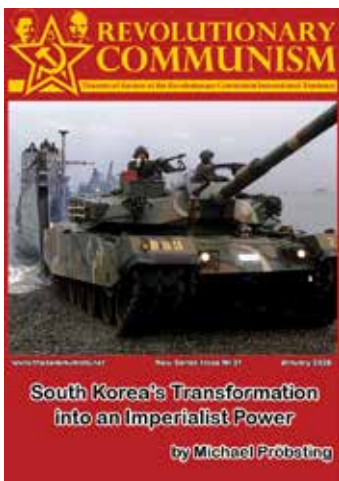
<https://www.asiatimes.com/2020/01/article/cracks-appear-in-us-china-detente-deal/>

7 Quoted in Gordon Watts: Cracks appear in US-China 'détente' deal. 16.01.2020, <https://www.asiatimes.com/2020/01/article/cracks-appear-in-us-china-detente-deal/>

8 The RCIT's documents on the Global Trade War have been collected at a special sub-page on our website: see <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-global-trade-war/>; our fundamental position has been summarized in a programmatic statement *"Global Trade War: No to Great Power Jingoism in West and East!"* which has been published in 10 languages (in English: <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/joint-statement-on-the-looming-global-trade-war/>). The latest essay is by Michael Pröbsting: *The Point of No Return Seems to Have Been Passed. Intensified Global Trade War, currency war and arms race open a new stage in the U.S.-China Cold War*, 7 August 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/point-of-no-return-in-u-s-china-cold-war/>

9 The RCIT has published numerous books, pamphlets and articles on the rivalry between the imperialist powers. See on this e.g. our recently published book by 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/>. On the RCIT's analysis of China and Russia as emerging imperialist powers see the literature mentioned in the special sub-section on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>.

10 *"China promised a \$200 billion increase in purchases of US goods and services over two years. China's trade surplus with the US is indeed too large. Much of China's foreign currency has been spent on purchasing US treasury bonds. This is not an ideal trade-financial structure in the long run. Moving toward a trade balance is a healthier direction for China-US economic cooperation."* (Global Times: US faces pressure to increase exports, 16.01.2020, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1177128.shtml>)



Publications of the RCIT

South Korea's Transformation into an Imperialist Power

On the nature of South Korean monopoly capital and the ensuing programmatic tasks of the workers vanguard

By Michael Pröbsting, December 2019

The Relevance of the Issue * Definition: What Constitutes a State as Imperialist? * Historical Background: Extraordinary Conditions Allow for Rapid Industrialization * South Korea as a Highly Industrialized, Modern Capitalist Country * South Korean Monopoly Capital: Domination of Domestic Market * South Korean Monopoly Capital: Global Players on the World Market * South Korean Monopoly Capital: The Role of Capital Export * On Some Political Issues Resulting from South Korea's Imperialist Transformation * The Emergence of a Labor Aristocracy and Inequality within the South Korean Working Class * The Political Role of South Korean Imperialism and its Limited Independence * The Stalinist Myth of South Korea Being Still a Neo-Colony of U.S. Imperialism * The Mistaken Conception of Sub-Imperialism * The Program of Revolutionary Defeatism * Anti-Imperialist Tasks in South Korea Today * Appendix: A Historic Analogy: Marxist Tactics in Germany in 1891 and 1914 * Capitalist Development in South Korea and Taiwan (1996)

A RCIT Pamphlet, 36 pages, A4 Format

A Very Self-Confident Imperialist Great Power

Some notes on China's self-image as a leading actor of the global order

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 13.12.2019

We have often pointed out that the acceleration of the rivalry between the imperialist Great Powers – the U.S., China, Russia, the EU and Japan – is one of the most important characteristics of the present historic period. This is particularly the case because the long-time hegemon – the U.S. – is obviously in decline while China, as its most important challenger, is rising.¹

It is well known how the American ruling class is paralyzed with its domestic problems symbolized in the impeachment inquiry against the reactionary dumbass in the White House. This is a nation whose President hysterically shouts “*Make America Great Again*” but, in real life, struggles to get even built a wall at its own border with Mexico.

China, on the other hand, is in a completely different position. It has experienced a period of rapid economic growth and, as a result, has become a global player in the world economy as well as in world politics. It is expanding its global influence via the so-called *Belt and Road Initiative*, its loans as well as other means.²

History has seen such periods before. One feels reminded to the period of decay of the Roman Empire in the 5th century where retarded emperors ruled over an ever-shrinking territory while, at the same time, new powers like the Huns, the Western Goths and the Vandals mobilized their forces to overrun the self-proclaimed “*center of the world*”. Another example would be the challenge and eventual defeat of the late Byzantine Empire by the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century or, to give a more recent analogy, the challenge of the British Empire in the early 20th century by Germany and the U.S.

Ignoring these developments of inner-imperialist rivalry and cynically justifying the regimes' brutal oppression of the Chinese workers and peasants, the Muslim Uyghurs and the protest movement in Hong Kong, Stalinist and Bolivarians praise China as a kind of progressive or socialist

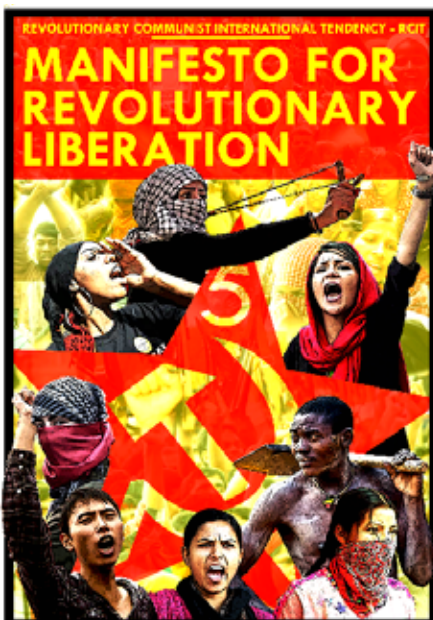
power. Various self-proclaimed Trotskyists claim that the rising Asian power represents not an imperialist state but rather a semi-colony or a “sub-imperialist” country.³

Hence, it is not without interest to observe how leading ideologues of the Stalinist-capitalist regime in Beijing view their country themselves. *Global Times* – the international English-language edition of *People's Daily* (the central organ of the ruling “Communist” Party of China) – recently published an article which reflects the enormous self-confidence of the emerging Great Power. In an article titled “*China will lead new Asian order, 'Asian century'*” the *Global Times* compares the decaying West with the rising Asian power. The author of the article states:

*“Back in the 19th century, Europe regarded the then backward Asia as the opposite of civilization. But in the 21st century, the UK's decline seems to reflect Asia's rise. As Asia rises, global wealth and power will accelerate to transfer to the continent. The Financial Times published an article in March titled “The Asian century is set to begin,” in which it said 21 of the world's 30 largest cities are in Asia, and Asian economies will be larger than the rest of the world in 2020. Indeed, people are now looking eastward because Asia shows a strong momentum in economic growth.”*⁴

And the *Global Times* concludes that now the “*real 'Asian century' will begin*” with China as “*the most important and the fastest-rising country in Asia*”: “*China and other Asian countries should seize the historic opportunity, focus on their own development and try to let Asian countries have a larger say in the world. When Asian countries stop following the West, the real “Asian century” will begin. China is the most important and the fastest-rising country in Asia. As the world's second largest economy, China will play an important role in building a new Asian order and maintaining peace and stability in the future.*”

We see, China's leadership is fully aware of its increasing



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

power and its opportunity to shape the imperialist world order. The Stalinists and centrists might ignore it, but China has become a very self-confident imperialist Great Power!

In the coming period we will observe an acceleration of the inter-imperialist rivalry which will inevitable result in more sanctions, trade wars, diplomatic crises and military saber-rattling. In the end, the struggle for global dominance will provoke the danger of a World War III – posing once more the alternative “socialism or barbarism” (Rosa Luxemburg).

In such a period it is crucial for Marxists to have a clear analysis of the world situation and to draw the necessary conclusions for strategy and tactics. This means in particular to fight for a program of *revolutionary defeatism against all Great Powers in East and West*. It also means to oppose intransigently all social-imperialist forces within the workers movement which lend direct or indirect support for one or the other Great Power.⁵ And it means, most of all, that authentic Marxists around the world must unite in a single international organization on the basis of an action program for the revolutionary tasks in the current period.⁶

Footnotes

1 The RCIT has published numerous documents on this issue. See e.g. the book by 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/>

2 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. In particular we refer readers 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>

3 For a critique of these views see e.g. Michael Pröbsting: *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*.

4 Li Qingqing: *China will lead new Asian order, ‘Asian century’*, *Global Times*, 2019/12/12 <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1173323.shtml>

5 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/>

6 See on this the RCIT program: *Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation* (2016), <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit-program-2016/>; see also *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/>



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

Save the Planet from Capitalist Destruction!

Thesis on Ecology (2008)

Note by the Editor: *The following document has been discussed and adopted in 2008 by our predecessor organization – the League for a Revolutionary Communist International (renamed to League for the Fifth International in 2003). The founding members of our organization were partly long-time and leading members of this organization before they were bureaucratically expelled in April 2011 a few weeks after they formed a faction in opposition against the increasing centrist degeneration of the LFI. The expelled comrades built immediately after their expulsion a new organization and went on to build the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) together with a number of other comrades. Today the RCIT is present in a number of countries on all continents.*

The environmental question

1. Global warming, melting of large parts of the polar ice-caps, climate change, expansion of the deserts, urbanization and the destruction of the rain forest...
2. There can be no question that we are living through a period in which changes in the natural environment of humanity threaten the imminent destruction of the living conditions of millions, if not of the whole of humanity over a longer period of time.
3. This danger is now recognised by the whole of society. Even the most ignorant sections of the ruling classes can no longer ignore it. At the very least, they have to concede that an environmental question exists. For the first time this qualitative shift takes place not at the local or regional level but at the highest, global level in the form of climate change, along with a host of narrower, often related crises in global fish stocks, rainforest destruction, and mass extinction.
4. Even those ultimately responsible for the system, which threatens the whole of humanity with an environmental and social catastrophe, have to concede that something has to be done about it. No UN assembly, no G8 meeting, no governmental programme is complete without a claim to have prioritised the question and promises of action plans - but their results are pathetic.
5. The danger of the destruction of the natural foundations of human life has become a truly global question. Every political and social force has to put forward and, increasingly they do put forward, a programme to answer the "environmental question".
6. Whole movements have developed around this issue. They started as movements and political currents of the middle strata, of the intelligentsia, larger sections of the youth in the imperialist and Stalinist states in the 1970s and '80s. In this period, they met not only the outright hostility of the bourgeoisies in the imperialist and semi-colonial world but also of the Stalinist and social-democratic and trade union bureaucrats. They also met outright denial and ignorance of the very existence of the issues they raised, even by the organisations of the far left.
7. Today, nobody can deny these dangers anymore. Envi-

ronmental issues have become issues for every party. The mainstream of the former radical petit bourgeois movement has become an "eco-reformist" or even "eco-marketing" party, with "green" companies manufacturing "green" commodities.

8. Other sections of the environmental movement still advocate various forms of petty bourgeois, backward and ultimately reactionary solution based on a return to forms of small-scale commodity production and the "de-industrialisation" of society.

9. It is an irony of history that the moment that were the Greens' biggest successes, the taking up of their issues by all parties and the whole of society, has actually revealed the utopian and bourgeois, or petit-bourgeois, character of their solutions. The demonstration of the emptiness of their answers has also revealed the incorrect understanding of the environmental question by the main currents of the green movement, including its left wing, the eco-socialists.

10. At the same time as environmental issues have become everybody's concern, the movements fighting against the effects of environmental destruction have also changed. For example, the struggles of the landless peasants, of indigenous people for land rights and against the large multi-nationals, the questions of fighting for humane conditions for the masses in the shanty towns of the megacities in the semi-colonies, the questions of the transport systems and energy systems in all their aspects, meant that the working class, the peasantry, the youth, the poor became active and central components of the struggles against the destruction of the human environment - but under the leadership and influence of petit-bourgeois or bourgeois forces and ideologies.

11. Such leaderships were able to dominate because of the political ignorance of the reformist bureaucracies, the social-democratic and Stalinist parties or bourgeois nationalists in the Third World. They could prevail also because of the adaptations made by the far left to 'environmentalism' as a distinct petit bourgeois ideological current.

12. This problem can only be overcome, if the working class advances its own programme, its own revolutionary solution to the environmental questions of the 21st century. The struggle against the destruction of the natural foundations for human life, and for a rational, conscious relationship between humanity and nature, is a central question of the socialist revolution today, a central question of building a classless, communist society.

13. Therefore, it is the task of revolutionaries to advance and fight for a programme of transitional demands to save the planet, a programme linking the daily struggles to the struggle for socialist revolution.

Humanity – Nature

14. The capitalist mode of production is not the first one to interfere in nature and so-called 'natural equilibriums' on a massive scale. Any notion or idea that humanity once had a 'truly harmonic' relation to nature that has been

destroyed is thoroughly illusionary. Human society has always interfered, and had to interfere, in nature - and nature itself has always changed.

15. Only permanent change, the movement of matter, is a real constant in natural history. All species had to, and have to, adapt to this and cope with it. However, what distinguishes humanity from any other species is that the relation between man and nature is a social one from its very beginning, a relationship mediated via social labour.

16. From the very beginning, humanity has tried to ensure the reproduction of its own existence, which necessarily involves making the conditions for survival, the satisfaction of needs, permanent and to safeguard them against the constant uncertainties and dangers of natural development (as much as this is possible).

17. Certainly, at the beginning of human development, this was all very primitive, very limited, but it set in motion a process of social development that would also develop the collective knowledge of society concerning the conditions of its natural development, of the laws of motion of nature, of its purposeful change, of technical and technological interventions in nature, which allowed for the development of humanity to a higher level on the basis of a social labour process. The development of society, of civilisations, and their reproduction, was only possible in this way.

18. But the relation between man and nature is always on the basis of a more or less limited knowledge of natural developments and their lawfulness and has led to catastrophic developments throughout human history, including the breakdown of whole civilisations.

19. All societies have interfered in nature. All societies destroyed and formed the human environment, created it, just as their own development was also determined by

the concrete, local or regional environmental conditions in which they evolved.

20. With the development of class societies, the relation between man and nature was not only differentiated along regional lines, but also along class lines.

21. 'Nature', and the 'natural' environment, was never the same for the working classes, for those who fought with nature, as it was for the ruling classes who lived under safer and better 'natural' conditions and first developed a contemplative view of natural beauty.

22. On the other hand, actual knowledge about nature and natural processes was concentrated in the labouring classes, be they peasants, miners, craftsmen, and so on. At the same time, the ruling classes were forced to appropriate, to control and centralise this knowledge into their own hands (or at least certain functions of it).

Capitalism

23. With the development of bourgeois society and the capitalist mode of production, important changes took place. All previous modes of production had also massively interfered in the natural environment, had developed new techniques in agriculture, interfered in natural selection, and this had led to the extinction of whole species or promoted the development of others. What distinguished capitalism was, and is, the scale on which it intervenes. Capitalism is truly a global, a world system. It destroys the local peculiarities of previous modes of production.

24. At the same time, it also constantly revolutionises its productive basis but it does so on the basis of generalised commodity production, in an anarchic form. Therefore, the effects of capitalism on the environment are not only of a quantitative, but also qualitative character.

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

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

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

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

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

25 years.

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

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

Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

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



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

25. The material basis for this is the development of the productive forces - the development and combination of large scale industry and science. Large industry goes hand in hand with the industrialisation of agriculture, destroying the last resort of previous class societies. It forces the peasantry from the land to the city or turns the peasant into a rural labourer. However, by doing so, it also increases the separation of the land from the city. It develops agriculture by destroying the soil, thereby undermining the conditions for its own advance. This not only provides the means for the creation of an urban proletariat, but also develops them in a way that undermines the living conditions and the health of the workers. It does so by pushing the alienation of the producer from the means of production to its very limits.

26. Capitalist production, therefore, develops the technique and combination of the social production process by undermining the foundations of all its wealth: the earth and the labourer. However, large scale industry, the industrialisation of agriculture, the advance of science, do not only develop the problem. They also provide the basis for its solution - a rational combination of industry and science on an environmentally sustainable basis.

27. In pre-capitalist societies, the relation between town and countryside, the relation between man and nature, developed under naturally created conditions. Under capitalism, as generalised commodity production becomes dominant, production furthermore is social production, but under private appropriation. It therefore destroys not only the traditional bonds of the countryside but also their local or regional peculiarities.

28. The destruction of these bonds, also means that the creation of a rational, and conscious relation of industry and agriculture, of agrarian production and manufacturing, becomes a necessity, if one wants to avoid, or repair, the destructive effects of social production under an anarchic system based on private property.

29. Under capitalism it is impossible to create a rational, lasting relation between man and nature, a relation that could allow for a sustainable and lasting reproduction of humanity and its natural living conditions. As generalised commodity production, the success and rationality of all economic activity is measured post festum, whether or not a product finds buyer, a need on the market. Everything that does not conform to this is constantly threatened with elimination from social or natural reproduction.

30. Indeed, since capitalist production is geared towards creating surplus value, the rational decisions of the competing capitals to improve their competitiveness and profitability will necessarily clash with any rational and lasting relation to the environment.

31. For example, whilst 'lean production' reduces the cost of fixed capital for storage and thereby raises the rate of profit - one obvious effect is the increased use of transport and therefore of pollution - the costs of which have to be paid for by society.

The environmental question and the imperialist epoch

32. One of the features of capitalist production as social production is its increasing incorporation of science into production. With the development of the capitalist mode of production, science became more and more a branch of

industry and even became a commodity itself. This clearly went hand in hand with the enormous leap in centralisation and concentration of capital at the end of the 19th century, the formation of modern monopoly and finance capital.

33. The opening of the imperialist epoch also meant an enormous concentration of research and development of natural science in the hands of large monopolies, foundations or in state institutions that became more and more directly geared towards the interests of the capitalist class by the imperialist state.

34. Scientific research and its results have become private property, part of business plans and business secrets. Monopolisation has not only often meant that advances were only geared towards more profit making, it also inevitably meant that advances were held back, that research was not undertaken or was suppressed where it threatened profits.

35. This reflects the increasing social character of production and, on the other hand, the fetter that private property increasingly becomes on production.

36. Under imperialism, further massive leaps in the revolutionisation of agriculture took place, turning agrarian countries into industrial ones where the farmers or peasants only constituted a minimal part of the population.

37. Massive agrarian monopolies and scientific changes also turned agriculture in the semi-colonies upside down: destroying the old forms of production, expropriating the peasants from their corps and then from their land. However, in many cases, it also meant that new farming methods destroyed the soil, leaving devastation, poverty, hunger and flight from the land.

Monopoly capital accelerates the destructive effects of capitalism

38. The very measures to improve profitability under globalisation, for example, the privatisation of former state owned energy companies, the creation of large monopoly markets in energy, water, and the transport industry, credit geared towards these, the sheer amount of fixed capital embodied in them, all mean that the ruling classes of all major capitalist states cannot allow any effective means to combat climate change or global warming, since this would mean massive interventions into the private property of the imperialist bourgeoisie, of the large finance capitals of this world.

39. Furthermore, they unavoidably also come up against another central contradiction marking the imperialist epoch and globalisation in particular - the international character of production and exchange on the one hand and the continued nation state form in which it takes place. The "environmental question", and the main threats it poses, are obviously international ones and can only be solved on the international level.

40. Whilst the bourgeois governments of all states are already pathetic in their internal actions against the destruction of the environment, they are even more so on the international level.

41. Secondly, all the measures of the national, as well as those from the international "community", have the character of measures of bourgeois and imperialist "environmentalism". They put the costs of measures onto the labouring classes and the semi-colonies. Trading with "pol-

lution certificates”, destruction of the rainforest to grow crops for “biofuel” (and thereby further evictions of the landless in countries like Brazil) are just perverse, but highly profitable, forms of this “environmentalism”.

42. Eco-Taxes, calls on consumers to separate the waste which has first been produced by the large monopolies are all more or less hopeless and cynical means to make the poor pay for, and take responsibility for, repairing the damage done by the irrational character of a system humanity cannot afford much longer.

43. Today, we face the results of the capitalist production process of the last centuries and its effects on the human environment. We face dangers that threaten the future existence of humanity itself. Neo-liberal globalisation, the latest phase of imperialism, accelerates this tendency dramatically. The various measures to improve profits, to counter the tendency of the rate of profit to fall over the past decades, have all led to an enormous increase in the destructive effects of this mode of production on the natural environment of humanity. This is a necessary product of neo-liberalism, which goes hand in hand with its increased attacks on the working class, the peasants, the poor.

44. The environmental question has been a central question raised by the anti-capitalist movement from the very beginning, particularly in the semi-colonial world.

45. It has mobilised around questions of climate change, of transport, the land question, the privatisation and modification of natural resources.

A programme to reclaim the human environment

46. Even the most modest calculations assume an increase in the average temperature on earth of between 1 and 1.5 degrees in the next 20 years. Others calculate it up to 4.5 degrees. In the last 100 years, the proportion of CO2 in the atmosphere has increased by 20 percent. Larger and larger areas of the polar icecaps are melting, tides may shift dramatically and sea levels will rise. This will lead to enormous changes, including the flooding of whole coastal regions and large parts of some countries. It is no longer a question of whether these dramatic changes will happen - but only whether, and how, humanity can adapt to these changes and change the course of development rapidly and decisively to avoid exacerbating them further,

by massively reversing emissions.

47. It would be foolish to think, that “the market” and the capitalist class would be able to solve these questions. They have already proved that they are unable to do this. Whilst the principal means for a rational reorganisation of what Marx called the “metabolism” between humanity and nature - large scale industry and science - are in existence, they can only become such a means if they are taken out of the hands of the ruling class, i.e. expropriated by the workers.

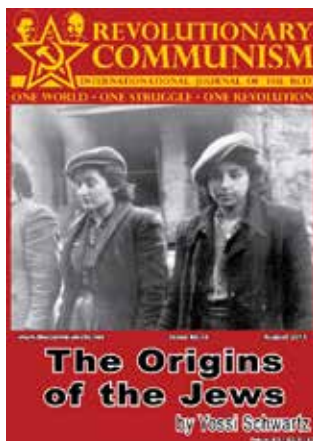
48. Only under a global planned economy can a system be developed that not only satisfies and develops the needs of humanity but is also self-sustaining and dynamic, that is to say, a metabolism between social production and nature that can adapt to the changes in the environment itself. The struggle for this goal must start by addressing, advancing and generalising the burning issues of the day.

49. Against the threat of global warming and in order to counter its development and prepare for its increasing impact, we fight for global and national emergency plans to reduce emissions, to reorganise energy and transport systems, but also to provide the means by which whole regions can be as well prepared as possible to survive the effects of climate change. Capitalist business and governments will not be able to develop or implement the radical measures needed, only a mass climate change movement based on the organisations and action of the working class can develop such a plan and fight to carry it out against the capitalists’ resistance

50. Such plans require that the means to achieve such changes - large scale industry in energy production, agriculture, the transport system, science and the financial resources to achieve them - have to be centralised and taken out of the hands of the large monopolies.

51. Large capital is not just “doing nothing”. The major capitalist forces are actively advancing their own plans, which will mean further advancing the destruction of the human environment, to make a profit out of “eco-business” or financial businesses that see opportunities for capital accumulation flowing from the on-going environmental crisis.

52. Often workers’ struggles will start with the call for opening the business plans, the books and the research plans of the polluting companies. We call for the opening of these books, for the opening of research, its results, and



Publications of the RCIT

The Origins of the Jews

By Yossi Schwartz, July 2015

Chapter I: What are the origins of the Jews?

Chapter II: The Rise of Anti-Semitism

Chapter III: Anti-Semitism and Zionism

Chapter IV: The Russian Revolution:

Bolshevism, the Bund, and Stalinism

for the abolition of business secrecy. All scientific research has to be taken out of the hands of private capital and put under workers' control. We call for an independent enquiry by the workers and climate change movements into the investment plans of the government and big business.

53. Under capitalism, science becomes a 'servant' of capital. This also means that research and development is directed to short term profit calculations. Many research projects, additional testing and proving of hypotheses, as well as 'pure science', that is, theoretical research into the foundations of science, are cut, since, for capital as a whole, they are just extra cost factors like any others.

54. Given our still very limited knowledge about the development and the laws of motion of the natural environment, the effects of our constant reshaping of it and so on, a drastic shift in the objectives of research, opening it up, generalising and exchanging results is needed, as is a massive increase in research itself.

55. We call for the expropriation without compensation of the large energy producers, of all those industries that monopolise basic goods (like water), of the large agri-businesses and the large transport companies like rail, airlines and road transport. They must be (re)nationalised under workers' control.

56. We fight for the reorganisation of the energy and transportation systems to make them as energy-efficient effective as possible. This will include a plan to phase out the reliance on fossil fuels of the current energy system. In some cases - such as brown coal - we call for an immediate halt to production.

57. We call for a plan to phase out and replace fossil fuels and nuclear energy not only for environmental reasons, but also because the limited reserves of these resources make it necessary that they be replaced by sustainable and reproducible energy resources during this century. We do not call for the immediate closure of all these plants, but for a planned closure/phasing out - the tempo of which will have to take into account the different national conditions and their relation to other social objectives (e.g. electrification of country, fighting against hunger and poverty).

58. An emergency plan's measures will not only affect the energy producers. It will also mean that the whole transport system has to be reorganised under workers' control and public ownership. We call for a dramatic shift from the individual car to effective public transportation systems. This means a huge investment and extension of them. They should be provided for free at all levels.

59. Under neo-liberal globalisation, the transport system develops in the opposite direction - a shift to planes and the maintenance of the car as the main transport system. As a part of the struggle for a rational system, we give support to struggles against the further building of "mega" airports like Heathrow. Of course, this does not mean that we oppose the building of every airport on the globe, but it means that the working class not only can but also must be prepared to fight for a halt to projects that just add to the environmental hazards created by the ruling class.

60. But equally important is the shift of transportation in goods. Ultimately, this, like all the other problems, can only be solved in a planned economy, as part of the building of a socialist society. But it also means that we fight to force the capitalists to implement immediate beneficial measures, for example, a reduction in exhaust gases for

motor vehicles, and we fight for taxation of these capitalists to pay for the damage they cause to the environment.

61. A programme on the environment must not be confined to just those sections of the capitalist class who make profits out of energy or transportation industries or those related to them. In all countries, we call for a programme of public works to introduce a more sustainable transport system, to repair and to improve housing to the highest energy-efficient standards, so that society is better equipped to deal with the degree of climate change that is already inevitable.

62. In the semi-colonial countries, it will often be impossible to generate the necessary resources from within the countries themselves. We call for the expropriation of imperialist capital and ventures in these countries without compensation, and for complete cancellation of the semi-colonial countries' debts to the imperialist banks. But we also call for the imperialist governments to be forced to provide the means necessary to build and construct housing and facilities that can meet the effects of climate change, such as the flooding of whole regions. We reject green taxes and other measures that end up forcing the working class and poor to pay for these programmes and initiatives, they should be funded by taxing the rich and big business. We call for an immediate ban on luxury, wasteful forms of transport and where necessary rationing based on need, organised under the control of the workers and users in the industry and ultimately a workers' state.

63. The agrarian question is a central part of the environmental question, as Marx already pointed out. In the semi-colonial world, in particular, capitalist agriculture led to destruction of rain forest, desertification, pollution, destruction of species and crop varieties, monopolisation, and the destruction of fertility as result of the short sightedness of agrarian production under large monopolies.

64. Urbanisation and disastrous living conditions in mega-cities are the other side of the same process, and are accelerated by impoverishment and privatisation of basic goods (water etc.)

65. We call for (re)nationalisation and expropriation of these industries and a programme of public works for decent housing, electricity, sanitation - all paid for by taxing the rich.

66. Some industries and forms of transport will need to be massively restructured, shrunk or even closed down (eg coal mines, junk mailers) in favour of sustainable, renewable alternatives. Marxists demand that the capitalists pay for the clean-up and conversion of these industries, with retraining programmes overseen by the workers and guaranteed jobs with no loss of pay, conditions or pension for the workforce. By means of such demands we would seek to win workers in such industries to the climate change movement, while within that movement and in the course of developing an emergency plan, we would fight all instances of sectionalism that placed the interests of particular groups of workers, defending their current forms of work and industry, above the global climate emergency. We condemn the union bureaucracy when it falls in behind the greenwash of the government or employer (eg British Air Line Pilots supporting government's airport expansion plans, NUM arguing for coal expansion on the basis of currently untested carbon storage), putting loyalty to capitalism before humanity's needs.

67. In agriculture, we fight for the expropriation of the large agri-business multi-nationals and chemical industries. We fight for control over research in new fertilisation techniques and genetic modifications and a halt to their implementation without previous testing. On the other hand, we are aware that GM could be a potential improvement of productivity and agricultural development, so that we call for massive research under control of the producers, agrarian labourers (workers and peasants) and consumers. Where governments or business have undertaken unsafe tests of GM crops or planted them without such tests, we support actions taken to destroy such crops

The workers' movement must change

68. The struggle to save the planet has already awoken many working class people and peasants - be it by fighting for control of their land, against pollution, etc.

69. The environmental question also demonstrates the limits and, ultimately, the inadequacy not only of bourgeois and petit-bourgeois environmentalism, but also of 'pure trade-unionism', nationalism and reformism. Firstly, the limits of trade-unionism are clear enough. All too often, the trade union bureaucrats use narrow worker interests (for example, of workers employed in coal industries) as a means to promote ignorance about the general and long term interests of the class. This is a major means by which union bureaucracies tie these workers to "their" capitals.

70. Secondly, bourgeois nationalism in the semi-colonies and reformism, and also a wing of the Green movement, has promised "environmental" change via entering or forming bourgeois governments, sowing the illusion that one could implement such politics without challenging the power of the ruling class, the bourgeois state apparatus

itself.

71. This meant not only that their "reforms" were indistinguishable from those of the "environmentalist" wing of the imperialist bourgeoisie itself but also that they used the state apparatus, that was supposed to implement their reforms, against movements fighting the destruction of their human environment (for example, the SPD/Green government in Germany or Lula against the land-occupations and protests against the latifundistas and agribusiness).

72. While we reject the bourgeois claims that corporate-engineered consumerism is natural, against the greens we insist that the majority of humanity's living standards can continue to rise in a sustainable manner through democratic economic planning and voluntary, collective forms of living in order create a harmonious relationship between nature and humanity. State provided canteens, childcare, laundries, and more communal forms of housing and leisure could socialise the wasteful duplication of private household tasks, in the process liberating women from the "second shift".

73. The destructive division of town and country, the pollution and overcrowding along with unplanned sprawl, can only be reversed with democratic planning of the economy in the hands of a workers state takes hold and begins to reshape the human environment.

74. Therefore, the fight on the environmental question is closely linked to the fight for organs of self-organisation, of control, of self-defence of the working class and the peasantry. The question of the destruction of the human environment also means that a programme for an emergency plan has to be a central part of the struggle for workers' governments, the creation of working class power and for the transition to socialism by means of world revolution.

Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Marxism and the United Front Tactic Today

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

