

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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A drawing of Luis Armando Espinoza by the Argentinean artist Rodolfo Fucile (see page 2)

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COVID-19 Counterrevolution and the Police & Surveillance State

by Michael Pröbsting

Yossi Schwartz: Slavery, Imperialism, ... COVID-19 in Nigeria

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Picture on the cover: A drawing of Luis Armando Espinoza by the artist Rodolfo Fucile. Espinoza, a 32-year old worker in Tucumán (Argentina), was detained and later killed by the police in May 2020 because he "violated the lockdown rules". He leaves a wife and six small children.

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

Slavery, Colonialism, Imperialism, Military Rule, Plagues... COVID-19 in Nigeria

Article by Yossi Schwartz, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 2 May 2020

Even some scientists understand that the lockdown might be far more dangerous than the virus. “*An investigation might show that the growth in the number of death cases related to lockdown is higher than the death cases related to COVID-19,*” the paper said. “*It may have a similar effect to ‘Iatrogenesis’ in medicine, a phenomena where the medicine is more detrimental than the disease itself (...)* Expected consequences of the lockdown include enormous unemployment, isolation and loneliness, low access to healthcare, drug abuse and domestic violence, hunger and social unrest.”¹

Africa, the birthplace of the human race, has been plundered for hundreds of years by different robbers aided by corrupted chiefs and modern bourgeois politicians. Today when humanity is facing three crises - economical, political and medical - it is more than likely that the peoples of Africa will suffer from these three combined disasters caused by the decaying, rotten capitalist system more than people in other parts of the world.

At the same time, the working class and the poor in Africa will be at the front line of the class struggle because they have fewer illusions in ‘their’ corrupted governments. Those are not able to hide behind the explanation of coronavirus in order to cover political and economic plans to attack the democratic rights and the social gains as easily as it happens in other parts of the world. The African masses have suffered from slavery, colonialist exploitations before the formal independence, and from the imperialist super-exploitation then after. Today, they suffer from imperialist super-exploitation, imperialist wars, corrupted local governments and the policies of these government that cost so many lives. There is a popular saying these days that capture the essence of the situation: “The Corona is the virus, capitalism is the plague.” It is just a matter of short time that the peoples of Africa will rise up against the attacks. In this struggle, the workers and oppressed of Nigeria (the most populated country in Africa) is likely to become a leading force.

Slavery and Colonialism

While studies of slavery usually examine the slavery of transatlantic slavery, the trading of human beings began already in the ancient slave societies. The ancient Egyptians had slaves, as did the other early societies of that historical period, including Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome. Slavery existed in many ancient societies but before Greece slaves were rare, only owned by powerful families. The first true slave society was ancient Greece.

It is estimated 90% of the population of democratic Athens were slaves respectively former slaves as the economy was based on the slavery mode of production. The slaves worked in construction, fields, and even in teaching crafts and arts.

In ancient Rome the ruling class used slave labor to build roads and temples and slave worked even in merchants' shops. Rome became the most developed slave society at that time. Yet there was a difference between the slavery

of the ancient empires and the slavery of the transatlantic. Slaves in ancient societies were those who lost the war or sold to slavery because of debts. This was true in Rome and the Byzantine Empire even after Christianity became the state religion. Since the slaves in Rome were those who lost the war, slavery was not rationalized by racial origin. The Romans used the term “Natio” so that slave owners know to which people respectively tribe the slaves belonged. People and tribes more resistant against the Roman Empire equalled potentially resistant slaves in the eyes of the slaveholders. According to the Roman law: “*Those who sell slaves must state the natio [place of origin] of each at the sale; for the natio of a slave frequently encourages or deters a prospective buyer; hence it is advantageous to know his natio, since it is reasonable to suppose that some slaves are good because they originate from a tribe that has a good reputation, and others bad because they come from a tribe that is a rather disreputable Edict of the Aediles.*”²

The “Natio” could change from negative to positive or from positive to negative in the lifetime of the slave based on the relations between the Roman Empire and his or hers tribe. Although there were also black slaves in Rome, the majority of slaves were not Africans and the slaves from Africa were not seen as an inferior race in any regard. Slavery was seen as the logical outcome of economic desperation or lost wars and had nothing to do with race at that time.

After a victorious battle, the Roman generals handed over the captives to an official who sold them at auction to traders who followed the armies. To give some examples: “*In 177 BC, during his campaign in Sardinia, Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus killed or enslaved 80,000 of the island’s inhabitants. In 167 BC the Roman senate granted the victorious Roman general in Greece the right to sack seventy cities on the west coast of Greece: 150,000 persons were enslaved.*”³

The Roman politician, rhetor and philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero, following a victory during his governorship of Cilicia, gave his soldiers all the plunder except the captives whom he sold.

On 19 December 51 BC he wrote: “*as I write, there are about 120,000 sesterces (a Roman coin) on the platform.*” (...) *In the war against Judea 66-70 CE, 97,000 people were enslaved.*”⁴

Bondage rather than slavery existed in Africa. In West Africa until about 600 CE most people were hunter-gatherers. In the driest areas, they raised sheep, goats, cattle, or camels. In the wooded area near the equator, farmer raised yams, palm products, or plantains. The savanna areas yielded crops including rice, millet and sorghum. Famine or fear of stronger enemies forced one tribe to ask another for help and give themselves in bondage in exchange for assistance. Only after 600 CE, the level of the forces of production developed to a point that class society developed in the form of bondage.

Unlike slavery, bondage is similar to the European serf system. Typically, these servants became a part of the extended tribal family. However, there is some evidence of chattel slavery, in which people considered personal prop-

erty, in the Nile Valley. It appears there was a slave-trade route through the Sahara that brought sub-Saharan Africans to Rome.

The large scale of the slave trade of the Africans began in the middle of the 15th century by Portugal as part of the accumulation of capital and continued until the 19th century. It devastated Africa and enriched European and North American capitalists and plantation owners. The Portuguese slave traders were the first to kidnap people from the West Coast region of Africa and to take those they enslaved back to Europe. It is estimated that by the early 16th century 10% of Lisbon's population was of African descent. After the European discovery of the American continent, the demand for African slaves gradually grew.

The Spanish took the first African captives from Europe to the American continent as early as 1503 and already by 1518 the first captives were shipped directly from Africa to America. The majority of African captives were exported from Senegal, Angola, Nigeria and Cameroon.

Capturing people and enslaving them became easier for the slave traders because some African chiefs and kings collaborated with the slave traders. Already eleven years ago, the *Civil Rights Congress of Nigeria* has written to tribal chiefs stating: "We cannot continue to blame only the white men, as Africans, particularly the traditional rulers, are not blameless."⁵

The forced removal of tens of millions of people from the continent by the European, the Arab and the Jewish slave traders had a major effect on the growth of the population in Africa. It is estimated that from 1500 to 1900, the population of Africa remained stagnant or declined.

The weakening of the Africans due to the slave trade facilitated the occupation of Africa, the theft of its natural resources and the exploitation of the black workers and farmers by the colonialists.

To quote a student of Frantz Fanon: "...colonialism in Africa started in the nineteenth century. It was systemic violence—organized, continuous, methodic, and willful. It was not only integral to capitalism, but also coexistent with racism, cultural domination, and European self-aggrandizement.

Whereas slavery focused on exploiting isolated and captive individuals, the submission and exploitation of entire populations required sophisticated methods and numerous agents. The first point of colonial assault was the occupation of land by force of arms. Taking control of the land provided colonizers the raw materials they needed and geopolitical advantage in the competition among themselves for colonies. After the occupation of the land, control of the population followed to acquire not only cheap or free labor and market for manufactured goods, but also the erosion of social bonding, indigenous beliefs, values, identities, and indigenous knowledge. Colonialists achieved this by using

different agents including missionaries, anthropologists, physicians, and journalists. Since violence and outsiders' propaganda alone cannot sustain oppression, colonizers resorted to local agents to carry out the colonial mission. The most important of these were individuals educated in colonial schools or serving as subordinates in the colonial system. These so-called local elites inherited the colonial state whose function was not to serve the colonized but to exploit them."⁶

Imperialism

Imperialism is the last stage of capitalism as Lenin pointed out in his book '*Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*' which was written in 1916 and published in 1917.

Generally speaking, Imperialism takes the form of political control, creating economic dependence and super-exploitation. The same type of local elite that served the colonialists have been serving the imperialists.

Africa is a very rich continent with resources of gold, diamonds, oil and other rare metals but the control of the continent by imperialists aided by the local capitalists is the reason for the poverty of the peoples of Africa. This enforced poverty is turning Africa into a death trap for many millions in the time of the coronavirus, not so much from the pandemic but rather from the social and political conditions aggravated by the lockdown.

The imperialists owe trillions of dollars to Africa because of these plunders. It doesn't bring an advance of the conditions for the African peoples if they pay the debts which is another form of robbery.

By 2018, African government external debt payments have doubled in two years, from an average of 5.9% of government revenue in 2015 to 11.8% in 2017. 20% of African government external debt is owed to China. 17% of African government external interest payments are made to China. In contrast, 32% of African government external debt is owed to private lenders, and 35% to multilateral institutions such as the World Bank. 55% of external interest payments are to private creditors.⁷

Since the last few years the World Bank faced a situation where the loans have been paid back by the African countries in a way that independence from this parasitic imperialist organization was in sight. Luckily for the World Bank, COVID-19 was declared a severe pandemic (by health authorities paid also by World Bank) and the imperialist parasite offered to delay the payback of the debts respectively offered even bigger loans to the African continent.⁸

Immediate cancellation of all debts and instead massive reparation payments to the African peoples for the centuries of slavery, robbery of resources and exploitation of its

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workforce is the “help” that should come from imperialist institutions and countries. Not loans which are just a trick for another form of robbery.

Coronavirus and Africa

Some days ago it was reported by John Hopkins University that there are over 27,600 confirmed cases of coronavirus across the continent. The number of deaths is 1,297.

Number of infected countries in alphabetical order by the report⁹:

Algeria – 3,007 // Angola – 25 // Benin – 54 // Botswana – 22 // Burkina Faso – 616 // Burundi – 11 // Cameroon – 1,334 // Cape Verde – 82 // Central African Republic – 16 // Chad – 33 // Comoros – 0 // Congo-Brazzaville – 186 // DR Congo – 394 // Djibouti – 986 // Egypt – 3,891 // Equatorial Guinea – 84 // Eritrea – 39 // Eswatini – 31 // Ethiopia – 116 // Gabon – 167 // (The) Gambia – 10 // Ghana – 1,154 // Guinea – 862 // Guinea-Bissau – 50 // Ivory Coast – 1,004 // Kenya – 330 // Lesotho – 0 // Liberia – 101 // Libya – 60 // Madagascar – 121 // Malawi – 33 // Mali – 309 // Mauritania – 7 // Mauritius – 331 // Morocco – 3,568 // Mozambique – 46 // Namibia – 16 // Niger – 671 // Nigeria – 981 // Rwanda – 154 // Sao Tome and Principe – 4 // Senegal – 479 // Seychelles – 11 // Sierra Leone – 64 // Somalia – 328 // South Africa – 3,953 // South Sudan – 5 // Sudan – 174 // Tanzania – 284 // Togo – 88 // Tunisia – 918 // Uganda – 74 // Zambia – 76 // Zimbabwe – 29

However, it is very difficult to trust this information as very few people are tested due to a lack of testing kits. Take for example South Africa, the economically most developed country in Africa. Its population is 59.3 million

people. The first case was discovered on March 5, 2020. By the time of April 11 (which is 37 days later) the country conducted around 60,000 tests for Covid-19 which is 1,621 tests per day. Compare this with South Korea with a population of 51 million people where there were at least 10,000 tests per day and we see how low the number of testing was in South Africa. Today, the testing is at a rate of nearly 5,000 a day, if we believe the Health Minister Zweli Mkhize.¹⁰

Compare it to Nigeria as the most populated country in Africa with 205.1 Million people. Health authorities have tested so far only 10,000 people in Nigeria. More than 900 infections have been reported, including 40 health workers, and 28 deaths. Almost 4 times more people and only one sixth of tests compared to South Africa not to speak about South Korea. However, the first case of a person infected by Coronavirus in Sub-Saharan Africa was already discovered in late February and it was in Nigeria.¹¹

Conditions in Nigeria

Like most capitalist states the Nigerian government is using the tactic of lockdown in their motion toward open dictatorships and the attack on the working class, the poor, and the lower middle class.

Nigeria is rich with oil which its main source of foreign exchange earnings and government revenues. In addition to petroleum, Nigeria's other natural resources include natural gas, tin, iron ore, coal, limestone, niobium, lead, zinc, and arable land. The oil and gas sector accounts for about 10% of gross domestic product and petroleum exports revenue represents around 86% of total exports rev-

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.

**The COVID-19
Global
Counterrevolution**

What It Is and How to Fight It



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist Internationalist tendency

enue.

The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), through the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), owns majority stakes in all of the Joint Venture. Yet its debt to the International Oil Companies (IOCs) that operates in the country was USD\$6.8 billion in 2016. In December 2016, the FGN commenced negotiations with the IOCs and was subsequently able to obtain a discount of USD 1.7billion from the outstanding amount.¹²

The international oil companies are the well known big five: BP, Chevron, ConocoPhilips, ExxonMobil and Royal Dutch.

1. But it is not only the old Western imperialists who are making huge profits in Nigeria so is China.

*"Last August Chinese investment in Nigeria's oil and gas industry has reached \$16 billion, according to Nigeria's. Nigeria pumps 2 million barrels a day and has a goal of producing 3 million barrels a day by 2023. China's domestic oil production has been on a steady decline. So experts predict that up to 80 percent of China's crude oil supply will be imported by 2030 mostly from Nigeria."*¹³

According to an OXFAM report, the combined wealth of Nigeria's five richest men - \$29.9 billion - could end extreme poverty at a national level, yet 5 million face hunger. More than 112 million people are living in poverty in Nigeria, yet the country's richest man would have to spend \$1 million a day for 42 years to exhaust his fortune.¹⁴

79% of Women represent between 60 and 79% of Nigeria's rural labor force but are five times less likely to own their land than men. Women are also less likely to have had a decent education. Over three-quarters of the poorest women in Nigeria have never been to school and 94% of them are illiterate. Between 1960 and 2005, about \$20 trillion was stolen from the treasury by public officeholders. This amount is larger than the GDP of the United States in 2012 (about \$18 trillion).

Poverty and inequality in Nigeria are not due to a lack of natural resources, but to the super exploitation by the imperialists combined with ill-use, misallocation and misappropriation of such resources. At the root is a culture of corruption combined with a political elite out of touch with the daily struggles of average Nigerians.

In 2012, Nigeria spent just 6.5% of its national budget on education and just 3.5% on health. As a result, 57 million Nigerians lack safe water, over 130 million lack adequate sanitation, and the country has more than 10 million children out of school. In 2016, between 12.1% and 21.5% of Nigeria's youth were without a job.

The local elite serves not only Western and Eastern imperialists but Israel interests in Africa as well. As we said the Nigerian local elite do this for a share of the loot. A case that indicates the magnitude of this dependence on the imperialists is the relation with Israel, the twin sister of the former Apartheid regime in South Africa.

Israel and the Corrupted Leaders of the Nigerian Capitalist Class

Nigeria's first independent government was led by the Northern People's Congress in alliance with the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (a largely Igbo party), with Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as Prime Minister. In 1963, the country became a republic and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was

the first President. Who was this sir Tafawa Balewa?

In 1955 Balewa was appointed Federal Minister of Works and Transport by Nigeria's Colonial Governor, Sir James Wilson Robertson for his loyalty to the British imperialists. The first president Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was a pro-British conservative. Nevertheless, Balewa was known for his opposition to the apartheid regime of South Africa and his government nationalized large parts of the economy and since 1962 had closer relations with Stalinist Russia. This did not endear him on Western imperialism. The army used the corruption of this government as a reason to justify military coups in 1966 and 1967, which led to civil war. For almost three decades military rule backed by British imperialism, interrupted only briefly from 1979 to 1983 when General Olusegun Obasanjo returned the country to civilian rule, had its grip on the Nigerian people. Shortly after, the 1983 coup of General Muhammadu Buhari took place. In the civil war of 1967-1970, Israel sold weapons to both sides.

During the civil war "the Israeli public, press, and parliament called for assistance to Biafra, evoking their country's deep moral obligation to help a people in distress. Israel aided Biafra, including, in a clandestine manner, the supply of weapons. At the same time, Israel also sold arms to Nigeria, seeking to prevent a diplomatic rupture with the Lagos government that would have affected Israel's position in all of black Africa".¹⁵

At the urging of the Organization of African Unity, Nigeria broke formal ties with Israel in 1973 as a protest against Israel's occupation of Sinai territory belonging to Egypt. But already in January 1999, Nigeria's President Gen. Ibrahim B. Babangida, advocated the idea of restoring ties with Israel at a news conference during a three-day visit to Ghana.

In August 2010, the then Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan sacked the army's chief of staff, Gen. Abdulrahman Danbazau and the commanders of the air force, navy and ground forces because of corrupted military deals with Israel. The reports alleged, that some of the deals were fictitious. For instance, contracts were signed for unnecessary equipment like a simulator part - at a time when the ground forces did not even possess such a device. In another case, a fictitious deal was allegedly signed for a shipment of parachutes. Another charge was that faulty equipment, such as helicopters that were grounded because they weren't fit to fly, was purchased at an exorbitant price. The main figures whose names have been cited in the press are the former president and retired general Ibrahim Babangida.¹⁶

Israeli arms have been sold worldwide for years, supplying arms to bloody Third-World dictators. Israeli military exports totaled some \$7.5 billion in 2018, according to the Defense Ministry, which supervises them. Ziv for example, founded his company Global CST in 2006, a year after retiring as head of the Israel Defense Forces' operations directorate. Until the South Sudan scandal broke, he was known for training military forces worldwide, but not for arms dealing. Countries, where he has reportedly done military training or security consulting include Togo, Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, Georgia, Colombia, Peru, and Panama.

Foreign media reports say a company linked to Mitrelli (apparently a subsidiary) called HLSi is managed by a former naval commando officer. According to a report by the

Nigerian investigative newspaper *Premium Times*, HLSi signed a \$195 million contract in 2017 with the Nigerian government to supply airplanes, helicopters, patrol ships, and other items in a deal brokered by the Transportation Ministry for the navy to help fight piracy. When the deal came under fire from members of parliament, President Muhammadu Buhari was said to have canceled the agreement in May 2018. However, sources say it was never canceled.¹⁷

The Nigerian Working Class

During the colonialist era, before independence, the working class was the front line in the struggle against imperialist domination. The Nigerian working class has a very long history of struggles. The Lagos general strike of 1897 was the first general strike in Sub-Saharan Africa. Among the general strikes, the most important were the 1945 general strike led by Michael Imoudu, the 1950 strike of the *United Africa Company (UAC)* and the *Enugu Coal Mines* resistance where 21 of the miners were killed and 55 other brothers were injured by the colonial police at the *Iva Valley Colliery* near Enugu, on 18 November 1949.

After independence the Nigerian working class showed itself as a very militant powerful force. This was true even under the military rule. In 1981 a general strike forced the government to agree to a raise of the minimum wage. On Mayday in 1988 an almost general strike paralyzed the economy. Lagos airport was closed. Transport workers went on strike and government officials had difficulty getting to their offices. Fearing a revolt, the army security was reinforced at government headquarters. Even though strikes were banned by the military government, the workers demanded to implement the minimum pay lay

they gained in 1981 general strike. The generals wanted to borrow money from the IMF.

The IMF demanded to cut workers' wages and raise the price of goods. This led to the confrontation between the working class and the military. It was fueled by the killing of students who demonstrated against the rise of prices and were brutally attacked by the military. Then the workers began their strikes on April 24.

The military government arrested the head of the NLC and captured the building of the union. Nevertheless the strike movement continue to spread. Other union leaders were detained. In July 1986, the NLC conference declared that socialism will end the military rule. However, instead of organizing a full general strike to overthrow the military government the NLC accepted a rise of the wages and ended the strike.

Furthermore, the struggle of the oil union in 1994 was an example of a heroic struggle under very difficult conditions during military rule. On 4 July 1994, workers in the oil industry went on strike to protest the arrests of Abiola and the opposition coalition, the NADECO leaders. Other workers mostly in the South-West joined them. The strike disrupted domestic fuel, electricity and water supplies immediately. It closed the oil refineries and eventually the *Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC)*, representing 40 unions and 3.5 million workers, called a general strike on 3 August. Yet the union bureaucracy sabotaged this struggle. Instead of an unlimited general strike to bring down the government, it was called off the next day when the government promised to release Moshood Abiola. On 18 August, the government replaced oil union and NLC leaders with appointed administrators and ordered strikers back to work. On 28 August, the military government of Rivers State announced the arrest of saboteurs attempting to

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.

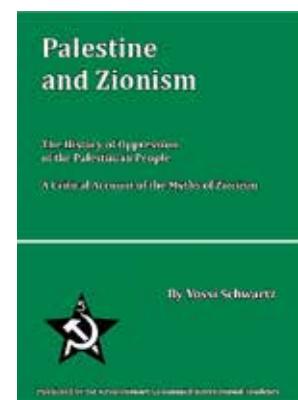
Yossi Schwartz also shows that the Palestinian people have heroically resisted against the occupation resulting in two Intifadas as well as the successful defense of Gaza against the Israeli aggression in three wars (2008/09, 2012, 2014). The author also analysis the shameful betrayal by the PLO leadership 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.thecomunists.net/theory/palestine-and-zionism/>



blow up oil pipelines and flow stations; 15 people were reportedly detained. Under threat of dismissal and without financial backing, the strike effectively collapsed and on 4 September it was called off. Oil union and NLC leaders have later detained.¹⁸

Since 1999 at least 13 general strikes took place in Nigeria: "2000, June – against a proposed 50% increase in the price of petrol;

2002, January - labor leaders end a two-day general strike after they were arrested;

2003, July - eight days, the longest general strike since 1964;

2004, June - three-day general strike;

2004, October - four-day 'warning strike' over fuel price increases;

2007, June – four-day strike wins most of its demands, including stopping a 15% fuel price increase, doubling the rate of Value Added Tax (VAT) to 10% and privatizing two oil refineries and honoring a 15% pay increase for civil servants

2010, November – one-day strike to increase the minimum wage from 7,500 Naira to the current 18,000 Naira a month

2012, January – eight-day general strike over a threat to increase the fuel price by nearly 120%, resulted in a fuel price increase of less than 50%

2016, May – a three-day general strike over increasing the price of fuel after a huge surge in prices of kerosene, electricity, and food."¹⁹

General Strikes and the future of the Revolutionary Workers Party

Despite a promise to conclude negotiations by the end of September, the government has made no serious move to hold discussions with the unions. In response, the ITUC-affiliated *Nigeria Labour Congress and Trade Union Congress of Nigeria* launched a general strike to force the government to start negotiations. However, instead of accelerating the workers' struggle to bring down the government, the Nigerian umbrella trade union suspended the nationwide strike on its fourth day on Sunday after the government agreed to hold a meeting to discuss increasing the minimum wage to 164 Dollars a month.

Because of the past struggle of the working class, the minimum wage in 2011 was 18,000 Naira which was equivalent to about US\$110, but now it is worth less than US\$50. The general strike in 2018 led to a 67% increased of the minimum wage of 30,000 Naira (US\$83) which is in real terms lower than the 2011 minimum wage. The general strike was called off by the union bureaucracy that pres-

ents this raise as a great victory.

Still, the tradition of the militant working class struggle in Nigeria is undeniable. No wonder that even before the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the government of Buhari was afraid of the working-class uprising as Nigeria's foreign debt rose from US\$10.3 billion in 2015 to US\$22.08 billion in 2018. The African Development Bank in its African Economic Outlook (2019) stated that about 50% of the country's revenue is now spent on external debt servicing. Concretely speaking, 2.45 trillion Naira was allocated to debt servicing in the 2020 budget out of 10.33 trillion Naira total expenditure (respectively, US\$7 billion and US\$28 billion).²⁰

Even before the Coronavirus began to spread in Nigeria, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) downgraded its earlier growth projection for Nigeria in 2020 from 2.5 percent to 2 percent.

As our comrades in Nigeria wrote: "*The general confidence level amongst Nigerians for the ruling elite and the Buhari government is seriously waning, thus we can expect more revolts from various quarters of the citizenry. Today's presidential speech has indicated a two-week extension of the lockdowns. One can only expect such developments to deepen with time.*"²¹

Clearly what is missing is an independent workers' party to lead the fight for a workers' government and for the expropriation of the big capital under workers' control.

When the next wave of struggle against the government that serve the imperialists and the local elite breaks out, to rally for the formation of such a independent workers' party will be a central task for the revolutionaries in Nigeria. While struggles for higher wages and full employment are important they should not end there. If humanity is to survive, capitalism must be overthrown and the bourgeois' state must be replaced by workers states.

Our brothers and sisters in Nigeria and the African continent as such have experienced centuries of slavery and colonialism, brutal military rule and imperialism, epidemics like Ebola, HIV/AIDS and even diseases like Cholera, which are eradicated in the rich countries of Europe and the United States. Never have our brothers and sisters in the continent of Africa surrendered and they will not do this now because of COVID-19 and forced lockdowns.

Instead this are the militants and leaders of the first ranks in the future World Party of Socialism!

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Publications of the RCIT

The Origins of the Jews

By Yossi Schwartz, July 2015

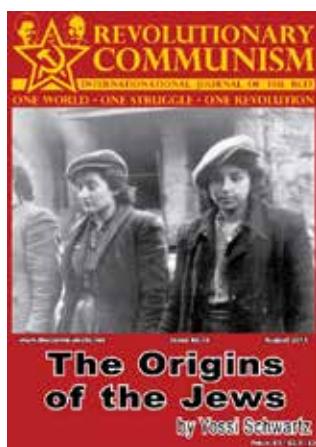
Chapter I: What are the origins of the Jews?

Chapter II: The Rise of Anti-Semitism

Chapter III: Anti-Semitism and Zionism

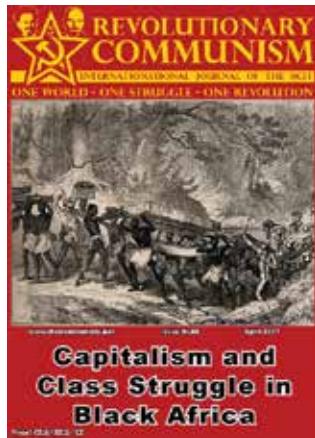
Chapter IV: The Russian Revolution:

Bolshevism, the Bund, and Stalinism



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PUBLICATIONS OF THE RCIT

Theses on Capitalism and Class Struggle in Black Africa

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

A RCIT Pamphlet, 24 pages, A4 Format

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

The Police and 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

Essay by Michael Pröbsting, International Secretary of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 21.5.2020

Introduction

There are a number of indications that the phase of global total lockdown – which has been imposed since March under the cover of the COVID-19 crisis – is gradually coming to an end. Some governments have either relaxed the most severe conditions of their lockdown regime – at least in parts of the respective country – or they have announced dates when they will do so in the foreseeable future.

In this article we will not repeat the RCIT's comprehensive analysis of the COVID-19 crisis which we have outlined since the beginning of February in several dozen documents including a Manifesto and new book.¹ To summarize it briefly we characterize the current historic situation as a *Triple Crisis*, consisting of a combination of:

1) The *Third Depression* of the capitalist world economy, i.e. the worst slump since 1929-33;²

2) A global shift of the ruling class towards *chauvinist state bonapartism*, i.e. a dramatic expansion of its repressive state apparatus, an acceleration of Great Power rivalry (first and foremost between the two largest imperialist powers U.S. and China)³, as well as an increase of chauvinism against migrants;

3) The COVID-19 pandemic, a serious pandemic which has cost the lives of 300,000 people worldwide until now.⁴

In this article we will focus on dealing with possible measures of the ruling class to expand the state repression and suppress democratic rights in the Post-Lockdown phase.

An expected development

It is not surprising that the phase of a total global lockdown is coming to an end. We have predicted this development in various RCIT publications. We noted at the beginning of the current counter-revolutionary offensive that "it is likely that the ruling classes will keep the global state of emergency for weeks if not months."⁵ Likewise, we explained "that the current state of emergency with a comprehensive lockdown in large parts of the world (...) is an extreme situation which will not and can not last very long."⁶

The reasons for this are pretty obvious. The drastic lockdown caused massive economic damage, hunger among the popular masses as well as extraordinary social trauma. The capitalist class does not want to continue such a total lockdown for much longer as it needs to revive the value-creating production. Likewise, the popular masses are not prepared to accept their imprisonment for much longer. This is particularly the case in countries where the consequences of the lockdown – e.g. mass unemployment, hunger, expulsion of rural migrants from cities, brutal state repression, etc. – are much more drastic and noticeable than the consequences of the Corona Virus.

It is only the middle class intelligentsia (doing their jobs now via "Home Office"), with their liberals and opportunist leftists, who believe in the possibility and desirability of an indefinite continuation of such a state of emergency

controlled by the bonapartist state machinery until a vaccination has been found (may be at the end of the year, may be next year).

Furthermore, the bourgeoisie could already use the period of lockdown in order to drastically expand the repressive state apparatus. As we noted, the ruling class's "goal is to advance their counterrevolutionary attacks as much as possible in this time [of lockdown, Ed.] so that they can present the popular masses after this period with the implementation of radical political and economic changes as a fait accompli."⁷ Hence, in addition to the above mentioned negative consequences of an overstretched lockdown, it also does not need it any longer for its political bonapartist goals.

The Lockdown was not directed against the pandemic

One could object that the governments have no reason to end the lockdown phase because the COVID-19 pandemic has not been overcome yet. But such an argument ignores the real purpose of the lockdown. The ruling class never conceived the lockdown primarily as an instrument against the pandemic. As the RCIT emphasized since the beginning of the crisis, the bourgeoisie created the panic about the Corona Virus not because it feared for the public health. It did so rather, on one hand, for political reasons (justifying the expansion of the police and surveillance state, finding a scapegoat for the Third Depression, using it as an instrument against Great Power rivals). On the other hand, there exist weighty economic reasons as the current crisis offers extraordinary business opportunities for a number of corporations in certain industries like drugs, biotechnology, robotics, Artificial Intelligence and the whole IT industry, the whole online retail sector, etc. We note in passing that it is no secret that various corporations have close connections with and are significant donators for ruling parties and influential institutions (take e.g. the close relations of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the WHO leadership).⁸

Furthermore, there is increasing evidence that the lockdown is not particularly effective in combating the mortality resulting from the Corona Virus – as the RCIT has pointed out from the beginning. The countries that have imposed draconic lockdowns from early on have the world's highest number of fatalities per capita (Belgium, Spain, Italy, and France). Britain, another leading country in this sad league, imposed the lockdown sometime later.⁹

On the other hand, a number of countries which didn't impose a lockdown experienced a very low mortality rate (e.g. South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Iceland).¹⁰

In addition, it is also becoming increasingly difficult to deny that the bourgeoisie (and their pseudo-leftist servants) extremely exaggerated the threat posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Of course, in contrast to initial claims by the clown in the White House, it is not a "hoax" or a "little flu". Quite the opposite, it poses a serious threat to public health which requires a serious program of mass

testing, free health care and the expansion of the public health sector under workers and popular control.¹¹

However, in contrast to the war-like hysterical proclamations of Conte, Macron and Xi, it does also not pose an “unprecedented, extreme danger” which would kill far more people than other pandemics which the world has experienced in the past decades. These hysterical claims are simply not true and are only invented in order to justify the lockdown policy and the expansion of the police and surveillance state. As the RCIT already pointed out in past documents, there have been various pandemics – from severe influenza, swine flu, Ebola to HIV/AIDS – which did also cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of people a year. (Let alone the much higher numbers of annual deaths from tobacco, cancer, heart disease, etc.) The COVID-19 pandemic is no exception to such health catastrophes.

In Austria, the first known case of infection has taken place already on 5 February. Since this happened in Ischgl, a Tyrolean ski resort town which became a major coronavirus hotspot for Austria and other European countries, one can assume that virus has been spread already to a sizeable part of the population.¹² Nevertheless, neither Austria as a whole nor Vienna, its capital city with 1.9 million people, have experienced any excess mortality this year (the currently available mortality statistics go till 3 May). This is both true for those below as well as those above the age of 65 years. It is also noteworthy that there have been periods in the past years (heat wave in summer 2015, severe Influenza in 2016/17) in which more people died than this year.¹³

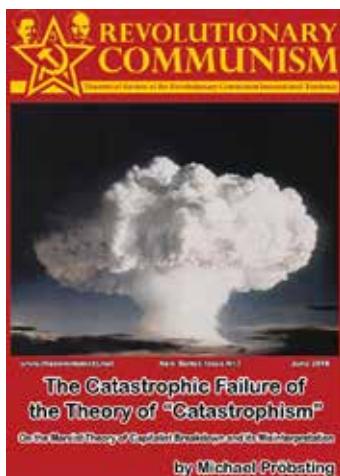
The same is true for various other European countries (with prominent exceptions like Italy, France, Spain and

UK). Here too, the number of total mortality rate has been not above the average of the past years.¹⁴

This is also true for countries where no lockdown has been imposed. Tokyo, the densely populated capital and most populous prefecture of Japan with 37.4 million people, experienced no excess mortality this year until the end of March (the last official data), despite the fact that the first cases of Corona Virus have been established already in late January.¹⁵ According to official data from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, “*the capital saw 33,106 deaths in the three months through March, 0.4 percent fewer than the average of the previous four years for the same period.*”¹⁶ Bear in mind that Japan had no lockdown until the end of March.

In Sweden, another country which didn’t impose a lockdown (and which also refrained from mass testing) and which has been harshly attacked for this by most EU governments (as well as by the Lockdown Left), mortality has been higher in April than it was in the previous years. However, it is noteworthy that the country, according to its *Statistics Office*, experienced an even higher number of fatalities, in relation to the size of the population, in December 1993 and January 2000 when it suffered from severe seasonal influenza.¹⁷

Furthermore, a number of studies indicate that the mortality rate of the COVID-19 pandemic is higher than influenza (about 0.1%) but much lower than has been claimed by the ruling class’s Lockdown propagandists. The reason for this is that many more people have been already infected by the virus than the official statistics indicate. This has been clear from early on as various studies from Italian villages, New York, Santa Clara (California) or the German town of Gangelt in Nordrhein-Westfalen where mass



NEW RCIT PUBLICATION!

The Catastrophic Failure of the Theory of “Catastrophism”

By Michael Probsting, May 2018

*On the Marxist Theory of Capitalist Breakdown and its Misinterpretation
by the Partido Obrero (Argentina) and its
“Coordinating Committee for the Refoundation of the Fourth International”*

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

A RCIT Pamphlet, 32 pages, A4 Format

testing or representative tests had been conducted.

A new official study in Sweden suggests, according to state epidemiologist Anders Tegnell, that to date “*a little more than 20 percent*” had probably contracted the virus in Stockholm.¹⁸ Other studies make similar assessments that 20-25% of Stockholm’s population has been infected.¹⁹ If we take the figure of 20% and relate it to the number of COVID-19 death in Stockholm to date (1,855), this would indicate a mortality rate of 0.397%.²⁰ This is, by the way, a very similar mortality rate which has been observed in the study on Gangelt.²¹

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic is a serious threat to public health but not an “unprecedented catastrophe”. It needs to be combated by a public health program under workers and popular control. It is not justification at all for an anti-democratic lockdown policy and the expansion of state repression. Democratic, progressive and socialist forces must never support such a policy of the riling class.

Which “new normal” is the ruling class planning for?

So if the ruling class is forced to relax or to give up the draconic lockdown policy, does this mean a return to the status ante, i.e. the situation before the beginning of the lockdown? Definitely not! As we said above a crucial purpose for the whole shock-and-awe “coup d’etat” of spreading panic and quarantining the whole population was to use such for advancing a massive global counter-revolutionary offensive. In fact, the “new normal” will be built upon the drastic measures which have been imposed in the past few months.

In our recently published book “*The COVID-19 Global Counterrevolution: What It Is and How to Fight It*” we predicted such a development: “*Anyway, it is clear that important elements of such state of emergency and control measures over the population will remain in place for a long period – all of this under the cover of containing and preventing a pandemic. In fact, we see already the ruling classes preparing the population for the “necessity” to continue the surveillance of the population indefinitely. (...) In other words, the ruling class can and will use the threat of pandemic as justification for an indefinite period of expansion of the repression apparatus, surveillance of the population and state of emergency. In summary, we currently see the formation of chauvinist state-bonapartist regimes – of an “all-powerful state”, to put it in the words of a Bloomberg commentator.*”²²

We also tried to outline possible scenarios of such a “new normal” in which we referred to various plans to expand the police and surveillance state.²³ By now we are already in a position to give a clearer picture as various plans and projects of the ruling class have become known. Basically, it seems to us that there are two basic trends of state bonapartist measures which will be essential for the “new normal”. These two trends are:

1) A massive increase of surveillance and repression of the popular masses;

2) A “partition” of countries in different zones, depending on their numbers of infected persons.

In the following we will provide a survey how these crucial developments are taking place in different parts of the world.

China: the most successful regime in making “Big Brother” omnipresent

China is definitely that country in the world in which the expansion of the high-technology surveillance is most advanced. This has been no doubt being helped by mainly two factors: a) the country, as an emerging imperialist power, is home of a number of highly advanced technology corporations.²⁴ It also has the material resources to implement such systems; b) it is ruled since decades by a Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship which can build on a centralized and experienced political superstructure, i.e. a highly bureaucratized bonapartist state machinery.

As we already pointed out in our book, China has been quick and effective in implementing a comprehensive surveillance system. In the past months, the regime – in close cooperation with Chinese tech giants like Tencent and Alibaba – has rapidly developed an online “health code” system. All Chinese citizens are required by law to use this app on their smartphones. After downloading the app, users enter their name, identity card number, telephone number and sometimes a photo. In addition, they have to input into this app their personal medical information, travel history, and COVID-19 contact history. This app tracks an individual’s travel, contact history, and biometric data (for example, body temperature) directly through one’s smartphone. “*A colored QR code is then generated with a color designated to identify their level of health risk. Specific standards vary across provinces, but the basic color scheme rules the same nationally. A green QR code allows an individual to travel within the city; a yellow one implies potential risks that require an at-home quarantine for 7-14 days; and a red code imposes a 14-day quarantine either at home or a centralized location. After the quarantine requirement is fulfilled, the code automatically reverts to green, permitting local travel again.*”²⁵

This health QR code helps the regime to comprehensively control the movement of people. “*To enter many offices, restaurants, parks or malls in China nowadays, people must show their status on an app that determines whether they are a coronavirus threat. (...) The apps have become a necessity for travel in China, to book train or plane tickets or enter many public places, though not all establishments require them, such as supermarkets.*”²⁶

There exist already several tracking apps in China. There is one by the State Council, China’s cabinet, which uses GPS locations shared by telecommunications companies. It allows authorities to look back at someone’s travel history in the previous 14 days and see if they visited areas considered high risk or were exposed to anyone with COVID-19. In addition, there are a number of different apps used by provincial administrations. In general, these systems are based on a Covid-19 health QR code and have been operated largely through social media and payment platforms such as WeChat and Alipay. The system determines a person’s health status based on factors such as travel history, duration of time spent in an outbreak-stricken area and relationships to potential carriers of the virus, and the system refreshes the colour codes at midnight on a daily basis.²⁷

At the moment, this surveillance system experiences several problems. One of them is that there are currently about 100 types of health code in operation around the country, according to the state news agency Xinhua. The

regime plans to standardize them but at the moment, people who have specific app face difficulties to use this app when they enter another province. This is in particular a major problem for migrant workers who constitute a significant part of China's working class. This problem is also exacerbated by the fact that the QR code systems are operated by two Chinese tech giants – Tencent and Alibaba – which are in fierce competition and which have lobbied regional administrations to implement their respective apps. The apps from these two corporations are often not compatible. Furthermore users have filed cases reporting a green health code suddenly switching to red for unknown reasons, imposing an immediate quarantine on the user enforced through the loss of access to public spaces and services.²⁸ However, given the centralized nature of the Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship one can assume that it will sooner or later succeed in implementing a national standardization of all these different systems.

In addition, the regime continues to impose draconic local lockdowns if the number of infected people significantly increases in a city. For example, the authorities of Shulan city in Jilin province, one of China's three northeastern provinces, have raised the city risk level from medium to high, as the confirmed cases in the city had increased to 15 by 11 May. As a result, Shulan has amped up its virus-control measures – residential compound lockdowns, ban on non-essential transport, and shutting down schools.²⁹

In addition to these compulsory mobile tracking apps, the Chinese state is also increasingly deploying drones as well as small mobile robots on the streets as we already pointed out in our book. These robots are able to measure the temperature of pedestrians and warn them via loudspeaker to wear face masks and to follow the instructions of the authorities.

We conclude this chapter by pointing out that the Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship does not make any secret out of its "Big Brother" policy and its close connections to the high-tech corporations. As an example, we draw attention to an article published by the *Global Times* – the mouthpiece of the regime in Beijing. In this article, the author – a professor from a University in Beijing – proudly brags about the surveillance skills of the regime. Let us reproduce some excerpts from this article.

"Since the outbreak, nearly 4 million community workers in urban and rural neighborhoods across China have been collecting data every day. Their updated reports every 24 hours have

enabled the country with 1.4 billion people to extract valuable information for COVID-19 control in real time. To curb the spread of the highly contagious novel coronavirus, the Chinese government has introduced extensive quarantine measures, rigorous health checks, and unprecedented data reporting synergy. Using digital tools like big data and artificial intelligence (AI) has become key to turning the tide. National and local authorities are working closely with large technology companies like China's e-commerce platform Alibaba, technology company Tencent, and search engine Baidu to innovate smart application solutions for relevant diagnoses, monitoring, forecasts, security checks, healthcare, work resumption, and even avoidance of panic buying.

Mobile phone data has been used to track users' daily locations and health status. Community workers have innovative apps and mini programs to improve their work efficiency. Thanks to the apps and online programs, they inform people where they can get masks or delivered food, or how many people returned home from travel, and where they came from. They also can tell whether new returnees traveled on the same flight or train with the confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients. Upon their arrival, returnees must first register at their neighborhood center and get a paper or electronic pass. By simply scanning a QR code on their smartphones, information over their whereabouts for the past 14 days can be shown. Their information is registered in a database for checking whether they've fulfilled quarantine requirements. Some Chinese high-tech companies are now providing free AI and big data analysis services for the public. (...) Baidu and MEGVII, a Chinese AI company, have developed a AI-powered fever detection system, which use infrared and facial recognition technology to scan more than 200 people every minute in public transportation venues. If a passenger appears with a temperature of 37.3 C or above, an alert will be issued."³⁰ Such dystopian nature of the Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship demonstrates once more how extraordinary silly and reactionary it is that numerous Stalinists, Bolivarians and pseudo-Trotskyists claim that China would be a "socialist" or "progressive" country!³¹

Moscow follows the Chinese model and creates a "Cyber Gulag"

The authorities of Moscow, the capital city of imperialist Russia, have imposed a city-wide lockdown.³² Most of the city's 12 million residents must remain indoors, barring a few exceptions – like trips to the supermarket or

China's transformation into an imperialist power

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

By Michael Pröbsting (International Secretary of the RCIT)

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pharmacy, taking out the trash or briefly walking the dog. In order to enforce this lockdown, Mayor Sergei Sobyanin introduced a so-called “smart control system” under which Muscovites’ home addresses and pictures will be stored in a centralized database that police will have access to. Muscovites and residents of the Moscow region -- anybody 14 years old or above -- must download a QR code if they want to move around their city. By registering on a government website or downloading an app on their smartphones, citizens can declare a route and purpose in advance; they then receive a QR code that can be checked by the authorities. The measure will initially only apply to people using public transport, but authorities say restrictions will gradually scale up to passes for short trips around neighborhoods. Police will scan these codes and fine people without a permit or if they intentionally provided false information. Those who still go to work can get a special unlimited pass, but for personal matters -- such as driving to a store or a dacha (a country house) -- residents can only get two passes a week, each valid for one day.³³

According to the authorities, the new tracing “tools will merge with existing street cameras and face recognition software to quickly identify residents who stray from their homes and/or quarantines”.³⁴

One does not need to be Einstein to understand that the authorities introduce such a comprehensive surveillance system not primarily in order to contain the pandemic. Unsurprisingly, it is not only Russian Marxists but also liberals and bourgeois democrats who are deeply worried. “The pandemic will go away, but the system will stay,” said Mikhail Klimarev, executive director of the Internet Protection Society.³⁵ Likewise, Leonid Volkov, a chief strategist of opposition leader Alexei Navalny, wrote on his Telegram channel: “One thing is clear, the coronavirus will eventually leave but this digital concentration camp will remain.”³⁶ And Daria Besedina and Maxim Katz, local opposition lawmakers who voted against the system, also dubbed it a “cyber Gulag” and “digital concentration camp.”³⁷

The U.S.: “the ancient past known as February” and today

It would be totally wrong to assume that China and Russia would be the only countries working to build a system of total surveillance. Western imperialist states, impressed by the Chinese model, have also started to work on such programs. The U.S. tech giants Apple and Google announced in early April that they are teaming up on a major effort “to help health officials trace coronavirus exposure risks”. They plan to “to make technology available by mid-May that would use Bluetooth on people’s phones to detect when people have come into contact with individuals diagnosed with the virus. The feature would be designed to work with apps by public health authorities on devices that run Apple’s iOS and Google’s Android. In the coming months, the companies said they would roll out an update that would embed the technology into the iOS and Android operating systems, which are used on about 99 percent of smartphones globally. The change would apply to all versions of Google’s Android released since late 2015.”³⁸

In fact, the ruling class in the U.S. is polarized between the reactionary Trump Administration which refused to take any measures against the pandemic and a coalition

of politicians and corporations which hope to gain – politically and financially – from the lockdown policy. The renowned writer Naomi Klein has recently published a highly insightful article which elaborates on the interests of various billionaire owners of corporations like Google, Oracle, Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook, Bloomberg, and others as well as on their close connections with politicians like New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. Here are some interesting excerpts from her article.

“It has taken some time to gel, but something resembling a coherent Pandemic Shock Doctrine is beginning to emerge. Call it the “Screen New Deal.” Far more high-tech than anything we have seen during previous disasters, the future that is being rushed into being as the bodies still pile up treats our past weeks of physical isolation not as a painful necessity to save lives, but as a living laboratory for a permanent — and highly profitable — no-touch future. Anuja Sonalker, CEO of Steer Tech, a Maryland-based company selling self-parking technology, recently summed up the new virus-personalized pitch. “There has been a distinct warming up to human-less, contactless technology,” she said. “Humans are biohazards, machines are not.”

It’s a future in which our homes are never again exclusively personal spaces but are also, via high-speed digital connectivity, our schools, our doctor’s offices, our gyms, and, if determined by the state, our jails. (...) This is a future in which, for the privileged, almost everything is home delivered, either virtually via streaming and cloud technology, or physically via driverless vehicle or drone, then screen “shared” on a mediated platform. It’s a future that employs far fewer teachers, doctors, and drivers. It accepts no cash or credit cards (under guise of virus control) and has skeletal mass transit and far less live art. It’s a future that claims to be run on “artificial intelligence” but is actually held together by tens of millions of anonymous workers tucked away in warehouses, data centers, content moderation mills, electronic sweatshops, lithium mines, industrial farms, meat-processing plants, and prisons, where they are left unprotected from disease and hyperexploitation. It’s a future in which our every move, our every word, our every relationship is trackable, traceable, and data-mineable by unprecedented collaborations between government and tech giants.

If all of this sounds familiar it’s because, pre-Covid, this precise app-driven, gig-fueled future was being sold to us in the name of convenience, frictionlessness, and personalization. But many of us had concerns. About the security, quality, and inequity of telehealth and online classrooms. (...) And most of all, we had concerns about the democracy-threatening wealth and power accumulated by a handful of tech companies that are masters of abdication — eschewing all responsibility for the wreckage left behind in the fields they now dominate, whether media, retail, or transportation.

That was the ancient past known as February. Today, a great many of those well-founded concerns are being swept away by a tidal wave of panic, and this warmed-over dystopia is going through a rush-job rebranding. Now, against a harrowing backdrop of mass death, it is being sold to us on the dubious promise that these technologies are the only possible way to pandemic-proof our lives, the indispensable keys to keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe.”³⁹

Likewise, the Australian government has launched an app based on a Singaporean one that uses Bluetooth wireless signals to track the user’s COVID-19 contact history. We see a similar development in New Zealand where the government of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern launched a

contact-tracing app for mobiles "to help people tracking their movements".⁴⁰

In many countries, including the U.S. and Australia, the lockdown policy and surveillance are being used against national and ethnic minorities. Dhakshayini Sooriyakumaran, the Director of Human Rights at the Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility, points out: "*In many countries, security forces focused their efforts to enforce coronavirus-related restrictions on underprivileged communities. In Australia, Indigenous peoples and migrants are being disproportionately targeted for public health order compliance fines. In the US, there are widespread reports that police officers are using coronavirus stay-at-home orders and policies making masks mandatory to harass and abuse Black Americans. The rolling out of mass tech-enabled surveillance will help governments expand the existing systems of surveillance and discrimination, which have long been reserved solely for marginalised groups, to their entire populations. Israel, for example, is now using the surveillance tools it developed to monitor Palestinians in the occupied territories to track the movements of the country's entire population. If the tech-enabled surveillance wave triggered by the coronavirus pandemic continues unchallenged, the governments could not only use these new surveillance opportunities to increase the isolation and oppression of already marginalised communities, they could also create new groups of "undesirables" and restrict their access to most basic rights and services.*"⁴¹

European Union: surveillance and the model of "red/green zones"

European governments are also pushing to install mobile tracing apps in order to monitor its citizens' movements. As indicated above, such a monitoring technology would allow the governments to refrain from another lockdown and, instead, to control the movements of the people via tracing apps. Tellingly, a recently published article by the Associated Press started with the words: "Goodbye lockdown, hello smartphone."⁴²

As we have stated repeatedly in our documents of the last months, an important political purpose of provoking public fear about the pandemic and imposing the lockdown has been the creation of a political atmosphere which would allow the governments to break the taboo issue of surveillance.⁴³ Currently, two alternative systems are considered, the *Pan-European Privacy-Preserving Proximity Tracing* (PEPP-PT/PEPP) and the competing *Decentralized Privacy-Preserving Proximity Tracing* (DP-3T) protocol. Britain is working on its own system and Norway has already rolled out one of the earliest - and most invasive - apps, Smittestopp, which uses both GPS and Bluetooth to collect data and uploads it to central servers every hour.⁴⁴

Whatever system will be implemented within the European Union, it is obvious that this opens a new era. No doubt, this will be still far away from the totalitarian conditions in China. But it will clearly constitute a qualitative step forward in undermining bourgeois democracy and its replacement by state bonapartism.

The European governments are aware that this is a difficult project as large sections of the population strongly reject such a "Big Brother" future. This is why they needed to employ a "shock-and-awe" tactic for which the COVID-19 pandemic provides an excellent pretext.

One challenge which the European governments face in this context is to convince its population to use such a mobile tracing apps. The easiest solution would be to obligate the people to install this app on their smartphones, as the Chinese regime has done. The Austrian government, led by the conservative party of Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, has repeatedly pushed for such compulsory regulation. However this has created a public backlash. Nevertheless it is continuing to prepare the public mood for such a move. Antonella Mei-Pochtler, a senior advisor of Kurz who has been also employed as a Managing Director at the Boston Consulting Group, recently stated in an interview with the *Financial Times*: "*This will be part of the new normal. Everyone will have an app.*"⁴⁵

It is, by the way, telling that the leading circles of the bourgeoisie are fully aware of the anti-democratic nature of this strategic push. Mei-Pochtler admitted in the same interview that such monitoring technology is "*on the borderline of the democratic working model*". Naturally, the Austrian government is only one example and similar processes are taking place in many other countries.

Such mobile tracing apps are of course only effective if they are used by a large majority of the population. Since many people do not trust their governments there is natural resistance to install such apps. Even Singapore, ruled by authoritarian governments since decades, finds it difficult to force its population to use this technology. In March, it released TraceTogether, an app that uses Bluetooth technology to help public health officials do contact tracing. As of April 1, only 12% of the people had opted to download the contact tracing app. Hence, Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien-loong made a public appeal to the country's citizens to download the app in a national address on 21 April.⁴⁶

In general, we think that it is likely that the governments might wait for a "second wave of the pandemic" in order to create the political conditions to enforce its project of a compulsory mobile tracing apps.

As the process to force the population installing mobile tracing apps on their smartphones will take some time, several governments are now implementing a system which divides each country into so-called "green zones" and "red zones". This conception has been developed by Miquel Oliu-Barton and Bary Pradelski, two university professors, and has been intended as a Europe-wide system in order to allow travelling within the continent (and, hence, to save the profits for the tourism industry in the summer period). While this system has not been adopted by the EU until now, it has been already implemented by a number of countries like France, Italy, and Spain.

Basically, the "green/red zones" concept is based on existing provinces or districts in each country. Those regions where the virus is not under control are labelled as "red zones" and those where the virus is under control as "green". Naturally, such a designation would not be decided by the regions itself but by the central authorities.⁴⁷

While people living in "green zones" are free to travel to other green zones, people from the "red zones" are not allowed to leave their territory except with special permission. "*By differentiating between red and green zones, the spread of the virus across the entire territory is minimised. This is the case because travel to and from red zones would be limited to necessary travel only – such as that by key workers – and rig-*

*id testing routines would be implemented. As the resurgence of the virus within the green-zone travelling network would have detrimental consequences it is paramount that the conditions for EU green labels are stringent.”*⁴⁸

It does not need much explanation to understand that such a “green/red zones” system can only be realized by an expanded police and surveillance apparatus. Otherwise it is not possible to control if citizens are legitimately staying in a given zone or not. Likewise, it is impossible to enforce the travel ban for people living in a “red zone” without a vast repression apparatus.

As we mentioned above, European governments are currently cautious to publicly announce plans for a compulsory implementation of the mobile tracing apps. They leave it open and do not exclude that it might be voluntary, i.e. that people can choose to install this app or not. On the surface this appears to be a significant difference. However, in practice it is highly likely that even a formally voluntarily solution would in fact more or less become compulsory. Once the governments have managed to technically solve all issues with such an app and once they have succeeded in gaining public support for it via a vigorous campaign (a new pandemic crisis, media campaign etc., similar to what we have experienced in the past few months), they will have created the preconditions to enforce a general acceptance of such an app. For example, the authorities could follow the Chinese and Russia example that it is only possible to get a job, to enter public transport, a restaurant, a mall, a football stadium etc. if one can show via such an health code app that he or she is not infected. In such a scenario, use of such an app would not be formally compulsory but in fact it would have such effect for all those who are not living socially isolated, i.e. for the popular masses.

India: State Bonapartism under semi-colonial conditions

India, the second most populous country in the world after China, is also implementing a series of measures in order to expand the repressive state apparatus. True, the ruling class has to operate on the basis of very different objective conditions than China, Russia or the Western imperialist powers. As we have elaborated in extensive studies, India is not an imperialist but rather a semi-colonial country, albeit with specific characteristics.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, the chauvinist right-wing government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is putting strong efforts to utilize the COVID-19 pandemic to build up the bonapartist state apparatus. Already in April, the federal authorities launched the app *Aarogya Setu* - meaning Health Bridge - a Bluetooth and GPS-based system developed by the country's National Informatics Centre. The app alerts users who may have come in contact with people later found to be positive for COVID-19 or deemed to be at high risk.⁵⁰

The government makes the use of this app compulsory for all workers, both private and public, as well as for members of the military. Installation of the app is also mandatory in regions declared as containment zones. Stranded Indians abroad who wish to be repatriated also need to install it on their mobile phones before entering the country. In some regions, the police have already stepped in to

enforce the use of the app. In Noida, a burgeoning satellite town close to New Delhi, police have made it a punishable offense if people don't use the app. App users must answer questions posed by a chatbot about whether they have any COVID-19 symptoms, pre-existing health conditions and about their travel history. Those suspected of being infected are contacted by health authorities, who track cases in a database.

In short, India's ruling class tries to follow the Chinese example in implementing a massively expanded police and surveillance apparatus. Unsurprisingly, even the main opposition Congress party, an utterly bourgeois force, condemns this attack. Rahul Gandhi aptly called the app “*a sophisticated surveillance system*.”

Of course, the *Aarogya Setu* app is a huge project and its implementation will need some time. By early May the app has been downloaded by more than 90 million times in a country with a smartphone user base of about 500 million. To popularize it, a campaign featuring Bollywood celebrities was launched.⁵¹

Despite its relative economic backwardness – compared to imperialist countries – India's government mobilizes significant resources in order to expand also other elements of the repressive state apparatus. Replicating the Chinese innovations, India is also developing robots. For example, Asimov Robotics, a start-up based in Kerala, has deployed robots at entrances to office buildings and other public places to dispense hand sanitizer and deliver public health messages about the virus. Robots developed by Asimov Robotics are also being deployed in hospital isolation wards to carry food and medicines, which eases the pressure on medical staff.⁵²

A more developed project is the systematic use of drones for surveillance of the population. Hence, the government, in cooperation with start-ups such as Marut Dronetech, tests the use of drones to monitor adherence to social distancing rules. These drones are also capable to check people's temperature using thermal imaging.

The news agency Reuters published an interesting report about such use of drones in Mumbai, a large city of around 12 million people, of which some 65% live in slums. A further six million people are estimated to live in peripheral districts. Operating from a government building, officials are studying a giant screen showing live drone and CCTV footage of crowded slums. When cameras captured dozens of shoppers thronging a market in Mumbai's low-income Dongri area – often considered Asia's biggest slum with an estimated 1 million residents – violating the countrywide lockdown, officials called in the police to disperse the crowd. According to this report, authorities are using drones, re-oriented traffic cameras, and heat maps to enforce a lockdown in what is one of the most densely populated areas on earth.⁵³

In addition, the government has also divided the country in three different zones. Green zones are districts with either zero confirmed cases till date; or, no confirmed case in the last 21 days. Red zones are defined based on the total number of active cases, doubling rate of confirmed cases, extent of testing and surveillance feedback from the districts. The districts, which are neither defined as red nor green, are classified as orange zones. According to the Health Ministry's classification, there are currently 130 red zone districts, 284 orange zone districts and 319 green

zone districts across the country. The government has also said that the list of districts will be updated on the weekly basis and changes will be communicated to the states. Depending on the designation of the zone, the freedom of movement within such is either largely restricted or more relaxed.⁵⁴

South Africa: Lockdown imposed by a “progressive” government

Let us finish this overview by briefly mentioning South Africa. Here the capitalist popular front government of South Africa of President Cyril Ramaphosa follows the same policy like the previous mentioned states. After imposing a draconic lockdown the ANC government has now assigned levels of lockdown restrictions for each of the country's roughly 50 districts, depending on the number of active coronavirus infections there. The parts of the country with the highest rates of infection, including metropolitan areas, are likely to remain under stringent restrictions into June.⁵⁵

As in other countries, such a system can only be implemented with the brutal help of the repressive state apparatus. As we have reported, there has been a particularly draconic implementation of the lockdown policy not only in South Africa⁵⁶ but in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa as it is often imposed by the army against the urban poor masses living in the slums.⁵⁷ This is why the RCIT, jointly with our African comrades, has initiated an international solidarity campaign.⁵⁸

All this confirms, as we have often emphasized in the past, that the ANC government, which is in power since 1994, has a thoroughly capitalist nature.⁵⁹ This essence is unswayed by fact that this government includes ministers of the so-called South African “Communist” Party since its inception and that it has been uninterruptedly supported

by the labor bureaucracy of the largest trade union federation COSATU. The Stalinists' decades-long participation in such a capitalist government rather demonstrates once again that this political current has nothing to do with socialism and Marxism! It rather represents an agency of the bourgeoisie within the ranks of the official workers and popular movements.⁶⁰

Conclusions

Surely, our brief survey is far from complete. We have only discussed a selected group of countries, albeit these countries all in all are home of nearly half of the world population. However, we think it has been sufficient in order to provide an overview of some fundamental tendencies which are characteristic for the plans of the ruling class to expand their control over the population in the coming period.

In the RCIT Manifesto on the COVID-19 Counterrevolution we have warned: *“With one stroke, “Big Brother” is here, openly and without any attempt by the capitalist state to conceal it. The massive surveillance techniques will soon be the new normal worldwide.”* Our survey has demonstrated that this was not an “alarmist” statement but rather a pretty accurate assessment of a new era which has began in March 2020.

Hence, we repeat that the current policy of the ruling classes represent a dangerous global counter-revolutionary offensive under the cover of the COVID-19 pandemic. We emphasize this not because we draw pessimistic conclusions out of such an assessment. As we states in our Manifesto: *“In other words, the global counter-revolutionary offensive can only temporarily cover up the accelerating political and economic contradictions between the classes and the states. Sooner or later, this will result inevitable in new and massive political explosions, probably in the form of major domestic crisis,*

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- * **The Kashmir Question and the Indian Left Today**
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*Written by Michael Pröbsting
(International Secretary of the RCIT)*

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wars as well as revolutionary uprisings – in the Global South as well as in the imperialist states of the West and the East.”⁶¹

And in fact, we see already various food riots (e.g. in African countries, Chile, Central America) and mass protests in the past weeks. It is particularly promising to see renewed popular struggles in countries like Lebanon and Iraq which have played a central role during the pre-revolutionary world situation in late 2019.⁶²

However, it would politically totally irresponsible to ignore the huge offensive of the ruling class in recent months and the resulting dramatic changes which have taken place. It would be even more fatal to ignore the fact that the ruling class has massively rearmed and, hence, the workers and oppressed face now an enemy in different shape. On one hand this enemy has substantially weakened because its economy is in tatters and because the contradictions between the Great Powers have massively accelerated. On the other hand, this enemy has also become more aggressive in its determination to forcefully attack the working class and the popular masses.

This is why the vanguard of our class must politically and organizationally prepare for such a new era of the class struggle. We must analyze the new conditions, draw the necessary lessons and regroup.⁶³ We must take advantage that the historic developments of the past months have sorted the wheat from the chaff. Large sectors of the opportunist left have joined the camp of the COVID-19 counterrevolution and have thoroughly discredited themselves. This is and remains a mark of Cain of the opportunist left, irremovable forever! Such Leviathan Left might continue to talk about “socialism”, “Marxism” or even “Trotskyism”. In fact, they have become social-bonapartists, i.e. servants of the ruling classes’ chauvinist state bonapartism under the cover of “socialism”.⁶⁴

In contrast to them, authentic revolutionaries must join forces on the basis of a program of intransigent and independent class struggle. It is the deep conviction of the RCIT that revolutionaries must closely collaborate and if possible fuse their forces on such a program which refuses support for any faction of the monopoly bourgeoisie. Against U.S. imperialism as well as Chinese or any other imperialism! Neither the Trump/Bolsonaro laissez faire “hoax” non-response to the COVID-19 crisis, nor the state bonapartist lockdown and surveillance methods of Xi, Modi and Macron! For an unambiguous socialist, internationalist and democratic program against the Triple Crisis of Third Depression chauvinist state bonapartism and COVID-19 pandemic! This is the road on which the

RCIT hopes to fight alongside other revolutionary forces in building a new World Party of Socialist Revolution!

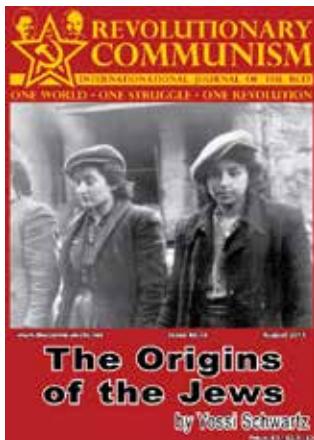
Footnotes

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By Yossi Schwartz, July 2015

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5 RCIT Manifesto: COVID-19: A Cover for a Major Global Counterrevolutionary Offensive

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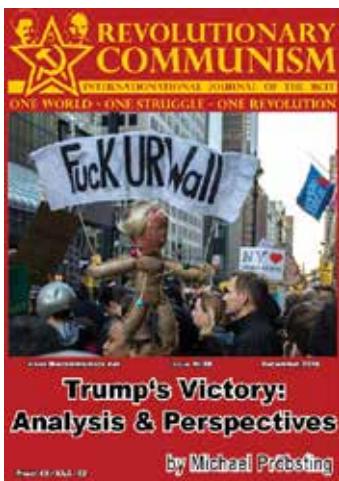
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Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

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

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

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

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

25 years.

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

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

**Building the
Revolutionary Party
in Theory
and Practice**

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



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

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Books of the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: Marxism and the United Front Tactic Today

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Marxism and
the United Front
Tactic Today**

*The Struggle for Proletarian Hegemony
in the Liberation Movement
in Semi-Colonial and Imperialist Countries
in the present Period*



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International tendency

What the RCIT Stands for

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

No future without socialism!

No socialism without a revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

