



REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency



www.thecommunists.net

New Series Issue Nr.86

February 2023

Ukraine War: Centrism and Revolutionary Tactics

Henry Kissinger's Desperate Call for Imperialist Peace

The Zionist Slave Labor Camps in 1948 * COVID-19 & China

English-Language Theoretical Review of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), New Series No.86, February 2023

- Henry Kissinger's Desperate Call for Imperialist Peace
An intelligent strategist articulates the fear of the ruling class about the Ukraine War and Great Power rivalry imperialism p.3
- The Zionist Slave Labor Camps in 1948 p.6
- COVID-19: What Did Authentic Marxists Say about China's Lockdown Policy in Spring 2020?
In contrast to the Lockdown Left, the RCIT opposed chauvinist state bonapartism from the very beginning p.8
- Ukraine War: Once More on Military Aid and Inter-Imperialist Rivalry
A critical contribution to a debate among Trotskyists in the U.S. p.11
- Russia: A Disguised Support for Imperialist Armament
The RRP (Russia) deepens its opportunist adaptation to the social-chauvinist KPRF p.16

Picture on the cover: Map of Ukraine War since February 2022 (Source: Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2022_Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine#/media/File:2022_Russian_invasion_of_Ukraine.svg)

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

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

Henry Kissinger's Desperate Call for Imperialist Peace

An intelligent strategist articulates the fear of the ruling class about the Ukraine War and Great Power rivalry

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 24.12.2022

Since the beginning of the Ukraine War, the RCIT has emphasized that this event has provoked a dramatic turn in the world situation. Given the dual nature of this conflict, it represents both a just war of national defence as well as a trigger for the acceleration of the rivalry between the imperialist powers. Hence, this event has far-reaching consequences both for imperialist Russia as well as for the relation of forces between the Great Powers. It can result in the opening of a deep crisis of the reactionary Putin regime, the danger of a new world war as well as revolutionary and counterrevolutionary developments all over the world.

An article by Henry Kissinger, published a few days ago, is a strong confirmation of our assessment by a representative of the ruling class. The author does not need much introduction. Kissinger is a former Secretary of State and National Security Advisor of U.S. Presidents. He is without doubt a highly intelligent strategist of imperialism who remains very-well connected and influential within leading circles of the ruling class.

Since some time, he argues for a kind of imperialist foreign policy which is known as *Realpolitik*. Such an approach takes the decline of U.S. imperialism into account and advocates a "pragmatic" approach in the relations with the new Great Powers of the East – China and Russia. Basically, he argues for a "multi-polar world order" where all Great Powers attempt to handle their antagonism in a peaceful way. As a result, the ruling class should be able to avoid World War III and to pacify popular rebellions and local wars.¹

In his article, titled "How to avoid another world war", Kissinger repeats his call for opening negotiations in order to end the Ukraine War. "Does the world today find itself at a comparable turning point in Ukraine as winter imposes a pause on large-scale military operations there? I have repeatedly expressed my support for the allied military effort to thwart Russia's aggression in Ukraine. But the time is approaching to build on the strategic changes which have already been accomplished and to integrate them into a new structure towards achieving peace through negotiation."²

Basically, he proposes a "a ceasefire line along the borders existing where the war started on 24 February. Russia would disgorge its conquests thence, but not the territory it occupied nearly a decade ago, including Crimea. That territory could be the subject of a negotiation after a ceasefire. If the pre-war dividing line between Ukraine and Russia cannot be achieved by combat or by negotiation, recourse to the principle of self-determination could be explored. Internationally supervised referendums concerning self-determination could be applied to particularly divisive territories which have changed hands repeatedly over the centuries. The goal of a peace process would be twofold: to confirm the freedom of Ukraine and to define a new international structure, especially for Central and Eastern Europe. Eventually Russia should find a place in such an order."

Furthermore, Kissinger suggests that Ukraine should be "linked ... to NATO, however expressed."

Fear of a world war and revolutionary uprisings

These proposals basically repeat what the former U.S. Secretary of State has already argued in the past few months and what, in one way or another, has been also suggested by other Western politicians who advocate a strategy of *Realpolitik* in the current world situation.

Two arguments in Kissinger's article are, in our opinion, particularly interesting. The first is the historical context which the author introduces to argue his case. The whole first third of his article is dedicated to a historical analogy of the current situation with a period in 1916 during World War I. He refers to secret peace negotiations between Britain, France and Germany at that time which, however, ended without result so that the war continued for two more years. The consequences, as Kissinger emphasizes, were disastrous.

"The Great War went on for two more years and claimed millions more victims, irretrievably damaging Europe's established equilibrium. Germany and Russia were rent by revolution; the Austro-Hungarian state disappeared from the map. France had been bled white. Britain had sacrificed a significant share of its young generation and of its economic capacities to the requirements of victory. The punitive Treaty of Versailles that ended the war proved far more fragile than the structure it replaced."

This is a highly remarkable historic analogy of a leading strategist of imperialism as he directly draws parallels between the current world situation and the years of 1916-18 which saw both a breakdown of the imperialist world order as well as a wave of working-class uprisings including the Russian Revolution led by Lenin and Trotsky!³

Kissinger's argument also reflects that faced with the danger of popular uprisings, the imperialists of all camps are ready to join forces against their common enemy – the working class and the oppressed!

"Russia decisive contributions to the global equilibrium"

Kissinger's second interesting argument is about Russia's future role in the imperialist world order. He strongly opposes those hawks in the camp of Western imperialism who want to see their Russian rival humiliated and destroyed. As he explains, such a scenario would provoke the danger of a civil war in the largest country of the world with global consequences.

"The preferred outcome for some is a Russia rendered impotent by the war. I disagree. For all its propensity to violence, Russia has made decisive contributions to the global equilibrium and to the balance of power for over half a millennium. Its historical role should not be degraded. Russia's military setbacks have not eliminated its global nuclear reach, enabling it to threaten escalation in Ukraine. Even if this capability is diminished, the dissolution of Russia or destroying its ability for strategic policy could turn its territory encompassing 11 time zones into a contested vacuum. Its competing societies might decide to settle their disputes by violence. Other countries might seek to expand

their claims by force. All these dangers would be compounded by the presence of thousands of nuclear weapons which make Russia one of the world's two largest nuclear powers."

This argument shows that smart strategists of Western imperialism recognize the role of their Russian rival for global stability and the need to find a compromise with the Kremlin in order to avoid "uncontrollable" wars and popular uprisings.

As the RCIT has pointed out repeatedly, the Putinista muddleheads advocate a "multi-polar world order" – i.e. a "peaceful coexistence" between the rivalling Great Powers – as a political goal. This is a reactionary utopia since such "peaceful coexistence" between greedy robbers is not possible in the long run. Two World Wars and the current Cold War are clear historic confirmation of this Marxist thesis!⁴

In any case, it is not without irony to see a leading strategist of U.S. imperialism arguing for the same idea of a "multi-polar world order" which the "Marxist" supporters of Chinese and Russian imperialism advocate since a number of years as a "progressive" perspective.⁵

It is clear that a compromise between Western and Russian imperialism would be at the cost of national independence and sovereignty of the Ukraine. These powers would agree on a "solution" which keeps parts of the Ukraine under Russian occupation while the rest of the country would be under control of Western imperialism. We repeat that advocacy of an imperialist "multi-polar world order" is utterly reactionary and must be combated by socialists!

Learn, pacifists and Putinistas, learn!

However, this is not the only lesson which the Putinista friends of Chinese and Russian imperialism need to learn. The other telling feature of Kissinger's article is his call for negotiations and peace. Obviously, such negotiations between the Great Powers could only result in an imperialist peace, i.e. a "peace" under the conditions of continuing domination by imperialist powers, of continuing capitalist super-exploitation and national oppression. Such a "peace" can not but contain the germ of future wars.

Unfortunately, many pacifists and Putinistas call for "unconditional negotiations" and the soonest-possible conclusion of a peace treaty. Consequently, they condemn any military aid to the Ukraine and call Kyiv to renounce parts of its territory. In short, these pacifists and Putinistas advocate "peace" at the cost of the oppressed nation which strengthens the imperialist oppressor and prepares future wars.

Ironically, many of such Putinistas and semi-Putinistas claim to be "Marxists" but deliberately ignore what Lenin said already long time ago about such imperialist "peace". *"To assume that a democratic peace may emerge from an imperialist war is, in theory, to substitute vulgar phrases for an historical study of the policies conducted before and during that war. In practice, it is to deceive the masses of the people by beclouding their political consciousness, by covering up and prettifying the real policies pursued by the ruling classes to prepare the ground for the coming peace, by concealing from the masses the main thing, namely, that a democratic peace is impossible without a whole series of revolutions."*⁶

"As long as the foundations of present, i.e., bourgeois, social

*relations remain intact, an imperialist war can lead only to an imperialist peace, i.e., to greater, more extensive and more intense oppression of weak nations and countries by finance capital, which grew to gigantic proportions not only in the period prior to the war, but also during the war. The objective content of the policies pursued by the bourgeoisie and the governments of both groups of Great Powers before and during the war leads to intensified economic oppression, national enslavement and political reaction. Therefore, provided the bourgeois social system remains, the peace that follows upon the war, whatever its outcome, must perpetuate this worsening of the economic and political condition of the masses."*⁷

Lenin's conclusions about the political character of such pacifists as "servants of the bourgeoisie" also remains completely valid. *"Just as all the social-chauvinists are at present deceiving the people by covering up the real, i.e., imperialist, policy of the capitalists, which is being continued in the present war with hypocritical phrases about the "dishonest" attack and "honest" defence on the part of this or that group of predatory capitalists, so phrases about a "democratic peace" serve only to deceive the people, as if the coming peace, which is already being prepared by the capitalists and diplomats, could "simply" abolish "dishonest" attacks and restore "honest" relations, and as if it would not be a continuation, a development, and a perpetuation of this very imperialist policy, i.e., a policy of financial looting, colonial robbery, national oppression, political reaction and intensified capitalist exploitation in every form. What the capitalists and their diplomats now need is "socialist" servants of the bourgeoisie to deafen, dupe and drug the people with talk about a "democratic peace" so as to cover up the real policy of the bourgeoisie, making it difficult for the masses to realise the real nature of this policy and diverting them from the revolutionary struggle."*⁸

Kissinger concludes his article with these words: *"The quest for peace and order has two components that are sometimes treated as contradictory: the pursuit of elements of security and the requirement for acts of reconciliation. If we cannot achieve both, we will not be able to reach either."*

To this, socialists reply: *"The quest for peace and order is inextricably linked with each other. There can be no sustainable peace without socialist order. There can be no socialist order without revolution of the workers and oppressed!"*

The struggle for socialism does not take place in a vacuum but in the world as it exists today. It must start with supporting the workers and oppressed in their struggles today. The RCIT and its section in Russia – *Socialist Tendency* – have therefore sided with the national war of defence of the Ukraine against Putin's invasion from the very beginning. At the same time, we emphasise the dual character of the conflict and the necessity to oppose both camps in the inter-imperialist rivalry between Russia and NATO. Hence, we advocate an internationalist and anti-imperialist position which we summarise in the slogan: *"Defend the Ukraine against Putin's invasion! Against Russian and against NATO imperialism!"*⁹

Footnotes

1 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: "Worse than World War I". Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger warns that the Cold War between U.S. and China could get out of control, 21 November 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/worse-than-world-war-i/>

2 Henry Kissinger: How to avoid another world war, Spectator, 17 December 2022 <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-push-for-peace/>. All quotes are from this article if not indicated otherwise.

3 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Russia: A Mirror of the Future. Notes on Russia's role in the current world situation, the global class struggle and revolutionary regroupment, 5 November 2022, www.thecommunists.net

4 The RCIT has dealt on numerous occasions with the inter-imperialist rivalry of the Great Powers. See e.g. 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, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>; by the same author: World Situation: In the Midst of a Global Political Tornado. Notes on global developments characterized by the Ukraine War, inter-imperialist rivalry, global energy and food crisis as well as spontaneous mass protests, 13 April 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-april-2022/>; A Peculiar and Explosive Combination. Notes on the current world situation, 6

October 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/world-situation-notes-10-2022/>.

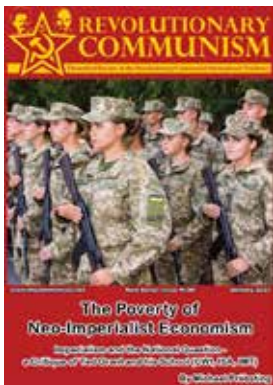
5 See on this e.g. the pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting: Putin's Poodles (Apologies to All Dogs). The pro-Russian Stalinist parties and their arguments in the current NATO-Russia Conflict, 9 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/nato-russia-conflict-stalinism-as-putin-s-poodles/>; by the same author: Servants of Two Masters. Stalinism and the New Cold War between Imperialist Great Powers in East and West, 10 July 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/servants-of-two-masters-stalinism-and-new-cold-war/>.

6 V. I. Lenin: Proposals Submitted By The Central Committee Of The R.S.D.L.P To The Second Socialist Conference (1916), in: LCW 22, p. 170

7 Ibid, pp. 169-170

8 Ibid, p. 173

9 We refer readers to a special page on our website where more than 150 RCIT documents on the Ukraine War and the current NATO-Russia conflict are compiled: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/compilation-of-documents-on-nato-russia-conflict/>. In particular we refer to the RCIT Manifesto: Ukraine War: A Turning Point of World Historic Significance. Socialists must combine the revolutionary defense of the Ukraine against Putin's invasion with the internationalist struggle against Russian as well as NATO and EU imperialism, 1 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/manifesto-ukraine-war-a-turning-point-of-world-historic-significance/>



Publications of the RCIT

The Poverty of Neo-Imperialist Economism

Imperialism and the National Question -
a Critique of Ted Grant and his School (CWI, ISA, IMT)

By Michael Pröbsting, January 2023

Introduction * Part I. The Grantites' main flaws on imperialism and national oppression * 1. Confusion on imperialism and the class character of states * 2. Failure to recognise the nature of national oppression * 3. Refusal to support liberation struggles as they take place * Part II. The class basis and the theoretical tradition of Grantite revisionism * 4. Strategic orientation to the labour bureaucracy, Sanders, Chavez, etc. * 5. The Grantites' utopia: reforming the capitalist state and the peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism * 6. Are the police "workers in uniform"? * 7. Woods against Lenin's concept of revolutionary defeatism * 8. The Marxist theory of antagonistic contradictions and the inevitability of their violent explosion (and their gradualist distortion by Grantism) * 9. Excuse: Comparing imperialist economism in the past and present (Bukharin/Pjatakov/Radek versus Grant/Woods/Taaffe) * Part III. Some objections and Marxist answers * 10. Undermining the unity of the working class? * 11. "The workers would not understand this" * 12. "But the national question can not be solved under capitalism!" * 13. Are national liberation wars doomed to become "proxy wars" in the age of inter-imperialist Cold War? * Conclusions * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 28 pages, A4 Format

The Zionist Slave Labor Camps in 1948

By Yossi Schwartz, ISL the RCIT section in Israel/Occupied Palestine, 29.12.2022

It is clear to those who follow up the news from Israel that the new government led by Benjamin Netanyahu is the most right-wing government in the history of Israel. It is an extreme nationalist and racist government committed to the annexation of most of the West Bank and in support of open discrimination which means for example the right of doctors not to treat Arabs or members of the LGBT community. It intends to give itself the power to override, by a narrow majority in the Knesset, any of the Court's objections to their bills, even if they violate the Basic Laws, which serve as Israel's elements of constitution. A full constitution is beyond the power of the racist MK's. They also want to allow the appointment of judges according to the political majority of the moment, like in the United States. And similarly for the attorney general and the government's legal advisors.

Yet the Zionist labor party under Ben Gurion was much crueler when it came to the Palestinians. By the ethnic cleansing of most of the Palestinians in 1948. So was the military government running the lives of the Palestinians citizens of Israel until the eve of the 1967 war. Yet the enforced labor camps during the 1948 war are much less known. What is not known are the forced labor camps working for the Zionist army that at the end of the wars those who survived the camps were expelled from their country. On this aspect Salman Abu Sitta and Terry Rempel wrote an article by the name The ICRC and the Detention of Palestinian Civilians in Israel's 1948 POW/Labor Camps based on files of the Red Cross.

"In early 1948, the second ICRC delegation to Palestine, comprising de Reynier, Jean Munier, and Roland Marti, began to investigate the situation on the ground and prepare recommendations for Red Cross intervention as a neutral intermediary. Specifically, the delegation proposed setting up a mission in Palestine by 1 April 1948 that would consist of eighteen Swiss nationals (eight delegates and ten nurses). Its purpose was to ensure that international humanitarian law be applied to all victims of the conflict, to protect institutions engaged in humanitarian work, and to generate and coordinate the distribution of emergency assistance" [1]

"Treaties governing the conduct of war consisted of the 1907 Hague Regulations, which prohibited deportation from occupied territory, and the 1929 Geneva Convention, which called for the repatriation of POWs following the cessation of hostilities. Neither of these adequately addressed the issue that would arise in the fighting to come: the treatment of civilian noncombatants in conquered territory. The Red Cross, as guardian of the Geneva Conventions, was well aware of the inadequacies of the existing international instruments in situations involving civilians, and it had been keen to update the conventions" [2]

"The new conventions were not ratified until after the Palestine war was over. In such a situation, the ICRC had to face the reality that without "the formal commitment of the parties to apply [international humanitarian law to civilians] during the events in Palestine, the principles of the Geneva Convention of 1929 would remain a figment of the imagination [with] no practical effect" [3]

The ICRC appealed to the Jewish Agency and to the Arabs High Committee to respect the spirit of the conven-

tion. Both sides agreed. Significantly, however, the JA tempered its agreement with a crucial proviso: *"the Zionist forces would protect the civilian population only "to the extent that the [1929 Geneva] Conventions applied to civilians." [4]*

"The establishment of the ICRC's mission in Palestine in early April 1948 coincided almost exactly with the Haganah's launch of Plan Dalet, the Israeli high command's plan for the wholesale eviction of Palestinians and destruction of Palestinian villages in areas allocated by the UN partition plan to the Jewish state and beyond.²⁷ From then until Israel's unilateral declaration of statehood on 14 May 1948, most of the major Palestinian and "mixed" towns (i.e., Haifa, Jaffa, Bisan, and Tiberias), along with some two hundred Palestinian villages (including all those in the Jerusalem corridor west of the city), had fallen despite often fierce resistance" [5]

"Israel's policy with regard to captives changed with the end of the so-called civil war phase on 14 May 1948 and the start of the "international conflict" the following day, when the armies of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Transjordan, responding to Israel's declaration of statehood, entered Palestine with the aim of preventing those parts of the country "assigned" by partition to the Arab state from falling into Jewish hands. From then on, Israeli forces began taking prisoners, both regular Arab soldiers (for eventual exchange) and able-bodied Palestinian (noncombatant civilians). Throughout the war, Palestinian civilian prisoners consistently outnumbered Arab military prisoners by a large margin in all four of Israel's official POW camps" [6]

"Marwan 'Iqab al-Yahya, then a fifteen-year-old boy, recounts that after the massacre in Tantura, he was herded into a truck with other men of the village while soldiers struck any head that stood above the others with their rifle butts.

They took us to Zichron Ya'akov and we were led to a damp dark cellar. . . . We were about three hundred. There was standing room only. We stayed three days without food. . . . Then suddenly the door opened. . . . We were packed in waiting trucks. Again, they knocked and beat all standing heads. There was so much blood splashed. Under guard we were driven to [the village of] Umm Khalid. There we were taken to a concentration camp with barbed wire and gates and put to forced labor" [7]

According to the ICRC reports:

"Four "official" camps were established for the civilian Palestinians. "These had been used during World War II for the internment of German, Italian, and other POWs." Two of the camps—Atlit (no. 792), established in July about twenty kilometers south of Haifa, and Sarafand (no. 793) established in September near the depopulated village of Sarafand al- 'Amar in central Palestine—had been used in the 1930s and 1940s to detain illegal Jewish immigrants. All four camps were administered by former British officers who had defected when British forces withdrew from Palestine in mid-May 1948. From various prisoner accounts, it would appear that many of the camps' guards and administrative staff were former members of the Irgun and the Stern Gang who had been integrated into the Israeli army. There were other camps that were not official. The establishment of the POW camps highlighted a problem that was to preoccupy the ICRC throughout the war—namely, Israel's failure to distinguish between the bona fide POWs, or soldiers in regular armies, and the Palestinian civilian non combatant detainees."

"It is painful to see these poor people, especially the old, who

were snatched from their villages and put without reason in a camp, obliged to pass the winter under wet tents, away from their families; those who could not survive these conditions died. Little children (10–12 years) are equally found under these conditions. Similarly sick people, some with tuberculosis, languish in these camps under conditions which, while fine for healthy individuals, will certainly lead to their death if we do not find a solution to this problem. For a long time, we have demanded that the Jewish authorities release those civilians who are sick and need treatment to the care of their families or to an Arab hospital, but we have not received a response" [8]

With tens of thousands of Jewish men and women called up for military service, Palestinian internees constituted an important supplement to the Jewish labor employed in maintaining the Israeli economy during the war under emergency legislation. According to a November 1948 report, civilians were being interned for what appeared to be the express purpose of aiding the Israeli economy. Thus, the report goes on, Atlit was "essentially a camp for workers." [9] Even before the establishment of the official POW labor camps, captured civilians were put to work. Reporting on a visit to Acre on 30 May 1948, ICRC delegate de Meuron stated that the men, "whether soldiers or not," were being "employed under the orders of the Haganah for public work, drying of wetlands, and military" [10]

At the end of the war these people were expelled. Ironically the Arab members of the Stalinist party were among these forced laborers even though they supported the formation of Israel and their party helped the Zionist war by bringing weapons from Stalinist Czechoslovakia.

When we read the Holocaust Encyclopedia, we find the following:

Forced Labor: An Overview

"Forced labor played a crucial role in the wartime German economy. German military, SS, and civilian authorities brutally exploited Jews, Poles, Soviet civilians, and concentration camp prisoners for the war effort. Many forced laborers died as the result of ill-treatment, disease, and starvation" [11]

While Israel is not a Nazi state but an apartheid state it is very similar on the national question to Hitler's regime until 1942.

*Down with the criminal apartheid state from the river to the sea!
For a Palestine red and free from the river to the sea!*

Endnotes:

[1] SALMAN ABU SITTA AND TERRY REMPEL (2014) " The ICRC and the Detention of Palestinian Civilians in Israel's 1948 POW/Labor Camps based on files of the red cross

[2] Ibid

[3] Ibid

[4] Myerson and Ben Zevie [sic] to ICRC in Palestine

[5] SALMAN ABU SITTA AND TERRY REMPEL (2014) " The ICRC and the Detention of Palestinian Civilians in Israel's 1948 POW/Labor Camps based on files of the red cross

[6] Ibid

[7] Statement by Marwan 'Iqab al-Yahya published in Muhammad Nimr al-Khatib, *Nakbat Filastin* (Beirut: Dar Maktabat al-Hayat, 1951), pp. 203–14.

[8] ICRC, Emile Moeri, "Report on the Situation of the POWs in Jewish Hands," Tel Aviv, 6 February 1949, p. 2

[9] ICRC, Moeri and Lehner, "Report No. 19," Tel Aviv, 11 November 1948, G59/I/GC, G3/82, p. 2.

See also ICRC, Maximilien de Meuron, "Report no. 11," p. 1.

[10] ICRC, de Meuron, "Report No. 9"

[11] <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/forced-labor-an-overview>

Books of the RCIT

Yossi Schwartz: Palestine and Zionism

The History of Oppression of the Palestinian People.

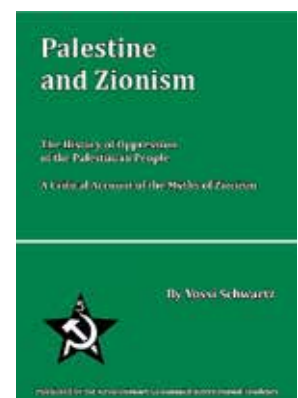
A Critical Account of the Myths of Zionism

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/>



COVID-19: What Did Authentic Marxists Say about China's Lockdown Policy in Spring 2020?

In contrast to the Lockdown Left, the RCIT opposed chauvinist state bonapartism from the very beginning

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 22.12.2022

It has become clear by now that the popular rebellion in China a few weeks ago achieved an important partial victory. The largest mass protests since the Tiananmen Square uprising in 1989 had spread throughout the country and forced the Stalinist-capitalist regime to retreat from its totalitarian Zero-COVID policy which did put millions of people under Lockdown for long periods.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) has called for support of these protests from the very beginning.¹ We did so because we fully share the popular outrage against the Lockdown policy in general and against the Zero-COVID policy in particular. Furthermore, authentic Marxists have always rejected the reactionary idea that the Stalinist-capitalist regime would represent a progressive factor whatsoever.²

Many socialist forces who oppose Stalinism have also stated their support for the protests of the Chinese masses. They even raise slogans against Lockdowns and against the Zero-COVID policy. While this is a welcome development, it is astonishing that, at the same time, the very same organisations remain mum about their support for the authoritarian Lockdown policy (or even for the ultra-reactionary Zero-COVID strategy) in the past three years. As we did show in some articles, they had explicitly referred to the supposedly successful pandemic policy of the Xi regime and/or praised the Zero-COVID strategy.³

In contrast to numerous reformist and centrist organisations, the RCIT characterized the reactionary Lockdown policy as *COVID Counterrevolution* and opposed it from early February 2020 onwards. We advocated a health-orientated socialist response to the pandemic⁴ and a strategy of popular uprising in defence of social and democratic rights.⁵

We are proud of our record since we understood the reactionary political character of the capitalist COVID policy from the very beginning. In this article we want to show what the RCIT did say in February and March 2020 about the official pandemic policy of the Xi regime. At that time the public opinion of the ruling class (as well as of the Lockdown Left) was full of praise for Beijing's policy.

Already in the very first RCIT article on COVID, written by our comrade Almedina Gunić on 2 February 2020, we emphasised the political and anti-democratic character of the Lockdown policy. At the same time, we denounced all forms of chauvinism – at that time by Western imperialist governments against Chinese citizens.⁶

"First, revolutionaries have to oppose any form of chauvinism that occurs against people from Asia (or any other part of the world). This chauvinism can appear openly articulated like in the newspaper "Courrier picard" and the Yellow peril ideology. But it can also be far more hidden like it is in the case of the double standard towards dealing with diseases coming from China with the 2019-nCoV and diseases coming from the U.S. like the (H1N1)pdm09. Therefore revolutionaries should even oppose

*general travel bans and forced quarantine. This doesn't mean to ignore the necessity of protection against 2019-nCoV and other diseases. However, the answer is to implement health screens for all travelers and to offer immediate health care for free if any case of infection is detected. (...) Third, the general quarantine for all people in Wuhan and other places has to be lifted and replaced by systematic and complete health screening of all people who might have had contact with the virus. This screening must be free for all people but should be mandatory. The same is necessary for any potential treatment which should include quarantine if necessary. The results however, should only be accessible for the health staff and the patients. All information must be protected by the workers movement in order to prevent any outrage against infected people."*⁷

We confirmed such a first assessment in an official statement of the RCIT three days later in which we explained that the bourgeois COVID policy is not based "on health precautions but rather on political calculations." We emphasized that the hysteria around the pandemic "objectively serves the following objectives:

- a) The ruling classes in China as well as in many other countries exploit the hysteria in order to justify the vast expansion of surveillance and control of its population.
- b) They also utilize this hysteria in order to wipe up patriotism and suspicion against "foreigners", people "from outside" or simple "others".
- c) China's regime utilizes the hysteria also in order to create a climate of fear so that anxious people put all their hopes in the state forces.
- d) The ruling classes in other imperialist states utilize the global hysteria in order to wipe up anti-Chinese chauvinism and to advance their stakes in the ongoing rivalry between the Great Powers. (...)
- e) Likewise, reactionary forces outside China exploit the crisis in order to foster suspicion and hatred against Chinese or, more generally, against Asian migrants.
- f) The ruling class will exploit the 2019 Corona Virus (and subsequently China) in order to find a culprit for the Great Recession which has recently begun."

As a positive program we raised the following demands:
 "* No to the lockdown of people in Wuhan and other cities by China's Stalinist-capitalist regime!

* For systematic and complete health screening of all people who might have had contact with the virus. This screening must be free for all people but should be mandatory. The same is necessary for any potential treatment which should include quarantine if necessary.

* Oppose any entry ban for people from China!

* For health screens for all travelers and for immediate health care for free if any case of infection is detected.

* No to general travel or trade restrictions on China!

* Rally to stop any campaign against Chinese or Asian migrants!

* Create international teams of experts and medical staff in or-

der to develop cure and preventive vaccination as soon as possible! All developments in this field must be accessible to the global public and have to be monitored and controlled by workers and popular organizations.

* Build additional health care facilities and hospitals! (China has demonstrated how fast such construction projects can be realized if the will for it exists!)

* All necessary projects in the struggle to protect public health must be financed by taxes of the rich!

* Nationalize the pharmaceutical corporations under workers control and utilize the resources in a centralized and effective way to develop drugs against widespread illnesses like influenza, corona virus, cholera, HIV/AIDS, etc.!"⁸

Of course, we further developed our analysis and our program in the following two years when the whole world was in the grip of the COVID Counterrevolution. But our basic principles – for a health-centred approach based on a public health program under workers and popular control, against the anti-democratic Lockdown and surveillance policy – these principles constituted the fundament of the RCIT's approach from the first days of the pandemic.

The Lockdown Left who cheers the Chinese masses rebelling against the Lockdown policy today, what did they say when the Xi regime imprisoned many millions of workers and oppressed in spring 2020? What did they say when the Chinese masses protested already at that time – for example in Hubei in late March of that year?! Here is what the RCIT said on these protests:

"The RCIT fully supports these protests. We have stated numerous times that the regime – not only in China but all over the world – uses the COVID-19 crisis as a pretext to increase the state repression. Wuhan – a major working class city of 11 million people with a large manufacturing industry – was the centre of important popular protests in summer 2019 against the horrible air pollution. In addition, the regime in Beijing was terrified about the mass uprising in Hong Kong and the possibility of provoking similar events in other Chinese regions. The RCIT has emphasized in numerous documents that the mass lockdown of the whole population – in China as well as globally – is a counter-revolutionary strike against the working class and the popular masses. It is primarily not motivated by health considerations but by political calculations. If the regimes would be primarily interested in containing and eliminating the pandemic they would focus on free mass testing of the population, in expanding the resources of the health sector and in providing free medical treatment to those infected. But in fact the main interests of the capitalist regimes are to paralyze, terrify and confuse the workers and oppressed, to launch a gigantic wave of austerity attacks, mass sackings and factory closures as well as to massively build-up the state repression apparatus. (...) The RCIT has therefore warned from the beginning that the COVID-19 crisis is utilized by the ruling classes as a cover for a major global counterrevolutionary offensive. They are launching huge authoritarian attacks on democratic rights like the mass lock downs and the suppression of the right to demonstrate and to assemble. Unfortunately, the opportunistic left has largely capitulated to this pressure of the ruling classes around the world. Many of them even share the admiration of various capitalist politicians and journalists for the draconic methods of China's Stalinist-capitalist regime. However, the mass protests in Hubei demonstrate that the working class is not prepared to accept the state repression. The situation is highly symbolic: while large

*sectors of the so-called left support mass lock down and state repression under the cover of the COVID-10 crisis, the workers and oppressed rebel against these attacks of the Bonapartist regimes."*⁹

We continued to analyse the reactionary pandemic policy of the Xi regime in various works.¹⁰

Compare our consistent opposition to the Lockdown policy of capitalist governments in general, and in China in particular, from early 2020 until today with the coward stance of the opportunist left which cheers the protests in China today but were silent in the past two years!

The revolutionary character of a Marxist organization is not demonstrated when it opposes a counterrevolutionary policy only three years after its inception and only after the masses enter the streets and break down the chains of the totalitarian regime! No, an authentic Marxist organization recognizes the reactionary character of such a policy from the beginning and offers the vanguard a program and a strategy!

We call all socialist organisations who support the recent Chinese mass protests to make a self-critical balance sheet of their advocacy of the Lockdown policy in the past three years. The RCIT would strongly welcome such a development and is ready to open a dialogue on this issue!

Footnotes

1 The RCIT has published the following documents on the recent mass protests in China: Popular Rebellion against Lockdowns and "Zero COVID", <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/china-popular-rebellion-against-lockdowns-and-zero-covid/>; Protests against "Zero COVID" in China: An Embarrassment for the Lockdown Left, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/china-protests-and-lockdown-left/>; China Protests: The Anti-Lockdown Program of the University Students in Beijing, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/china-protests-university-students-against-lockdowns/>; Que el FITu y otros partidos de izquierda pongan en pie un Comité de Solidaridad con el pueblo chino que lucha contra la dictadura del PCCh, <https://convergenciadecombate.blogspot.com/2022/12/que-el-fitu-y-otros-partidos-de.html>; Defensores de cuarentenas y pases sanitarios apoyan la lucha de chinos contra cuarentenas ¿Doble vara o una realidad que liquidó sus argumentos?, <https://convergenciadecombate.blogspot.com/2022/11/defensores-de-cuarentenas-y-pases.html>

2 The RCIT has published numerous documents about capitalism in China and its transformation into a Great Power. See on this e.g. the book by Michael Pröbsting: Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry. The Factors behind the Accelerating Rivalry between the U.S., China, Russia, EU and Japan. A Critique of the Left's Analysis and an Outline of the Marxist Perspective, RCIT Books, Vienna 2019, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/anti-imperialism-in-the-age-of-great-power-rivalry/>; see also by the same author: "Chinese Imperialism and the World Economy", an essay published in the second edition of *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Imperialism and Anti-Imperialism* (edited by Immanuel Ness and Zak Cope), Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2020, https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-91206-6_179-1; China: An Imperialist Power ... Or Not Yet? A Theoretical Question with Very Practical Consequences! Continuing the Debate with Esteban Mercatante and the PTS/FT on China's class character and consequences for the revolutionary strategy, 22 January 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-imperialist-power-or-not-yet/>; China's transformation into an imperialist power. A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power (2012), in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 4, <http://www.thecommunists.net/publications/revcom-number-4>; How is it possible that some Marxists still Doubt that China has Become Capitalist? (A Critique of the PTS/FT), An analysis of the capitalist character of China's State-Owned Enterprises and its political consequences, 18 September 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/pts-ft-and-chinese-imperialism-2/>; Unable to See the Wood for the Trees (PTS/FT and China). Eclectic empiricism and the failure of the PTS/FT to recognize the imperialist character of China, 13 August 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/pts-ft-and-chinese-imperialism/>; China's Emergence as an Imperialist Power (Article in the US journal 'New Politics'), in: "New

Politics”, Summer 2014 (Vol:XV-1, Whole #: 57). See many more RCIT documents at a special sub-page on the RCIT’s website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>.

3 See on this e.g. RCIT: What Can We Learn from the Popular Rebellion against Lockdowns and “Zero-COVID” in China? An Open Letter to the comrades of LIT-CI, 14 December 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/open-letter-to-lit-ci-on-china-anti-lockdown-protests/>; see also Michael Pröbsting: Protests against “Zero COVID” in China: An Embarrassment for the Lockdown Left. The popular rebellion against the COVID Counterrevolution refutes the analysis and program of the opportunist left (with Alan Woods’ IMT as an example), 30 November 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/china-protests-and-lockdown-left/>

4 RCIT: A Revolutionary Action Program to fight COVID-19! Workers and Oppressed: Don’t trust the State of the Rich and Powerful! Trust only Yourselves! April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/health-program-covid19/>; see also: ALS: A Marxist approach to the international mobilizations against the authoritarian health restrictions, February 2022, https://www.thecommunists.net/home/espaa%3%B1ol/una-aproximaci%C3%B3n-marxista-a-las-movilizaciones-internacionales-contra-las-restricciones-sanitarias-autoritarias/#anker_1

5 The RCIT has published more than 100 pamphlets, essays, articles and statements plus a book on the COVID Counterrevolution 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 two RCIT Manifestos: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counterrevolutionary Offensive. We are at a turning point in the world situation as the ruling classes provoke a war-like atmosphere in order to legitimize the build-up of chauvinist state-bonapartist regimes, 21 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/covid-19-a-cover-for-a-major-global-counterrevolutionary-offensive/>; “Green Pass” & Compulsory Vaccinations: A New Stage in the COVID Counterrevolution. Down with the chauvinist-bonapartist police & surveillance state – defend democratic rights! No to health policy in the service of the capitalist monopolies – expand the public health sector under workers and popular control! 29 July 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/green-pass-compulsory-vaccinations-a-new-stage-in-the-covid-counterrevolution/>; In addition, we draw attention to our book by Michael

Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. A Marxist analysis and strategy for the revolutionary struggle, RCIT Books, April 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-covid-19-global-counterrevolution/>.

6 See on this also the joint statement of the RCIT’s Section in South Korea and the International Bureau: 2019 Corona Virus: No to the Anti-Chinese Chauvinism in South Korea! 06.02.2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/2019-corona-virus-no-to-the-anti-chinese-chauvinism-in-south-korea/>

7 See Almedina Gunić: Coronavirus: “I am not a Virus”... but WE will be the Cure! The chauvinist campaign behind the “Wuhan Coronavirus” hysteria and the revolutionary answer, 02 February 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/wuhan-virus/>

8 RCIT: 2019 Corona Virus: Oppose the Global Wave of Chauvinist Hysteria! Workers and oppressed: Do not trust the ruling class and its media! 05.02.2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/2019-corona-virus-oppose-the-global-wave-of-chauvinist-hysteria/>

9 RCIT: China: Solidarity with the Mass Protests in Hubei! Thousands of Chinese workers clash with the police in protest against the state repression under the cover of COVID-19, 28 March 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/china-solidarity-with-the-mass-protests-in-hubei/>

10 See e.g. chapter “China as a model?” in the above-mentioned book by Michael Pröbsting: The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It. See also chapter “China: the most successful regime in making “Big Brother” omnipresent” in the pamphlet by Michael Pröbsting: The Police & Surveillance State in the Post-Lockdown Phase. A global review of the ruling class’s plans of expanding the bonapartist state machinery amidst the COVID-19 crisis, 21 May 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/police-and-surveillance-state-in-post-lockdown-phase/>; by the same author: China’s Demographic Development and the Zero COVID Policy. The latest official reports about China’s birth and death rates destroy the reactionary conception of the Lockdown Left, 18 January 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/china-s-demographic-development-and-the-zero-covid-policy/>; “Big Brother” in China: The “Personal Health Index” App, 27 May 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/big-brother-in-china-the-personal-health-index-app/>

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.

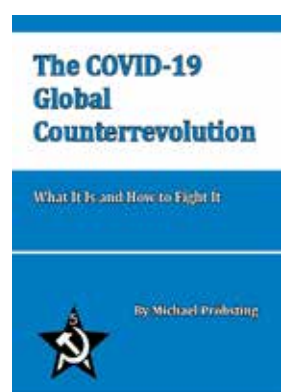
In addition, there is a wave of anti-democratic attacks of a scale which has not been seen in the imperialist countries since 1945. This has triggered a global turn towards Chauvinist State Bonapartism and the creation of a monstrous Leviathan-like state machinery.

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.



Ukraine War: Once More on Military Aid and Inter-Imperialist Rivalry

A critical contribution to a debate among Trotskyists in the U.S.

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 7 January 2023

The Ukraine War has been the most important single event in world politics in 2022 and will remain to be so for the foreseeable future. It's therefore only logical that this war has provoked major debates both within as well as between socialist organizations. Most of these discussions center on the character of the war resp. of the powers involved and, related to this issue, if socialists should call for military aid for the Ukrainian resistance.

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and its section in Russia – *Socialist Tendency* – have sided with the national war of defence of the Ukraine against Putin's invasion from the very beginning. While we lend no *political* support for the bourgeois Zelensky government, we call for material support – including military aid – for the Ukrainian resistance. At the same time, we emphasise the *dual character* of the conflict and the necessity for socialists to oppose both camps in the inter-imperialist rivalry between Russia and NATO. Hence, we advocate an internationalist and anti-imperialist position which we summarise in the slogan: “Defend the Ukraine against Putin's invasion! Against Russian and against NATO imperialism!”¹

There has been a debate for some time between *Left Voice*, the U.S. affiliate of the *Trotskyist Faction* (FT, with the Argentinean PTS as the leading party), and *Workers Voice*, which is the U.S. section of *International Worker League* (LIT, with the Brazilian PSTU as the leading party). While the FT characterises the Ukraine War as a “proxy war” and

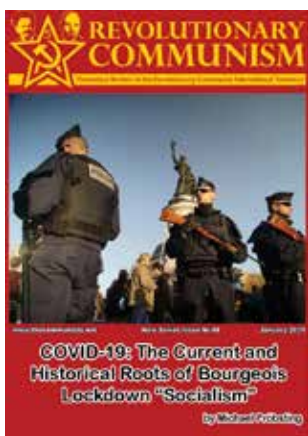
refuses to support any side, LIT correctly sides with the Ukrainian resistance.

We do not intend to repeat all our criticism of the FT's and LIT's policy as we did already elaborate such in several articles.² Furthermore, we already wrote a contribution to the debate between *Left Voice* and *Workers Voice*.³ Recently, three socialist organisations in the U.S. – the *Revolutionary Socialist Organizing Project*, *Denver Communists* and *Seattle Revolutionary Socialists* (RSOP/DC/SRS) – intervened in this debate with a statement titled “No U.S./NATO Arms to Ukraine!”.⁴ While we do not agree with their conclusions, we think that the comrades make an interesting contribution which we want to discuss critically in this article.

The wrong thesis of the “proxy war”

Let us begin with a brief summary of the RSOP/DC/SRS statement. The main point of this document is – as the title already suggests – their opposition to any military aid for the Ukrainian resistance fighting against Russia's invasion.

While the comrades correctly oppose any U.S. military intervention and sanctions against Russia, their position unfortunately “also means opposing any U.S. arms shipments to Ukraine.” However, we should also take note that they somehow relativize this statement by saying: “Opposing U.S. arms to Ukraine is not the same as criticizing Ukrainians for accepting arms from NATO. We should not do that.”



Publications of the RCIT

COVID-19: The Current and Historical Roots of Bourgeois Lockdown “Socialism”

Police State, Universal Basic Income & a new version of “War Socialism” of 1914

By Michael Pröbsting, January 2021

Introduction * 1. An Overview of the Policy of the Lockdown Left * 2. A Marxist Critique of Lockdownism and Universal Basic Income * 3. The Bourgeois Ideology of the “Caring State” (The Capitalist Handout State) * 4. The Objective Basis for Lockdown Socialism: Changes within the Political and Economic Physiognomy of Capitalism * 5. A Historical Analogy: The Mobilization of the Imperialist State for World War I * 6. War Socialism in 1914: The Social-Chauvinist Lensch-Cunow-Haenisch Group in German Social Democracy * 7. Lenin and other Marxists Declare War on War Socialism * 8. The Lockdown Left: A Worthy Successor of Social-Chauvinist War Socialists * 9. Once Again, the State Question: Marxism versus the Opportunist Left

A RCIT Pamphlet, 32 pages, A4 Format

They justify their position by arguing that socialists in the U.S. should focus on opposing their “own” imperialism. *“The primary role of U.S. revolutionaries regarding foreign policy is to win as many workers as possible away from support of U.S. imperialism. (...) As an organization in the U.S., Workers’ Voice has forgotten this primary objective. It is so concerned about winning support from Ukrainian workers that it ignores its primary duty of opposing U.S. imperialism.”*

In addition, the RSOP/DC/SRS statement shares with the FT the analysis, albeit with some ambiguity, that the Ukraine War is primarily a “proxy war” between NATO and Russia. *“The Workers’ Voice position is wrong on two counts: First, the war in Ukraine is not only a war of national independence. It is also an inter-imperialist conflict.”*

Based on such a wrong assessment, the comrades argue that the Ukraine’s right of national self-determination is only a subordinated factor. *“If a call for self-determination of a nation was used primarily to back the interests of one imperialist power against another, Marxists opposed it. One clear example was the case of Serbia in 1914. (...) The analogy of Serbia 1914 and Ukraine 2022 may not be exact, but it does have strong common elements. Marxists today would like to see Ukraine defeat Russia and win its independence. However, we cannot support U.S. imperialist intervention in this conflict. We must first oppose “our own” imperialist power.”*

Here too, the comrades’ position is somehow contradictory as they also express their sympathy for the Ukrainian cause: *“Of course we want Ukrainians to defeat the Russian invasion but we cannot sacrifice our opposition to U.S. imperialism to try to bring that about.”*

We should finally also note that the RSOP/DC/SRS statement distinguishes itself positively from the FT analysis by suggesting that not only the U.S. but also Russia is an imperialist power.⁵

On national wars and imperialist interference

As we did explain on numerous occasions, it is wrong to characterize the war in the Ukraine primarily as a “proxy war”. Of course, it is true that such an element exists since it takes place against the background of an accelerating inter-imperialist rivalry where both camps attempt to utilize the war to their advantage.

However, this has been the case in nearly all national wars which took place in periods of Great Power rivalry. Just think about France’s support for the U.S. *War of Independence* against Britain in 1775-83, the support of France and other Western power for the Polish insurrection against Russian occupation in 1863-64, the support of Napoleon III for the Italian *Risorgimento*, Russia’s support for the Balkan peoples in their war against the Ottoman Empire in 1912, Western and Nazi Germany’s support for Ethiopia against Italy in 1935-36, Western support for China as well as for various partisan struggles in South East Asia as well as in Europe during World War II, etc. Such kind of interference by one or several Great Powers did not remove the legitimate character of such national wars.⁶

The comrades’ reference to Serbia and its role in World War I is misplaced. This was a World War with all Great Powers participating so that ¾ of the world population was affected by this catastrophe. The Entente powers sent armies to the Balkans where the Serbian troops fought as part of their joint command. Today, no Western Power has

deployed its troops to wage war against Russia – neither in the Ukraine nor anywhere else. Of course, this could change in the future and, as we have repeatedly said since 24 February, this could change the character of the Ukraine War and, consequently, our tactics. But it would be utterly wrong to define our tactics for today on the basis of possible developments tomorrow.

Furthermore, the comrades should take into account that the relationship between Russia and the Ukraine has been historically shaped by national oppression. The Ukrainians fight Putin’s invasion not because Western governments tell them to do so but because they want to keep their fundamental national rights. Surely, Western weapons make their struggle militarily more effective. Without such weapons they would be forced to wage a more “primitive” war with a larger component of guerrilla struggle. But their goals would be pretty much the same as they are currently: defeating the Russian occupiers and liberating the occupied territories.

We ask those comrades criticising our analysis: what would the Ukraine do differently without Western support? Would they stop fighting the Russian invaders and rather welcome them? Would they support Russification, pardon “Denazification”? Would they not trying to liberate their territories? The answers to such questions are obvious!

We repeat that this does not mean that we deny that there exists a “proxy element” in this conflict. This is why we have always insisted that revolutionaries in both imperialist camps must reject all forms of chauvinist-militarist policy. This includes strong opposition to economic and financial sanctions as well as to all forms of chauvinist hatred against “Russian culture”, “Western LGBT decadence”, etc.

Does support for deliveries of arms mean support for U.S. military intervention?

As we already said, the RSOP/DC/SRS statement claims that socialists should oppose military aid for the Ukrainian resistance because that would represent a form of “U.S. imperialist intervention in this conflict.” This is a wrong argument.

First, if military aid would transform a national war into a proxy war in the service of this or that Great Power, there would have been hardly any national war in history. As we noted above, such a form of intervention of one or the other imperialist power has happened many times in history. We ask the RSOP/DC/SRS comrades: were the U.S. Trotskyists wrong in supporting the Chinese national war against Japanese imperialism from 1937 onwards? Were they wrong to do so despite the material support which Washington lent to China and despite the economic sanctions which it imposed against the *Land of the Rising Sun*? Were they wrong to do so during World War II when U.S. imperialism was at war with Tokyo? And we could ask the same question about the national war of the Yugoslavian partisans and various other struggles during World War II, about the Ethiopian War in 1935-36 when the Western powers imposed sanctions against Italy, etc. In our opinion, the Fourth International was absolutely right in continuing their support for all these just wars of national defense.

The comrades might object that one must not be naïve as the Western powers give weapons not because they are interested in the Ukraine's national self-determination but for their own reason. Obviously, this is true. However, this is not the whole story. It is the same with the Ukrainian side. They ask for weapons not because they want to serve Western interests but because they need such to fight back against Putin's invasion. Both sides have their "egoistic" reasons. In one case, these are imperialist motives. In the other case these are the motives of a people in a semi-colonial country resisting the occupation of another Great Power. In the case of the Ukraine War, these two interests overlap. In such a situation, Marxists have to differentiate. While we oppose the interests of U.S. imperialism, we also support national self-determination of oppressed nations. Hence, we consider Ukraine "egoism" as legitimate and, therefore, support military aid for their cause.

Another objection might be that military aid is just another form of imperialist intervention like imperialist sanctions. We think this is also a mistaken view. In our opinion, support for military aid must not be confused with support for imperialist sanctions and expropriation as there is a clear difference between these two things. Imperialist sanctions and expropriation hands over, or increases, economic power of an imperialist state and its monopoly bourgeoisie. In contrast, military aid hands over weapons to the Ukraine. One measure strengthens an imperialist state, the other strengthens a semi-colonial country under attack by a Great Power. In other words, there exists a difference in class character between these measures.

A critique might object that military aid might increase the influence of the donor. Surely, this is the case to a certain degree. But this does not mean that such aid automatically transforms the relationship into one of a master and his servant. There are numerous cases where such military aid did not result in such a relation. Think about the U.S. Independence War, about the partisans on the Balkans, etc. The task of socialists is not to oppose such military aid for a just war but to oppose any political conditions attached. Likewise, socialists in a country like the Ukraine have to counter any influence of imperialist "friends" and to advocate a policy of working-class independence.

Supporting military aid means voting for military budget?

The RSOP/DC/SRS statement also raises another criticism: *"If Workers' Voice had representatives in Congress, its voting position would be very similar to the pro-imperialist members of the DSA! They would presumably vote for continuing the U.S./ NATO arms shipments to Ukraine. This would be like Social Democratic parliamentarians in 1914 Germany voting for "war credits" for World War I. (...) This is not a revolutionary Marxist position!"*

We are not without criticism of the LIT comrades (to which *Workers Voice* belong) as they advocate imperialist sanctions against Russia – and at the same time deny the latter's imperialist character! But on this issue, the RSOP/DC/SRS comrades are mistaken. Supporting military aid does not mean one would have to vote in the parliament for the governments' bill. This would be a grave opportunist mistake since such a vote would reflect confidence in the (imperialist) governments foreign and military policy

towards the Ukraine.

Leon Trotsky had a similar discussion with Shachtman in 1937, at that time a leader of the U.S. section of the Fourth International. He reported about this discussion in his well-known book *"In Defense of Marxism"*.

"On September 18, 1937, Shachtman wrote me:

"You say, 'If we would have a member in the Cortes he would vote against the military budget of Negrin.' Unless this is a typographical error it seems to us to be a nonsequitur. If, as we all contend, the element of an imperialist war is not dominant at the present time in the Spanish struggle, and if instead the decisive element is still the struggle between the decaying bourgeois democracy, with all that it involves, on the one side, and fascism on the other, and further if we are obliged to give military assistance to the struggle against fascism, we don't see how it would be possible to vote in the Cortes against the military budget. ... If a Bolshevik-Leninist on the Huesca front were asked by a Socialist comrade why his representative in the Cortes voted against the proposal by Negrin to devote a million pesetas to the purchase of rifles for the front, what would this Bolshevik-Leninist reply? It doesn't seem to us that he would have an effective answer. ..." (My emphasis.)

This letter astounded me. Shachtman was willing to express confidence in the perfidious Negrin government on the purely negative basis that the "element of an imperialist war" was not dominant in Spain.

On September 20, 1937, I replied to Shachtman:

"To vote the military budget of the Negrin government signifies to vote him political confidence. ... To do it would be a crime. How we explain our vote to the anarchist workers? Very simply: We have not the slightest confidence in the capacity of this government to conduct the war and assure victory. We accuse this government of protecting the rich and starving the poor. This government must be smashed. So long as we are not strong enough to replace it, we are fighting under its command. But on every occasion we express openly our nonconfidence in it: it is the only one possibility to mobilize the masses politically against this government and to prepare its overthrow. Any other politics would be a betrayal of the revolution."

The tone of my reply only feebly reflects the ... amazement which Shachtman's opportunist position produced in me. Isolated mistakes are of course unavoidable but today, two and a half years later, this correspondence is illuminated with new light. Since we defend bourgeois democracy against fascism, Shachtman reasons, we therefore cannot refuse confidence to the bourgeois government."⁷

The RSOP/DC/SRS comrades basically repeat Shachtman's logic and conclude from this that one must not support weapon deliveries for the Ukraine.

U.S. revolutionaries need to break with "Americanism"!

We shall conclude our article with pointing to a methodological problem in the RSOP/DC/SRS statement. It seems to us to that the comrades suffer from an extraordinary national-centredness which they disguise by displaying a hard-core anti-imperialist approach against their "own" ruling class.

As we noted above, the comrades recognise not only the imperialist character of Russia but express also their sympathy for the Ukrainian people (*"we want Ukrainians to defeat the Russian invasion"*). They even say that they do *"not criticize Ukrainians for accepting arms from NATO."* At

the same time, they oppose such military aid and accuse *Workers' Voice* for its supposed "support for U.S. imperialist intervention".

How do the RSOP/DC/SRS comrades justify such a contradictory position? Basically, by reducing a key issue of world politics and of internationalist struggle to a national, American issue. A war in Eastern Europe is viewed with American glasses and subordinated to what these comrades consider as tasks of American socialists. Comrades, this is not internationalism, this is Americanism!

From where did you get the idea that U.S. socialists should subordinate their international solidarity to their policy of fundamental opposition against their own ruling class? Certainly not from Marx, Lenin or Trotsky! Marx and Engels called the labor organisations in Western Europe to support the Polish insurrection in 1863-64 against Russia despite the pro-Polish sympathies of Napoleon III and other governments. As we did show in other works, U.S. Trotskyists continued their support for China despite the fact that Washington also sided with the *Middle Kingdom*.⁸

No, comrades, surely, the U.S. is a beautiful country but, sorry to say so, it is not the centre of the world! You should derive your tactics from an analysis of world politics and from the internationalist tasks of international socialism – not from national considerations of American socialists!

Trotsky's words against some ultra-leftists which demonstrated a similar mechanistic approach have not lost their relevance. „In ninety cases out of a hundred the workers actually place a minus sign where the bourgeoisie places a plus sign. In ten cases, however, they are forced to fix the same sign as the bourgeoisie but with their own seal, in which is expressed their mistrust of the bourgeoisie. The policy of the proletariat is not at all automatically derived from the policy of the bourgeoisie, bearing only the opposite sign – this would make every sectarian a master strategist; no, the revolutionary party must each time orient itself independently in the internal as well as the external situation, arriving at those decisions which correspond best to the interests of the proletariat. This rule applies just as much to the war period as to the period of peace.“⁹

Furthermore, comrades, proletarian internationalism does not mean that every socialist organization focuses on opposing its "own" bourgeoisie. Surely, socialists in imperialist countries must never defend "their fatherland" and neither must they support the policy of their respective ruling class. But their tactics towards this or that class struggle in another country, this or that national liberation war on another continent – all this must be derived from an international and not from an American perspective!

If opposition against one's "own" bourgeoisie is sufficient for internationalism, what for do socialists need an International? This basically means "everyone for himself" but no joint strategy, commonly elaborated and subordinated to

common international priorities in the class struggle! Such an approach is typical for national-centered groups but must not be the starting point for internationalist socialists!

We hope that the RSOP/DC/SRS comrades reconsider their position. This would be all the more urgent because the coming period will see more such kind of national wars combined with one or the other form of Great Power interference. Revolutionaries need to take an internationalist position, elaborated with comrades in other countries, so that they can jointly intervene in these class struggles.

Footnotes

1 We refer readers to a special page on our website where more than 150 RCIT documents on the Ukraine War and the current NATO-Russia conflict are compiled: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/compilation-of-documents-on-nato-russia-conflict/>. In particular we refer to the RCIT Manifesto: Ukraine War: A Turning Point of World Historic Significance. Socialists must combine the revolutionary defense of the Ukraine against Putin's invasion with the internationalist struggle against Russian as well as NATO and EU imperialism, 1 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/manifesto-ukraine-war-a-turning-point-of-world-historic-significance/>

2 For our critique of LIT see e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Shall Socialists Call for "Nuclear Disarmament"? A comradely critique of a pacifist slogan raised by LIT-CI, 2 October 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/shall-socialists-call-for-nuclear-disarmament/>; by the same author: Ukraine War: Revolutionary Defenseism and Non-Revolutionary Defenseism. A comradely critique of LIT-CI which falsely combines its defence of the Ukraine with support for Western imperialist sanctions against Russia, 15 July 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/ukraine-war-revolutionary-defenseism-and-non-revolutionary-defenseism/>; Ukraine War: Supporting Western Sanctions Is Impermissible for Socialists! Support for the Ukrainian resistance must be combined with consistent anti-imperialism (a comradely critique of LIT-CI), 1 June 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/ukraine-war-supporting-western-sanctions-is-impermissible-for-socialists/>; LIT-CI "Would Undoubtedly Defend Russia". Recent articles of LIT-CI reveal a dangerous step towards social-imperialism, 29 March 2022, [www.thecommunists.net, https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/lit-ci-would-undoubtedly-defend-russia/](https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/lit-ci-would-undoubtedly-defend-russia/); Is Russia "Dependent on Western Imperialism"? Critical remarks on the LIT-CI statement on the current NATO-Russia conflict, 14 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/critical-remarks-on-lit-ci-statement-on-the-current-nato-russia-conflict/>; For an extensive critique of the position of FT/PTS on the Ukraine War see e.g. Michael Pröbsting: No to Workers Boycott against Russia but Yes to Boycotting the Ukraine? On the support of the PTS/FT for boycott actions against arms shipments for the Ukraine, 26 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/pts-ft-workers-sanctions-against-ukraine/>.

3 Michael Pröbsting: Ukraine War: A Mistaken Polem-

Comunismo Revolucionario

Spanish-language Journal of the RCIT

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

ic. Reply to a critique of the FT/PTS of LIT-CI's defence of the Ukraine, 13 September 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/ukraine-war-a-mistaken-polemic/>

4 Revolutionary Socialist Organizing Project, Denver Communists and Seattle Revolutionary Socialists: No U.S./NATO Arms to Ukraine! 22 December 2022, <https://www.leftvoice.org/no-u-s-nato-arms-to-ukraine/>. All quotes are from this statement if not indicated otherwise.

5 The RCIT has published numerous documents about capitalism in Russia and its rise to an imperialist power. The most important ones are several pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting: The Peculiar Features of Russian Imperialism. A Study of Russia's Monopolies, Capital Export and Super-Exploitation in the Light of Marxist Theory, 10 August 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-peculiar-features-of-russian-imperialism/>; by the same author: Lenin's Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power. On the Understanding and Misunderstanding of Today's Inter-Imperialist Rivalry in the Light of Lenin's Theory of Imperialism. Another Reply to Our Critics Who Deny Russia's Imperialist Character, August 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-theory-and-russia/>; Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014 (this pamphlet contains a document written in 2001 in which we established for the first time our characterisation of Russia as imperialist), <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>; see also these essays by the same author: Russia: An Imperialist Power or a "Non-Hegemonic Empire in Gestation"? A reply to the Argentinean economist Claudio Katz, in: New Politics, 11 August 2022, at <https://newpol.org/russia-an-imperialist-power-or-a-non-hegemonic-empire-in-gestation-a-reply-to-the-argentinean-economist-claudio-katz-an-essay-with-8-tables/>; Russian Imperialism and Its Monopolies, in: New Politics Vol. XVIII No. 4, Whole Number 72, Winter 2022, https://newpol.org/issue_post/russian-imperialism-and-its-monopolies/; Once Again on Russian Imperialism (Reply to Critics). A rebuttal of a theory which claims that Russia is not an imperialist state but

would be rather "comparable to Brazil and Iran", 30 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/once-again-on-russian-imperialism-reply-to-critics/>. See various other RCIT documents on this issue at a special sub-page on the RCIT's website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>.

6 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: A Marxist Slogan and its Caricature. On the social-imperialist distortion of the slogan "The Main Enemy Is At Home" in the context of the Ukraine War and the Taiwan Strait Crisis, 17 August 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/the-marxist-slogan-the-main-enemy-is-at-home-and-its-social-imperialist-distortion/>; by the same author: The Ukraine War and the Second Sino-Japanese War: A Historical Analogy. The dual tactic of Marxists in the Ukraine War today draws on the approach of their predecessors in the war between China and Japan in 1937-41, 10 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/ukraine-war-second-sino-japanese-war-a-historical-analogy/>

7 Leon Trotsky: From a Scratch—To the Danger of Gangrene (1940), in: Leon Trotsky: In Defense of Marxism (1942), Pathfinder Press, New York 1973, pp. 128-129, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/edom/dm/22-scratch2.htm>

8 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: A Marxist Slogan and its Caricature. On the social-imperialist distortion of the slogan "The Main Enemy Is At Home" in the context of the Ukraine War and the Taiwan Strait Crisis; by the same author: The Struggle of Revolutionaries in Imperialist Heartlands against Wars of their "Own" Ruling Class. Examples from the history of the RCIT and its predecessor organisation in the last four decades, 2 September 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-struggle-of-revolutionaries-in-imperialist-heartlands-against-wars-of-their-own-ruling-class/>

9 Leon Trotsky: Learn to Think: A Friendly Suggestion to Certain Ultra-Leftists (1938); in: Trotsky Writings 1937-38, pp. 332-333, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1938/05/think.htm>



Publications of the RCIT

Ukraine: A Capitalist Semi-Colony

On the exploitation and deformation of Ukraine's economy
by imperialist monopolies and oligarchs since capitalist restoration in 1991

By Michael Pröbsting, January 2023

Introduction * I. The Marxist Theory of Imperialism and the Concept of Semi-Colonies * II. The Dead-End of Bureaucratic Stalinism * III. The Devastating Social & Economic Consequences of Capitalist Restoration * IV. The Semi-Colonial Deformation of Ukrainian Capitalism since 1991 (1. Oligarchs: the creation of a comprador bourgeoisie; 2. A semi-colonial supplier of raw materials for the capitalist world market; 3. Deep in the trap of foreign debt; 4. Foreign investment: the imperialist plunder of the Ukraine; 5. Migration: the Ukraine provides cheap labour force) * V. Ukraine: A Dependent Country Torn between Great Powers in East & West * VI. Russia's Push to Colonise the Ukraine since February 2022 and NATO's Efforts to Increase its Influence * VII. The Way Forward: From National Liberation to Social Revolution * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 28 pages, A4 Format

Russia: A Disguised Support for Imperialist Armament

The RRP (Russia) deepens its opportunist adaptation to the social-chauvinist KPRF

By Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 9.11.2022

A few days ago, the *Revolutsionnaya Rabochaya Partiya* (Revolutionary Workers Party, RRP) published a new, comprehensive resolution about Putin's war against the Ukraine. The RRP is not much known outside of Russia as it is a sizeable but a nationally isolated Trotskyist organisation which split from Alan Woods' IMT two decades ago.¹

The new statement, adopted at a conference in Moscow on 30 October, elaborates the RRP's approach to the war, to anti-war protests as well as to Zyuganov's KPRF.² Basically, the document confirms and deepens the organisation's past line which our comrades in Russia rightly characterise as "*capitulation to social-chauvinism*". As we did already deal with the policy of the RRP in a recently published article, we will limit ourselves at this place to discussing the main issues of the new Moscow resolution.³

Again, the RRP statement distinguishes itself by its failure to say a critical word about the war resp. the "*Special Military Operation*" as it is officially called in Russia.⁴ Likewise, it does not even mention the imperialist character of Russia.⁵ This is not because of security reasons since the RCIT section in Russia – "*Socialist Tendency*" – as well as another Trotskyist organisation ("*Socialist Alternative*") take a clear internationalist and anti-imperialist position against Putin's war in their publications.⁶ Neither is there any excuse for being silent about Russian imperialism. Even large Stalinist parties like the RKRK manage to speak out this obvious truth!⁷

However, the remarkable thing about the new RRP resolution is not only that it repeats the organization's serious political flaws but also that it starts to raise social-chauvinist, pro-war slogans.

"More ammunition, more high-tech weapons"

In dealing with the recent protests of soldiers, the RRP shamefully combines support for legitimate demands with reactionary slogans to strengthen Putin's army and its combat readiness. "*We need to support the demands of the workers at the front, concerning the improvement of their situation, to achieve fulfillment by the authorities of their promises: credit vacations, credit amnesty for the seriously wounded and the dead; provision with all necessary ammunition at the expense of the state; provision with high-tech equipment.*"

While the first slogans are legitimate economic demands, the latter are nothing but undisguised slogans calling the state to provide the army with more ammunition and with more high-tech weapons. Effectively, *these are social-imperialist demands as a better armed Russian army is capable of killing more Ukrainians!*

Surely, the RRP leaders will hide themselves behind the argument that some soldiers might raise such slogans and that they are only relating to these demands. However, this is an excuse only for rotten opportunists! In an imperialist war, Marxists can not necessarily support all demands of the soldiers of an imperialist army! This is particularly true, if this army is invading and colonializing a

semi-colonial country like the Ukraine!

The social-chauvinist character of the RRP policy is also revealed by another omission. While they mention the *economic* demands of soldiers, they don't say a single word about the *democratic* demands which were raised at these protests. Among the popular slogans of the protesting soldiers from the Chuvash Republic (the Chuvash people is one of the many oppressed national minorities of the Russia Empire) was the demand to see their relatives and be able to leave. In fact, the soldiers could enforce several of their demands and many of them were able to leave the army and to go home. The Chuvash Republic was also promised to get R500 million – R400 million for payments to the mobilized and R100 million as humanitarian aid.

As our comrades of "*Socialist Tendency*" have demonstrated in their statement on the recent soldier protests, it is the duty of Marxists to relate to legitimate demands which undermine the combat strength of army. It is however utterly counter-revolutionary to raise demands for more weapons to kill oppressed people!

The RCIT's approach is completely contrary to the social-chauvinist logic of the RRP. We do not desire to raise the combat strength of the army of Russian imperialism. No, we want to undermine and weaken it. We want to increase the divisions and frictions between soldiers and the military command not by outdoing the regime's chauvinism and militarism but by counterposing the elementary interest of the soldiers against the imperialist goals of Putin's army.

The RRP's policy follows the footsteps of Zyuganov's KPRF and the right-wing milbloggers a la Igor Strelkov. These reactionaries criticise the Kremlin and the army command for not sufficiently providing the military with modern weaponry, for not waging the war against the Ukraine successfully enough.

In contrast to the RRP's social-chauvinism, the RCIT's approach is based on our internationalist and anti-imperialist program against Putin's reactionary war against the Ukrainian people – a policy which we summarise in the slogan: *Defend the Ukraine against Putin's invasion! Against Russian and against NATO imperialism!*

From such an approach follows that we differentiate in our support for soldiers demands. As we said in our statement on the soldier protests:

"Therefore, socialists want to see the defeat of the Russian army. All activists against this barbarous war therefore welcome such a process of disintegration of the Russian armed forces. If this imperialist army is less united and more divided, it becomes a less effective instrument for Putin's colonial war. We support those demands which help to undermine and break the loyalty of soldiers to the army command (which implements the directives of the capitalist-bonapartist Putin regime). We do not support those demands which help to strengthen the imperialist army and to make it a more effective instrument of the Kremlin. Socialists should therefore support all demands which increase the democratic rights of soldiers, and which weaken the character of the army as a willing tool of the Kremlin. Hence, activists

should agitate for the soldiers' right to receive visits from their relatives and to get leave. We also defend their right to protest. Furthermore, socialists should use these events as an opportunity to explain the necessity for soldiers to self-organise (e.g. building committees of action), to demand the right to elect their superiors, etc." ⁸

Calling the pro-Russian social-imperialist KPRF ... to oppose NATO!

The RRP leadership continues its social-chauvinist policy also in regard to its opportunist adaptation to the KPRF. As we mentioned in our previous critique, the RRP has a long-standing policy of supporting Zyuganov's party. At the recently held elections in early September, they called for a vote for this party and even stood candidates on its list in Moscow. (The Russian section of Alan Woods' IMT followed the same shameful tactic. ⁹)

They act as Zyuganovs servants despite the fact that the KPRF – the second-largest party in the country behind Putin's "United Russia" – has played the role of an ultra-reactionary whip since the beginning of the war. It was Zyuganov and his party which initiated the chauvinist bill in the Duma calling for the recognition of the so-called "Donbass Republics". ¹⁰ It was Zyuganov and his party which played a major role in pushing for Putin's "mobilisation" so that Russia could accomplish its imperialist goals in the Ukraine. ¹¹ And it was this party which unanimously supported the laws in the Duma which formally annexed the four occupied regions of eastern and southern Ukraine (Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhia). ¹² And, we shall add, it is this party which supported the recently adopted bill banning "LGBT propaganda". ¹³

Even the RRP leadership can no longer hide the truth about the reactionary character of Zyuganov's social-chauvinist party. "The CPRF leadership has adopted a chauvinist position (...). Many CPRF members voluntarily left the organization in protest, and many were expelled. These elections demonstrated that patriotically-minded workers are voting for United Russia [Putin's party, Ed.], while the CPRF's rating is declining. (...)

For now, the CPRF is merging with United Russia. Instead of going left, it is going right. There is no ground for a mass Marxist platform within the CPRF. Worker internationalists are already woefully few in number. They will not waste their time looking for like-minded people in the CPRF in its current form. The development of a vanguard force may have points of contact with elements within the CPRF, but will crystallize outside it."

While the RRP leadership is forced to admit this uncomfortable truth (which authentic Marxists publicly stated already long before), how does it justify its opportunist support for the KPRF which even went so far as standing on its electoral list?! Well, there is only one solution for the RRP leadership: ignore the issue, avoid any self-criticism and hope that critical members will not ask too many questions!

Despite such a sobering balance sheet, the RRP leadership still refuses to state what is the political character of the KPRF. They still do not dare to call this party a "social-chauvinist and social-imperialist" force. The reason is obvious. Such an omission allows Zyuganovs servants to leave the door open for future collaboration.

But the RRP leadership does not confine itself to hopes for a future realignment. Despite being compelled to criticise the Zyuganovs policy, it still makes bizarre proposals to this party. Leaving aside such absurd speculations like "if the CPRF had taken a revolutionary stance", the RRP's Moscow resolution states: "The CPRF could make an appeal for solidarity with the workers of NATO countries, the most reliable way to prevent the military aggression of Western imperialism is to influence the working masses in the West. Today is the time to refresh the memory of workers about Lenin's thesis that it is not enough to fight against one war, it is necessary to fight against the origins of the war, which stem from the capitalist relations of production."

One has to admit that this is a realistic demand to Zyuganov and his friends. One can criticise them for many things but certainly not for failing to condemn NATO and to appeal to Western workers! The KPRF is an utterly Great Russian chauvinist and social-imperialist party since many years. It has always supported the "fatherland"



Publications of the RCIT

The Peculiar Features of Russian Imperialism

A Study of Russia's Monopolies, Capital Export
and Super-Exploitation in the Light of Marxist Theory

By Michael Pröbsting, August 2021

Introduction * Another Denial of Russia's Imperialist Character * The Methodological Failure of our Critics * Russia's Economy: Dominated by Domestic, not Foreign, Monopolies * Capital Export and the Problem of "Round-Tripping" Foreign Direct Investments * "Phantom FDI": No Russian Peculiarity but a Global Phenomenon * Russia's Leading Multinational Corporations and their Foreign Investments * Imperialist Super-Exploitation via Capital Export * Imperialist Super-Exploitation via Migration * Conclusions * Footnotes

A RCIT Pamphlet, 20 pages, A4 Format

against NATO imperialism. Zyuganov does not need the RRP blandisher to remind him about his patriotic duty!

It is also outrageous that the RRP leadership worries about “preventing the military aggression of Western imperialism” ... but does not say a single word about preventing the military aggression of Russian imperialism! And this at a time when Putin’s killers slaughter the Ukrainian people and destroy their country!

It seems that the RRP leadership is a bit worried about the fate of the imperialist “fatherland” which needs to be defended against “the military aggression of Western imperialism”. In any case, it is safe to say that it is much more worried about Russia than about the Ukraine – the victim of Putin’s imperialist war!

Socialists must break with the social-imperialists!

The RRP is deeply trapped in the policy of social-chauvinism and opportunist adaptation to the social-imperialist KPRF. In abstract, it praises the principles of Marxism, internationalism and everything which sounds and beautiful! However, in their practice, the RRP supports weapons for the imperialist army and votes for the social-chauvinist party. It is a servant of Zyuganov, i.e. a servant of Russian social-imperialism.

There is a gulf between the policy of authentic revolutionaries and that of the RRP’s unprincipled and outrageous policy of opportunism. It is therefore obligatory for authentic Marxists to break decisively with the forces of social-chauvinism and their allies! Revolutionaries who want to remain faithful to the principles of internationalism and anti-imperialism must categorically separate themselves from the RRP and similar forces – in Russia as well as internationally.

The supporters of “Socialist Tendency” – the RCIT section in Russia – welcome all revolutionaries who join us in the struggle against social-imperialism and chauvinist patriotism. We repeat our proposal which we outlined in an “Open Letter to Russian Socialists” and in which we call all revolutionaries to unite on the basis of a consistent internationalist and anti-imperialist program.¹⁴

Footnotes

1 Since the beginning of the Ukraine War, the RRP collaborates with the *Partito Comunista dei Lavoratori* (PCL), an Italian Trotskyist organization. The PCL has republished several documents of the RRP on their website (see <https://www.pclavoratori.it/files/index.php?obj=NEWS&oid=7240>; <https://www.pclavoratori.it/files/index.php?obj=NEWS&oid=7249>; <https://www.pclavoratori.it/files/index.php?obj=NEWS&oid=7334>; <https://www.pclavoratori.it/files/index.php?obj=NEWS&oid=7328>). The PCL’s omission of any critical comment about the policy of their Russian comrades in the 8 months after the beginning of their collaboration, suggests a political proximity between the two organisations.

2 РРП: Резолюция Московской конференции, 30.10.2022, https://vk.com/@rwp_rwp-rezoluciya-moskovskoi-konferencii-rrp-301022. All quotes are from this resolution if not indicated otherwise. The translation is ours.

3 Michael Pröbsting: Against Russia’s War without Internationalism and Anti-Imperialism? A revealing statement of the RRP (Russia) about Putin’s “partial mobilisation”, 8 October 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/rrp-russia-and-ukraine-war/>

4 We refer readers to a special page on our website

where more than 120 RCIT documents on the Ukraine War and the current NATO-Russia conflict are compiled: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/compilation-of-documents-on-nato-russia-conflict/>. In particular we refer to the RCIT Manifesto: Ukraine War: A Turning Point of World Historic Significance. Socialists must combine the revolutionary defense of the Ukraine against Putin’s invasion with the internationalist struggle against Russian as well as NATO and EU imperialism, 1 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/manifesto-ukraine-war-a-turning-point-of-world-historic-significance/>

5 The RCIT has published numerous documents about capitalism in Russia and its rise to an imperialist power. The most important ones are several pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting: The Peculiar Features of Russian Imperialism. A Study of Russia’s Monopolies, Capital Export and Super-Exploitation in the Light of Marxist Theory, 10 August 2021, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/the-peculiar-features-of-russian-imperialism/>; by the same author: Lenin’s Theory of Imperialism and the Rise of Russia as a Great Power. On the Understanding and Misunderstanding of Today’s Inter-Imperialist Rivalry in the Light of Lenin’s Theory of Imperialism. Another Reply to Our Critics Who Deny Russia’s Imperialist Character, August 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialism-theory-and-russia/>; Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014 (this pamphlet contains a document written in 2001 in which we established for the first time our characterisation of Russia as imperialist), <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>; see also these essays by the same author: Russia: An Imperialist Power or a “Non-Hegemonic Empire in Gestation”? A reply to the Argentinean economist Claudio Katz, in: New Politics, 11 August 2022, at <https://newpol.org/russia-an-imperialist-power-or-a-non-hegemonic-empire-in-gestation-a-reply-to-the-argentinean-economist-claudio-katz-an-essay-with-8-tables/>; Russian Imperialism and Its Monopolies, in: New Politics Vol. XVIII No. 4, Whole Number 72, Winter 2022, https://newpol.org/issue_post/russian-imperialism-and-its-monopolies/; Once Again on Russian Imperialism (Reply to Critics). A rebuttal of a theory which claims that Russia is not an imperialist state but would be rather “comparable to Brazil and Iran”, 30 March 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/once-again-on-russian-imperialism-reply-to-critics/>. See various other RCIT documents on this issue at a special sub-page on the RCIT’s website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/china-russia-as-imperialist-powers/>.

6 See the website of our comrades in Russia: www.socialisttendency.com. Readers can find the English translation of a number of these documents about the Ukraine War at this sub-page on the RCIT website: <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/compilation-of-documents-on-nato-russia-conflict/>. For the fusion declaration between the RCIT and CT see: <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/fusion-declaration-between-ct-russia-and-rcit/>. For the stance of “Socialist Alternative” see e.g. Даниил Раскольников: Почему Путин напал на Украину? 15 августа 2022, <https://socialist.news/russia/war/why-putin-invade-ukraine/>

7 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Russia and the Theory of “Lesser-Evil” Imperialism. On some Stalinists and “Trotskyists” who formally recognize Russia’s class character but reject the political consequences, 28 July 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/russia-and-the-theory-of-lesser-evil-imperialism/>

8 RCIT: Ukraine War: On Spontaneous Protests of Soldiers of the Russian Army, 3 November 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/ukraine-war-spontaneous-protests-of-soldiers-of-russian-army/>

9 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Zyuganov’s Servants. IMT leaders in Russia join list of Zyuganov’s KPRF – Pu-

tin's pro-war "communists" – for upcoming municipal elections, 25 August 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/zyuganov-s-servants-imt-russia/>; by the same author: Nothing Learned and Nothing Forgotten. The theory and practice of Alan Woods' IMT demonstrates its continuing adaptation to pro-Russian social-imperialism, 15 October 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/imt-russian-imperialism-ukraine-war/>

10 The RCIT has published a number of polemics against the KPRF's social-chauvinist policy in the Ukraine War; see e.g. the pamphlets by Michael Pröbsting: Putin's Poodles (Apologies to All Dogs). The pro-Russian Stalinist parties and their arguments in the current NATO-Russia Conflict, 9 February 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/nato-russia-conflict-stalinism-as-putin-s-poodles/>; by the same author: "Socialism" a la Putin and Zyuganov. On a telling dialogue between the Stalinist party leader and the Russian President, 13 July 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/socialism-a-la-putin/>.

11 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Russia: Zyugan-

ov Calls for "General Mobilisation" to defeat the Ukraine. The "communist" KPRF leader joins the long-standing demand of the hard-core sector of the Great Russian chauvinist camp a la Igor Strelkov, 13 September 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/russia-zyuganov-calls-for-general-mobilisation-to-defeat-the-ukraine/>

12 See on this e.g. RCIT: Putin Announces Colonial Annexation of Ukrainian Territories, 30 September 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/global/putin-announces-colonial-annexation-of-ukrainian-territories/>

13 See on this e.g. Michael Pröbsting: Russia: So-Called "Communists" against LGBT+. The KPRF deputies in the State Duma unanimously support a bill banning "LGBT propaganda", 31 October 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/pressed/russian-kprf-against-lgbt/>

14 Open Letter to all Socialists in Russia: Unite in Fighting Russian Imperialism! Open Letter by the Socialist Tendency (Russia) and the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 12 July 2022, <https://www.thecommunists.net/rcit/open-letter-to-all-socialists-in-russia-12-07-2022/>

Books of the RCIT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anti-Imperialism in the Age of Great Power Rivalry

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

By Michael Pröbsting



Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

