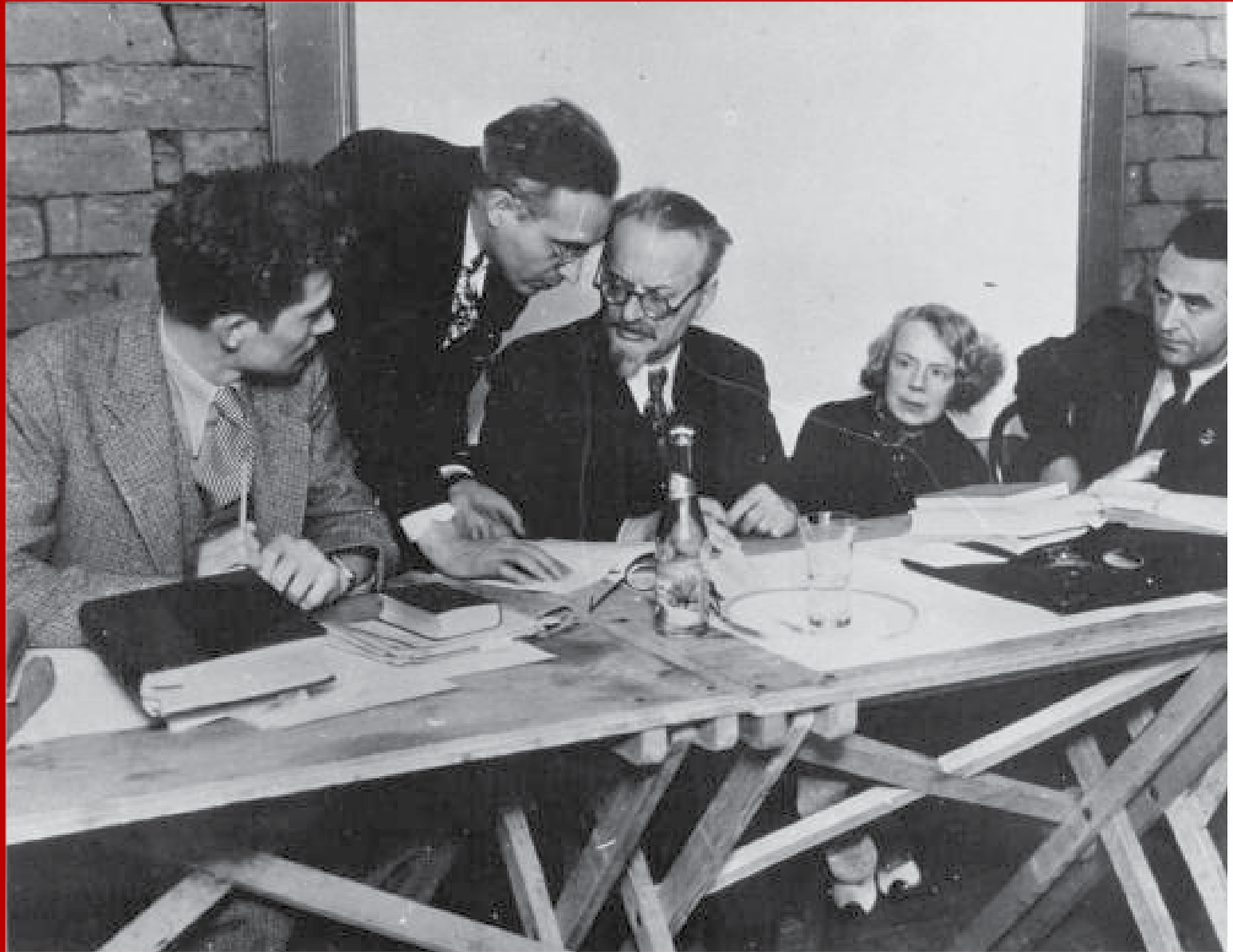




# REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



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New Series Issue Nr.43

September 2020

## Latin American Trotskyism at the Crossroads

Collaboration between CEP & RCIT \* Price Increase in Nigeria  
PTS & Chinese Imperialism \* Cold War between U.S. & China

## English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.43, September 2020

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Picture on the cover: Leon Trotsky at the Dewey Commission in Mexico, 1937

From left to right: Jean van Heijenoort, Albert Goldman, Trotsky, Natalia Sedova, Jan Frankel

Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:TrotskiEnM%C3%A9jicoEn1937.jpeg>

*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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# TikTok and the Cold War between the U.S. and China

## Socialists must oppose all Great Powers!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 10.08.2020*

1. In the past few weeks the Cold War between the two largest imperialist Great Powers has escalated one step further. On 19 June, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo characterized China a “rogue actor” in a major speech at the so-called Copenhagen Democracy Summit. He called Europeans to join the U.S. in a grand alliance against Beijing. On 14 July, the U.S. announced in an official statement that it “will not allow Beijing to treat the South China Sea as its maritime empire”. It formally rejected China’s maritime claims and stated its support for “our Southeast Asian allies and partners in protecting their sovereign rights to offshore resources.” Both sides have conducted naval exercises in the South China Sea since then. In addition, the Trump Administration closed the Chinese consulate in Houston, citing alleged cyber-espionage activity there. In retaliation, Beijing closed of the US consulate in Chengdu. Likewise, Washington imposed sanctions against leading officials in Hong Kong after Beijing introduced the draconic “National Security Law” in order to clamp down against the pro-democracy movement. This, in turn, prompted retaliatory sanctions of Beijing against U.S. senators. And most recently, President Donald Trump has issued a decree banning two popular Chinese social media apps – *TikTok* and *WeChat* – from operating in the U.S. within 45 days.

2. Indicating a dangerous dynamic of escalation, there is increasing talk about the possibility of war between the two Great Powers. While such speculation was mostly restricted to military experts in the past, this is now discussed by prominent representatives of the ruling class. Hu Xijin, the editor-in-chief of *Global Times* – the international mouthpiece of the Stalinist-capitalist regime – recently published an article titled “*If war breaks out between China and the US, which side will have the upper hand?*” A few days ago, Kevin Rudd, a former Prime Minister of Australia, published an essay in *Foreign Affairs* – the most prominent journal of the U.S. foreign policy establishment – which discusses the same issue. Titled “*Beware the Guns of August – in Asia*”, Rudd compares the current situation with August 1914 when World War I started. He con-

cludes: “*The once unthinkable outcome – actual armed conflict between the United States and China – now appears possible for the first time since the end of the Korean War. In other words, we are confronting the prospect of not just a new Cold War, but a hot one as well.*”

3. The recent escalation has certainly been triggered by the gloom prospects of Trump for the Presidential elections in early November and his desperate attempts to avoid defeat by any means necessary. It is a realistic possibility that the mad man with the orange hair might be prepared to risk a military confrontation in the South China Sea if this could help him staying in the White House for the next four years.

4. However, it would be totally wrong to explain the Cold War between the U.S. and China by Trump’s electoral politics or his dysfunctional personality. As the RCIT has pointed out in a number of documents, the accelerating rivalry is a result of the decline of the U.S., the world’s absolute hegemon among the imperialist powers for many decades, and the rise of China as the a new imperialist power and the most important challenger of the U.S. Hence, while Trump’s methods are highly disputed in America’s ruling class, there is a broad consensus – including the Democrats Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders – that Washington must confront the new Asian power as a rival. Hence, the conflict between the two largest imperialist Great Powers started already several years ago and accelerated in spring 2018 with the beginning of the Global Trade War.

5. More generally speaking, the aggravating rivalry between U.S. and Chinese imperialism is a result of the decay of capitalism and its global order in the current historic period which started in 2008. In such a period, all contradictions between classes and states unavoidable accelerate as history has demonstrated in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

6. In such a period, it is of utmost urgency to have a clear understanding of the character of the rivalry between the Great Powers and the resulting program. The

## **China’s transformation into an imperialist power**

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

**By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)**

**Order the pamphlet via our contact address: [rcit@thecommunists.net](mailto:rcit@thecommunists.net)**

RCIT emphasizes once more that in order to understand the world situation socialists must recognize the imperialist character not only of the U.S., Western Europe and Japan, but also of China and Russia. Socialists cannot support either side. They must rather advocate the program of *revolutionary defeatism* as elaborated by Lenin and the Bolsheviks and which has been summarized by Karl Liebknecht in the famous slogan “*the main enemy is at home*”.

7. Hence, the RCIT opposes all forms of Great Power chauvinism and militarism. Down with sanctions and reactionary patriotism by all imperialist states! No to sabre-rattling and the Global Trade War! Instead, socialists should utilize any conflict in order to weaken and eventually overthrow the ruling class. In case of conflicts between Great Powers, the RCIT advocates a revolutionary defeatist position on both sides, i.e. refusing to support either of the two camps. The same tactic is appropriate in the case of a conflict between one of these Great Powers against a semi-colonial proxy of an imperialist rival (e.g. a war between China and Taiwan or between China and India).

8. Both Washington as well as Beijing try to exploit domestic problems of their rivals. Hence, the U.S. lends rhetorical support to pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong as well as the Muslim Uyghurs who are brutally suppressed by the Chinese regime. Likewise, China’s media report extensively and fully of sympathy about the *Black Lives Matter* movement. Socialists must denounce such cynical maneuvers. At the same time they must call for independent international solidarity campaigns of workers and popular organizations in support of all legitimate democratic struggles (like those in Hong Kong, Xinjiang/ East Turkestan or the mass movement against racism and police violence in the U.S. and other countries).

9. We repeat that all forms of support by so-called “socialists” for one or the other Great Power represents nothing but shameful social-imperialism. SYRIZA in Greece as well as PODEMOS and the PCE in Spain are examples for “socialist” parties serving EU imperialism as part of coalition governments. Various Stalinists who praise China and Russia as a kind of “anti-imperialist pole” are other examples.

10. The RCIT calls on organizations and activists around the world to fight for such a revolutionary strategy. We urge all those who share our programmatic principles in the general outline to get into contact with us and to join us in building a Revolutionary World Party!

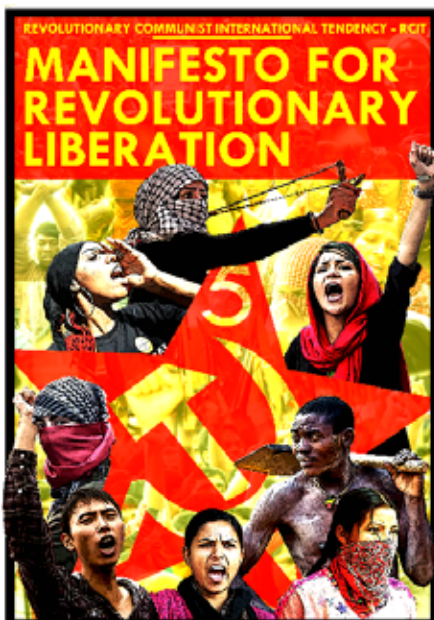
*International Bureau of the RCIT*

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We refer reader also to the following documents of the RCIT relevant for this issue:

On the rivalry between the imperialist powers see e.g. our 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/>

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 article is by Michael Pröbsting: *A Temporary Truce ... to Prepare for another War. On the Meaning of the “Phase One” Deal for the U.S.-China Cold War*, 17 January 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/a-temporary-truce-to-prepare-for-another-war/>



## PROGRAM OF THE RCIT

# Manifesto for Revolutionary Liberation

*Adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> 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*

## Unable to See the Wood for the Trees Eclectic empiricism and the failure of the PTS/FT to recognize the imperialist character of China

An Essay by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 13.08.2020

**L**a Izquierda Diario – the daily internet publication which has been launched by the *Fracción Trotskista* – has recently published an interesting article on China.<sup>1</sup> The *Fracción Trotskista* is an international organization with the strongest section – the PTS – in Argentina where it has several deputies in national and regional parliaments. Esteban Mercatante, the author of the lengthy article, is a prominent intellectual of the PTS and co-editor of the Economics section of La Izquierda Diario. In other words, his article is representative for the analysis of the PTS/FT.

In the following we will critically discuss Mercatante's article mainly for two reasons. First, the rise of China and the accelerating rivalry between Washington and Beijing – the two largest imperialist Great Powers – is one of the key features of the current historic period. A Marxist organization can only find a correct orientation in the current historic period if it accurately understands the China question.

And secondly, the PTS/FT – one of the largest organizations claiming to stand in the tradition of Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International – fails to elaborate such a proper understanding of the China question. It rejects the notion that China is an imperialist power without providing any clear alternative class characterization. It evades clarity hiding behind eclectic empiricism which makes them vulnerable for the danger of opportunist adaption to pro-Chinese social-imperialism – a position enthusiastically advertised by the *Partido Obrero*<sup>2</sup>, another self-proclaimed Trotskyist organization in Argentina which is a close partner of the PTS within their alliance FIT-U.<sup>3</sup>

### The Marxist analysis of Chinese imperialism

As Marxists have pointed out since a number of years the rivalry between the Great Powers has become a key issue of the world situation. Since the beginning of the new historic period of capitalist decay in 2008 China and Russia have emerged as new imperialist powers which challenge the long-standing domination of Western imperialism with the U.S. as the absolute hegemon. As a result, the inter-imperialist rivalry is one of the most important lines of contradiction of decaying capitalism in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In the past decade, the RCIT has analyzed these crucial developments in a number of books, pamphlets and articles. We have elaborated in detail not only the decline of U.S. imperialism but also the rise of China as the second largest imperialist power. This is reflected in China's strong position in most relevant areas like output and production of capitalist value, trade, capital accumulation, foreign investment, global leading corporations, number of billionaires, military strength, etc.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the most important feature of the inter-imperialist rivalry is the conflict between the U.S. and China – the two largest Great Powers on this planet. Since the beginning of the trade war

in 2018, this conflict has steadily escalated and has been transformed into a full blown Cold War with protectionist measures, sanctions, military tensions, etc.<sup>5</sup>

At this point we will not repeat our analysis of these developments rather limit ourselves to briefly summarize the programmatic consequences. Clarity in the analysis of the class character of China is not solely a theoretical task. It has profound programmatic consequence since Marxists consider it as impermissible to side with any Great Power. It is therefore of utmost importance to recognize the imperialist character of *all* Great Powers involved, i.e. not only of the "old" imperialist states in the West but also of the "new" imperialists in the East. Hence, revolutionaries today must neither side with the U.S., EU and Japan, nor with China and Russia.

The only legitimate strategy of Marxists is the anti-imperialist program of *revolutionary defeatism*. This policy has been initially elaborated by Lenin and the Bolsheviks and was later defended by Trotsky and the Fourth International against the revisionist distortion by Stalinism and opportunist centrism.<sup>6</sup> The basic principles of this program have been famously summarized in the slogans "*The Main Enemy is at Home!*" and "*the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war*". This basically means that revolutionaries must oppose any form of chauvinism, militarism and aggression of *all* imperialist states, that they must refuse to side with *any* Great Power and that they must utilize all difficulties of "their" imperialist government in order to advance the class struggle towards the overthrow of the ruling class.<sup>7</sup>

The RCIT has emphasized repeatedly that without a proper analysis of the imperialist nature not only of the Western but also of the Eastern Great Power, it is impossible to find a correct orientation in the complex and convulsive world situation which is characteristic for the current historic period. Without such a correct analysis, socialists are doomed to vacillate and to opportunistically adapt to this or that Great Power, i.e. to fall into the trap of social-imperialist policy.

Unfortunately, many self-proclaimed socialists have failed to recognize the emergence of China and Russia as new Great Powers in the past decade. Consequently they are incapable of understanding the imperialist nature of the global rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. As we have shown in our works, most Stalinists, left social democrats, Bolivarians and various centrists support – openly or disguised – one or the other Great Power. PODEMOS and the PCE in Spain, SYRIZA in Greece or the French PCF are examples for "socialist" parties serving EU imperialism as part of coalition governments.<sup>8</sup> The Russian KPRF, the Venezuelan PSUV, various Stalinist regime parties in Cuba and Eastern Asia, etc. praise China and Russia as a kind of "anti-imperialist pole".<sup>9</sup> In short, these parties are pro-Western or pro-Eastern social-imperialists. There are also various "Trotskyist" organizations – like the Argentinean PO – which adapt to such reformist

positions.<sup>10</sup>

Others, most of them are centrist forces which consider themselves as “Trotskyists”, do not arrive at such tactical conclusions. However, they fail to recognize the imperialist character of China and Russia and shy away from spelling out the necessary strategic conclusions for their program.<sup>11</sup> Which position will they take in the conflict between the imperialist Great Powers? What do they say about the sanctions, the trade war, etc.? What will they say in case of a military conflict let us say in the South China Sea? The answer of these centrists to these most important questions of the current historic period is ... silence.

### Problems of the PTS/FT analysis

Esteban Mercatante’s article provides a number of facts which demonstrate the rapid rise of China in the past one, two decades. He shows, among others, that China’s share of global output, in foreign investment or the number of globally operating Chinese corporations have dramatically increased. He also discusses various problems of China, in particular the lower productivity compared with its Western rivals and its lagging behind in key areas of high-technology.

All this is fine in itself. But what are the conclusions? The title of the lengthy article (more than 4,000 words) is “*China in the World Disorder*”. Hence, one could expect to get an answer to the question what exactly is China’s place in this world (dis)order. What is the character of China’s relationship with the other Great Powers, what is the character of its relationship with countries of the South? However, the author writes many words but fails to give a clear answer to this question which is obviously of utmost importance for any Marxist! Instead, the article limits itself to vague descriptions. The author states: “*This allowed China to be an exceptional case of ‘exacerbated unequal and combined development.’*” This is true.<sup>12</sup> But what has been the result of this “*unequal and combined development*”? What is the class character of China today? Is it imperialist, is it a semi-colony, or is it “sub-imperialist”? No answer.

Sometimes, the author suggests that China plays a role which resembles imperialist powers but he refuses to draw such conclusions explicitly. “*Since the 2000s, the Asian giant has made every effort to strengthen the growth of its ‘national champion’ companies. By supporting the expansion of these firms around the world, China increasingly seeks to play the same game the imperialist powers have played in recent decades: the concentration and centralization of capital around the world, which allowed multinational firms to consolidate their dominance of the value chains and take advantage of wage differences and competition between countries to attract capital by lowering taxes and granting other concessions, and thus appropriate a larger share of the surplus value generated around the world.*”

The conclusion of the PTS/FT article is that “*China still has a long way to go*”. “*Today, when the United States has been challenging various aspects of the transnational capitalist order it built after the end of World War II (while at the same time retaining any prerogatives that might benefit U.S. companies) as a way to fight more aggressively to sustain its leadership, the challenge is not that China will attack this order but rather that it poses a threat to the position of the United States and other powers. China’s goal of continuing to increase its influence and*

*advantages within that order increasingly involves questioning the ‘exorbitant privileges’ of the main power, especially attacking the disproportionate monetary and financial prerogatives the United States maintains. (...) Undoubtedly, China still has a long way to go and will face more resistance from the great powers to any change in the status quo. If there is any doubt about that, the last few years show that this path will be fraught with internal and international upheaval and will inevitably not be a peaceful one. It has been one of the greatest sources of geopolitical tensions in recent times, and will continue to be so even if Trump (the other great disruptor) leaves the scene if he is defeated in November.*”

This conclusion is unclear and this is not accidental. The article confuses two issues which are related to each other but which are definitely not identical. One question is if China can *replace* the U.S. as the hegemonial power. The other question is if China *has already become* an imperialist Great Power. As we have pointed out repeatedly, China could replace the U.S. only if it had become the strongest imperialist power by defeating the old hegemon. In other words, China could become the hegemon only via another World War with devastating consequences for humanity. Such a scenario is indeed still far away.

However, as we have also emphasized, Marxists don’t consider the U.S. to be the *only* imperialist Great Power. Likewise, we reject the Kautskyian notion that the Western imperialist states would constitute a kind of united “ultra-imperialist” bloc. No, there have been always several imperialist powers in the past many decades (e.g. Japan, Germany, France, UK, etc.). More recently, new Great Powers like China and Russia have emerged. (We note in passing that South Korea has also become an imperialist state recently.<sup>13</sup>)

In fact, there has never been only *one* imperialist power. There always existed *several* Great Powers—stronger and weaker ones, more modern and more backward. Before 1917 there was Britain, Germany, the U.S., but also Russia as a backward power, etc. In the 1930s, Japan – another “backward” imperialist power – challenged the hegemony of the U.S. and UK in Asia. Since the PTS/FT suggests that the lower labor productivity of China would be an argument against its imperialist character, we refer to the fact that in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there did also exist several imperialist states with substantially lower labor productivity (e.g. Russia before 1917, Austrian-Hungarian Empire until 1918, Italy, or Japan).<sup>14</sup>

We note, as an aside, that the PTS/FT seems to be even not completely convinced if capitalism as such has been restored in China. At least this is what one has to conclude from a remark in a balance sheet article about the debates on the world situation at the recent FIT-U conference on Latin America and the U.S. In this article, two leading PTS comrades – Christian Castillo and Claudia Cinatti – note: “*We are developing a discussion in the FT-CI about the specific nature of the current Chinese social formation, assuming that it does not seem to us, in principle, that the capitalist restoration process remains unfinished.*”<sup>15</sup>

We can not hide our astonishment about such a discussion. First, it is remarkable (to use a diplomatic word) that the PTS/FT has announced now for a number of years that “*it is discussing the character of China*”. In other words, it is discussing and discussing for years but still not able to arrive at definite conclusions! One wonders, if the whole

China question is a *philosopher's stone* for the PTS/FT for which it is looking for years but never discovering it!

Anyway, as we have demonstrated in our works, China is characterized since many years by capitalist property relations, forms of exploitation of labor, creation of capitalist value, and the formation of a large bourgeoisie with numerous monopolies at the top. It's capitalist character can remain obscure only for those who *identify* capitalism as a social formation with the specific model of neoliberalism. But neoliberalism is only *one of several forms* of the capitalist mode of production. Marxists, however, have always recognized that state capitalism is also a form of capitalism. In fact, state-capitalism (or state-monopoly capitalism as Lenin also called it) has played a central role in the 1930s during the period of depression. Likewise, we see currently a growing number of bourgeois economists in the West who, impressed by China's success, advocate an abandonment of neo-liberalism and a turn to forms of state-capitalist etatism.<sup>16</sup>

### **"China can never become imperialist before a world war?" Really?**

The evasiveness of the PTS/FT is not accidental but deliberate. We see this in various documents of that organization dealing with this issue. Again and again, the PTS/FT denies not only the imperialist character of China (as well as of Russia). It even denies that Russia and China have "*yet seen the consolidation of a capitalist class*". Most importantly, it excludes the possibility that China could become imperialist without *first* defeating the U.S. in a military confrontation. This is the position adopted at the last in-

ternational congress of the FT in 2018:

*"In recent years, China's imperialist tendencies have deepened (...) In short, China is not currently disputing the global leadership of the United States, which will continue to be the main imperialist power in the coming years. China's per capita GDP is still very low (...) On a military level, although China is modernizing its armed forces, the disparity continues to be overwhelming, even in the technological sphere. Furthermore, due to the particularities of capitalist restoration, neither China nor Russia have yet seen the consolidation of a capitalist class, and the role of the state continues to prevail in both countries. However, China is too big, too self-sufficient and too well-financed to succumb to direct economic pressure by the US or a group of imperialist powers. The tensions in the current relationship between the US and China emerge from, on the one hand, the difficulties China faces in freeing itself from the constraints imposed by its attempts to extend imperialist domination on a world scale; and, on the other hand, the difficulties faced by the US in attempting to subjugate the Chinese state, which has grown significantly stronger since it suffered the brutal imperialist oppression of the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. This fraught relationship of codependency lies at the heart of the the neoliberal, globalizing consensus, which is running out of steam. (...) This has shown that a "peaceful route" to China's imperialist development is impossible."*<sup>17</sup>

The essential conclusions of this document are simply wrong and lack logic. In fact, as we have shown many times, China has the largest or second largest – depending on the counting methods – number of billionaires as we as of capitalist corporations in the world. Well, you cannot "consolidate" much more as a capitalist class! (See Table 1 and 2)

**Table 1. Top 10 Countries with the most Fortune Global 500 Companies (2020)**<sup>18</sup>

Rank	Country	Companies	Share (in %)
1	China (without Taiwan)	124	24.8%
2	United States	121	24.2%
3	Japan	53	10.6%
4	France	31	6.2%
5	Germany	27	5.4%
6	United Kingdom	22	4.4%
7	South Korea	14	2.8%
8	Switzerland	14	2.8%
9	Canada	13	2.6%
10	Netherlands	13	2.6%

**Table 2. The Millionaires and Billionaires by Country, 2018**<sup>19</sup>

Country	Wealth Range (in Million US-Dollar)					
	1-5m	5-10m	10-50m	50-100m	100-500m	500+m
United States	14,520,885	1,855,679	902,736	50,144	19,253	1,144
China	3,094,768	235,858	132,701	10,113	5,690	708
Japan	2,627,845	125,377	51,947	2,478	1,027	71
United Kingdom	2,247,529	124,244	56,535	3,125	1,422	117
Germany	1,985,627	127,157	63,678	4,078	2,042	203
France	2,002,967	99,252	42,117	2,087	886	64

Even more wrong is the statement that China could not become imperialist *before* waging war against the largest Great Power on the planet. Why should this be the case?! Neither Germany, Japan nor any other country had *first* to wage a major war against Britain or the U.S. *before* they did become imperialist. In fact, any new power would hardly risk a war against the imperialist hegemon if it would not have already developed sufficient strength before as an economic and military power!

At the same time, the PTS/FT leaders are intelligent empiricists so they recognize that China is rising as a power. Hence, they are ready to accept the empirical data documenting China's rise. They are even prepared to accept that there are certain "*imperialist tendencies*" in China. However, they refuse to draw the necessary conclusions. They say that China is not an imperialist power. But what is it? Is it a semi-colony? Is it a sub-imperialist power (as other socialist organizations wrongly claim)?<sup>20</sup> The PTS/FT is silent on this crucial issue! They recognize the trees but they don't see the wood!

Why is this silence so dangerous? As we mentioned above, theoretical clarity in the analysis of the class character of China is the precondition to elaborate a correct programmatic approach in the face of the Great Power rivalry. The RCIT's recognition of the imperialist character of the Great Powers in the West as well as in the East allows us to advance the Leninist position of revolutionary defeatism against all these imperialist rivals. Recognizing the imperialist character of only the "old" Great Powers (U.S., EU and Japan) but not of the new ones in the East, inevitable pushes socialists objectively into the camp of pro-Chinese and Russian social-imperialism. True, the PTS/FT has not spelled out this consequence (in contrast to the PO, its partner within the FIT-U). But their dangerous silence on the issue of the class character of China opens the door to such a capitulation.

At this point, it is worth referring to an interesting discussion at the recent FIT-U conference. In the debate Miguel Sorans – a central leader of the UIT-CI – explained that his organization raises the slogan "*Down with the Chinese capitalist dictatorship*". He noted that, in contrast, the PTS and PO do not raise such a slogan. He asked the present leaders of the PO and the PTS to explain why they are not doing so. They avoided giving an answer.<sup>21</sup> In the case of the PO the reason is pretty obvious. As we have shown in several above-mentioned documents, they are undisguised and proud pro-Chinese and Russian social-imperialists. In contrast, and fortunately, the PTS is not. But their refusal to raise the slogan "*Down with the Chinese capitalist dictatorship*" could be an indication that they are open to follow the PO's shameful path towards social-imperialism.

There are also other hints which reflect the potential danger of pro-Chinese social-imperialism in the logic of the PTS/FT position. Jimena Vergara, one of their leaders, said the following in a speech at the FIT-U conference which recently took place. She (rightly) recognized the importance of the Cold War between the U.S. and China: "*The most strategic aspect of this agenda from the point of view of the interests of U.S. imperialism is the confrontation with China that is being hailed as a 'new cold war.'*" However, she characterized this conflict as follows: "*Likewise, both U.S. parties are on the same page concerning the task of preserving the global leadership of the United States and sending China back to the*

*status of a subordinated nation, an issue in which they have so far failed.*"<sup>22</sup>

So if the PTS/FT emphasizes that China is not a imperialist power and if they characterize the Cold War as an attempt of the U.S. to "*send China back to the status of a subordinated nation*", there can be only one conclusion: that the whole conflict would objectively reflect the struggle of China against its impending suppression as a semi-colony by U.S. imperialism. If this really would be the case, could one arrive to any other conclusion than that it would be the duty of socialists to side with China against the U.S. in this conflict?!

Another hint that the PTS/FT is prone for pro-Chinese social-imperialism is the following statement in the above-mentioned balance sheet article about the debates at the recent FIT-U conference on Latin America and the U.S. In this article the PTS/FT state not only that it does not characterize "*China as just another imperialist country*" but they also indicate, albeit algebraically, the possible conclusion from this for their tactics. They explicitly reject the idea the PTS/FT would take a defeatist position in a military conflict between the U.S. and China. "*This, however, does not imply that we define China as just another imperialist country or that in the event of war with the United States, the position should be one of 'defeatism' on both sides equally, but rather that the confrontation should be seen specifically.*"<sup>23</sup>

If the position in the war between the U.S. and China is not defeatism concerning the latter, which position would the PTS/FT leadership take instead? Well, for Marxists there is only one alternative to defeatism, and this is "defensism", in other words, defending China against the U.S. Again, we see that while the PTS/FT leadership does not openly arrive to pro-Chinese social-imperialist positions, the objective logic of its whole analysis pushes it into such a direction.

### **Lacking concepts and categories is tantamount to lacking science**

As we have shown, the PTS/FT leadership refuses to give a clear characterization to China. In numerous documents over a number of years, it has claimed that China is not imperialist without providing a positive answer, i.e. it has not said what it is. The PTS/FT might say that China is in a process of transition and that it is not possible to give it a clear designation. But China did become imperialist already a decade ago! For years, the PTS/FT leadership has avoided to provide a clear class characterization. How long does the PTS/FT leadership feel incapable to arrive at a conclusion?! And as we have shown above, it effectively denies the possibility that China could become an imperialist power *before* a major war with the U.S. Since such a war is unlikely to start in the near future, this could mean that the PTS/FT leadership will continue to refuse any clear statement about China's class character for another period of years!

Such confusion is totally incompatible with a scientific, Marxist approach! In fact, the PTS/FT leadership's confusion, its limitation to description of a phenomenon instead of characterizing its essence, rather represents a capitulation to eclectic empiricism. It is a way of thinking which is influenced by bourgeois post-modernism – a thoroughly counterrevolutionary ideology which has spread at the



universities and in intellectual circles in the past decades. Essentially, post-modernism represents an ideological regression, a bourgeois-idealist outlook which refuses the possibility to recognize the objective reality (or it even denies its existence at all). Hence, this trend rejects clear, scientific categories and relativizes everything to subjective perceptions, individualism, isolated examples, etc.<sup>24</sup>

Naturally, self-proclaimed Marxists like the PTS/FT reject ideologies such as post-modernism. But they are not aware that by allowing confusion and ambiguity on crucial questions for years and years they objectively adapt to the influence of petty-bourgeois post-modernist poison.

All this is thoroughly alien to Marxism! It is impossible to be a Marxist without applying a scientific method which analysis concrete developments in their relationship to each other, viewing them within the totality, and integrating them into a system of thought of interconnected and correlated concepts and categories. Hegel once noted: *"To understand means to express in the form of notions."*<sup>25</sup>

In fact, as Lenin once stated in his *Notebook on Philosophy*, it is impossible to recognize the objective reality, to make progress in science, *without concepts: "The concept (cognition) reveals the essence (the law of causality, identity, difference, etc.) in Being (in immediate phenomena)—such is actually the general course of all human cognition (of all science) in general."*<sup>26</sup>

Notions or categories are the language of the method, its mode to express itself. Without clear notions or categories, the scientific method is condemned to silence. But without a scientific method – and for Marxists this means without the method of dialectical materialism – it is impossible to recognize and understand the essence of things and processes. Hegel's famous statement has not lost any relevance: *"The method (...) is therefore soul and substance, and anything whatever is comprehended and known in its truth only when it is completely subjugated to the method"*<sup>27</sup>

Hence, as Lenin explained, notions are absolutely necessary in order to recognize the essence and the laws of development of the objective reality. *"The formation of (abstract) notions and operations with them already includes idea, conviction, c o n s c i o u s n e s s of the law-governed character of the objective connection of the world. To distinguish causality from this connection is stupid. To deny the objectivity of notions, the objectivity of the universal in the individual and in the particular, is impossible. Consequently, Hegel is much more profound than Kant, and others, in tracing the reflection of the movement of the objective world in the movement of notions. Just as the simple form of value, the individual act of exchange of one given commodity for another, already includes in an undeveloped form all the main contradictions of capitalism, — so the simplest generalisation, the first and simplest formation of notions (judgments, syllogisms, etc.) already denotes man's ever deeper cognition of the objective connection of the world. Here is where one should look for the true meaning, significance and role of Hegel's Logic."*<sup>28</sup>

A refusal of such a scientific Marxist approach, as we see it in the case of the PTS/FT's approach to Chinese imperialism, means remaining trapped in confusion and eclectic empiricism. Abram Deborin, the leading Soviet philosopher in the 1920s (before the persecution by Stalin's bureaucracy) appropriately called such an approach as *"crawling empiricism"*. We fear that this is also an accurate characterization of the PTS/FT method.

### Some "pragmatic" considerations?

It is certainly not only theoretical considerations (or lack of such) which drive the PTS/FT leadership towards refusal to characterize China as imperialist. There exists probably also a pragmatic (to use a polite word) consideration among their leadership given their orientation in Argentina. As it is known the PTS is an important component of the *Frente de Izquierda y de los Trabajadores-Unidad* (Workers' Left Front) – an electoral alliance which includes, in addition to the PTS, the *Partido Obrero* (which was the leading force in the now defunct international organization CRCI), *Izquierda Socialista* (the leading force in the international organization UIT-CI<sup>29</sup>) as well as the *Movimiento Socialista de los Trabajadores* (the leading force in the international organization LIS). FIT-U has currently 2 deputies in the national parliament and 20 in regional parliaments. While the FIT-U alliance is principally composed of centrist organizations, recent major capitulations – the vote of its deputies in the regional parliament of Buenos Aires for a pro-Zionist bill<sup>30</sup> and its support for the state-bonapartist lockdown policy<sup>31</sup> – are major capitulations of a reformist type.

Since the PTS has become the largest force within this alliance in the last years, it is pushing now for the transformation of this alliance into a single "Trotskyist" party (which they would be able to dominate most likely). The second-largest component of FIT-U is the PO. As mentioned above, this centrist organization sides with the imperialist powers China and Russia. Hence, the PTS/FT leadership might have opportunistic considerations not to elaborate positions which could create "unnecessary obstacles" for uniting with the PO in a single party.

We note in passing that the whole idea of the PTS leadership to build a "Trotskyist" party on a national basis, i.e. without taking into account the key issues of the international class struggle, is in itself something fundamentally alien to the internationalist principles of Marxism. Leon Trotsky who observed a similar approach among various centrist parties in the 1930s (often affiliated to the so-called London Bureau) condemned such a national-centered approach unambiguously: *"Marxist policies 'in one country' are as impossible as the construction of a socialist society 'in one country'. Any group that attempts to develop a political line confined to national questions is inevitably doomed to sectarian degeneration."*<sup>32</sup>

In short, building a national party by excluding crucial issues of the international class struggle is a characteristic of national-"Trotskyism", not of authentic, internationalist Trotskyism.

We hope that the comrades of the PTS/FT will advance in their discussion about their position on China so that they can overcome the current confusion and elaborate a clear Marxist analysis. As the comrades are surely aware themselves, the Cold War between the two largest Great Powers is a crucial issue for Marxists today. Failing on this issue does not only mean to remain trapped in an intellectual cul-de-sac but also opens the road to opportunist adaptation towards social-imperialism. We hope that the PTS/FT will soon correct this major mistake!

## Footnotes

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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 RCIT statement is: TikTok, Consulate Closures and the Cold War between the U.S. and China. Socialists must oppose all Great Powers! 10.08.2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/tiktok-consulate-closures-and-the-cold-war-between-the-u-s-and-china/>

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9 See on this e.g. chapters VIII and XXIV in our book *Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry*.

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# 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

## An Opportunity To March Forward –

### An Opportunity Which Should Not Be Missed!

**Open Letter to all participants of the virtual Latin American and US conference organized by FIT-U (Argentina) on 30 and 31 July and 1 August**

*By the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 30 July 2020*

**D**ear comrades of the alliance FIT-U as well as other participants!

First, we want to congratulate the comrades in FIT-U for organizing this conference. We are living in the midst of the most turbulent world situation within the last 50 years. Hence, it is highly urgent to make a step forward in discussing and coordinating the resistance against the offensive of the ruling class.

For that reason the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) would have liked to participate in the conference with the right to speak. With such a request we sent a letter to FIT-U respectively its individual parties (PTS, PO, IS and MST) on 22 July. Soon we were informed that this had provoked a controversial discussion among the organizers since some supported and others opposed our participation. Finally, we were informed officially – less than 24 hours before the beginning of the conference – by a comrade from the FIT-U National Bureau that we could not participate in the conference since there was no consensus about this.

We note this decision with regret. Of course, we are aware that there exist profound political differences between the RCIT and individual parties within FIT-U. To name just two examples we refer to the support of the PO leadership for imperialist China and Russia against U.S. imperialism or the scandalous vote of the three FIT-U deputies (belonging to PTS and PO) in the BA city parliament on 18 June for a pro-Zionist bill (which was “rectified” only 9 days later after many protests). However, we don’t think these are legitimate reasons to exclude us from speaking at this conference since similar profound differences also exist between the different forces within FIT-U.

Nevertheless, we want to take the opportunity to address all participants of the conference in this Open Letter and to put forward what, in our opinion, should be the next steps forward. As we have done so extensively in other documents (see Appendix), we will only summarize what we consider as the most important steps.

In our view, revolutionaries should enter in serious discussion and collaboration on the basis of broad agreement on the most important issues of the global class struggle in the current world situation.

1) For an emergency health program against the Corona Virus! Down with the draconic Lockdown policy and

the expansion of state bonapartism under the cover of the COVID-19 pandemic! Against all attacks on democratic rights!

2) Unconditional support for the global wave of popular uprisings without lending political support to reformist and populist leaderships. From Chile to the U.S., from Hong Kong to Idlib, from Palestine to Kashmir and from Lebanon to Catalunya – for a single global Intifada!

3) Down with the Great Power rivalry! No support for any imperialist power (U.S., China, EU, Russia and Japan)! Defend the oppressed people against imperialist aggression!

Naturally, these are only the most burning issues of the current world situation. A platform around these questions could not replace a complete program. But it could constitute an important starting point for close discussion and collaboration. Likewise, we could initiate together international solidarity campaigns on such issues.

In other words, we could make a step forward in building a Revolutionary World Party. This is what the RCIT is fighting for and we look forward to work together with other revolutionaries in such a spirit!

Comrades, this conference constitutes an opportunity to march forward. It is an opportunity which should not be missed!

*International Secretariat of the RCIT*

#### Appendix

For those interested in the positions of the RCIT we refer to the following documents respectively compilations of our documents:

Open Letter to the FIT-U: <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/open-letter-to-fit-u-for-an-international-conference-on-the-struggle-against-the-global-capitalist-crisis/>

The Global Popular Uprising against Racism and Police Violence: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/the-global-popular-uprising-against-racism-and-police-violence/>

COVID-19 Counterrevolution and pandemic: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>

Great Power Rivalry: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>

## Comunismo Revolucionario

### Spanish-language Journal of the RCIT

Order the journal via our contact address: [rcit@thecommunists.net](mailto:rcit@thecommunists.net)

## Important Omissions

### Some observations on the final unitary resolution of the FIT-U Latinamerica and U.S conference

by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT) 3 August 2020

The Latin America and U.S conference organized by the Argentinean alliance FIT-U (composed of the four Trotskyist parties PTS, PO, IS and MST) has ended with the adoption of a unitary resolution. As we reported, the RCIT could not attend this conference with the right to speak. Our participation was supported by one part of the organizing parties but opposed by another part.<sup>1</sup>

In this commentary we will limit ourselves to make some observations on the final resolution. We will refrain from elaborating in detail our positions on all the issues which the unitary resolution deals with and refer readers to our extensive literature. (See the footnotes)

First we note with satisfaction that the resolution does not only make a general assessment on the crisis of capitalism, the tyranny of imperialist super-exploitation, the necessity of an independent working class position on the basis of an anti-capitalist strategy, etc.

The statement also takes a fundamentally correct position in a number of important conflicts and class struggles. Among them we note the defense of Cuba and Venezuela against imperialist aggression without lending any political support to their bourgeois-populist and Stalinist regimes.<sup>2</sup> It takes the same principled position in Bolivia where it denounces the reactionary coup against Morales without lending political support to him and his MAS.<sup>3</sup>

However, it is impossible to ignore the profound weaknesses of the unitary statement. It is urgent to openly name these weaknesses as this is the only way to overcome them in the future. Again, we note that we limit ourselves at this place to briefly outline what we consider as the most glaring deficits and refer to a more detailed elaboration on this issue to the extensive literature of the RCIT.

#### Regional-centeredness instead of internationalism

First, we note that the resolution suffers from a profound *regional-centeredness*. It lacks an *internationalist* approach to the political events and the class struggle in the Americas. By this criticism we do not mean that we consider it as inappropriate that the statement focuses on the Americas. No, our criticism is that the statement assumes that the political events and the class struggle in the Americas are basically caused by specific American factors. The statement gives the impression that the Americas exist in isolation of the world. However, in fact, this is not the case. The developments in the Americas – like in all other continents – are fundamentally part of a *world process*. This serious flaw becomes evident by the fact that several of the most important global developments which determine the class struggle in the Americas are simply ignored in the statement.

First, it is astonishing that the statement – despite some length (more than 2.200 words) – does not mention with a single word the COVID-19 pandemic and the reactionary state bonapartist offensive of the ruling class. Everyone

knows that this is a crucial issue both of Latin American as well as of U.S. politics. So why is the statement silent on this question? Can it be the case that some of the organizing parties which shamefully support the reactionary and anti-democratic Lockdown policy felt embarrassed to mention this issue?<sup>4</sup>

Secondly, the statement does not spend a single word on the Great Power rivalry between the U.S. and China. This is all the more astonishing because this rivalry is a crucial factor in the process of decline of U.S. imperialism which, in turn, is key to understand the systemic domestic crisis and the profound division within the ruling class in the U.S. This inter-imperialist rivalry between the two largest Great Powers is not only a central factor to understand world politics. It also has strong influence on the political and economic developments in Latin America. The huge increase of foreign investment of Chinese monopolies, the support of Moscow and Beijing for the regimes in Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua, etc. – all this undermines the long-standing hegemony of U.S. imperialism in Latin America. Again, the question arises if this silence might have been caused by the fact that one of the organizing parties (the Argentinean PO) is an undisguised supporter of Chinese and Russian imperialism and other parties hesitate to recognize the imperialist character of these two Great Powers?<sup>5</sup>

#### Silence on the Arab Revolution

Third, the statement talks a lot, and rightly so, about the upswing of the class struggles in the Americas. However, it fails to mention that these struggles don't take place in isolation but are part of a *global wave of popular uprisings* which started in 2019 and which swept from Hong Kong to Ecuador, from Iraq to Chile, from India to Lebanon and from Sudan to Catalunya. Again, this creates the wrong impression that the class struggles in the Americas are a specific American phenomenon and not part of a global process.<sup>6</sup>

Related to this unfortunate silence is the failure to mention with a single word the ongoing Arab Revolution – which began in 2011 and which has been the most profound revolutionary process of the 21<sup>st</sup> century so far.<sup>7</sup> No word about the Syrian Revolution – the longest-lasting revolutionary event in recent history where the workers and poor peasants fight against the Russian-Iranian-Assadist occupation forces since more than nine years.<sup>8</sup> No word about the liberation struggle of the heroic Palestinian people who face the unrestricted aggression of the Zionist state. Again, how can such an astonishing silence be explained? It is difficult to avoid the impression that such silence is related to the fact that a sector of the FIT-U parties shamefully refuses to support the Syrian Revolution and other liberation struggles in the Arab world since many years.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, this silence also brings to our mind the scandalous vote of three FIT-U deputies (belong-

ing to PO and PTS) on 18 June for a pro-Zionist bill - a vote which was only reluctantly "rectified" nine days later after strong protests by many militants.<sup>10</sup>

We think that such a regional-centeredness, which characterizes the statement of the FIT-U conference, is in fundamental contradiction to Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution. It is a key mark of this Marxist conception to view national and regional developments not in isolation but as part of an international process.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, we want to draw attention to another important weak spot in the statement. Talking about the struggles in the U.S. and in Latin America, the declaration rightly condemns the brutal repression by the police. However, it fails to call for the formation of organized self-defense units armed with whatever is necessary to fight back against the capitalist repression forces. Such self-defense units are highly urgent to fight back against the killer-cops in the U.S., Chile and other countries and could constitute a first step towards workers and popular militias. However, without such militias any socialist revolution – which the FIT-U parties proclaim as their goal – remains a useless day-dream.

These are, in our view, some of the most important mistakes in the statement of the FIT-U conference. We hope that it will be possible on future debates to discuss and overcome them. This is crucial in our view because it is the firm belief of the RCIT that is impossible to elaborate a revolutionary strategy for the current period without a correct approach to the fundamental issues of world politics and the global class struggle.

#### Footnotes

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3 See on this RCIT & PRT: Bolivia: Defeat the Right-Wing Coup! Build democratic popular assemblies and self-defense committees! For a broad anti-coup united front! But no political confidence in Morales! 12 November 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/bolivia-defeat-the-right-wing-coup/>

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7 See on this <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/collection-of-articles-on-2nd-wave-of-great-arab-revolution/>

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9 See on this Michael Pröbsting: Syria and Great Power Rivalry: The Failure of the „Left“. The bleeding Syrian Revolution and the recent Escalation of Inter-Imperialist Rivalry between the US and Russia – A Marxist Critique of Social Democracy, Stalinism and Centrism, 21 April 2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/syria-great-power-rivalry-and-the-failure-of-the-left/>

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## The Rise of Russia as an Imperialist Great Power

**\* Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire**

**\* Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and Russia's Rise as a Great Power**

*Two Pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)*

*Order the pamphlet via our contact address: [rcit@thecommunists.net](mailto:rcit@thecommunists.net)*

# A Revolutionary Initiative in a Historic World Situation!

## Formation of a Liaison Committee between CEP and RCIT

*Joint Declaration of Colectivo Emancipacion Proletaria and the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, 19.07.2020*

1. Our joint statements on the COVID-19 Counter-revolution, on the popular uprising in the U.S., on the pro-Zionist betrayal by FIT-U deputies in Argentina and our rejection of the Stalinist methods of slandering (see Appendix) demonstrate that we have already reached agreement on key issues of the current world situation. Hence, our common commitment of fighting for a revolutionary program in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky is substantiated by agreement on central questions of the international class struggle today.

2. We have made these joint statements and set up a fighting bloc because we recognize the responsibility of authentic revolutionaries to take the initiative in the current historic and extraordinary world situation. This situation is characterized, on one side, by the counter-revolutionary offensive of the ruling class under the cover of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift towards state bonapartism. However, at the same time, we see uprisings of the popular masses, in the U.S. as well as other countries, which break down the reactionary Lockdown regime.

3. In this historic situation – comparable to 1914 or 1989-91 – the reformist and ossified centrist forces experience another “4 August”. Once more, most of these pseudo-leftists commit a historic betrayal by supporting – openly or disguised – the bonapartist state of siege with all the lockdown and surveillance measures. Cynically, they characterize the lockdown policy as being in the interest of the working class and call for even harsher and longer

lockdowns! As a consequence, these “leftist” parties and groups have become *social-bonapartists*. In such a historic situation, authentic revolutionaries have the responsibility to join forces in calling for the immediate convocation of an International Conference of *all* Revolutionary Organizations and Groups that oppose the quarantine and the state of siege from the workers and revolutionary point of view.

4. We call revolutionaries around the world to join us in the struggle for a Conference of Struggle and International Coordination of Workers’ and Revolutionary Organizations, which coincide in the programmatic points of our joint declaration on the counter-revolution COVID 19. In times like today when large sectors of the official left capitulate to the bonapartist pressure of the ruling class, it is of highest importance that authentic Marxists do not take a passive “wait and see” approach but march forward energetically and bold in international coordination, centralization and struggle! The working class is one and global. We must tear down the walls and borders invented by the bourgeoisie to isolate ourselves, while big capital acts and coordinates internationally.

5. Naturally, we are aware that we have differences on several central issues. But we believe that these differences should not prevent us from fighting together at the points where we have an agreement. We equally reject the centrist alchemy of hiding the differences and the sectarianism that prevents a joint struggle on the issues of agree-

# Books of the RCIT

## Yossi Schwartz: Palestine and Zionism

The History of Oppression of the Palestinian People.

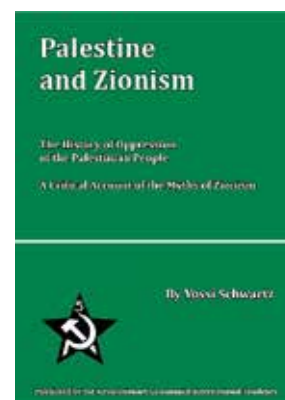
A Critical Account of the Myths of Zionism

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/>



ment. We are aware that our discussion is far from complete.

6. For this reason, we will set up a *Liaison and Discussion Committee* that will provide the forum to deepen our discussion and to clarify and overcome existing differences. Such differences are only natural given that we arrive from different traditions. Likewise, we will continue to take joint political initiatives in order to intervene in the international class struggle and the debates within the vanguard of the working class and the youth. In this way, we hope to explore the bases for achieving, based on the agreements, a greater unity and centralization of our forces in a joint international Trotskyist organization.

7. Based on the above, we also clarify that, unlike the pseudo-Trotskyists, the debates on the differences will be conducted in front of the vanguard, so that it can judge by itself the different positions of the groups and even leaders at the individual level. We are against the sects that hide important political differences which might exist within such a Comité de Enlace y Discusión. Hiding such differences would be in contrast to the tradition of living Bolshevism.

8. The *Liaison and Discussion Committee* will issue a public *Discussion Bulletin* for debates.

*Colectivo Emancipacion Proletaria* (Argentina, Chile)  
*Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (Brazil, Mexico, Pakistan, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Israel/Occupied Palestine, Yemen, Nigeria, Kenya, Russia, Britain, Germany and Austria)

#### Appendix: Joint Statements and relevant Documents

The COVID-19 Counterrevolution and the Betrayal of

the Lockdown Left, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/joint-statement-the-covid-19-counter-revolution-and-the-betrayal-of-the-lockdown-left/> // La contrarrevolución COVID-19 y la traición de la izquierda de la cuarentena, <https://www.thecommunists.net/home/espa%C3%B1ol/declaracion-conjunta-la-contrarrevolucion-covid-19-y-la-traicion-de-la-izquierda-de-la-cuarentena/>

FIT (Argentina): A Scandalous Betrayal of the Heroic Palestinian Masses! <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/fit-argentina-a-scandalous-betrayal-of-the-heroic-palestinian-masses/> // FIT (Argentina): una escandalosa traición a las heroicas masas palestinas, <https://www.thecommunists.net/home/espa%C3%B1ol/fit-argentina-una-escandalosa-traicion-a-las-heroicas-masas-palestinas/>

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# 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



## Nigeria: Fight All Forms of Price Increase for Petroleum Products! Nationalize the Oil Industry and the Power Sector under Workers & Masses Control! For a Global Eco-Friendly Energy Scheme!

*Statement of the Revolutionary Socialist Vanguard [RCIT Nigeria], 7th August, 2020*

On Thursday, 6th August 2020, The South West chapter of Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN) directed all its members in the zone to increase the dispensing pump price of Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) from N143 to N150 in their respective filling stations. This is only an example of a now widespread development amongst other associations of petroleum products marketers in the North and all over the country. It is in response to the announced official increment, on August 5th, of the ex-depot price by the Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (PPPRA) of PMS from 111.78 naira/litre in July to 138.62 naira/litre (an 18% increase). Other petroleum products such as diesel and kerosene also had their ex-depot price\* increased to 160-165 naira/litre and 160 naira/litre respectively. Even cooking gas prices also went up. What this means is that at the local retail outlets for motorists and other consumers, the actual price for PMS will range from 150-170 naira/litre and for other products even higher. [1]

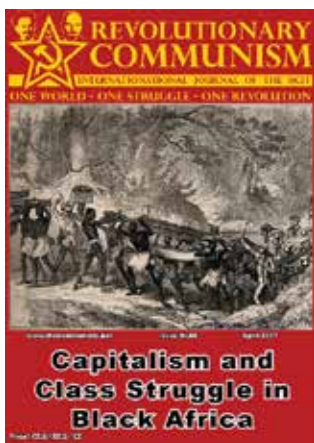
It goes without saying that the new hike in petroleum products prices, no doubt, spells multifaceted hardship for the average Nigerian because of the potential to push to extremes the hyper-inflation already affecting the prices of commodities and transportation.

The PPPRA however has strangely not given any stipu-

lated bench mark for consumers to purchase petroleum products at the fuelling stations. [2] This is not totally surprising since the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and its subsidiaries the PPPRA and the Petroleum Products Marketing Company (PPMC) have been brandishing arguments of "deregulation" of the oil industry and now they claim to practise a "partial deregulation" policy. [3]

It seems to us that all this talk about "deregulation" is in fact an attempt to atomize and confuse the masses so as to prevent a mass uprising that the government fears will emanate from a direct proclamation of the a new retail price for consumers. The Nigerian masses must not fall for this as it is possible for the official announcement to be further delayed. Many members of the leaderships of trade unions continue to orientate towards the Nigerian bourgeois, this time they do so by supporting "deregulation". Take the quote from the speech of the General Secretary, Nigeria Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), Mr Afolabi Olawale as an example; "Our position is that we don't support any form of deregulation that is based on importation. We support deregulation that is based on local refining of products."

The National Public Relations Officer, Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGAS-



### PUBLICATIONS OF THE RCIT

## Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa

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

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SAN), said the Federal Government should ensure that the nation's refineries "are fully commercialised using the Nigeria LNG model." Mr Ambrose Oruche, the Acting Director-General of MAN, also expressed the same idea only this time he tacitly recognized the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity for these attacks; "The deregulation which came in as a result of COVID-19 pandemic was a welcome development". He goes further to confirm that the attacks are not over as far as petroleum industry is concerned; "Price increase will continue but it will be better if there is a refinery to address issues of refining and cost implications locally; if they cannot be refined locally, more investments may not come into the local refinery except the Petroleum Industry Bill is signed." [4]

While, on principle, we oppose any form of deregulation and support local production of PMS and other petroleum products, we do not think any serious, full or real form of deregulation is possible, simply because the present stage of capitalism is ruled by monopolies that have become more fused with the state. One has only to look at how the Nigerian government have vacillated over the removal and return of fuel subsidy in the past decade. One can argue that it is due to mass resistance and this too is true yet it is also largely because of the state-monopoly relations in the commanding heights of the economy. The same can be said of the power sector where budgetary allocations are made despite claims that the power sector has been privatized.

Even with presence of working local refineries, a deregulation is still a mirage as it will be controlled by the ruling cabals. Just one indication to confirm this fact is that Aliko Dangote, the richest Nigerian and African is already adding the finishing touches to his petroleum refinery after enjoying unrestrained monopoly in other industries of the country. [5] Should such a large refinery become functional it will determine prices for petroleum products even if the handful of abandoned refineries are revived. In such a situation all "investments" will come and will be enjoyed by the same cabal. "Deregulation" mixed with phrases of local production of petroleum products become a decoy/justification for anti masses attacks.

For us in the Vanguard, these are only signs of maturing anti-people attacks launched by the Nigerian bourgeois class as a necessary offspring of a period of deepening economic recession and crises. It was not long ago that the pump price of petroleum products was hiked in July by 31 naira/litre as part of this streak of attacks.

The upward review of pump price for PMS from 121.50 to 143.80 naira/litre which became official on 1st July, 2020,[6] was in essence a continuum of the policy which led to the announcement that the fuel subsidy was to be totally removed just months back. In any case, such an increment comes within the broader context of global oil politics since we experienced the reduction of oil prices not just in Nigeria but all over the world in May/June. Like every other thing, the abysmal fall in oil prices in the past few months was a product of the infectious crises at the core of this historic stage of the capitalist world called imperialism. In this regard, it is important to clear the air by placing the rise and fall of oil prices in the setting of Great Power rivalry which is rife in our world.

With the advent of strict lock downs and travel bans imposed by world governments the supply of oil barrels be-

came greatly larger than the demand. The capitalist cartel controlling global oil sales through OPEC+ who were already at loggerheads even before the inception of the pandemic became more aggressive towards each other. This is hardly surprising since the whole travesty of the measures imposed under the pretext of preventing the spread of COVID-19 was, in the real sense, partly protectionist tactics to sustain their economic position in the face of an economic slump which is almost as serious, if not more, than the Great Depression of 1929. We have already explained numerous times that in this 2nd Great Depression, the ruling classes exploit the COVID-19 pandemic to launch preemptive strikes against the workers and oppressed masses who will, as all indications show, fight back immediately the effects of this Depression begin to rear its head. [7] This time we focus on the specific effects of the imperialist rivalry as it affects and reflects in the turbulence in the oil market.

With no side of the imperialist faction ready to concede to an excessive loss after over-production of oil, Russia the second most powerful imperialist power in the East defies the commitment to its own quota of oil supply in order to attack the oil industry of the US which is not an oil producing or exporting nation itself but which utilizes its influence as the major world imperialist power to monopolize greatly at the international level the oil resources of the Persian gulf states like Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, a regional power and the largest exporter of oil to the US, finds itself a stooge of the imperialist power and at the receiving end of the attacks by Russia against the US. As a reprisal the Bin Salman led kingdom of Saudi Arabia also flooded the market with oil above the approved quota even though this will affect the US oil industry detrimentally. This was the reason the oil prices in the US plummeted to almost zero and the price of petroleum products globally fell in like manner. [8]

In such a tug of war between imperialist heavy weights, a poorly industrialized semi-colony or neocolony like Nigeria remains subject to the caprices of the outplay of such battle. Several lessons can be drawn out of this, first since the price of crude fell so low recently, it can be implied that there's more than enough crude to go round, that is, with proper planning an average person in Nigeria can purchase it at the most affordable price. This means OPEC+ is only a cartel of capitalists who deliberately manipulate the demand and supply of the mineral resource so they can reap maximum profit from it irrespective of the consequences for the global poor. Secondly, since such a global price collapse of oil caused by ruling class in-fighting means massive unemployment for workers in the oil sector the present state of oil production and regulation becomes immediately moribund and must be abolished. It should be replaced by workers controlled democratic mechanism. Thirdly, with the humongous profits accrued by these powers it becomes nearly impossible to explore other forms of energy consumption that are eco-friendly. The rise of new diseases and disasters is greatly hinged on profit-driven penchant of these powers to consume fuels that destroy the ecosystem.

The effects of climate change has already reached alarming levels such that they are felt more by the so-called "third world" respectively the global working class. The city of Wuhan one of the most populated working class

regions in China has experienced torrents of disasters first, through the corona virus outbreak and now through dastardly floods that have submerged the property of the people. [9] Authentic revolutionaries and progressive unionists must not allow the same bourgeois forces which caused these disasters to utilize them for their political interests just as they did the COVID-19 pandemic.

If nothing is done these attacks and increments are bound to continue and not only in the oil sector but others as well.

We must put the whole energy generation, distribution and consumption under the democratic control of the workers and popular masses so that the safety of planet and advancement of the human race can be put first and last. This will naturally occur by the nationalization of the oil industry in Nigeria and other petroleum exporting countries coupled with local production of petroleum. Further, it will certainly put the workers and oppressed in direct conflict with international cartels like OPEC+ and require the expropriation of their parasitic transnational energy corporations such as Shell, Exxon Mobil etc.

No to any form of deregulation! Only a mass controlled oil industry can put the price regulation mechanisms in the hands and interest of the people. Hence an intransigent war must be waged on all forms of hikes on public services. Only through a popular uprising can these changes be realized, thus all restrictions on the right to freely demonstrate and gather publicly must be defeated. For us the only way to avert massive deaths from the COVID-19 pandemic and other deadly diseases such as malaria, AIDS, obesity, cardiovascular diseases etc. remains to change the objective conditions of health care and education by expanding the health system; funding education properly; providing hygienic and standard housing for the population; fighting malnutrition and other hunger related deaths with food supplies for the poor etc.

All of these cannot be given by the oppressor they must be taken by the oppressed. The August 5th, CORE RevolutionNow protests is a crucial example of how all of these is possible. [10] However such remonstrances must be linked in solidarity with uprisings in Mali, Lebanon, Hong-Kong, Serbia and the US against all imperialist powers and their stooges in the semi-colonial nations. These movements must begin to form delegates, action committees to lead them and most importantly armed self-defense committees to ward off the enemy in blue and the terrorists butchers of the ruling class like Boko Haram.

We seize this medium to demand the immediate and unconditional release of two RevolutionNow protesters, Olawale Bakare (Mandate) and Abiodun Sanusi (Socialist) arrested at the August 5th protest who are now in DSS detention.

Onward in the struggle for a socialist future!

Signed: Oladipupo Jimoh,  
International Liaison Personnel,  
Revolutionary Socialist Vanguard, [RCIT Nigeria].

\*Ex-depot price is the amount depot owners and marketers are allowed to pay to lift products from NNPC depots for distribution to retail outlets across the country.

## Footnotes

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## Lockdown Left says: “Cops Need to Enforce Laws”

### The ex-revolutionary L5I as another example for shameful social-bonapartism in the era of the COVID-19 counterrevolution

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 24 July 2020

We have closely followed the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting counter-revolutionary offensive of the ruling class since its beginning in early spring.<sup>1</sup> We have analyzed not only the nature of this pandemic and the political calculations of the bourgeoisie but also the pathetic capitulation of large sectors of the reformist and centrist left. Most of these organizations have in practice chosen to support the Lockdown policy which is an ineffective instrument in combating the pandemic but an effective weapon to impose a state of siege against the working class and popular masses. Hence, we characterize this “left-wing” policy as *social-bonapartism* – socialism in words, support for bonapartism in deeds – and call these organizations the *Lockdown Left*.

At this point we will not repeat our comprehensive analysis which we have updated in a new pamphlet published a few days ago.<sup>2</sup> Here we will limit ourselves to show a new example of the consequences of social-bonapartism. The U.S. section of the “League for the 5<sup>th</sup> International” – a former revolutionary organization which has swapped Trotskyism for revisionism a decade ago – has published a new article on the COVID-19 crisis. This article expresses once more and with full clarity the social-bonapartist policy of the Lockdown Left in general and the L5I in particular.<sup>3</sup>

Let us first present the key paragraphs of the article: “In order to halt the spread of coronavirus, we only need to look at

our recent past to see the way forward. Even in the US, the hardest hit country in the world, there was a point in time where it looked like we were getting a handle on it. But just as soon as that point was reached, we reopened Pandora’s box and let the virus loose again. So the first step would be to reinstate the lockdown where the numbers show it’s needed, allowing trips out for essential errands only. For those essential errands, masks must be mandatory, enforced under penalty of fines and imprisonment and/or enforced isolation. Instead of enforcing laws against “living while black,” cops need to enforce laws that actually do protect the population from morons who think that their “right” to infect the rest of us is sacrosanct.

Economically essential workers, no matter what their current wages, must be paid as such; they are truly essential. Whether that means “hazard pay” for the length of the crisis or, preferably, a permanent raise in income is moot at this point. One way or another, get the money out to the people who will be risking their lives to make sure that society has enough to function through the lockdowns that will be needed to get the pandemic under control.”<sup>4</sup>

We note briefly that the L5I repeats the nonsense that the US is “the hardest hit country in the world”. Since the U.S. is the third-largest country in the world in terms of population, it does not show the whole picture to focus only on absolute numbers of COVID-19 death. This is like saying that India is richer than France because its annual output is larger in absolute numbers. The true picture of a coun-

## Books of the RCIT

### Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution

What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle

In *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution* Michael Pröbsting analyses the dramatic events in spring 2020 which have opened a new historic era. A triple crisis has shocked the world. The Third Depression has begun, characterized by a devastating economic slump of the capitalist world economy which is certainly no less dramatic than the crisis which started in 1929.

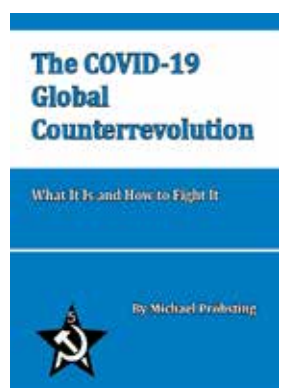
In addition, there is a wave of anti-democratic attacks of a scale which has not been seen in the imperialist countries since 1945. This has triggered a global turn towards Chauvinist State Bonapartism and the creation of a monstrous Leviathan-like state machinery.

And finally, the world faces COVID-19 – a pandemic which endangers many lives and which is exploited by the ruling classes in order to spread fear, to deflect attention from the capitalist causes of the economic crisis and to justify the turn towards chauvinist state bonapartism.

*The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution* also shows that large sectors of the reformist workers movement and the

so-called left fail to understand the meaning of this triple crisis. Similar to the situation in 1914 after the beginning of World War I we can observe a gigantic wave of opportunist capitulation by many self-proclaimed socialists as they support or at least do not denounce the global lockdown and the suppression of democratic rights which the ruling classes are imposing in the name of combat against the pandemic. *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution* offers a Marxist analysis of this historic crisis and elaborates a revolutionary perspective for the struggles ahead.

The book contains an introduction and 6 chapters plus an appendix (176 pages) and includes 5 figures and a diagram.



try's wealth is only revealed if one looks at the output in relation to the size of the population. And here we can see that France GDP per capita is more than 20 times higher than India's (40,471\$ vs. 2,010\$).<sup>5</sup>

Likewise, when we look at the COVID-19 deaths in relation to the size of the population, we see that various countries, whose governments have imposed draconic lockdowns from early on, have a higher number of deaths per capita than the U.S. Among them are Belgium, Britain, Spain, Italy and Chile.<sup>6</sup>

However, the more important and scandalous parts of the L5I article are, first, the demand that the Lockdown policy should not only continue but should rather move back to the draconic days in March-May. Effectively, the L5I suggests that the Lockdown policy should continue until the pandemic is over. This position is, as we stated in a recently published essay where we dealt with the Morenoite LIT-CI which supports a similar pro-Lockdown policy, *"both utopian as well as reactionary. It is utopian, first, because no society can exist without labor. Second, the working class and the oppressed can not achieve any demand by sitting at home instead of organizing and fighting against the capitalist class in the workplaces and on the streets. The LIT program is also reactionary because it advocates the disarming of the working class. Staying at home and banning meetings and demonstrations make it impossible for the workers and oppressed to resist against the ongoing counter-revolutionary offensive of the ruling class! In short, the LIT leadership is objectively promoting a social-bonapartist policy of atomization of the working class, i.e. the liquidation of the class struggle. Surely, many members of this organization are not aware of this. But this is the objective meaning of their leadership's strategy."*

Let us add, at this place, that the idea of a society living under lockdown until the pandemic is over is bizarre and

cynical. According to latest prognosis of the WHO, a vaccine against the Corona Virus might not be found before early 2021. And even than it remains to be seen how effective it is and if people will be able to afford it. (Let's not forget that the pandemic is viewed as a big business for many corporations.) Should people remain effectively imprisoned in their homes for at least half a year?! What a reactionary nonsense!

Of course, the pseudo-Marxist intellectuals know that labor is essential to keep a society running. Fortunately, such labor can be provided by the so-called "essential workers". Even more fortunately, the Lockdown Left hardly belongs to this sector as its leaders and cadres are largely based in the middle class. So, basically this "Left" demands that it can stay at home, doing some "home office", playing video games, watching Netflix and ordering food delivered by the "essential workers". What an intellectual ivory tower full of dystopian utopias! Is anyone surprised that the so-called left is so isolated from the lower and middle strata of the working class and the poor?!

The L5I's support for the reactionary Lockdown policy is even more explicit when it comes to the question how to enforce it. Here, one has to thank the author that he does not shy away from openly stating the consequences of social-bonapartism. Explaining who shall enforce the de facto imprisonment of the people (*"lockdown ... allowing trips out for essential errands only."*), the L5I states briefly and succinctly: *"cops need to enforce laws"*. We admit that the L5I is absolutely consistent in its logic. Who can impose the bonapartist laws of the ruling class imprisoning the people in their houses and banning public meetings and demonstrations? There is nobody but the repression apparatus of the very same ruling class which could do so. Hence, the L5I author only expresses openly what is the

## 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.

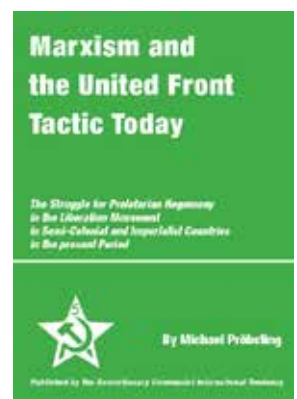
The following paragraphs are the back cover text of the book which give an overview of its content.

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.



true position not only of his own organization but of the whole Lockdown Left. His admission is all the more welcome as most social-bonapartists shy away from expressing such consequences so bluntly and undiplomatically!

In reality, everyone who can read the news – and even more so everyone who is able to combine reading with Marxist thinking – knows that the ruling class utilizes the lockdown measures as a pretext to suppress democratic rights. Just ask the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong, the workers and youth in Chile, the urban poor in Africa! They all face every day brutal repression by the police and army under the pretext of the Lockdown rules.

Hence, calling the “cops to enforce laws” – particularly in the current situation of an expanding bonapartist state apparatus all over the world with wide-spread attacks on democratic rights – is nothing but counter-revolutionary and treacherous!

No one shall be surprised that the reactionary law and order forces in Chile, France, Africa, etc., the cheerleaders of the Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship in China, the social democrats and Stalinists in Spain and others hail the Lockdown and support the police and army “dominating the streets” (Trump). It is a shame that the former revolutionary LSI has joined the company of social-bonapartism – the new leprosy of the workers movement.

#### Footnotes

1 The RCIT has analyzed the COVID-19 counterrevolution extensively since its beginning. Starting from 2 February we have published more than fifty documents which are all compiled at a special sub-page on our website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/collection-of-articles-on-the-2019-corona-virus/>. In particular we refer readers to the RCIT Manifesto: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counter-revolutionary Offensive. We are at a turning point in the world

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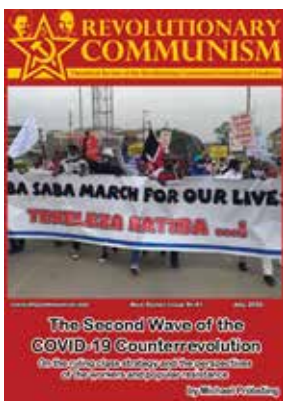
2 Michael Pröbsting: The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution

3 For a critique of the LSI pro-Lockdown policy see chapter V of our above-mentioned book *The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It*.

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6 Coronavirus (COVID-19) deaths worldwide per one million population as of July 24, 2020, by country, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1104709/coronavirus-deaths-worldwide-per-million-inhabitants/>



## Publications of the RCIT

# The Second Wave of the COVID-19 Counterrevolution

*On the ruling class strategy in the current conjuncture, its inner contradictions and the perspectives of the workers and popular resistance*

By Michael Pröbsting, July 2020

Introduction \* The localized version of Lockdown policy is spreading \* New information concerning severity (or not so severity) of the pandemic \* Telling figures for Europe, Sweden and Ischgl \* The worst pandemic in Africa? Really? \* Capitalism and care homes as deadly traps for old people \* The real nature of the ruling class bonapartist offensive under the cover of COVID-19 \* Why is the ruling class opting for a local lockdown strategy? \* Excuse: A crisis characteristic for the present period of capitalist decay \* The nature and inner contradictions of the local lockdown strategy \* Preparing for a new counter-revolutionary offensive \* The Lockdown Left: a never ending embarrassment \* The shameful example of the PSTU/LIT-CI \* The imperialist aristocratism of the Lockdown Left \* Building a Revolutionary World Party \* Footnotes

*A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format*

# What the RCIT Stands for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*No future without socialism!*

*No socialism without a revolution!*

*No revolution without a revolutionary party!*

