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Greece: Elections, United Front and the struggle for a Workers' Government

**plus: Programme for Pakistan, France,
Mali, Chinese Imperialism, Zimbabwe ...**



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WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE!

Revolutionary Communism

No. 3, June 2012

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The third issue of our English-language journal *Revolutionary Communism* reflects the progress we have made in the recent past. Since the appearance of the last issue of this journal in January 2012 we have deepened the political and organisationally homogeneity of the organisations who collaborated closely since last year: the *Revolutionary Workers Organisation* (RWO, Pakistan) and the *United Lankan Workers Party* (ULWP, Sri Lanka), the *Revolutionary Workers Collective* (RWC, USA) and the *Revolutionary Communist Organisation for Liberation* (RKOB, Austria). In particular we have discussed, agreed and published an international programme – *The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto*.

Based on programmatic unity and the practical experience of collaboration we have fused in spring 2012 to form an international organisation based on democratic centralism – the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT).

We will continue to publish *Revolutionary Communism* as the English-language journal of the RCIT several times a year. We also have set up a new website: www.thecommunists.net which is regularly updated. Our e-mail Newsletter (*RC-News*) will also continue to be published about once a month. *The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto* can be ordered at our contact address or can be read on our website www.thecommunists.net/rcit/rcit-manifesto.

We are fully aware that the RCIT is a small international organisation, uniting revolutionary cadres in three different continents. However, smallness at the beginning did not discourage Marx and Engels when they joined the *Communist League* or Trotsky and his supporters when they started to organise the *Bolshevik-Leninists* as an international unity after 1928/29. Neither does it discourage us today. Those who are prepared to join an organisation only *after* it has become strong enough are useless human material for a force which often has to swim *against* the stream and which by the nature of its struggle faces numerous difficulties, dangers and deprivations.

For an organisation which wants to win over the workers vanguard, the most important pre-condition is an exact understanding of which politics it wants to convince others. A pathfinder who does not know the territory in which he or she wants to lead others is a useless charlatan who can only create confusion. This is why Trotsky insisted "*Programme first!*" and why we united in the RCIT only after the elaboration of a common international programme.

The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto is the political platform of the RCIT. Hence it is the programme on which we seek to unite with other forces to build a stronger joint organisation. Does this mean that our programme is "the last word"? In the preface to the programme we already replied to such a question: "*Of course not. There is no 'last word' because the world never stands still. Just as society continually develops, the workers and oppressed always gather new experiences, so a programme, by its very nature, must continue to evolve. It must reflect and include new developments, new experiences and new lessons.*"

As important as the programme is our principle that a Bolshevik organisation must be *an international organisation from the beginning*. This principle is rooted in the nature of capitalism and of the working class which both are international in their essence.

Only as an international organisation we can develop a truly internationalist outlook, internalise international experience and work as internationalist revolutionaries. If a group exists for too long as a national organisation it runs into serious danger to develop a national-centred experience and viewpoint.

This was the attitude of Trotsky too as he explained in a letter to the German *Leninbund* in 1930:

*„From its very first steps the Opposition must therefore act as an international faction – as did the Communists in the days of the publication of the **Communist Manifesto**, or in the Zimmerwald Left at the beginning of the war. In all these cases the groups were for the most part small numerically or it was a matter of isolated individuals; but they nevertheless acted as an international organization. In the epoch of imperialism such a position is a hundred times more imperative than in the days of Marx.*

Those who believe that the International Left will someday take shape as a simple sum of national groups, and that therefore the international unification can be postponed indefinitely until the national groups "grow strong," attribute only a secondary importance to the international factor and by this very reason take the path of national opportunism.

It is undeniable that each country has greatest peculiarities of its own; but in our epoch these peculiarities can be assayed and exploited in a revolutionary way only from an internationalist point of view. On the other hand, only an international organization can be the bearer of an international ideology.

Can anyone seriously believe that isolated Oppositional national groups, divided among themselves and left to their own resources, are capable of finding the correct road by themselves? No, this is a certain path to national degeneration, sectarianism, and ruin. The tasks facing the International Opposition are enormously difficult. Only by being indissolubly tied together, only by working out answers jointly to all current problems, only by creating their international platform, only by mutually verifying each one of their steps, that is, only by uniting in a single international body, will the national groups of the Opposition be able to carry out their historic task." (Leon Trotsky: An Open Letter to All Members of the Leninbund (1930); in: Writings 1930, p. 91f.)

We will finish this editorial by giving a brief overview over the articles in this journal. Greece is naturally a focus of our analysis and propaganda since it is by far the most developed country in Europe from a class struggle point of view. It bears strong similarities with the Revolution in Portugal 1974/75 and we try to apply the Marxist programme to the actual situation.

Another focus of the journal is Pakistan. Our section has elaborated an extensive Action Programme which contains both an analysis of the major problems of the country and revolutionary answers. A report on recent clashes in Karachi supplements our programmatic assessment.

In addition to these two key issues we also publish articles on the freedom struggle of the Tuareg people in Mali, racism and perspectives for migrants in France, analyses of Chinese imperialism, a leaflet from revolutionaries in Zimbabwe and a polemic against the former revolutionary LFI.

Greece: For a Workers' Government!

Critical electoral support for KKE and SYRIZA!

Workers: Organize and prepare for the struggle for power!

By Michael Pröbsting, 6.6.2012

The capitalist crisis in Greece is at a turning point. The vast majority of the working class, the oppressed, and even the middle class want an immediate end to the brutal austerity. Many hope that the new elections on 17th June will bring a decisive change through the formation of a "leftist" government under the leadership of the party SYRIZA. For which perspective should militant workers fight now?

The answer of our international organization - the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)* is:

* For the elections on 17th June we call for critical electoral support for the reformist parties SYRIZA and KKE. But nobody should have false hopes: The leaderships of these parties will try in every step to betray the interests of the workers. They can not and will not lead the workers out of the current misery. But as long as the mass of workers still have hopes in them, the most progressive activists must fight with them and direct demands to these parties: SYRIZA, KKE and DIMAR: *Form or support in parliament a "left" government! Such a government must be forced by mass mobilization to implement demands in the interest of the workers!*

* But the decisive changes are not made in parliament, but in the enterprises and on the streets. Everything depends on that the workers organize themselves and fight for their demands with *strikes, general strikes* and ultimately an *armed insurrection*. The main goal must be: building of *action committees* in the enterprises, neighborhoods and schools, and of *armed self-defense committees!* For a *workers' government* based on such committees, whose task is to *overthrow and expropriate the ruling capitalist class!*

* The most urgent task now is to build a *revolutionary party* that fights for an action program for the seizure of power, that pushes aside the reformist leaderships of KKE and SYRIZA aside and prepare the masses for the tasks ahead.

The current situation

Greece is facing ruin. The workers have lost a quarter of their wages within the last 12 months. At the end of the year it is expected that the production will be a fifth below the level of 2008! The official unemployment rate will then amount to 25%.

The country is being plundered by European banks: Greece owes the banks €340 billion Euro, although it has already paid €600 billion – much more than it ever owned the greedy financial sharks! The unscrupulous small class of super rich shifts its assets abroad, while the masses sink ever deeper into poverty and misery.

In the past two years, the workers have shown with more than a dozen general strikes that they reject the austerity policy. But these protests were fruitless. Why? Because they left the question of power untouched. As

long as the capitalists and the banks own their factories and banks, they can do with it whatever they want. As long as the caste of politicians – which is closely linked with the capitalist class – control state power, they can legislate and send the police against the demonstrations as they like.

Masses are hoping for SYRIZA

Given the experience of the last two years, many workers are now hoping for a decisive change through the parliamentary elections. Already in the elections on 6th May, the left-reformist party SYRIZA won a sensational victory. It increased its vote share from 4.5% to 16.6%. The Communist Party KKE, also a reformist party with strong roots in the core layers of the working class, could increase its share from 7.5% to 8.5%. According to a recent survey of 30th May SYRIZA is predicted an electoral victory with 31.5%, while the right-reformist DIMAR is said to have the support of 7.5% and the KKE of 5.5% of the electorate.

This demonstrates the recognition of the masses that a transformation is possible only if political power is changed. But this recognition is still incomplete, subject to many illusions. This is not surprising when one remembers that the reformist policies of the leading parties in the workers' movement told them that policy is better left to the politicians and that the working class itself should not take power.

These illusions can be overcome and replaced by the socialist recognition that real democracy can be introduced by the abolition of capitalism along with its parliament and by its replacement by a democracy rooted in the factories and neighborhoods councils.

Revolutionary, however, can not base their politics on future possibilities, but must take into account in their tactics those illusions that exist in the current phase. Revolutionaries must not themselves fall victim to the illusion that the illusions of the masses disappear by itself, spontaneously through the fight. No, for this the active intervention of revolutionaries, patient agitation, sharp propaganda and the practical participation in the class struggle is necessary.

SYRIZA leads to a dead end

To remove illusions of others, revolutionaries must first of all make sure that they don't fall victim to their own illusions. They have to say the correct views and openly transmit them into the masses.

It is essential that the revolutionary-minded activists clearly recognize the true nature of the SYRIZA leadership around Alexis Tsipras and explain this in their propaganda. His party calls for a very moderate program of suspension of austerity, but they are not willing to take the necessary steps for this. SYRIZA calls not even for a complete cancellation

of the debt of the country. By this, however, the country would remain trapped in imperialist debts. Tsipras spreads the illusion of finding a joint solution with the capitalist governments of the Euro zone and the European Central Bank to solve the debt crisis. Such a "solution" in reality mean a continuation of austerity programs, and therefore can only go at the expense of the already impoverished population. Similarly, SYRIZA advocates remaining inside the Euro-zone which is controlled by banks and corporations. In various political crises in the past Tsipras has declared SYRIZA's willingness to maintain "order" and the Constitution – which is nothing but the order of the banks, corporations and their politicians caste. He also met with the army leadership and announced SYRIZA's readiness for the military defense of the capitalist country against its enemies and for "expanding the striking force of the army."

The leadership of SYRIZA is thoroughly reformist. It is neither willing nor able to eliminate the misery of the masses, because they dare not to touch the power of the banks and corporations and their political instrument of power, the corrupt state apparatus, including the Parliament. It leads the masses unprepared into the coming sharp confrontations, in which the ruling class will try to crush the working class with the help of police, military, and the entire state apparatus. In recent months some sections of the elite have already openly speculated about the possibility of a military coup, as they did in 1967.

KKE is no alternative

Today the KKE criticizes SYRIZA partially with left-wing arguments for their illusionary perspective. But it combines this criticism with a politically devastating tactics: they refuse to give SYRIZA any support at all in Parliament. This is wrong! The RCIT says: The KKE should rather support in parliament the formation of a SYRIZA-led government and defend it against attempts by the right-wing parties to bring it down. The KKE should vote only for those bills that are in the interests of the workers. (E.g. stop of the memorandum, cancellation of debt, etc.).

Despite their criticism of SYRIZA from the left, the KKE leadership itself is part of the bourgeois order. It has helped the ruling class in the past to overcome political crises (e.g. by forming coalition governments with the conservatives and royalists 1944-45 or with the Conservatives and PASOK in 1990-91). When the youth revolted in December 2008 after of the murder of 15-year-old school student, Alexandros Grigoropoulos, by police forces, the KKE leadership denied their solidarity and denounced the youth as "hooligans." And when a mass demonstration on 20th October 2011 – during a two-day general strike – wanted to disturb the parliamentary session, which decided on another austerity package, the KKE security service defended Parliament against the demonstrators with violent means and with the benevolent toleration of the police!

Workers' Government

The dilemma of SYRIZA leadership is that it promises to the workers a way out of poverty without creating the conditions for it: the break-up of the power of the Greek

and European big business over the economy and state apparatus. But as long as the capitalist robbers hold this power, they will bring any government to its knees or overthrow it with a coup. This is what they did in the 1930s in France and Spain, in 1973 in Chile and 1974/75 in Portugal. It can not be otherwise, since a ruling class can not be pushed to the side peacefully and gradually. It wages a battle to the death to save their profits and privileges. The workers must wage such a struggle too!

Therefore, the central axis around which the future perspective must be built is the question of preparing the working class for the struggle for power. Contrary to the hopes of the reformists and centrists (such as CWI and IMT), the capitalist rule can not be destroyed peaceful, but only by the armed uprising.

The key steps to prepare for the struggle for power are the widespread formations of Action Committee of the masses in the factories, neighborhoods and schools. Equally central is the formation of armed self-defense committees to fight against the fascist thugs and the uniformed thugs (police/army). Out of these committees real militias and workers' councils can emerge in the future. The perspective must be the formation of a workers' government based on such organs of the masses. The task of such a workers government must be the overthrow of the ruling class, the expropriation of the banks and corporations as well as the dismantling of the armed state apparatus.

Revolutionary tactics

What does this mean for today's situation? Today action committees exist only partly and in embryo. The masses still hope for a way out through a "leftist government" with SYRIZA at the top. Revolutionary-minded activists



Murderous Greek police (Cartoon from Carlos Latuff)

must take into account.

For this first and foremost it is necessary to disseminate among the masses a concrete, revolutionary action program. Such a program must include among other things:

* *Immediate termination of the memorandum! Reversal of all wage and benefit cuts in the past few years! Cancellation of all debts!*

* For the *expropriation of the super rich! For the nationalization of the domestic and foreign banks, industrial and large commercial enterprises as well as the large estates (including the church property!) under the control of the workers! For an emergency plan funded from the assets of the rich to secure the survival of the population and the country which is faced with the extortions of monopoly capital.*

* For the nationalization of the land! *Cancel the debts of peasants and small traders – instead give them interest-free loans! For promoting voluntary associations with the longer-term goal of voluntary collectivization!*

* No to Greek chauvinism! *For full equality for national minorities and immigrants (citizenship rights, equal pay, equal recognition of their language in offices and schools, etc.)!*

* For a *workers' government based on councils and militias!* Such workers' government would immediately break with the imperialist EU and the euro-zone and instead promote the building of socialism in Greece and the international spreading of the revolution in the Balkans and throughout Europe. *For a socialist federation of the Balkans! For the United Socialist States of Europe!*

Today, when the masses still have illusions in SYRIZA and KKE, the struggle for such an action program must to be combined with a *critical electoral support* for these parties and the demand that they (and the right-reformist DIMAR) form or support the formation of such a government.

Deputies of the workers' parties, which claim to honestly represent the interests of working people, should grant a SYRIZA-led government no political support. This would be an illusionary, bourgeois workers' government and no real workers' government! If SYRIZA forms such a bourgeois workers' government with the support of DIMAR and/or KKE, socialist deputies can support such a government only against attempts of the right-wing parties to bring it down. They can vote only for concrete bills which serve the interests of the working class. However, they may not grant general, political support for such a SYRIZA-led government or they should not vote for the budget, which by its nature serves the maintenance of the capitalist order.

Various opportunists (like the Mandeliste Fourth International, the IMT, the LFI and others) criticize revolutionary-minded activists in Greece for not forming a "leftist government" with SYRIZA or even for not withdrawing their candidacy in the elections at 17th June in favor of supporting SYRIZA. This criticism is directed mainly against the radical left alliance ANTARSYA which got in the elections on 6th May 1.2% of the vote.

The RCIT rejects such an opportunistic criticism. Our criticism of ANTARSYA is that it does not put forward a revolutionary action program and carry this into the masses. Whether ANTARSYA competes independently in the elections or limits itself to one, two constituencies

and otherwise calls for a critical electoral support for SYRIZA and KKE, is a tactical question. It is quite possible that the second option would be advisable at this election given the mass illusions particularly in SYRIZA. It is important that the organizations in ANTARSYA use the revolutionary tactics of the united front towards the two major parties, direct demands to them, attempt to work together with their rank & file and support critically a "leftist government" against the right-wing forces.

International solidarity!

In case of an electoral victory of SYRIZA, the European monopoly capitalists, their governments and their media will unleash an even worse smear campaign against "the lazy Greeks". The international workers movement must hurry to help their brothers and sisters in Greece. The unions and the social democratic, Stalinist etc. workers' parties of Europe have to organize immediately a campaign for the total cancellation of all debts of Greece. Down with the governments and the EU Commission which try to blackmail the Greece!

Instead, *we need a Europe-wide campaign which includes pan-European general strikes against all the austerity packages and for the cancellation of all debt in Europe!*

Revolutionary Party

The key to a revolutionary solution of the current crisis is the timely formation of a *revolutionary party*. Only if such a party exists, can the working class be won for a program of the socialist seizure of power and then the door to liberation can be pushed open. The first step in this direction is the creation of a revolutionary pre-party organization to develop such a program and to unite activists on this basis. The RCIT will do it's best to support the Greek revolutionaries in achieving this goal.

We refer our readers to our pamphlet "*Perspectives on the Greek Revolution*" (see also www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-revolution-or-tragedy) and on our analysis of the elections on May 6, "*After SYRIZA's victory in the Greek elections: The question of a Workers Government and the revolutionary way forward*" (see also www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/after-the-greek-elections) ■



After SYRIZA's victory in the Greek elections: The question of a Workers Government and the revolutionary way forward

By Michael Pröbsting, 18.5.2012

The Greek elections ended in a tremendous defeat for those bourgeois parties which ruled the country since more than three decades and which implemented in the last years the draconic austerity packages, which impoverishes the workers and peasants.

The vote for the bourgeois-populist party PASOK (which belongs to the social democratic Second International) collapsed from 44% in 2009 to 13,2%. The conservative Nea Dimokratia (ND) also declined dramatically from 33.5% to 19% of the votes. The extreme right-wing LAOS party, which joined the PASOK-ND coalition last autumn, did not even manage to enter the parliament again.

At the same time the reformist and centrist parties to the left of PASOK won together more than 2,1 million votes or a 1/3 of the total. In particular the left-reformist alliance SYRIZA saw a dramatic rise from 4,5% to 16.6%. While the new reformist DIMAR party got 6.1%, the traditional bourgeois workers party in Greece – the Stalinist KKE – saw only a slight increase of their votes (from 7.5% to 8.5%). Antarsya – an alliance of several centrist organizations – was able to triple its vote from 25.000 to 75.000 which represents about 1.2%.

Finally right-wing forces which pretend to oppose the Euro-dictate for austerity were also successful at the elections. The “*Independent Greeks*” – a split from ND – received 10.6% of the votes and fascist Golden Dawn party got nearly 7% of the votes and entered the parliament for the first time.

Pre-revolutionary dynamic

The vote reflects first and foremost the deep pre-revolutionary dynamic of the political situation in Greece which we in the RCIT have analysed in our extended thesis on the Greek Revolution (*Perspectives in the Greek Revolution. The Greek tragedy is the tragedy of the lack of a revolutionary leadership of the workers movement For Workers' Councils, Workers' Militias and a Workers' Government!*, 10.11.2011; in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 2 (English-language journal of the RCIT), p. 8-15, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/greece-revolution-or-tragedy>). The ruling class – under pressure of the imperialist Euro-governments – has imposed one austerity package after the other against the open opposition of the popular masses. As a result the two traditional main bourgeois parties who received 70-90% of the votes for decades couldn't manage to get even 1/3 of the votes today.

Despite all distortions the elections have shown very clearly that bourgeois democracy is a dictatorship of the capitalist class. According to opinion polls 80% of the population oppose the Euro-zone loan agreements and the austerity packages. The working class has fought against these austerity packages with a number of general strikes, enterprise occupations, mass demonstrations etc. Nevertheless the government executed the will of the small elite

of foreign and Greek monopoly capitalists.

The general dynamic of the pre-revolutionary dynamic in Greece is the following. The economic and political crisis of the capitalist system is advancing rapidly. The masses are moving to the left and look for radical solutions. They are desperate and they want a radical change now. Some backward sectors are looking to the fascists for a solution. The class contradictions are sharpening enormously and it is doubtful if bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism can contain them for much longer. Sooner or later the bourgeoisie might look for bonapartist solutions (a strong, authoritarian regime, possibly by a military coup) or even for strengthening the fascists. If the official leadership of the workers movement fails and no alternative revolutionary party is formed to remove the reformist obstacles, the working class might become demoralized, the fascists will grow and a sharp political strike against the working class will become very likely.

Why did SYRIZA win and the KKE stagnate?

The most important factor in the rise of the reformist parties on the left of PASOK is the massive increase of SYRIZA while at the same time the Stalinist KKE more or less stagnated. This is particularly clear when one looks at the votes in the traditional working class centres of the country Athens, Piraeus and Thessaloniki. In all of the six electoral districts of these three areas the KKE even lost votes and in five of them even got a lower share of the votes than it did at the elections in 2009. (<http://ekloges.yypes.gr/v2012a/public/index.html?lang=en#%22cls%22:%22party%22,%22params%22:%22id%22:3}}>)

SYRIZA on the other hand became the strongest party in five of these six districts. In Athens and Piraeus it got between 19% and nearly 24% of the votes.

How can this difference in working class support between SYRIZA and KKE be explained? The main reason can certainly not be found in the organizational strength of SYRIZA. It was a small party until now with less than 5% at elections before and which hardly control any significant trade unions. It even suffered a split in 2010 when DIMAR left it. KKE on the other hand possess a huge apparatus and a long tradition of leading popular struggles. It heads important and militant trade unions like the dockers or the building workers. Its trade union federation PAME had more than 1/5 of the delegates at the last congress of the union federation GSEE in March 2010.

However, exactly because it is a powerful reformist party, many workers had big hopes in it. But the KKE leadership completely failed in the mass struggles of the last years. When the youth rose up at the end of 2008 – after the murder of 15-year-old student Alexandros Grigoropoulos by two police officers – the KKE leadership denounced them. While tens of thousands of youths were fighting in the streets against the police, the KKE General Secre-

tary Papariga slandered the militants as “hooligans” and “hoodies” led by “foreign intelligence”. (This is similar to the reaction of many British centrist organisations which denounced the August Uprising of the poor, youth and migrants in summer 2011.) When the workers occupied enterprises or took part in one or two day general strikes, it was incapable to offer a perspective. When the spontaneous mass movement Kinima Aganaktisménon Politón (KAP –Indignant Citizens’ Movement) with hundreds of thousands people occupied central squares in Athens and Thessaloniki for weeks in summer 2011, it refused any support and denounced the movements as “apolitical”. When the parliament adopted a brutal austerity package and the masses marched to the parliament in protest on 20th October 2011, the KKE stewards acted as a police force, guarded the parliament against militant sectors who tried to interrupt the parliament session and beat up a number of the militants.

It is no surprise that a significant sector of the militant working class is looking for a political alternative to the KKE. It hopes to find them in SYRIZA.

Unfortunately these hopes are completely unfounded. Like the KKE and DIMAR, SYRIZA is a reformist, bourgeois workers party. This means that they are parties dominated by a petty-bourgeois labour bureaucracy which is tied via various posts and privileges with the capitalist state and hence is incapable to fight consistently for the working class interests. At the same time it has organic links with sectors of the working class which are their main social class base. In the case of SYRIZA the core of the party’s bureaucracy comes from Synaspismos – a split from the KKE in 1991. This reformist party supported for many years extremely chauvinistic propaganda towards Macedonia and mobilized together with the Conservatives, PASOK and the church for joint demonstrations under the slogan “Macedonia is Greek”.

SYRIZA leader Alexis Tsipras wants to keep Greece in the Euro-Zone which reflects the party’s desire to keep relations with European imperialism. He does not call for the complete cancellation of the debts but rather demands the establishment of a committee to review how much of the debt should be paid and how much should be canceled. During the political crisis in autumn 2011 Tsipras called for the defense of the constitution and to “*preserve social cohesion and national integrity*”.

Tsipras raises now the idea of a “government of the left”. According to the English edition of the Greek daily newspaper *Kathimerini*, he laid out the five points that he will negotiate with other party leaders:

“* *The immediate cancellation of all impending measures that will impoverish Greeks further, such as cuts to pensions and salaries.*

* *The immediate cancellation of all impending measures that undermine fundamental workers’ rights, such as the abolition of collective labor agreements.*

* *The immediate abolition of a law granting MPs immunity from prosecution, reform of the electoral law and a general overhaul of the political system.*

* *An investigation into Greek banks, and the immediate publication of the audit performed on the Greek banking sector by BlackRock.*

* *The setting up of an international auditing committee to investigate the causes of Greece’s public deficit, with a mora-*

torium on all debt servicing until the findings of the audit are published.” (Tsipras lays out five points of coalition talks, http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_ws1e1_23909_08/05/2012_441181)

These proposals reflect the deep hatred amongst the working masses but they leave the decisive questions unanswered. Will the draconic social cuts and mass sackings of the last two years be reversed or not? What does the “*general overhaul of the political system*” mean concretely since every bourgeois populist demands the same? “*Investigation into Greek banks*” is fine but how is it possible to stop them to continue the transfer of their capital abroad if one does not immediately nationalize them under workers control? “*Setting up of an international auditing committee*” – who will set it up? The European governments?

Unfortunately this illusionary left-reformist program is also supported by left-wing intellectuals like the editor of the Greek journal *Marxist Thought*, Christos Kefalis: “*This means that while the European left is still on the defensive, the attempt to implement the “compromising” program of SYRIZA and reach an agreement with the EU should be made.*” (Christos Kefalis: The Greek Elections and Political Prospects in Greece, 10.5.2012, <http://dissidentvoice.org/2012/05/the-greek-elections-and-political-prospects-in-greece/>)

SYRIZA has no intention and certainly doesn’t offer any proposal to break the control of the country by the foreign and Greek banks and corporations. Neither does it propose anything to break up the police and army which ranks are the home of many fascists and where a coup d’état is already discussed in bourgeois circles as an option.

Unfortunately, a number of centrist organisations share or semi-share the illusions in a “government of the left”, which the SYRIZA-leadership is spreading. The comrades from DEA (Internationalist Workers Left, a split from SEK/IST in 2001) who helped to found SYRIZA in 2004) praise the policy of the SYRIZA leadership instead of characterizing it as reformist: “*SYRIZA was rewarded for its radical left-wing politics.*” (Internationalist Workers Left (DEA): A political earthquake in Greece, May 9, 2012, <http://socialistworker.org/2012/05/09/political-earthquake-in-greece>)

But in reality the kind of “left government” which Tsipras is calling for would be either a popular front government (if it includes PASOK or any other open bourgeois forces) or a bourgeois workers government. Such a government would be a coalition of bourgeois workers parties (like SYRIZA, KKE or DIMAR) which are dependent and connected with the capitalist state. In any case it would be a government not serving the workers and peasants but betraying it in the interest of the bourgeoisie.

In that sense the KKE leadership is certainly correct if it denounces SYRIZA as “*a new social democracy*” (KKE: On the results of the elections of the 6th of May 2012, <http://inter.kke.gr/News/news2012/2012-05-07-ekloges>) However the KKE leadership “forgets” that it itself is a Stalinist version of the “old social democracy”. This is like two thieves denouncing each other as “criminal”

To the workers and youth militants of SYRIZA we from the RCIT say: The defense of the working class against the draconic attacks by the capitalists and the liberation of the country from the debt trap can not be achieved by negotiations with the EU-bosses. What is necessary is a workers government which is under the control of the workers and

popular masses and which overthrows the ruling class!

The question of a Workers Government

We in the RCIT have pointed out in our *Thesis on Greece* that the main question in the present phase is the question of power:

"A revolutionary program for the crisis in Greece must first of all explain the character of the current crisis and draw the correct conclusions. This crisis cannot be overcome by reforms and governmental coalitions within the framework of capitalism. The working class and the popular masses will experience a social massacre, a social and historical defeat, if the ruling capitalist class – regardless of whether ND, PASOK, KKE or SYRIZA administer their businesses – is not overthrown in time. The most important element of the current situation is therefore the question of power. Which class rules – the working class or the capitalist class?"

Building a socialist society cannot be achieved peacefully or by parliamentary majority vote. This is a daydream entertained by the SYRIZA, KKE or the centrist CWI and IMT leaderships. History has shown that building socialism requires a socialist revolution, the smashing of the power of the capitalist class and the creation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Since the ruling class will defend its power by any means, a revolution is impossible without a civil war. For this the working class must be prepared.

However the central problem at the moment is that the tempo of capitalist crisis and working class radicalization is much faster than the tempo of the formation of a revolutionary working class party which is fit for the tasks of the day.

Such a revolutionary workers party can not be built by propaganda and education alone nor by practical participation in the class struggle only. Both of this is indispensable. But what is necessary too – particularly in a situation like the present one – is the bold and patient propaganda and agitation for a revolutionary programme and its application in the form of concrete tactics.

One of the important tactics is the united front tactic. Revolutionaries must take into account that the progressive sectors of the masses have illusions in the bourgeois workers parties SYRIZA, KKE and DIMAR. Hence a strategy for class struggle with the formation of action councils, mass demonstrations, occupations, strikes and indefinite general strikes must be directed not only to the broad masses of the workers but also to the mass organizations of the class (including their leaderships). The reformist and centrist parties must be actively addressed for joint actions respectively given the extreme minority status of the revolutionary forces they must seek to participate in mass struggles led by reformists and intervene in these struggles with practical initiatives, a sharp and independent propaganda profile including explaining and warning of the treacherous role of the reformist leaderships and putting demands on these leaderships. In doing this the revolutionaries must not give the impression that they themselves believe in the good intentions of the reformist leaders but that they want to help the masses to make their own experience. The goal of such a united front tactic, as the Communist International under Lenin and Trotsky did develop, is to break the influence of reformism amongst the masses and to rally them under the leadership of a Bol-

shevik party.

This is also true for the governmental question. The masses have hopes that these parties can bring an important change. This is not surprising since they hardly have ever been in power before. Revolutionaries must not ignore the issue who is in government since it is of huge importance for the working class. They should propose tactics which relate to the existing illusion but at the same don't create confusion amongst the workers.

As Bolshevik-Communists we emphasize the need of a workers government. A "genuine workers' government" – as the Communist International called it in its thesis in 1922 – must be completely independent of the bourgeoisie and its state apparatus. This is only possible if it arms the proletariat in workers militias, puts the core industry under workers' control, base itself on workers councils (Soviets as they were called in Russia) and aims for the complete overthrow and expropriation of the bourgeoisie. The "Thesis on the Tactics of the Comintern" of the Fourth Congress in 1922 described the attitude of Bolsheviks as follows:

"Instead of a bourgeois-Social-Democratic coalition, whether open or disguised, Communists propose the united front of all workers and a coalition of all workers' parties, in both the economic and political arena, to struggle against the power of the bourgeoisie and ultimately to overthrow it. Through united struggle of all workers against the bourgeoisie, the entire state apparatus can pass over into the hands of the workers' government, thus strengthening the power of the working class.

The most basic tasks of a workers' government must consist of arming the proletariat, disarming the bourgeois counter-revolutionary organisations, introducing [workers'] control of production, shifting the main burden of taxation to the shoulders of the rich, and breaking the resistance of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

Such a workers' government is possible only if it is born from the struggles of the masses themselves and is supported by militant workers' organisations created by the most oppressed layers of the working masses. Even a workers' government that arises from a purely parliamentary combination, that is, one that is purely parliamentary in origin, can provide the occasion for a revival of the revolutionary workers' movement.

Obviously, the birth and continued existence of a genuine workers' government, one that pursues revolutionary policies, must result in a bitter struggle with the bourgeoisie, and possibly a civil war. Even an attempt by the proletariat to form such a workers' government will encounter from the outset most determined resistance from the bourgeoisie. The slogan of the workers' government thus has the potential of uniting the proletariat and unleashing revolutionary struggle." (in German: Protokoll des IV. Weltkongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale, Band II, Hamburg 1923 (Reprint Erlangen 1972, p. 1015f.; in English: John Riddell: The Comintern's unknown decision on workers' governments, August 14, 2011, <http://johnriddell.wordpress.com/2011/08/14/the-comintern%E2%80%99s-unknown-decision-on-workers%E2%80%99-governments/>)

Based on this method of the Comintern, the RCIT believes that revolutionaries in Greece should advocate a workers government based on workers councils and militias. This call is also directed to all workers organisations, i.e. also to the bourgeois workers parties and the trade unions GSEE, ADEDY, PAME, KKE, SYRIZA, DIMAR and Antarsya.

Peaceful creation of a workers government?

Such a workers government would not be a step towards a gradual transformation. Albeit the exact tempo can't be determined in advance, such a workers government would be a mortal danger for the ruling class and hence it would be related with the most bitter struggle and civil war. We think that it is a mistake if organizations which understand themselves as Marxists present the creation of such a workers government as the outcome of a general strike. Kokkino/CWI or Marxistiki Foni/IMT are examples for this. Unfortunately the League for the Fifth International has also adopted this idea recently:

"To implement such measures, however, would need a workers' government. This could only be brought about by a mass general strike to bring down the government and would need to be based on the councils and self-defence organs." (Martin Suchanek: Greece: The General Election and the Greek Revolution: For a Government of the Workers' Parties!, LFI, 25.4.2012 <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/greece-general-election-and-greek-revolution-government-workers-parties>)

We argued in our thesis on Greece about against such an idea:

"They propose a prolonged or even indefinite general strike to overthrow the government and the formation of a workers' government. Their rejection of the reformist electoral orientation is correct but their concept of the struggle for a workers' government is wrong and naive. It is a characteristic of centrism that it presents the seizure of power in a (pre-) revolutionary situation as a relatively peaceful transition, without rupture, in other words, in an opportunistic, non-revolutionary way. The indefinite general strike is seen as a weeks-long strike which forces the government to resign and then a workers government based on trade unions, leftist parties, action committee etc. delegates, emerges. In a (pre-) revolutionary situation this is a completely unrealistic view of the proletarian seizure of power. Moreover, it is a dangerous opportunistic illusion which is spread by centrism in the ranks of workers vanguard."

Given the talk of a military coup and the rise of the fascists we think it is necessary for a vanguard organization to warn the proletariat of the unavoidable clashes with the class enemy and to propagate the necessary conclusions, i.e. to call the workers organizations to build armed militias. Suggesting that the working class can create its government by a general strike only is highly problematic.

On the Sectarianism of the KKE and its bourgeois-patriotic Popular-Frontism behind it

The KKE is well known amongst sectors of the working class for a sectarian attitude. They refuse to have joint demonstrations and often they refuse to organize joint strike actions with other trade unions. As mentioned above they also failed to solidarise with the youth mass uprising in December 2008 or the square occupation movement KPA in 2011.

Many progressive organizations correctly criticize the KKE for this. However there is a strong tendency amongst centrist forces to focus their criticism of the KKE on this sectarian attitude. This is related with a failure to see the reason for this sectarianism. The sectarian policy of the KKE leadership is not caused in their unwillingness to

collaborate with others. Their history is full of episodes of collaboration even with openly bourgeois forces. In 1944 it formed a coalition government with the bourgeois and monarchist forces to disarm the partisans and install a capitalist regime during the revolutionary crisis of 1944-45. Also in 1990-91, the KKE participated in a coalition government with PASOK and ND. Neither is their sectarianism rooted in a failure to understand the need for a united front. Bureaucrats are not directed by ideas and understanding but by a pragmatic policy which serves its interests.

As we have said the KKE is a bourgeois workers party. It has repeatedly acted respectively offered to act as a savior of Greek capitalism. However to understand the specific variation of the KKE reformism it is necessary to put in mind the specific character of Greek capitalism. In opposite to most Western European countries Greece is not an imperialist but a semi-colonial capitalism. We will not go into more detail here since we have dealt with this question in the chapter *"The class character of Greece"* in our thesis on the Greek Revolution. We just want to remark here that this fact is not understood by a number of centrists who either ignore largely the question of Greece's class character or – like the SWP/IST of Alex Callinicos – who wrongly consider Greece as a "sub-imperialist" country.

However from this semi-colonial character of Greece derives the fact which often can be observed in semi-colonial countries that a sector of the reformist labour bureaucracy attempts to form a strategic alliance with the petty-bourgeoisie and with sectors of the "national" bourgeoisie in order to create an "independent" national capitalism. This is the true meaning of the *"anti-monopoly anti-imperialist orientation of struggle"* which plays a central role in the KKE policy. True, the KKE leadership sometimes speaks in resolutions about the need to combine the "anti-monopolist, anti-imperialist struggle with the struggle for socialism". But its focus on the patriotic slogans unmasks the true, bourgeois-nationalist character of their perspective. The KKE leadership hopes to win over the petty-bourgeoisie, middle classes and sectors of the "national" bourgeoisie for the project of an "independent" capitalist Greece (with a strong state-capitalist sector in finance and industry). This is why we characterize the KKE programme of bourgeois-patriotic Popular-Frontism.

To justify this orientation they spread the illusion that Greece could be an independent nation because the country *"has conditions to create a self-supporting developing national economy."* (Aleka Papatrifa, 5.7.2010) As we wrote in our Thesis *"such a nation existing in isolation is not possible"*.

This is why the KKE leadership focuses its agitation on the withdrawal of Greece from the EU and the euro currency and the restoration of "independence" for Greece and the drachma currency: *"Consequently, there is one solution: Disengagement from the EU and unilateral cancellation of the debt, This is the solution, anything else will constitute a tragedy for the workers."* (KKE: 1st Day of the 48hr Strike: Strike struggle with the occupation of the Ministry of Labour. Down with the government and the plutocracy, disengagement from the EU with people's power, 10.2.2012, <http://inter.kke.gr/News/news2012/2012-02-10-48ori2/view?searchterm=disengagement>)

But in reality, the solution of the Greek crisis can only

be international in character. A capitalist Greece outside the EU will face at least as tough austerity measures as those imposed by the present government. The only solution is the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, the smashing of the capitalist state and the creation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the spreading of such a socialist revolution in Europe and beyond.

Of course this patriotic orientation is added by specific historic and ideological reasons. The KKE central role in the antifascist national liberation struggle during the Second World War and the enormous patriotism with which it covered this struggle still has an enormous influence on the party and its public profile.

For these reasons the KKE's bourgeois-patriotic Popular-Frontism is driven by their perspective not to build a reformist government in a Greece as part of the European Union and the Euro-Zone. Therefore they reject any participation in a bourgeois government *under the present circumstances*. They hope that a collapse of EU debt-regime might force the Greek bourgeoisie and/or the European monopolies to a withdrawal of Greece from the EU/Euro and a return to the Drachma. *Under such circumstances* the KKE will be very willing to collaborate with whomever – including various bourgeois nationalist forces. In this context one just should remember the collaboration of the KKE with the monarchists in World War II and the reactionary alliances of Stalinist and right-wing chauvinists in Russia and other Eastern European countries in the 1990s.

For these reasons the KKE leadership has an interest in the failure of any SYRIZA-led government which want to keep Greece in the Euro-Zone.

Workers and youth activists in the KKE: Break with the poisoning combination of sectarian refusal of joint struggle with other workers organisations! Break with the nationalism and orientation towards a popular front!

Some comments on ANTARSYA's programme

Certainly one of the most interesting phenomena is ANTARSYA – the “*Anticapitalist Left Cooperation for the Overthrow*”. It is an alliance of a number of centrist organizations including OKDE Spartakos (affiliated to the Mandeliste Fourth International), the New Left Current (NAR, split from the KKE youth organisation, SEK (affiliated to the SWP/IST) and the EKKE. In its pre-election statement it raised a number of important demands which undoubtedly are part of revolutionary transitional programme in Greece today:

“Whatever the parrots of the troika may tell us, the “haircut” (debt cut), carried out by the “black front” means the rescue of the bankers and social disaster for the population. The measures of the Memorandum No. 2 amount to a war of extermination against the majority of the working class. The EU is imposing a devastating austerity program throughout Europe. The bankers are compensated with 50 billion while social security funds and other public bodies are being robbed!

Despite all the propaganda we say that there certainly is a different way!

- Immediate termination of the loan agreement, of any memoranda and the related measures.
- Non-recognition of the debt, debt cancellation and suspension of payments.
- Break with the system and decoupling from the euro and the EU.
- Nationalization of the banks and corporations without compensation under workers' control.
- Immediate increase in wages and pensions! Cancellation of the poll tax and increased taxation of capital.
- Prohibition of dismissals and full protection of the unemployed. Shortening of working hours and reduction of the retirement age.
- Expropriation of hundreds of closed factories and re-com-



Militant youth in Greece fights back against austerity packages and police repression

missioning by the employees themselves – Cheap and good quality food by the employees of agricultural cooperatives, the poor and middle farmers without middlemen and large producers.

Rise of the entire working population -Anti-capitalist revolution! Power and wealth belong in the hands of the workers! That is the only way we can avoid the bankruptcy of society. Our way leads to a break with capitalism – by the overthrow of the current authoritarian political system and its replacement by a democracy and the power of the workers, by the widest control to be exercised by the workers and the people. If the united front of workers, intellectuals and creative people take over leadership, we can live in dignity, use the social productive forces collectively and break with the logic of profit, the market, the “competitiveness” and environmental degradation.

We are strong enough to overthrow them! We have demonstrated our strength during the great general strikes, the occupation of the ministries, the unique lessons in democracy and struggles during the square occupancies. We can see it every day in the small and large conflicts, in the heroic struggles of Chalivourgia (steel industry), in the movements of civil disobedience “I do not pay.” This is shown by the many forms of organization and coordination of struggles at the rank and file, outside of and against the institutionalized trade unionism of GSEE and ADEDY, by developing new forms of solidarity, self-organization and self-determination. The popular uprising, the continued popular and labor war that is increasing its strength will lead to victory! (...) What is needed is the mobilization and organization of goals and demands, put today on the agenda by reality itself (cancellation of debt, leaving the euro zone and the EU, nationalization and workers’ control). This can be achieved by a united front of the break with the system and the revolution, the escalation of the workers’ and popular uprising with strikes, occupations, demonstrations and by the organization and coordination of struggles at the rank and file on the basis of an anti-capitalist program.” (ANTARSYA: Statement on the parliamentary elections to be held on May 6 in Greece, <http://kasamaproject.org/2012/05/08/antarsya-another-radical-view-from-greece/>)

As excellent as these demands and the call for revolution are, there are several major problems with it which makes it a centrist and not a revolutionary programme. First it lacks the centrality of the formation of workers and popular council. More concretely workers and popular councils as a united front of all who want to resist without any programmatic preconditions. The formulation “on the basis of an anti-capitalist programme” is highly misleading and opens the road to a sectarian mini-united front of the radical left with itself but not of the masses including those with a reformist consciousness. Let us not forget that the soviets in Russia were initially formed by workers and soldiers in 1917 who supported the defense of the imperialist fatherland in the World War I and in which the anti-revolutionary parties had a huge majority.

Secondly the uprising is presented as a rather spontaneous process. One struggle leads to a bigger struggle leads to a general strike leads to an uprising. But the revolution will never win in this way. It can only win as the organized armed insurrection led by a strong revolutionary working class party with an organized mass support in soviets or organs similar to soviets.

Thirdly and related to the first two points it lacks any call for a workers and popular militia. How should the rising fascists be beaten, how should the brutal police be

fought against and how should a military coup opposed without such a workers militia? By this we do not mean the security groups which a number of left-wing groups have already. We rather mean a mass workers militia as a united front. Only such a mass militia is strong enough to smash the enemy.

And fourthly it lacks any serious orientation towards a united front. Calling for a “*united front of the break with the system and the revolution, (...) the organization and coordination of struggles at the rank and file on the basis of an anti-capitalist program*” is nothing but a united front with itself. In other words it is no united front. But the masses which rally today behind SYRIZA, KKE or DIMAR will not spontaneously break away and join ANTARSYA. But this is the decisive question since ANTARSYA – despite tripling its votes – is still a small formation. In other words the comrades should systematically call the reformist parties for joint actions or seek to participate in mass struggles led by them. They should direct demands on their leaderships and combine this with a sharp propaganda against the treacherous character of the reformist leaderships.

To the comrades from ANTARSYA we in the RCIT say: break with the inadequate, centrist programme and build a revolutionary party! Focus your energy and devotion to the formation of a working class liberation party whose programme and tactic are adequate for the present challenges!

Is it sectarian not to join a bourgeois workers government?

As we have explained before it is vital for revolutionaries in Greece to make propaganda for a workers government based on workers councils and armed militias. But what does this mean for today in May 2012? Today neither workers councils nor militias exist. What does this mean for the question of government? Should communists not care about this and wait for the masses to erect their organs? No, we in the RCIT are of the opinion that the class struggle today goes on, the illusions of the masses exist, and hence communists must apply their tactics to this situation. They must be applied in order to enhance the mass struggle and the self-organisation of the masses and by this to prepare the conditions for the creation of workers councils and armed militias.

Concerning the governmental question one has to say this: The bourgeois workers parties are prepared to become governmental parties in the capitalist system. SYRIZA has already expressed this many times. The KKE has already done this in the past. In fact its project – approved by its last congress – of the creation of a “*people’s government*” is a camouflage for this. (KKE: Political Resolution of the 18th Congress of KKE, February 2009, <http://inter.kke.gr/News/2010news/2009-09-16-political-resolution>)

However the KKE uses radical rhetoric to cover its bourgeois-patriotic popular frontism. In a recent press conference Aleka Papariga, General Secretary of the KKE, emphasized that the real power is not in parliament and hence one should not have illusion about elections.

“I am telling you that even the most pro-workers and pro-people government cannot do anything if it is not based on the uprising and the organization of the people. Because the enemy is not only within the Parliament, the enemy is mainly the busi-

ness groups, the bourgeois class etc. And you know that the business groups do not ask for the vote of the people, they do not run in the elections no matter if some participate in the parties. Of course it is the parties, ND and PASOK in particular, which ask for the vote of the people on behalf of them. However voting against ND and PASOK does mean voting against the class they represent." (Aleka Pappariga: The "left" government is dangerous for the people, <http://inter.kke.gr/News/news2012/2012-04-10-synentefxi>)

Of course this did not stop them to campaign since a long time for the slogan "Election Now!" Rhetoric is good but parliamentary seats are better.

However today the KKE refuses any support for a SYRIZA-led government. By this make it makes it easy for Tsipras to put the responsibility for the failure of a "left government" on the shoulders of the KKE and relieves the SYRIZA leadership from the burden to prove in practices if they could lead Greece out of the crisis. (i.e. to unmask themselves as left-reformist traitors)

Similarly ANTARSYA does not call the reformist parties to form any kind of workers government.

This has caused a number of left-wing people to criticize them. Indeed as we have explained above for different reasons both KKE and ANTARSYA lack a correct understanding of the Marxist united front tactic. However the understanding of this tactic by their critic is often not much better. Why? Because for them the united front tactic is basically fighting together for this or that demand or forming a joint government. The limitation of the united front for specific demands, the focus on the rank and file organizations, the need to denounce the reformist leaderships and the goal to break the workers away from them to win them for the revolutionary party – all this is a book of seven seals for most of the centrists.

Revolutionaries must apply the united front tactic on the governmental question under the present circumstances as they are. This means today a situation where the reformist left rallies masses of workers behind them, where workers councils and militias don't exist at the moment and where the masses are looking desperately for a way out.

Last year when the reformists where all in opposition, criticized sharply the PASOK/ND coalition government, called for a "left" or "popular" government and the masses wanted to bring down the government – under these conditions it was important to call them to transform their words into deeds. In our Theses on Greece we therefore wrote:

"No demand for new elections, but for the overthrow of the government by an indefinite general strike and an armed uprising! For the formation of a workers government based on Workers' Councils and militias! As a first step: demand that the dominant labour organizations today – GSEE, ADEDY, PAME, KKE, SYRIZA, DIMAR and Antarsya – form a workers' government based on the mobilization of the masses! Down with the PASOK/ND-conspiracy against the people! The power lies not in parliament, but on the street! A real workers' government is based on the organs of workers' power (Councils, Militias, etc.), and must expropriate the bourgeoisie and smash the state apparatus."

Today, after the electoral victory of SYRIZA and the refusal of KKE to join a government one has to adapt the revolutionary united front tactic. Under the present con-

ditions revolutionaries should demand from SYRIZA and DIMAR who are willing to form a government to do so. Revolutionaries should call the rank and file to organize to force such a government to implement the demands like cancellation of the debt, reversal of all past social cuts etc. To counter the pressure of the bourgeoisie revolutionaries should call the government to base itself on mass mobilization. Of course revolutionaries should warn the masses that the reformists can not and will not implement the demands of the masses and that they will be frightened to seriously confront the bourgeoisie. They should explain the need to break with these parties to create a revolutionary mass party.

Such a "left government" would be a bourgeois workers government or – as the Communist International called it in 1922 – an "illusory workers' governments". As the Comintern explained, "communists are also ready, under certain conditions and with certain guarantees, to support a workers' government that is not purely Communist, indeed, even a merely illusory workers' government – of course, only to the degree that it defends the workers' interests." (in German: Protokoll des IV. Weltkongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale, Band II, Hamburg 1923 (Reprint Erlangen 1972, p. 1017.; in English: John Riddell: The Comintern's unknown decision on workers' governments, August 14, 2011, <http://johnriddell.wordpress.com/2011/08/14/the-comintern%E2%80%99s-unknown-decision-on-workers%E2%80%99-governments/>) As the Bolshevik party showed in 1917 such a government can and should be defended against the open bourgeois forces. Why? Because it still has the support of the majority of the class-conscious workers. But at the same time revolutionaries must sharply criticise such a bourgeois workers government and they must not join it. They must rather prepare its future overthrow.

Revolutionaries should demand from the KKE who refuses to join a SYRIZA-led government not to join but to give critical support to it. This means that it deputies should vote in parliament for bills which are reforms in the interest of the masses and they should defend the SYRIZA-led government against attempts of the open bourgeois forces to overthrow it.

A number of centrists adapted to the illusions what a "government of the left" could achieve. DEA, which is part of SYRIZA since its beginning in 2004, for example paints a rosy picture what a government of the left could achieve:

"Only through a government of the left can the Memorandum can be overthrown in a manner that is in the interests of workers. Such a government would cancel the Memorandum and the loan deals as the first step toward a program with completely different priorities. The central concerns of such a program must be wages, pensions, public education, public health and support for the unemployed. To find the financial means for such policies, this government would stop paying off the loan sharks, whether Greek or international; it would nationalize the banking system; and it would impose heavy taxation on corporate profits and the rich." (Internationalist Workers Left (DEA): A political earthquake in Greece, May 9, 2012, <http://socialistworker.org/2012/05/09/political-earthquake-in-greece>)

The comrades don't say a single word about the left-reformist character of SYRIZA, about the inevitable clash with the bourgeoisie in such a scenario, about the incapa-

bility of a SYRIZA-led government as a bourgeois workers government to break with the bourgeoisie, about the need for a genuine workers government based on workers councils and militias as an instrument to really break the control of the bourgeoisie over the society etc.

Unfortunately the chorus of the opportunists who apply the united front tactic in an opportunist way has been recently joined by the former revolutionary League for the Fifth International. (for a more detailed critique of this organisation look at our website www.thecommunists.net). In recent articles on Greece they added to a number of correct observations and programmatic demands a thoroughly opportunist position on the governmental question. They criticize the KKE and ANTARSYA for their unwillingness to join a SYRIZA-led government.

Before the election the LFI leadership wrote: *“Being afraid of the danger of opportunism, not only the KKE, but also Antarsya (including the SWP-sister organisation and OKDE-Spartacos) have ruled out any participation in government and have not developed any tactics towards the left parties – even if they had a majority in government. It warns against illusions in a “left government”. (...) It is absolutely correct of Antarsya, despite its many other weaknesses and faults, to call on the workers’ organisations to join in struggle, to campaign for a united front against the current and coming attacks. However, it is wrong and, indeed, self-defeating, not to address the very real possibility of the left gaining a majority in parliament or being able to form a minority government. If the united front with reformists, with opportunists, is permissible in the struggle against cuts and against the government, why should it be impermissible with regard to the governmental question?”* (Martin Suchanek: Greece: The General Election and the Greek Revolution: For a Government of the Workers’ Parties!, LFI, 25.4.2012 <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/greece-general-election-and-greek-revolution-government-workers-parties>)

This idea was repeated also after the election: *“In such conditions, the KKE’s policy, refusing to form a coalition with the other left parties on the grounds that it would be a bourgeois government, is a massive obstacle to keeping out the pro-austerity right and centre right parties. This is like a crude copy of the German Communist Party’s “third period” policy in Germany in 1929-33, obstructing a united front against the Nazis with the reformist SPD and its huge trade unions because they were reformist and pro-capitalist.”* (Dave Stockton: Greek elections: A rout for the parties of austerity; an opportunity for the Left, LFI, 8.5.2012, <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/greek-elections-rout-parties-austerity-opportunity-theleft>)

This is by all standards an opportunist application of the united front tactic. While Trotsky criticized the Stalinists in 1929-33 for not applying the united front tactic including critical support in an election for a parliamentary post, he did NOT criticize them for not forming a joint government with the social democrats! Discussing the question of a social democratic government he wrote in 1932:

“The Communist Party must say to the working class: Schleicher is not to be overthrown by any parliamentary game. If the Social Democracy wants to set to work to overthrow the Bonapartist government with other means, the Communist Party is ready to aid the Social Democracy with all its strength. At the same time, the Communists obligate themselves in advance to use no violent methods against a Social Democratic govern-

ment insofar as the latter bases itself upon the majority of the working class and insofar as it guarantees the Communist Party the freedom of agitation and organization. Such a way of putting the question will be comprehensible to every Social Democratic and nonparty worker.” (Leo Trotzki: Der einzige Weg (1932), in: Leo Trotzki: Schriften über Deutschland, Frankfurt a.M. 1971, S. 403; in English: Leon Trotsky: Germany: The Only Road, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/germany/1932/320914.htm>)

Joining a bourgeois workers government is impermissible for revolutionaries. If a reformist workers party like the KKE or centrist forces like ANTARSYA criticize a SYRIZA-led government with left-wing arguments they also reflect a, albeit confused but to a certain degree correct, mistrust of the class-conscious workers in a capitalist government. Revolutionaries should not criticise these parties as “sectarian” for not joining a bourgeois workers government. They should criticise it for not giving it critical support against the open bourgeois forces.

Trotsky’s approach to the bourgeois workers government

Trotsky expressed the revolutionary approach on the question of a bourgeois workers government very well in the Transitional Program of the Fourth International:

“From April to September 1917, the Bolsheviks demanded that the S.R.s and Mensheviks break with the liberal bourgeoisie and take power into their own hands. Under this provision the Bolshevik Party promised the Mensheviks on the S.R.s, as the petty bourgeois representatives of the worker and peasants, its revolutionary aid against the bourgeoisie categorically refusing, however, either to enter into the government of the Mensheviks and S.R.s or to carry political responsibility for it.” (in German: Leo Trotzki: Der Todeskampf des Kapitalismus und die Aufgaben der IV. Internationale (1938), S. 26; in English: Leon Trotsky: The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International: The Mobilization of the Masses around Transitional Demands to Prepare the Conquest of Power, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1938/tp/index.htm>)

The LFI’s leadership criticism of KKE and ANTARSYA is unfortunately a criticism from the right, not from the left. Its call for a “left government” is an opportunist application of the opportunist tactic of “left unity” which has become recently a major feature in the LFI’s policy. It sees *“the inability of the revolutionary left organisations to transcend their fragmentation”* as the major factor for the crisis of leadership. (Workers Power: Draft Proposal for Political Basis for the Anticapitalist Initiative, 21.4.2012, <http://southlondonanticapitalists.wordpress.com/2012/04/30/building-a-new-left-a-great-start/>) In the same spirit it sees the failure of “the left” to form a joint government as a major obstacle in the class struggle.

In fact the most important obstacle for the class struggle is the failure of the left to break with its method, programme and strategy. Hence it follows a non-revolutionary policy and can’t apply the necessary tactics.

Indeed the formation of an authentic revolutionary party and a Fifth Workers International based on a communist programme is the major task ahead of all true revolutionaries. In Greece and around the world. The RCIT will do its utmost to contribute to this task. ■

Prospects for revolutionary class struggle in Pakistan: Our goal – socialism, our way – the revolution, our instrument – the revolutionary party!

An Action Program for Socialist Revolution by the Revolutionary Workers Organisation (RWO), April 2012

Pakistan's peoples are haunted by poverty, child labour, wars and catastrophes. Responsible for this misery are not the toiling peoples. It is the greedy, corrupt ruling classes of both Pakistan and of the imperialist powers who together exploit and oppress the workers, peasants and national minorities to enrich themselves.

The workers, peasants and national minorities – i.e. the overwhelming majority of the over 180 millions in Pakistan – are bearing the terrible consequences of the capitalist misery. In Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa members of the oppressed minorities are killed or disappear on a daily basis. 73% of the population lives on less than US \$2 a day – i.e. the official poverty line defined by the United Nations – and nearly one fifth has to survive with even less than US \$1 a day. Nearly half of Pakistan's population is food insecure and 48% of the children are undernourished. Workers are exploited mostly in the informal sector where labour rights and collective bargaining does not exist. On the countryside a handful families concentrate the agrarian wealth in their hands while the huge majority of the rural population does not possess any land and their labour is squeezed by the landlords up to the extreme. For the huge majority of the women live is daily struggle for survival. But while they work – in employment or at home – as much as men if not more they have no economic independence and are often victim of physical violence.

Pakistan's misery is no exception. It is not the specific corruptness of the politicians and landlords in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. We can see a similar picture all over the world. The misery of Pakistan is part of the misery of the world. The causes are the same. It is rooted in the capitalist system which rules our world since centuries. Capitalism is in a cul-de-sac. (1) It is in death agony. It has nothing to offer. It must be overthrown. In Pakistan and around the world.

But capitalism will not collapse by itself. The ruling capitalist class can only be overthrown by a socialist revolution led by the working class in alliance with the poor peasants and the urban poor. Contrary to the illusionary daydreams of various left-wing forces (like Lal Khan's The Struggle/IMT or the Labour Party Pakistan) the socialist revolution will not be a process of peaceful transformation but an armed insurrection of the working class and the oppressed masses. There are also various Stalinist and Maoist parties who mistakenly believe that a stable democracy can be achieved without abolishing capitalism, that a bourgeois democratic revolution can succeed without a socialist revolution. This is nonsense! Real democracy is only possible under the rule of the working class and this has a successful socialist revolution as its precondition.

Such a revolution cannot and will not happen sponta-

neously. It must be organised. Organised by a revolutionary working class party. A party based on the lessons and experiences of the Bolsheviks who organised under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky the first successful seizure of power of the workers and peasants. (2)

In fact the workers, peasants and oppressed nationalities have demonstrated repeatedly that they are willing to fight for their freedom. The Revolution in 1968-69 was a heroic uprising of the workers, peasants and youth – defeated only because of the shamelessly betrayal of the Bhutto-PPP and also various Stalinist and Maoist forces who either uncritically supported the PPP or denounced it as a CIA conspiracy. The oppressed Baloch nation has risen up five times since 1948 to achieve independence. The heroic workers strikes at PTCL, KESC, the power-loom workers or the Lady Health Workers in recent years, the marches of the landless peasants and the lawyer's movement in 2007 which gave rise to the student movement – they all showed that the spirit of resistance is alive.

But what is missing is a Bolshevik party – a well organized combat party for revolution which is rooted amongst the working class. As long as we have not archived the formation of such a party all the heroic struggles of the masses can not successfully win liberation.

No fundamental question of mankind – economic disaster, environmental catastrophes, war etc. – can be solved on national terrain but only in the international arena. Pakistan's misery is inseparable linked with the misery of world capitalism. The tragic partition of the subcontinent in 1947 was caused by British imperialism in collaboration with the Muslim League and the Indian Congress party. The interest squeeze caused by the huge debts to foreign imperialist capital is a permanent burden on the economy and the US-“war on terror” marks life in Pakistan more and more dangerous. There is no national solution for Pakistan's problems. The only solution is a successful revolution which starts in one or more countries and spreads internationally.

Our goal is a socialist society. Under socialism the economy is in the ownership of the society and not of individuals. It is planned according to the needs of the people and a sustainable development to improve the living conditions of all people. It does not function for the accumulation of profit. Decisions are made in councils assembling the workers, peasants, youth in the enterprises, the urban districts, the villages, the schools etc.. Based on these decisions the toilers elect delegates on a local, regional, national and finally internal level and by this form the foundation of a workers and peasant republic. All people will have enough to eat. No oppression against women, national minorities, youth etc. will be tolerated. In such a

society people have the full right to practice their religious beliefs. But state and religion are separated and the law is derived not from the Sharia but from the interests of the working people.

Our socialism has nothing to do with the caricature of socialism created by the Stalinist dictatorships in the USSR, Eastern Europe and China which are unfortunately still hailed by various "Communist" and "Workers' and Peasants'" Parties. Neither has it any similarity with the authoritarian capitalist regime of Bhutto in the 1970s which is still advocated by the left wing in the PPP.

This is why we need a party for socialist revolution in Pakistan and internationally. A party based on the working class and fighting for the liberation of all oppressed.

Building such a world party – the Fifth Workers' International – is the goal of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) and this is why the Revolutionary Workers Organisation (RWO) is its Pakistani section. We base ourselves on the international Program of the RCIT. This national Action program for Pakistan is a concretisation of the revolutionary method to the conditions of our country. If you share our goals – join us!

I. Pakistan: a semi-colonial capitalist country run by a ruling class of landlords, industrial and financial barons and the military officer caste and dominated by imperialism

Pakistan is a semi-colonial capitalist state. It is a state controlled by and serving a ruling class which combines landowners, industrial magnates and financial robber barons. It is a ruling class which of course has its inner divisions and struggles for their share of the spoils. But the conception shared by many left-wing liberals, Stalinists and Maoists that there exists a fundamental conflict of interests between the "feudal" landlords and the "modern" industrial entrepreneurs and military officers is sheer fantasy. The landlords, the financial and industrial capitalists, the dominant caste in the state apparatus and the imperialist powers are inseparable interconnected with each other and can not exist without the other.

The landlords of course don't consume the agrarian products of their tenant farmers themselves but sell it to make profit. Not surprisingly Pakistan's important industries and exports are closely related to the agrarian business. (Pakistan is e.g. one of the world's leading exporters of textiles and this industry alone accounts for more than 60% of the country's' exports.) So while the landlords obviously utilize the old "semi-feudal" methods of exploitation of the peasants (share-cropping, tenancy etc.) they are part of the bourgeoisie and could not exist without the market.

An expression of this is for example the strong support for the PPP (led by a landlord clan) amongst the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the strong support for the PML-N (led by the owner of the steel mill Ittefaq Group and one of the largest producer of iron materials) amongst the landlords.

This super-rich elite controls political life via their parties which are run like a family business (the PPP of the Bhutto clan, the PML of Nawrez Sharif etc.) and they often control the higher and lower civil servants. It is therefore no surprise that only 2% of the population pay taxes.

The military is not an institution separated from these elite but interwoven with it in many ways. Under the military dictatorships of Ayub Khan, Zia and Musharraf the industrial development was enhanced of which the landlords profited too. In fact given the weakness of the domestic ruling class it could only survive because of the existence of a strong military officer caste which either openly took power (as it did for 30 of the last 64 years) or played and plays a dominant role "behind the scenes" as an economic and political factor.

The military officer caste itself has become part of the capitalists. A few years ago Ayesha Siddiqi showed in her book *'Military Incorporated: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy'* that retired and serving officers run secret industrial conglomerates, manufacture everything from cornflakes to cement and actually own 12 million acres of public land. They are said to assume a wealth worth as much as £10 billion. Five giant conglomerates, known as 'welfare foundations', run thousands of businesses, ranging from street corner petrol pumps to sprawling industrial plants. The author estimates that the military controls one third of all heavy manufacturing and up to 7% of private assets.

This ruling class of landlords, industrial and financial barons and the military officer caste is closely linked with the imperialist powers. Without the imperialists support they could not exist.

Throughout its whole history the Pakistani ruling class was in closest alliance with the imperialist powers. The Pakistani ruling class served from the beginning as a vassal of US imperialism and was part of the US-led military alliances SEATO and CENTO. The Zia dictatorship was essential to engineer the US support for the reactionary struggle against the PDAP/Soviet government in the 1980s in Afghanistan and in the last decade the regime in Islamabad helped the US imperialists to wage its colonial war against the Afghan people and even the Pashtun people in FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Pakistan ruling class is highly dependent of imperialist support. Today Pakistan is the third-largest recipient of US foreign aid.

Of course the imperialists profit from this and exploit Pakistan as a semi-colonial country. This means that Pakistan is – like most countries in the world – formally independent but in fact exploited and oppressed by imperialist power like the USA, EU or nowadays also the new imperialist power China.

While China has been Pakistan's "all-weather friend" since decades there has been a significant shift in recent years. For most time Pakistan's ruling class was clearly subordinating itself to US imperialism. But with the decline of Washington's global absolute hegemony and the recent emergence of China as an imperialist power, Islamabad is turning now stronger to Beijing. China's growing hegemonic role in Pakistan is demonstrated not only by the intensive close military ties, but also its place as the biggest trade partner and a central foreign investor, as the building of the major port of Gwadar or the Karakoram Highway, connecting northern Pakistan to western China shows.

Pakistan serves the imperialist world as a producer of cheap agrarian commodities and textiles and it pays billions of dollars each year as interest rates to foreign financial capitalists. (e.g. 8,5 billion dollars in the financial

year 2010-11 while the state spent at the same time only a combined total of Rs 31.3 billion (\$368 million) under the Public Sector Development Program!)

The struggle for liberation of the oppressed masses under the leadership of the working class therefore cannot be conducted in support of one wing of the greedy robbers against the other or with the help of the West against the domestic "feudals". This will only make the working class and oppressed a tool for power games of the elite.

The only consistent struggle for the liberation of the working class and the oppressed can be conducted with a program for the full and complete liberation of all parts of our classes - i.e. for all sectors of the workers, be it poorer or better-off, be it male or female, young and old, national, migrant or abroad. And it must be conducted against the enemy of all of us – the ruling class with all its components and against the imperialist powers in West and East.

The working class and the oppressed masses are the huge majority in the country. They have strong allies: the international working class which constitutes nearly half of the world population and which can draw with it the huge masses of poor peasants and urban poor. But this is only possible via a program of permanent revolution which links the single democratic tasks with the goal of socialist revolution and the national with the international class struggle.

II. Pakistan is an artificial creation and a prison house for the oppressed nationalities

Pakistan is the product of the conquest and suppression by the British colonial empire. Because of imperialism's Durand agreement in 1893 the Pashtun people and the Balochi people got divided between what is today Afghanistan and Pakistan (and Iran in the case of the Balochis). It is because of imperialism's policy of "*divide et impera*" (3) that when they could not resist the anti-colonial liberation struggle of the masses on the Indian sub-continent that the British ruling class instigated the partition. The aspiring new ruling classes of the Hindu and Muslim capitalists and landlords criminally supported this partition in 1947. The masses suffered the terrible consequences: up to a million people died and up to 15 million people had to flee and leave their homeland forever. This reactionary partition was not a division into "two nations" – the Muslims and the Hindus – as the reactionary *Muslims League* of Mohammad Ali Jinnah claimed. Let us remark as a side note that the idea of a "Muslim nation" in itself is a caricature of the Korans belief in the global unity of the *ummah* and not an ethnic-national group. Already after 1948 many millions of Muslims on the sub-continent lived outside of Pakistan. In fact the partition did not unite the Muslims but divided them between two states! (like the Kashmiris, the Punjabis etc.)

Shamefully the Communist Party of India (with Stalin's support) played a treacherous role in this reactionary partition of the subcontinent. Its leadership claimed that the bourgeois Congress Party represents a "democratic movement" and publicly proclaimed to "*extend full co-operation*" with the Congress Party and the Muslim League. It called the workers and peasants to stop their struggles "*because the new government was to be given an opportunity to fulfill their promise*". They subscribed before the partition to the

reactionary theory of "two nations" (the Muslims and the Hindus), joined both the Congress Party and the Muslim League with the call "*to unite the left wing of those parties*". Similarly they betrayed decisive (pre-)revolutionary situations when the Indian working class and peasantry rose up against the British Empire. The CPI denounced the "Quit India" mass uprising in August 1942 as a provocation of a fascist "Fifth Column". It slandered the mutiny of the sailors of the Royal Indian Navy in February 1946 which turned into armed struggles and general strikes as "mob violence". This was a particular serious crime since this uprising united worker from the different communities (Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs) and had the potential to overthrow the colonial administration. And it contained the Tebhaga movement of the share-cropping peasants which stated in Bengal in 1946. All this was done with the support by the Stalin-led bureaucracy with the justification of the necessary subordination of the interests of the working class and poor peasants under the interests of the "national", "democratic" or "progressive" capitalists.

In fact the Muslim landlords, capitalists and state bureaucrats just looked for a pretext to create their state and exploit the toilers with the support of imperialism.

The Pakistani state never was the state of a single nation. In reality it became a state dominated by the Punjabi-despite the fact that the Punjabis constitute just 42% of the country's population. They made their language – Urdu – the official state language despite the fact that when Pakistan state was founded, not more than 10% of the population spoke Urdu.

As a result Pakistan is a prison-house for the oppressed nationalities. This state did not liberate the Muslims but oppresses most of them. This is why the Balochis sought independence from the beginning. This is why the Bengalis in what was Eastern Pakistan resented their discrimination and achieved finally independence in 1971 through a liberation war. This is why many other nationalities (especially Sindi, Saraki and even the Urdu speaking) resent the Punjabi-dominance amongst the military officer caste, the state apparatus, the rich and super-rich.

The Pakistani state was an artificial creation in the interest of British imperialism and a small domestic elite. Democrats and socialists have no interest in keeping this state within its present boundaries. We want to smash this prison house for the oppressed peoples. We want to achieve international unity starting with a voluntary federation of the people on the South Asian sub-continent and beyond. This can only be achieved via a socialist revolution and the building of a socialist society. Because as the partition in 1947 showed, as long as capitalist classes exist they will look for national division to rule their own state and to exploit the people. Only when we abolish the capitalist class there can be a unity of the different nations.

A pre-condition for such a voluntary federation is winning the trust and building the unity of the oppressed peoples. Therefore there can be no internationalism without the consistent struggle for self-determination of the oppressed peoples. "But this could lead to secession!", some frightened liberals and reformists will say. So what? Are we afraid of secession? Not at all! We don't want to keep a state that does not have the trust and support of the people living in it. Only voluntary unity is a stable and long-term unity of the peoples!

III. The political parties and the crisis of leadership of the working class movement

The established parties are all parties of the ruling class. As it is always the case with robbers they fight between themselves about the share of the spoils. That's why Zia executed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979 and Musharraf disposed Nawrez Sharif in 1999 and sent him into exile and the later and Benazir Bhutto did with Musharraf in 2007.

But in essence they serve the same class: the ruling class of landlords, industrial and financial barons. This is not only true for the PML(Q) and the PML(N) but also for the PPP. Yes, it proclaimed in the past socialism and democracy as its goals. But we know: not everyone who pretends to be a righteous Muslim is an honest man in real life. And so it is also the case that not everybody who swears on socialism and democracy is necessarily a socialist and democrat. In fact the PPP is led since its beginning by one of the biggest landlord families in Sind. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was no socialist in any way! He just covered his bourgeois regime with phrases about the "socialist revolution". At the same time he oppressed the working class, the reactionary war against the Bengal people striving for independence and sent in the years 1973-77 80.000 soldiers to slaughter the national liberation struggle of the Baloch people. And the PPP leader Benazir Bhutto imposed an open neoliberal policy in the 1990s against the working class and the peasants.

Shamefully various petty-bourgeois left-wing forces help the PPP to get a progressive cover. They present the PPP government as a lesser evil (like the Communist Party or various left-wing intellectual). Some even support them "critically" (like the Awami Party). Other, pseudo-Trotskyist organizations, support the ruling PPP – the party of the Sind big landlords and capitalists – as party activists and as office holder (like ex-MP Manzoor Ahmad and leader of the PPP's Labour Bureau from the "Revolutionary Struggle" tendency). Or they act as critically but loyal PPP inner-party opposition (like Lal Khan's "The Struggle"/IMT) which tries to foster relations with critical sectors of the bourgeois PPP by praising the party's past tradition of authoritarian ruler.

Instead of praising the PPP's past program and manifest to like the CWI and the IMT do, Marxists have the duty to unmask the PPP's Pakistani chauvinism and the bourgeois class interest which is covered by some sweetish demagogic phrases about „Islamic socialism“ and democracy. The PPP is and always was a bourgeois-populist party.

The present rise of Imran Kahn and his party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI) reflects the huge distrust of the masses in the established political parties. The only "strength" of Khan's PTI is the public hatred of his opponents and the unknown record of the party. However behind Khan's populism is ordinary bourgeois politics in the interest of the ruling class. This is why many politicians of the old parties don't find it difficult to jump wagon and joins Khan's party. They know they can continue with him the same old politics.

The Islamists parties usually represent the class position of very conservative sectors of the bourgeoisie and of backward and desperate sectors of the petty-bourgeoisie.

Unfortunately the Pakistani left is strongly marked by reformism and centrism. The Workers Party has links with

some trade union leaders but rather weak roots amongst the workers. Its policy is characterised by reformism which it inherited from its Stalinist and social democratic founding organisations. The Awami Party is even more right-wing reformist. It is totally focused on standing for elections and supports the imperialist war on terror.

The Labour Party follows a left reformist policy which it covers with socialist rhetoric. But in various working class struggles they orientate mainly to build closer relations with trade union bureaucrats instead of organising the workers against the union leaders. They are also looking for alliances with bourgeois, liberal forces and NGO's.

The Struggle Group (IMT) follows its unprincipled deep entryism in the openly corrupt capitalist PPP since decades. They believe that the Pakistani working class does not need their own, independent party. Instead, according to them the PPP is already the party of the workers and the task is only to replace its leadership by socialists. While they completely misjudge the progressive potential of the PPP they ignored real progressive mass movements like the lawyers movement and played a disastrous role in the PTCL workers struggle.

While in the concrete struggle practical agreements with various forces about common actions in the defence of a strike, of a national resistance act or actions of landless peasants are inevitable and necessary, political alliances with bourgeois parties are illegitimate for Marxists. This is why the Labour Party of Pakistan's joining of the All-Parties Democratic Movement (APDM) together with the right-wing fundamentalist Jamat-i-Islami and Imran Khan's PTI was a renunciation of class independence and a politics of popular-frontism, i.e. of class collaboration with sectors of the bourgeoisie.

As a result of the failure of the various reformist and centrist parties and the populist deception of the PPP the working class in Pakistan lacks their own party. The *RWO* emphasizes that the working class needs a revolutionary party. As a step into such a direction we support practical initiatives from sectors of the working class – in the unions, in other mass organizations etc. – to build a new, independent working class party. While we would advocate a revolutionary program we would not make acceptance of it to a pre-condition from participation. We would rather work inside such a new workers party as a revolutionary wing. We would however openly fight for our program under all circumstances and try to win the majority of the party for it.

The struggle for militant mass trade unions

Trade unions are chronically weak in Pakistan. Splintered in many small unions (in 2000 there were 7.220 unions) they organise only about one million workers which is about 2.4% of the workforce. Of these trade union members only 1,5% are female! The trade union movement has been dominated by a bureaucracy who look at their small unions like little principdom. Often they are connected to one of the main bourgeois parties in which they are helped by various reformist and centrist forces who collaborate with these parties. (e.g. Manzoor Ahmad PPP's Labour Bureau or the PTUDC of "The Struggle")

The working class faces a very difficult social situation. Of a total employed labour force of nearly 54 million (according to the official statistics of 2011), about 18 millions

work in the countryside and 16 million in the cities and towns. More than 45% of them are employed in the agricultural sector (amongst the employed women the share is even ¾!), 13.7% work in the manufacturing sector (the share amongst women is more than 10%) and 7% work in the construction sector (nearly all are men).

Of these total labour force 36% are formally wage labourers (40% amongst men but only 21% amongst women), 27.7% are classified as “contributing family workers” (only 17.3 amongst men but 63.4% amongst women!) and 35% are so-called “Own account workers” (40.5% amongst men and 15.6% amongst women).

Because of successful oppression by the various regimes in the past decades and the betrayals by the bureaucrats many workers have jobs in the informal sector. 73.8% - i.e. nearly ¾ - of all employed in the non-agricultural sector are employed in the informal sector. (Inside this informal sector between 40-45% each are wage labourers respective self-employed).

Naturally workers in the informal sector are suffering from a particular insecure situation which makes trade union organizing difficult. In addition to the past regimes have limited or banned trade union activity. In the Industrial Relations Ordinance 2002, promulgated by then-President General Pervez Musharraf, restrictions on labour rights have been extended to the workers in the Old Age Benefit Institutions, Workers Welfare Funds, Pakistan Mint, watch and ward, security and fire services staff in different organizations. Trade union activities were banned in KESC and PIA and the activities in the banking industry are still restricted. Agricultural workers have remained outside the ambit of labour rights and laws. The IRO is also not applicable to the Export Processing Zones (EPZ) and Special Industrial Zones (SIZ). Contrary to that, workers in Sri Lanka have the right of association and collective bargaining even in EPZ operating in that country.

This does however not mean that trade union activity is not possible as massive strikes at PTCL and KESC have shown in the last years.

The *RWO* works inside the trade unions and advocates the program of class struggle, socialism and workers' democracy. We fight against the divisions of the union movement in many small unions. For broad, mass unions which organise the workers in the whole industrial branch!

Given the fact that most of the Pakistani working class are not unionised, we call for a broad campaign to build new unions on a democratic basis. Defend the unions against state repression! Unions must not be banned in any sector of the economy! We call for an end of all laws which limit and strict the rights of trade unions. New trade unions who ask for registration must be recognised by the authorities without delay.

The trade unions must be purged from the grip by the bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is a layer which is connected with the state and capital via jobs and privileges. It is far away from the interests and living circumstances of the members. The struggle for the liberation of the working class must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their upper strata. *For a mass campaign to win the broad masses for the unions (including the overwhelmingly female domestic workers)! For a rank and file movement inside the unions against the bureaucracy!*

In the class struggle trade unions are important but not

sufficient. Particularly important is the formation of *mass rank and file Action Committees* which strive to integrate all activists and workers independent if they are member of a union or not. The goal of such Action Committees must be to transform themselves into broad, comprehensive combat organizations at the work place, in the district, schools and universities. This orientation is not in contradiction to the work within the existing mass organizations (trade unions, etc.), but rather complement to these activities. The regular work within the unions at the grassroots against the bureaucracy improves the ability of the independent organization of the working class. The support of each opportunity to build broad committees of struggle in turn strengthens a grassroots movement in the unions. Similarly it is important to build militant Action Committees of the poor peasants as a basis for a revolutionary peasant movement in alliance with and under the leadership of the working class.

While we reject the subordination of unions under the control of bourgeois parties we neither advocate anti-party syndicalism. Particularly in circumstances where the class struggle and the independent organization of workers is so much restricted particularly because of the concrete political circumstances (role of the military, reactionary pressure against public activity of women etc.) a linkage of the trade union struggle and the political struggle is essential. But the orientation must be towards the formation of a worker's party and towards intervening in political life independent of any bourgeois party.

A new Workers Party would be an enthusiastic supporter of the formations of Actions Committees and Workers' and Peasant Councils. At the same time such organs – reflecting the tendency of the toiling masses for self-organisation – would be a fertile ground for a Workers Party to recruit the most class-conscious, revolutionary elements.

IV. The program of the Revolution

The *RWO* advocates the following action plan in response to the crisis of capitalism and the imperialist power politics. They propose this program for the common struggle of the workers and oppressed. They call on all organizations of the labour movement and the oppressed, to jointly enter for these demands the battlefield against the ruling class.

Our program is characterized by that the demands are not appeals to the capitalists or their government. We do not raise demands in the hope they can be realized through the means of parliamentary combinations or even a participation in a government of the bourgeois state. They are not proposals to improve or reform the capitalist system.

No, the slogans of the transitional program should help the working class, to develop and organize their combat power. Therefore, the path of struggle for the demands is not to hope for the benevolence of the rulers, but that the working class and the oppressed organize in grassroots committees in the factories, neighbourhoods, the schools and villages. In this way, the working class to develop their greatest militancy. Therefore the program of the *RWO* emphasizes that the methods of class struggle have a central place: the working class must fight for their demands with mass demonstrations, strikes, general strikes, occupations up to armed mass actions and uprisings.

Fight the imperialist “War on Terror”!

The so-called “War on Terror” is a pretext of the imperialist powers to conquer blackmail and squeeze the semi-colonial peoples. While the Afghan and Iraqi people suffered worst Pakistan suffered in various ways too. Since 2006 the country so far more than 35,000 civilian victims, destruction of infrastructure and the forced expulsion of millions of people – mainly Pashtuns – from FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. Officially the direct and indirect costs for the economy have grown to \$ 13.6 billion by 2009-10 and are estimated to rise to \$ 17.8 billion in the current financial year (2010-11). The Federal Minister for Finance in late 2011 arrives to the conclusion: *“During the last 10 years the direct and indirect cost of war on terror incurred by Pakistan amounted to \$ 67.93 billion or Rs.5037 billion.”*

This is the price the country has to pay for the vassal role the ruling class and the military has played for US imperialism from the foundation of the state until today! This must stop!

Down with the reactionary war against local tribes in the FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces! In opposite to various left-liberal, reformist and centrist forces we are not neutral in this war between imperialism and the Pakistan army on one side and the oppressed people in the Northern West regions.

We need an anti-imperialist mass movement to expel the NATO imperialists from our country. No hopes in the empty promises of the Sharif’s, Khan’s etc. And no hopes in imperialist China!

** For mass mobilizations, strikes and general strikes and direct action to close down all NATO military basis in Pakistan!*

** Immediately close down the air space for US military operations!*

** Expel all NATO soldiers from Pakistan!*

** Close down the US embassy like the Egyptians closed down the Israeli embassy in September!*

We must force the Pakistani army to immediately cease all operations as part of the imperialist “War on terror”.

** Mass mobilisation for the withdrawal of the Pakistan army from FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but also from other territories where it serves as an oppressor army like Baluchistan! Support the resistance of the oppressed tribes and people against the army! For Workers and Peoples’ Militia to wage the armed struggle against oppression!*

End imperialist debt regime! Expropriated the banks and speculators!

The country – already poor – is forced due to the imperialist regime to pay billions of dollar every year to the richest financial institution around the world. But the domestic financial sharks also squeeze out the country. Public debt to domestic financial institution is even higher (Rs5463 billion in 2011) than to foreign agencies!

Imperialist capital also profits from millions of migrants who are working as super-exploited cheap labour force abroad. At least seven million Pakistanis are working as migrants to support their families at home.

The **RWO** says:

** No further interest and debt repayment! Immediate and complete cancellation of all private and government debt!*

** Cancel the debt both to domestic and foreign financial institution!*

** Expropriation of all banks and financial institutions! Combination into a single central bank under workers’ control! Full security of the bank deposits of small and medium savers!*

** Nationalization of assets traded on the stock market and the abolition of the stock market! Compensation for small shareholders!*

** Smash the IMF and the World Bank!*

** Full support for Pakistani migrant workers abroad! For international trade union solidarity to fight against the discrimination of migrants!*

Against wage cuts, job insecurity and unemployment!

A small minority of capitalists and land owners control the economy and therefore the basis for our life. They have the power to sack workers, raise prices, close factories and expel peasants from their land. At the same time they hardly pay any taxes. Officially nearly 3,5 million people are unemployed but in fact many more are looking for a job. We fight for:

** No to any pay cut! For massive wage increases and a minimum wage, which’s amount should be set by independent workers’ committees!*

• Fight the insecure employment! Conversion of unprotected, informal and temporary contracts into permanent contracts, with alignment of the employment protection provisions and wages. The adherence of these should be regulated by collective tariff agreements and controlled by trade unions and workforce representatives!

** Fight all layoffs and plant closures!*

** For workers inquiry committees for comprehensive detection of corruption between companies and between companies and government agencies!*

** For the control and the veto right of the workers against all decisions of the management! Against any participation of workers representatives in management positions!*

** For a public employment program to improve infrastructure (energy supply, public transport, education and child care, etc.), to take action against climate change, etc. This program must not be subject to state control of bureaucrats, but must be planned and controlled by the workers and oppressed people. It is to be paid out of profits and the assets of the super rich.*

** Cut the working hours now! We support any reduction in working hours. The aim must be the division of labour on all hands. This means that everyone should have a job and work with less hours at unchanged wages!*

** High taxation of the rich!*

** Open the books so that people can control the accounts of the capitalists and land owners and see their huge wealth!*

** Workers control in the enterprises so that workers can veto the management!*

** Expropriation of the capitalists and land owners and nationalisation of their property under control of the producers, i.e. the workers and peasants!*

Fight inflation! For the adjustment of wages to inflation! For price control committees!

Prises are rising dramatically. Officially inflation was at 9.5% in 2011 but the poor were affected even worse: food prices rose by 18.4%! The capitalists must be stopped to raise prices.

** Fight inflation! For automatic adjustment of wages and all*

social benefits and pensions to price increases!

* For the control of prices through price monitoring committee, elected by the workers, housewives as well as consumers! The basis should be a cost of living index, which is determined by representatives of the working class, the peasants and small traders.

For a decent of public services, pension system and health care! Fight the privatization!

A decent social and health system hardly exist for the broad mass of people. While the government spent in 2010 Rs 442 billion (\$5.2 billion) for the army and Rs 873 billion (\$10.27 billion) to the foreign and domestic financial capitalists to service old domestic and foreign loans it spend only a combined total of Rs 31.3 billion (\$368 million) under the Public Sector Development Program (2010)!

Privatization of important public infrastructure brought profits for a few millionaires but misery for the people. The regular power cuts are an unmistakable expression of this absurdity.

Here, too, we fight for our rights and wrest the control over the economy from the capitalists and take over ourselves.

* All essential services such as water, electricity, health care, education, etc., must be publicly owned and controlled by the workers and the users! Free access to basic services for all!

* The pension system must be entirely in public ownership! Increase of pensions and reduction of the retirement age to a level agreed by the workers' movement and the pensioners' associations!

* For a decent minimum pension for all!

* No to the privatization of public property - neither to domestic nor to foreign capitalists!

* Nationalization of all media under the control of employees, the labour movement and the consumers! Democratic participation of all sections of society to the media!

* Re-nationalization of privatized and outsourced companies under workers' control and without compensation!

An end to the "business secret"! For workers' control! For a public employment program! Expropriate the super rich!

The ruling class and its state apparatus are totally corrupt. This cannot be stopped by laws since who controls them? The officials who get the money stuffed in their pockets by the rich and super-rich! No, we fight for an



end of the “business secret”, because what happens to the products of our work must not be kept secret from us. And we fight for the full control and election of all state officials by the workers and peasants in their community respectively by action councils representing the masses.

The tax system must be radically altered. The indirect taxes – which discriminate those with little money against the rich – must be abolished. At the same time the rich must pay high taxes since they have appropriated the wealth.

At the same time we fight for the expropriation of the richest families and the whole, thin layer of landlords and big capitalists who control the whole economy and by this our lives. For the sake of our future and those of our children we cannot afford the existence of the rich one day longer!

** Abolition of all indirect taxes such as for example the VAT!*

** Massive reduction in taxes on wages! Drastic increase in taxes on profits and speculation! Elimination of tax loopholes for entrepreneurs! Immediate recovery of outstanding tax debts of the companies!*

** Open the books – bookkeeping, bank accounts, tax returns, etc.! Inspection by accountants who enjoy the trust of the workers!*

** For workers inquiry committees for comprehensive detection of corruption between companies and between companies and government agencies!*

** For the control and the veto right of the workers against all decisions of the management!*

** For the confiscation of property of the powerful and influential families and their utilization in the context of a national economic plan! For the expropriation of the richest families!*

** Nationalization of banks, large corporations and in wholesale trade and transport, social, health, education and communication area, without compensation under workers' control!*

Revolutionary Struggle for Democracy! Down with the all-powerful military! For a revolutionary Constitutional Assembly!

The struggle for democracy takes a central place in the class struggles in Pakistan. During half of the country's history the military ruled by an open dictatorship and the rest it operated as a very powerful player in politics.

In some provinces the army is conducting open civil war against oppressed nationalities. In other parts various agencies of the state apparatus try to intimidate oppositional activists.

But democracy is much more than the right to put a paper in a box every few years. It means control over all aspects of the society and is therefore linked with the question of control over the economic property.

** Down with all-powerful Military! Abolish the presidency! Dissolution of the secret service ISI!*

** For a radical purge of the state apparatus! For the complete screening of all state officials and their actions - especially police, army, intelligence, administration, legal, enterprise directors, etc. - under the control of workers and peasants councils!*

** Defense of the right to strike, freedom of speech and assembly, freedom of political and union organizing, as well as the freedom to make use of all communication and information media!*

** Freedom for all political prisoners!*

** Radical democratization of the administration and jurisdiction: election and possibility to recall of the entire administrative*

apparatus by the people! Trial by jury for all crimes and misdemeanors! Abolition of judicial office and replacement by jurisdiction by a jury under the advice of legally qualified experts!

** For the extension of local self-government!*

** No to police and surveillance state! Against expanding the powers of police and courts! For the replacement of the apparatus of repression by workers' and people's militia!*

Since the constitution of the country was elaborated and agreed by the tiny political elite and there is obvious massive dissent amongst the masses about the constitution, the working class, the poor peasants and the urban poor must fight for a *revolutionary Constitutional Assembly*. We don't want a Constitutional Assembly convened by the ruling elite as part of their gamble to keep power. We fight for a Constitutional Assembly as a result of an uprising of the workers, poor peasants and urban poor fighting for power and which is protected by their armed units! In such a Constitutional Assembly Marxists will fight for a revolutionary program.

Support the national liberation struggles of oppressed peoples! For an Azad, Socialist Kashmir! For an Azad, Socialist Baluchistan!

The struggle for national liberation is one of the most important issues of the class struggle in Pakistan today. Pakistan is a prison-house for the oppressed nationalities. The ruling class is and always was Punjabi-dominated despite the fact that the Punjabis constitute just 42% of the country's population. They made their language – Urdu – the official state language despite the fact that when Pakistan state was founded, not more than 10% of the population spoke Urdu.

Since then four armed uprisings of the 6,5 million Balochi people – who have demanded their own state since the 1920s and achieved it for a brief period in the 1940s – have been brutally suppressed. In 2005 the fifth Uprising of the Balochi people started which last till today. Tens of thousands of Balochis have been killed or disappeared. Their natural resources are exploited without any benefits for the local population. Mega projects like the construction of a huge port in Gwadar by the Army in cooperation with the new imperialist power China takes place without the involvement of the Balochi people and the government in Quetta. No surprise that the Balochi youth has started the just, armed national liberation struggle for independence again with the support of the Balochi masses. At the leadership of this struggle are revolutionary-nationalist forces like the BLA and tribal leaders.

The Pashtun tribes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and FATA are particularly heavily suppressed since the Pakistan army helps the US imperialist troops in their effort to subjugate Afghanistan. Since 2001 tens of thousands of the Pashtun poor have been killed and millions displaced. As a result a just resistance struggle has begun against the Pakistani state forces and the US imperialists which is combined by the struggle of poor and landless peasants against the greedy landlords. Unfortunately this just struggle is partly led by forces like the Taliban who try to exploit this struggle for their arch-reactionary Islamist agenda.

In Kashmir the people have been artificially divided since the terrible partition in 1947. The Kashmiris in the Indian occupied part are heavily suppressed in particular since the armed insurrection after the rigged election in

1987 by the Indian army which resulted in the death of at least 30,000 people. Recently another Kashmir intifada has started. Our brothers and sisters in the Pakistani-controlled "Azad Kashmir" are living not in freedom but in a militarized zone.

The Punjabi chauvinists and all open reactionaries denounce the desire of the oppressed people in Balochistan, Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, FATA etc. for national self-determination. They insist that Pakistan must be a united state. They even claim that Pakistan is the state of the Muslims in South Asia – ignoring the fact that 2/3 of the Muslims in the subcontinent lives outside of Pakistan.

The answer of the liberals and petty-bourgeois left-wing parties is a verbal solidarity with the oppressed people and calls for an end of discrimination and sometimes even for the right of self-determination.

However it is not sufficient to support the right of national self-determination since it can mean many different things. Since decades even the imperialist powers-dominated, hypercritical institution called "United Nations" is endorsing the nations "right of self-determination".

The only correct application of the Marxist program of national liberation in the tradition of the Bolshevik party under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky is the following. We fight for a unity of the different people and in the end for the amalgamation of the different nations. While this is only possible in a long process after the successful world-wide revolution and the establishment of socialism we already need now the closest possible unity of the workers and peasants of the different nationalities to fight against our common enemy – the ruling class of Pakistan and the imperialist powers. However such a unity is possible only on a completely voluntary basis and a perspective which combines the struggle for full democratic rights and for socialism.

To achieve this, the first precondition is that the Punjabi workers win the trust of their class brothers and sisters of the oppressed nationalities in Pakistan. For this it is necessary that they break any political and ideological links with the peoples-prison house called Pakistan. The Punjabi workers must unconditionally support the national liberation struggle of the Balochis, Kashmiris, Pashtuns etc.

The working class has to be the leading force in this struggle which draws into the struggle the peasants and urban poor. To achieve its leading role it has to fight politically against the leadership of the tribal leaders and various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces. It has to oppose any form of nationalism since the enemy of the oppressed nationalities are not the Punjabi class brothers and sisters but the ruling, capitalist class and their state.

We support the struggle for independence where it is clear that the majority of the oppressed people wish for it (which is the case in Kashmir and Balochistan). We combine the slogan for independence with a socialist perspective since only an independent state lead by a workers government based on the poor peasants and urban poor can bring real liberation.

** For a united Azad, Socialist Kashmir! For an Azad, Socialist Baluchistan!*

Our goal is a *socialist federation* of the people. Such a federation will not focus on the present Pakistan state which is only an artificial construct, created by an unholy alliance of British imperialism, the Muslim League and the Indian

Congress party. A federation should attempt to both overcome the results of the partition and unite South Asia but also bring together the other people who have been split by the imperialists and who live today in Afghanistan, Iran etc.

At the same time we call on the workers movement and all organisations of the oppressed to fight for the democratic demands against the Punjabi-dominated state.

We fight for full equality of all national groups and migrants:

** Equal wages for migrant and national minority workers!*

** Against the state language – for full equality of the languages of all nations in court, in the media, in the education system! Education must be offered to oppressed people in their mother language!*

** For local self-government and autonomy for all areas where discriminated national and ethnic groups live.*

** Our goal is revolutionary integration – the unity of the workers and peasants from all different nations to fight together against the ruling class and for the socialist liberation.*

Amongst oppressed nationalities we fight against all nationalist forces which preach national hatred against other national groups instead of differentiating between the oppressor and the oppressed, the rulers and the ruled amongst each nation. We fight the rulers and oppressors and try to win the solidarity of the ruled and oppressed.

We condemn all those who formally support the oppressed nationalities right of self-determination in words but fail to support the concrete struggle of these people against the Pakistan state under their current (non-revolutionary) leadership. We also condemn those who don't raise the slogan of independence despite the clear articulation of the oppressed people that they wish so (like e.g. the Balochis). We also reject those who raise the slogan of independence (for Kashmir for example) only in combination of a socialist federation which gives them the pretext not to support the present-day struggle of the masses which in their consciousness does not have the goal of a socialist federation. Finally we reject any attempt of imperialist forces to exploit the suffering of oppressed nations for their own geostrategic interests (see e.g. Dana Rohrabacher's resolution in the US Congress).

** For a socialist federation of workers and peasant republics in South Asia and beyond!*

No to chauvinism and war-mongering!

The Pakistani ruling class has a long history of fostering hatred against other people and states. Three times it was involved in wars with India. The *RWO* fights for international brotherhood of the people of South Asia. We oppose the nationalist war-mongering of the governments in Pakistan and India. In the three wars revolutionaries took a revolutionary defeatist position – they stood for the defeat of their own government in both countries. Our goal is a socialist federation of South Asia!

Jobs and housing for the poor in urban slums!

Half of the urban population lives in slums. Many of them are migrants from the countryside which flee the extremely poor conditions there to find a job in the cities. They can be an important force in the working class struggle for liberation. A particular focus for the mobilisation of the urban poor must be public employment program

under control of the workers' movement and the organizations of slum dwellers. With such a program, on the one hand, unemployment could be fought. On the other hand, with such a program the basis could be created for the massive construction of high-quality houses, the building of infrastructure, the supply of clean water etc..

* For a public employment program under the control of representatives of slum dwellers and the workers' movement - paid for by the capitalists profits! For a large-scale state investment program for the development of housing, energy, sanitation and waste management, hospitals and schools, roads and public transport!

* For the formation of local committees of action and self-defence units of the slum dwellers!

Expropriate the landlords! Land to the peasants! Organise the agricultural workers!

Land is concentrated in the hands of a few. The official statistics are rather confusing the picture since many landlord families have formally distributed their land amongst individuals of their clan so the real family control does not become visible.

Nevertheless one can see the dark picture even from the official statistics. The top 2.5 percent own 40% of the land and nearly half of the rural households own no land at all. Amongst those who have land the distribution is very unequal. In 1990, smallholders with less than 2 hectares of land made up 96% of the landholders but owned only 55% of the land.

Many peasants – at least a quarter - are tenants. It is common for tenant farmers to be in debt to landowners. Roughly 67% of Pakistan's tenant-operated land was sharecropped in 2000, and 48% of sharecropper households fell below the national poverty line. Sharecropping arrangements usually provide the landowner with half the production from the land; arrangements vary regarding provision of inputs. Most agreements are unwritten. The exact number of landless wage-labourers is not known. Many of the rural poor also depend on non-farm activities for income.

But the peasants have shown that they are ready to resist. In March 2010, landless peasants marched toward Lahore to demand land, and in April 2010, the Punjab government announced a program to provide 255.024 plots to landless peasants.

The struggle for the liberation of the poor peasants must be directed primarily against the big landlords, banks and monopoly capital. It is therefore a struggle that has to be conducted internationally and must be directed against the foundations of capitalism. The poor peasantry must therefore, for the sake of their own fundamental interests, enter the road to socialism together with and under the leadership of the working class.

An important slogan is the struggle for breaking the rule of landlords, banks and monopoly capital and, ultimately, their expropriation. The land must be distributed to the poor and landless farmers. At the same time we are fighting for a radical and lasting transformation of agriculture - away from the depletion by monocultures dictated purely by corporations and export-orientation and toward a diversified and sustainable agriculture.

The class struggle in the country-side requires that militant and revolutionary organisations of the poor and land-

less peasants are built, which should seek a close alliance with the working class.

Especially important is the independent organization of agricultural workers. They can play a vanguard role in the fight on the country-side, if they lead the class struggle against the big land and plantation owners consistently.

* *Immediate confiscation of all non-agricultural used land owned by large landowners! For the expropriation of the big landlords, the military and the multinationals!*

* *For the nationalization of the land under the control of workers and poor peasants! The land to those who cultivate it! The local democratic actions council representatives of the poor and landless peasants have to decide the question of the allocation and use of the land! Promotion of voluntary agricultural cooperatives and the formation of larger state production units!*

* *Debt cancellation and abolition of rent for the peasants! Nationalization of the banks! Interest-free loans for small peasants!*

* *For a radical change of direction in the agricultural economy. Away from the monoculture! For sustainable cultivation methods in agriculture! As much international transport of agricultural product as necessary to supply the world's population as necessary and as much supplies of agricultural goods on the spot as possible!*

Joint struggle for women's liberation!

A people striving for liberation can never be free if it tolerates oppression in its own ranks. The oppression of women, misery as unpaid work force, and their reduction to semi-slaves, wives to be raped and beaten up – all this must be eradicated. Free people require free women!

While officially the labour participation rate of women is only a fifth, in fact all the working class, peasant and urban poor women are working hard every day – albeit often as unpaid family worker. If they receive an income it is a third or more below that of men. 67% of women have never attended school, 32% higher than for men. They have to organize bringing up the family, organizing food and water, working hard but without possibility to achieve independence.

A particularly ugly form of women oppression is the so-called *Karol Kari* (honour killing). This coercive and black tradition is present in Pakistan mostly in Baluchistan, Sindh and Southern part of Punjab. In this reactionary tradition women are mostly made target of killing on the plea of "honour" and "respect". It is a central task of the workers movement to raise the banner of women liberation! *Karol Kari* must be fought by any means necessary and branded as a sign of slave mentality unworthy for a people fighting for liberation.

Given this massive discrimination it is not surprisingly that women make only 1,5% of the trade union members.

The **RWO** says:

* *An end to all forms of legal discrimination against women - whether in the workplace, in access to education or at the polls!*

* *Equal pay for equal work!*

* *For the massive construction of free, well-equipped 24-hour child-care facilities! For a wide range supply of affordable and high-quality public restaurants and laundry facilities! Our goal is the socialization of housework! As a first step we advocate childcare facilities und collectivization of the housework through the voluntary association of toiling people's families.*

* *For a public employment program to create the conditions*

for the socialization of housework and simultaneously eliminate unemployment among women!

* For a special education campaign to overcome illiteracy amongst women!

* Free access to free contraception and abortion on demand regardless of age and no matter in what month of pregnancy the woman is!

* Fight against violence against women! For the expansion of public women safe houses, controlled by women's organizations! For the formation of self-defence units by the workers' and women's movement against sexist violence!

* Down with all laws and public campaigns on religious dress codes! Against any compulsion to wear this!

* For the building of a revolutionary women's movement! For the right to caucus for women in the mass organizations of workers and oppressed!

Combat the sexual oppression by religious institution and the state!

We stand for the separation of state and religion. For massive building of public education institutions with free food so that the poor don't have to send their children to

the religious madrasses. We oppose the justification of oppression – particularly of women, youth and homosexuals – in daily life (education, clothes, sexual orientation etc) in the name of religion. *Abolish all laws repressing homosexuality!*

Everyone must have the right to choose voluntarily if and which religion and religious practice he/she wants to follow. We defend atheists and religious minorities (like the Shiites, Hindus, Christians) against discrimination and physical attacks.

An end to the oppression of young people!

The youth form a huge segment in the rapidly growing population of Pakistan. But they are severely discriminated in the patriarchal society. Arranged marriages are still a common practice. Poverty increases the oppression. Therefore the use of child labour is common in the informal sector estimation of the actual total number of working children vary between 2 and 19 millions.

But the youth have shown in the history of Pakistan that they can play a leading role in the struggle for liberation.



Remember the role of the youth in the 1968-69 Revolution, in the lawyers' movement in 2007 or in the repeated uprising including the present one of the Baloch nation.

The *RWO* says:

* *Freedom for the youth!*

* *Abolish child labour so that all children can access public education.*

* *Full democratic rights for young people: Those who can work must have the right to vote too – for the right to at the age of 15.*

* *For self governed youth centres free of charge where young people can spend their time beside the patriarchal family control.*

* *For a revolutionary youth movement!*

For a workers' government, based on the poor peasants and the urban poor

Wherever the workers and oppressed are fighting for their rights, they must organise and equip to fight against the government and private thugs of the reaction. Demonstrations, where clashes with the police can be expected, the protection of meetings and party headquarters etc., require the formation of security groups equipped with

batons etc.. Strikes and occupations - whether of plants, of land or of educational institutions – make the creation of pickets for defence necessary. Such security groups and pickets can lay the foundation for building a workers' and people's militia. For without such an armed militia the proletariat and the oppressed will never successfully struggle for power. Because the power can only be conquered by the armed insurrection and it can be defended only by the successful civil war against the capitalist class.

The goal of the struggle is the creation of a workers' government, based on the poor peasants and the urban poor. The task of such a government is to make the decisive break with the bourgeoisie:

* *Nationalization of banks and fusion into a single central bank, nationalization of large companies, large wholesale trade and transport, social, health, education and communication sector without compensation and under workers' control! Introduction of a foreign trade monopoly!*

* *Expropriation of the capitalist class and especially the banks, corporations and speculators!*

* *For a workers' government, based on the poor peasants and the urban poor, on the basis of councils in the enterprises and neighbourhoods as well as armed militias; Their representatives*

Report from Pakistan: Murderous attack on Sindhi rally in

By Shujat Liaqat (Revolutionary Workers Organization (Pakistan), 6.6.2011)

On 22nd May a mass demonstration in Karachi – the capital city of the Sindh province – was attacked by gunmen. At least 12 people were killed and 29 injured. The demonstration was a protest against the reactionary project of creating a Mohajir province by splitting the Sindh province and against police terror in the Lyari neighborhood.

It was organized by various progressive petty-bourgeois Sindhi nationalist parties mainly *Awami Tehreek* and the outlawed *People's Amn Committee* (PAC). The PAC is active in Karachi – particularly in the Lyari neighborhood – and has its main basis amongst working class and urban poor Sindhis and Balochis.

The demonstration was taken out from Football House and moved towards the Cheel Chowk, the most sensitive area which the police despite brutal repression has failed to pacify during their week-long operation that claimed 40 lives last month.

Participants of the rally were holding placards and banners inscribed with comments against the division of Sindh province and also chanting slogans against the Mohajir province movement.

As soon as the rally reached near Ghas Mandi, close to Cheel Chowk, unidentified gunmen started firing on it and fled, leaving four demonstrators are injured.

Following the incident, participants of the rally staged a sit-in protest at Napier Road near Pan Mandi. However, armed men appeared again and resorted to indiscriminate fire at the protest.

Witnesses said the firings incidents brought a halt to commercial and non-commercial activities as shopkeepers were trapped inside their shops and localities.

The police remained during the shooting very passive

and did not try to defend the demonstration.

Amongst the victims is Ghazala Siddiqui, a prominent woman of a well-known family of trade-unionists and progressive Sindhi nationalists. She was killed when she was defending the demonstration and tried to fire against the terrorists with a pistol snatched from a policeman.

Who is behind the murderous attack?

While nobody has officially claimed responsibility for the terrorist attack, all indications point into the direction of the reactionary semi-fascist *Muttahida Qaumi Movement* (MQM). The MQM is unofficially supporting the demand for a Mohajir province. Everybody knows that propagation of such poisonous billboards and banners cannot take place without the consent and knowledge of MQM. It is also clear that this act of terrorism cannot happen without the armed thugs of the MQM.

The MQM base themselves mainly on deprived middle-class Mohajirs. A number of Mohajirs migrated from to India with the expectations that they can continue to play a leading, privileged positions as they did in British colonial India. Support for Pakistani chauvinism is strong amongst sectors of the Urdu-speaking Mohajirs. Initially they dominated business, universities and the bureaucracy in Karachi and other cities in Sindh province.

But under Bhutto a quota system was introduced in Sindh and this reduced their share. Many middle-class Mohajirs felt this is discrimination but it was only reduction of privileges. This quota system ensured that other ethnical/national groups also got better access to these positions. Since then the MQM launches a vicious battle against to retain specific privileges for Mohajirs. It is also a

are under the direct election and recall ability by the workers and receive not more than an average skilled workers salary!

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 were demonstrated by the Bolsheviks under Lenin and Trotsky in Russia are a model for the revolutionary parties and revolutions also in the 21st Century.

For the building of militant international movements of the trade unions, of women, youth, migrants etc. on a revolutionary basis! For a new, revolutionary workers' party! For a 5th Workers International on a revolutionary basis!

This is what we in the *RWO* are fighting for together with our international comrades in the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT). If you agree with us – join us!

No future without socialism! No socialism without a revolution! No revolution without a revolutionary party!

Footnotes:

(1) A dead-end street

(2) The Bolshevik Party was the revolutionary party in Rus-

sia. Formed in 1903 (initially as a faction inside the Russian Social Democracy, than as an independent party) under the leadership of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin they organised the working class vanguard. In 1917 they won the majority of the proletariat and organised the armed insurrection (October Revolution) which lead to the first successful formation of a Workers and Peasant Republic. Leon Trotsky joined the Bolsheviks in 1917 and quickly became the second most important leader after Lenin. In particular Trotsky built the Red Army which successfully defended the young Soviet Union against the allied armies of the imperialist powers and the bourgeois counterrevolution in the Civil War 1918-21. Lenin and Trotsky played a leading role in the foundation of the Third, Communist International in 1919. After the death of Lenin in 1924 Trotsky became the leader of the Left Opposition against the bureaucratic counter-revolution under the leadership of Stalin. After his expulsion of the Communist Party and the Soviet Union he continued his struggle for revolutionary Marxism. This led to the foundation of the Fourth International which continued the revolutionary tradition of the Communist International. He was at the forefront of the revolutionary struggle till his murder by a Stalinist agent in 1940.

(3) “divide and rule”. It means that the rules can rule the oppressed more effectively if they divide them against each other. ■

Karachi - For a socialist programm against national oppression!

party which is very close to international capital. It is since its foundation a deadly enemy of trade unions.

MQM is creating the atmosphere, where they use the hatred in the working class and poor of different nationalities to destroy any struggle against the system and also exploited the Urdu speaking to win their vote in coming elections.

The *Revolutionary Workers Organizations* (RWO, Pakistani section of the RCIT) rejects the chauvinist call for the creation of a Mohajir province.

The national question

Pakistan in general and Karachi in particular is very multi-ethnic/national. The most important thing is to build international working class and poor unity which overcomes the national divisions. This is particularly urgent since the poverty created by barbaric imperialism and the greedy domestic ruling class is a fertile ground for nationalist agitation which tries to deflect the attention of the popular masses from the capitalists to other nationalities.

Karachi is the biggest city in Pakistan with at least 20 million people. It is very multi-ethnic/national but the people often live segregated from each other. There are two official national languages in Sindh province: Sindh and Urdu.

An important pre-condition for building such a cross-nationality unity amongst the workers and the poor is the consistent struggle against any form of national oppression and discrimination.

The RWO fights for complete equality between the ethnic/national groups and the abolition of any privileges. We demand the abolition of an official province language and

the full equality of all languages in all public areas.

We call for a massive public employment and education program so that people from all ethnic groups must be present in all public and administration bodies. Such a public employment program should be financed by higher and effective taxes of the rich.

If the workers movement can be won to fight for such a program it could help to overcome the mistrust between the different ethnic/national groups since it would make clear that we deny any privileges for anyone!

At the same time the RWO demands the widest possible local self-government. Of course the basis for self-governed areas should not be a specific ethnic/national group but all people from different ethnic/national origin who are living in a specific area.

Such a revolutionary internationalist working class program could be a useful answer against the propaganda of the petty-bourgeois nationalist forces amongst the oppressed and discriminated ethnic groups and nationalities. The Pashtun and Balochi nationalists demand mainly jobs and education for their youth and the development of their slum areas (*kchi abadi*). They follow a community and not class orientated strategy.

We need a joint struggle of workers, peasants and poor of all ethnic groups for jobs, development programs and equality for all independent of their origin.

In the end the liberation from poverty and all forms of national oppression can only be achieved by socialist revolution which destroys inhuman capitalism.

The decisive pre-condition for a successful socialist revolution is the formation of a multi-national revolutionary working class party in Pakistan and international. ■

For a free and socialist Azawad!

On the freedom struggle of the Tuareg people in Mali

By Johannes Wiener, April 2012 (updated in early June)

The revolutionary wave in the Arab world does not stop even before Mali. Mali is an extremely poor former French colony in the Western Sahara. More than 70% of the population lives on less than one U.S. dollar a day. The country's economy is limited almost exclusively to agriculture (which employs about 80% of the labour force). There is almost no industry. About 14.5 million people are living in Mali. The absolute majority of them populate the more fertile regions in the south and to a certain degree in the central area of the country.

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world. But at the same time it has various mineral resources. Thus, for example, Mali is the third largest producer of gold. At least two Canadian mining companies – *Lamgold Corporation* and *Avion Gold Corporation* – exploit the local resources.

Mali is a multi-ethnic state, where about 30 different ethnic groups are living. Therefore, the national question in Mali is very important. The north of the country is very sparsely populated, mainly by the Tuareg people. The Tuareg are a nomadic people who inhabit much of the Western Sahara. The fact that large parts of these people live as nomads and semi-nomads, they are only to a limited degree integrated into the capitalist economic system. Many of them, but also large parts of other ethnic groups in northern Mali, live and work under pre-capitalist conditions. This means that large sections of land in Mali are not owned by any private person or any company. Because of the economic backwardness, there is only a small working class in northern Mali. Large sections of the population are small farmers, nomads or semi nomads.

The struggle of the Tuareg for Azawad

The Tuareg people label the area of their settlement in the heart of the Sahara as *Azawad*. In the 1960s and the 1990s there were major uprisings of the Tuareg, where they openly fought for their own country. These rebellions were violently put down. Even before 1960 there were sporadic uprisings of the Tuareg against the French colonial power. And between and after the major uprisings in 1960 and 1990, there were minor armed conflict between the Tuareg and the Malian army. Since the 1990s the *National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad* (MNLA) is fighting in the north of Mali for an independent state of the Tuareg. The MNLA is a bourgeois-nationalist force. It stands at the forefront of the desire of the Tuareg for a separate state.

There are about 6 million Tuareg, who live in the sparsely populated heart of the Western Sahara (mainly in Mali but also in Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Burkina Faso and Niger). The Tuareg people are oppressed by the various bourgeois governments of North Africa. Their language is a discriminated, it is made difficult for them to give up voluntarily the nomadic life, to send their children to school or get medical care (in the north of Mali, there

are almost no schools or hospitals). The government does not officially recognize them as a national minority, but consider them as "vagrants".

Although the MNLA is a bourgeois force, one has to take into account that it is at the forefront of a legitimate and just struggle. You also have to say that the MNLA, contrary to the denunciations of the various imperialist powers (especially the former colonial power France), is relatively progressive. It emphasizes the separation of church and state, not only for the Tuareg, but for all peoples of the Azawad. It also sees itself as an anti-imperialist force.

The Uprising today

The spark of the revolutionary wave in the Arab region also jumped over to Mali. At the end of February, the MNLA started an offensive against the armed forces of Mali's central government. In a very short time they conquered a large part of the north of Mali. While the Malian army withdrew, a particularly reactionary sector of the army staged a coup against the elected president of Mali, Traoré Dioncounda. They accused the government not to fight decisively enough against the Tuareg rebellion, i.e. to suppress the Tuareg too little.

But the coup did not produce the desired result. In fact, it strengthened the position of the Tuareg, because it weakened the army which was already on the retreat. But one can expect that in the future it will be easier for a Malian military regime to take action against the young Azawad than for a bourgeois-democratic Mali. The question is rather, how will the Malian working class and poor peasants in the south of the country act towards such a government.

Socialist Perspectives

Our international organization - the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) - advocates a socialist perspective for the liberation struggle of the Tuareg. It is necessary that the Malian workers movement, in alliance with the poor peasants and the urban poor, supports the movement of the Tuareg and opposes the military, the exploiters, the landowner and the international corporations (and the imperialist states behind them). Especially today, when the Malian government does not even have enough forces to fight the uprising of the Tuareg, the workers and poor people of Mali take action. The unions should prepare to organize a general strike, the poor peasants should take over the land of large landowners and foreign companies, the oppressed need to arm themselves and form councils in the cities, villages and enterprises.

In Azawad the workers should take over the enterprises. The land of the big landowners must be divided among the peasants. All property of foreign corporations and the rich

countries must go into the possession of a new state. The oppressed masses should organize themselves in councils and the Tuareg militias have to be organized democratically. These councils in towns, villages and in the army must form the basis of the new state. Such councils are sovereign organs of the oppressed, major issues shall be discussed there at mass meetings and delegates should be selected on the basis of the decisions made. These delegates should be recallable at any time and should have no privileges.

Since in Azawad not only Tuareg are living but also other ethnic groups (mainly Moor in the west and mainly Peul and Songhai in the south), it is particularly important that they get full national rights. In those areas of Azawad, where these groups represent the majority of the population, they should be able to implement their wishes by local self-government.

Poverty, hunger and illiteracy are widespread in this part of Africa due to the economic backwardness, which is caused by the oppression and exploitation of the imperialist countries. It is important that a future workers' government based on the poor in urban and rural areas, develops a plan to combat these plagues of the capitalist system. Only then can Azawad be really free and independent.

The RCIT advocates the abolition of the state language and the complete equality of the languages of the various national groups of a country. These demands are particularly important in Africa and for the Tuareg people. Only through the struggle for complete equality can the goal of the closest possible union of the peoples be achieved.

Imperialism and Islamism

The major imperialist powers, especially France, denounced the Tuareg uprising immediately after its beginning and accused the MLNA of using "*violent methods*". The French foreign minister called the Declaration of Independence as "*null and void*." It is characteristic for the EU and France, which lead currently a bloody colonial war in Afghanistan with thousands of deaths, to shed crocodile tears for a few hundred dead Malian soldiers. In reality, France and the EU do not fear the violence, but a decline of its economic influence in Mali.

The second reaction of the former colonial masters was this: they warned of an Islamic theocracy in the north of Mali. We believe that it is for the workers, workers and peasants in Mali to fight against the reactionary Islamism – and not the corporate bosses and generals in Paris, London and Berlin. It also has to be stressed that there is a strong secularist tendency in the MLNA and amongst the people. True, due the pressure of the military struggle and the hostility of all regimes around Azawad the MNLA is pushed to collaborate with the Islamist forces of *Ansar Dine* and to undertake joint military operations against the Malian armed forces. On 26th of May an agreement between the MNLA and *Ansar Dine* about the creation of an Islamist state was announced but this was renounced by the MNLA on the next day. There have been a number of conflict and even armed clashes between the MNLA and the *Ansar Dine* militias in Timbuktu (one of the largest city in the south of Azawad).

Anyway the Islamist threat is used by the imperialist countries of Europe and bourgeois African States to jus-

tify a possible military intervention. Several West African countries are already planning an attack on Azawad, for fear that the oppressed national minorities in their countries could follow the example of the Tuareg. The regional alliance of bourgeois African governments *Ecowas* has said it is preparing to send 3.000 troops to Mali to help the regime fighting against the Tuareg.

For years, U.S. imperialism is trying to expand its influence in the region. In 2005, the U.S. created the so-called "*Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Partnership*." This includes 11 African so-called "*partner countries*": Algeria, Burkina Faso, Libya (when Gaddafi was still in power!), Morocco, Tunisia, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. The alliance organizes annual joint military exercises under the code name "*Flintlock*".

Expand the Uprising!

The boundaries of the West African run straight through the desert. So they cut for example the settlement area of the Tuareg in five parts. This is because the boundaries were drawn by former colonial ruler at the card table. Hence not only the social but also to national problems in West Africa exist across the borders of Mali.

As we said, various states plan to attack Azawad. It is important to extend the uprising of the Tuareg, to liberate all the oppressed national minorities in the southwest of the Sahara and bring the poverty and exploitation to an end. A future socialist government in Azawad needs to work for a federation of republics in the south of the Sahara, in which the workers, poor peasants and the urban poor keep the power in their own hands!

The RCIT is in solidarity with the liberation struggle of the Tuareg people. It is urgent that the international workers movement in Africa, Europe and beyond fights against any intervention by the imperialist powers and their allied African governments. It will be crucial that in Mali and throughout the region, new, revolutionary workers parties are created. Such parties will consistently fight for the liberation of oppressed nations and combine this with the struggle of the working class for a socialist revolution. Bourgeois organizations such as the MNLA can not lead the people to liberation. Only a revolutionary combat party with a communist program can do this. ■



France: Attack in Toulouse What was behind it and what will happen now?

By Nina Gunić, April 2012

The assassin in Toulouse, who killed seven people (including three children of a Jewish school), was allegedly shot and killed during his escape from a window. According to the media, he was a member of Al-Qaeda, an Islamist terrorist organization.

The crime against these people is more than terrible. We stand in full solidarity with the victims and their families. We condemn the reactionary Islamist terrorism and any form of anti-Semitism.

This incident shows how little protection the police force and private security services can actually deliver. The police act incredibly effective when it comes to the deportation of us migrants or when it comes to making random checks on the street (where they pick out in particular migrants with darker skin) and other types of harassment. But when it comes to protecting innocent children and adolescents, this apparatus is "suddenly" overwhelmed.

As revolutionary communists we see the police not as "workers in uniform" and hence not as part of our class. Regardless of the personality of this or that police officer, the police are simply the apparatus for the suppression and control of us by those in power. So it's no wonder that the police are not overwhelmed where they suppress us directly, and that they utterly fail when they are supposed to offer protection.

Active self-defense

In the case of the Jewish school in Toulouse (who have already before experienced attacks several times), we say: This private school should be transferred into the public sector and put under control of the workers movement and the students, teachers and parents. This also includes the formation of a self-organized defensive unit that provides continuous protection of the students. Such a self-defense unit has to be well organized, adequately militarily trained and democratically controlled. This will require the direct election of the people who are working in these self-defense units, and the possibility to recall them. This can become particularly necessary if one of them shows inappropriate behavior, agitation against minorities, sexism, etc. That would be the right answer for the protection of children in the Jewish school and would have prevented the worst.

In addition, criminals should not be put before a bourgeois court, which on one hand treats those mildly who have much money and on the other hand punish hard people from our class. Criminals should be put before of a tribunal of our class, a workers' tribunal. Here a jury trial, which takes the background of the people involved into account, administer justice. This is our response to the bourgeois law system in which judges are corrupted and criminal acts are judged from the viewpoint of the protection of the capitalist system instead of the actual harm caused by the crime.

Victims are misused for bourgeois propaganda

At present, relatively little is still known about the assassin. Mohamed Merah was said to be an Islamist terrorist. However the former director of the French counter-espionage agency DST, Yves Bonnet, believes that Merah was an informer of the domestic secret service, the *Direction centrale du renseignement intérieur*, which was created in 2008 by the Sarkozy government. And the Italian paper *Il Foglio* claims that Mohamed Merah was in Afghanistan and Pakistan in 2010 and 2011 as an informer of the foreign secret service DGSE.

It is clear, however, how the whole affair will continue. The rabid shooting down of the victims, the death of these people will be abused by the rulers for their own purposes. It will be used to increase the smear campaign against Muslims, to tighten further laws to monitor and also the machine of oppression against migrants. So close to the elections, the incident is perfectly positioned to initiate a harder and more racist policy of the Sarkozy government.

The tragic incident of 11th September 2001 (known as 9/11) has also been abused to wage a war against Afghanistan and later a war against Iraq, to push through various repressive laws (Patriot Act) and to massively reduce democratic rights.

Since that day the number of attacks on Muslims has dramatically increased: only in the first week after 9/11 the number of attacks, including assassinations, in the United States against Oriental-looking migrants (including many Indian) rose to 300 reported incidents. That was more than during the entire previous year. But not only directly after 9/11, but even in 2010 the number of attacks was 50% higher than in 2009! This account however does not include the number of harassment and assaults emanating from the state apparatus.

According to the *Associated Press* the police of New York have squandered millions of dollars in the last 11 years for monitoring Muslim communities and individuals without even a formal reason for suspicion. In the eyes of the rulers being a Muslim migrant means to have lost any right to privacy.

Not only in the U.S.

Not only in the U.S. has the ruling class intensified its campaign against immigrants, especially Muslim immigrants. The incident in Toulouse may play the role to start a new repression campaign against migrants. The bourgeoisie, the ruling class, doesn't care about justice for the victims. This is only the pretense, the camouflage, to enforce its goals: a harsher monitoring and increasing agitation against migrants.

Many other imperialist countries, including France, have adopted racist laws and increased surveillance and harassment of migrants in recent years. The prohibition of wearing a *burqa* (the full body veil) in public last year

was justified with the “argument” that it was a “full-body prison” for women. Instead of leaving the Muslim women the choice, it has now become the decision of the capitalist state. This is also justified with the “argument” that one has to make women independent of their husbands. Whether it is the husband or the capitalist state: In both cases it is not the woman who can decide. What hypocrisy of the rulers!

In the suburbs of Paris (*banlieues*) direct investment takes place not to improve living standards, despite the fact that youth unemployment is in some areas more than 40%. Instead money is channeled to set up more police stations. It is characteristic that President Sarkozy talks during the election campaign about “too many immigrants are living in the country”.

Given the widespread agitation against migrants it is not surprising that Muslims, who were participating in the public memorial service for the assassinated victims in Toulouse, were abused.

Building a revolutionary movement of migrants

The massive repression and incitement against us mi-

grants has demonstrated again how necessary it is to organize ourselves. We from the RKOB are committed to build a revolutionary, international migrant movement that is part of the workers movement. Such a movement is also important to fight against racism in the ranks of the workers’ movement.

The struggle against the oppression of us migrants is not just an issue of migrants, but of our whole class, the working class! The liberation of our class goes hand in hand with the struggle for complete equality for all oppressed! In this sense, it is also urgent to build a revolutionary combat party, which organizes the workers and oppressed against the cause of our over-exploitation and oppression of proletarian migrants: capitalism.

The destruction of capitalism through revolution, the building of socialism will go hand in hand with dying away of any systematic racism!

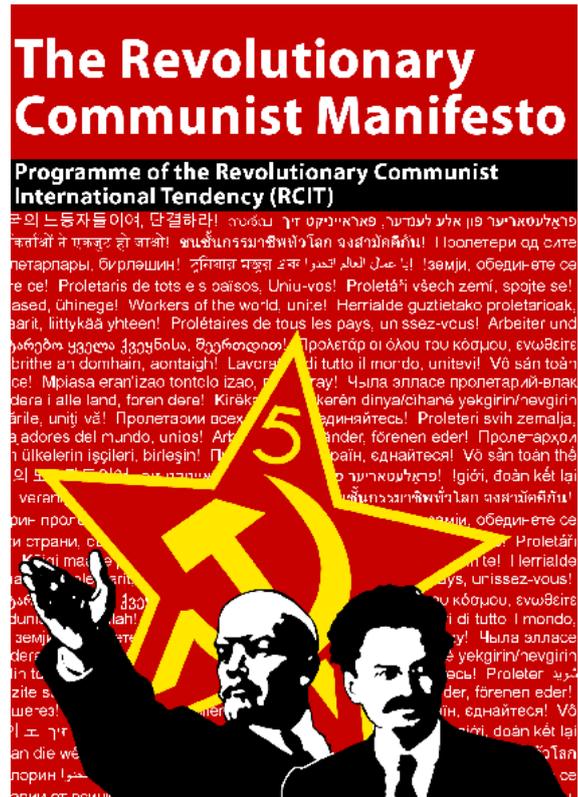
And only in a truly socialist system such incidents as the assassination in Toulouse can be as much as possible avoided, the victims protected and the perpetrators brought to justice without monitoring and suppressing the mass of the people. ■

The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto Programme of the RCIT

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The Programme has 68 pages (A5 format).
 Price: 2,5 Euro / 3,5 US-Dollar / 2 UK Pound
 If you want to receive the RCIT Programme, contact us (details on page 2 in this journal) or read it online: www.thecommunists.net.



Chinese Workers and Peasants Confront Chinese Imperialism: For the Socialist Revolution!

A Draft statement for discussion by the Communist Workers' Group of Aotearoa/New Zealand, 25.1.2012

The Wukan rebellion has focused world attention on the role of the Chinese workers and farmers. In reality it is one fight among many over land that happens to have come to international media attention. It has to be seen in the light also of the many labour disputes that have broken out in recent years especially since 2008 when China recovered from the slowdown of the global recession with a massive injection of state investment in infrastructure. We will not document these struggles other than to point out that they are proof of the growing strength and militancy of workers and farmers facing the extreme pressure to increase productivity to maintain profits as the emerging imperialist Chinese economy competes with other imperialist rivals to make its workers and farmers pay for the global crisis.

The left is in disarray over China. Many think this wave of peasant and worker militancy is a pro-democracy movement against the 'communist dictatorship' inspired by the Jasmine Revolution. Others say labour disputes are the working class playing its role in bringing workers democracy and social equality which is lacking in China's market socialism. Yet others recognise that China has restored capitalism and a new capitalist class is super-exploiting its workers and peasants, and then there are those like ourselves who say that China's restored capitalism has developed into an emerging imperialism which has clear consequences for the class struggle.

We propose to critique the various positions (we could call them 'post-Marxist' since they abandon the 'law of value') to arrive at the truth about China today. The key to understanding China's recent history is to discover how it combines pre-capitalist, capitalist and post-capitalist modes of production into a new capitalist imperialism. We need to develop a Marxist critique of this *uneven and combined development* which can explain how China's transition from degenerate workers state back to capitalist state has been able to assert its economic independence to escape the trap of imperialist domination as an emerging imperialist power. Without such an analysis we cannot fully explain the historic leading role of the Chinese working class and peasantry in the current world situation.

The "most dangerous class"

Writing in the *New Left Review*, Mike Davis says:

"Western post-Marxists—living in countries where the absolute or relative size of the manufacturing workforce has shrunk dramatically in the last generation—lazily ruminates on whether or not 'proletarian agency' is now obsolete, obliging us to think in terms of 'multitudes', horizontal spontaneities, whatever. But this is not a debate in the great industrializing society that Das Kapital describes even more accurately than Victorian Britain or New Deal America...Two hundred million Chinese factory workers, miners and construction labourers are the most dangerous class on the planet. (Just ask the State Council in Beijing.) Their full awakening from the bubble may yet determine whether or

not a socialist Earth is still possible".

China is today the "great industrialising" successor to Victorian Britain and New Deal America, where Western 'post-Marxists' are 'awakening' to the class struggle. However, China has long been recognised as being more advanced than the 'West'. To see precisely why the Chinese working class is the 'most dangerous' class for capitalism today we need to rewind and replay the historic scenario of its history as a revolutionary class. The Chinese working class played an important role in three revolutions, the bourgeois revolution of 1911, the workers revolution of 1925-1927, the Stalinist/Maoist revolution of 1949, and today after the restoration of capitalism it is once again centre-stage in the coming socialist revolution.

Karl Marx was the first to understand that not all nations had to repeat the development of capitalism in Europe and coming late to capitalism already a global system, 'backward' nations could rapidly make the transition from capitalism to socialism ahead of the European states in what he called '*permanent revolution*'.

Marx fully expected that China would rapidly catch up and surpass Europe in its bourgeois revolution. As in all 'backward' countries colonised by European capitalist powers, Marx expected that the national bourgeoisies would become weak and reactionary allies of imperialism and lack the capacity or class interest to unify the nation and win independence from imperialism, making it necessary for the revolutionary working class to take the leadership of the bourgeois revolution and complete it as the socialist revolution.

Writing in 1850, Marx says:

"Chinese Socialism bears much the same relation to European Socialism as Chinese philosophy does to Hegelian philosophy. It is, in any case, an intriguing fact that the oldest and the most unshakable empire in the world has in eight years by the cannonballs of the English bourgeoisie been brought to the eve of a social revolution which will certainly have the most important results for civilisation. When our European reactionaries in their immediately coming flight across Asia finally come up against the Great Wall of China, who knows whether they will not find on the gates which lead to the home of ancient reaction and ancient conservatism the inscription, 'Chinese Republic – liberty, equality, fraternity'."

What Marx was foreseeing was that once its reactionary 'Asiatic' mode of production was opened to the modernising force of capitalism China had the potential to break free of European domination and make its bourgeois revolution without having to repeat European history. Not only was Marx correct in this prediction, he anticipated that in China the bourgeois revolution would be completed under the leadership of the working class as the socialist revolution. Marx was here making the point later taken up by Lenin, that the bourgeois revolutionary tasks were better expressed as the 'national revolution' since they would be carried out by the proletariat not by the national bourgeoisie.

Marx was also anticipating Trotsky who from 1906 understood that the logic of this process in the epoch of imperialism would require a 'permanent revolution' in which the national and democratic tasks would be completed as part of an international socialist revolution. The Bolshevik Revolution put this theory to the test and proved that the national proletariat could begin to complete the national-democratic tasks, but that the permanent revolution would only be completed by the international socialist revolution. With the failure of the German Revolution in 1923, the Chinese Revolution became the next best hope for extending the Russian Revolution to the world.

Lenin lived to see the First Chinese national revolution of 1911. Trotsky survived long enough to see this revolution prove the universality of the theory of permanent revolution as the working class rapidly took the leadership of the revolution and made the Second Chinese Revolution as a workers revolution between 1925 and 1927. Trotsky, by then in opposition, fought against the Stalinist policy that betrayed the Shanghai workers revolution to the popular front with the Kuomintang.

Permanent Revolution Betrayed

Here was the tragedy of the Bolshevik program of permanent revolution betrayed by the Stalinists popular front. So weak was the Chinese bourgeoisie that it had to seek the authority of the Communist International and the Russian Revolution to force the Chinese Communists into a deadly political alliance with the Kuomintang which then sent its army against the revolution. Against this murderous popular front the Left Opposition program or Trotsky was for a Communist Party independent of the bourgeoisie to lead the armed struggle for the national revolution i.e. the program of permanent revolution.

After the defeat of the workers revolution in 1927 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) retreated to the countryside, fought a long civil war, and ultimately led a largely peasant revolution in 1949 that defeated imperialism, expelled the national bourgeoisie, and created a Degenerate Workers State based on socialised, or workers, property. It was 'Degenerate' because it reproduced the Degenerated Workers State in the USSR. The CCP was led by Chinese Stalinists who held that the national revolution could be won by a 'bloc of four classes' (peasantry, workers, petty bourgeoisie and liberal or patriotic bourgeoisie). This Stalinist/Menshevik program was based on the theory of 'socialism in one country' first promoted by Stalin in 1925 to defend 'socialism' in the Soviet Union by making alliances with 'democratic imperialist' states. In exchange for their support Stalin committed the Communist Parties in these countries to form parliamentary blocs with the national bourgeoisie and renounce international revolution.

Thus the Third Chinese Revolution in 1949 was one in which the Stalinist/Maoist CCP proposed to defeat imperialist occupation but remain a bourgeois republic with the cooperation of the 'progressive bourgeoisie'. The Stalinist/Maoist leadership proposed to collaborate with the Chinese bourgeoisie but become the ruling fraction of the national bourgeoisie. However, as in Eastern Europe, the Stalinist/Maoist plan failed because the weak national bourgeoisie was much more interested in preserving its ties to imperialism than in being subordinated to a planned economy.

So they declined the invitation and the Stalinist/Maoists had no choice but to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Thus the seizure of power in 1949 led to the expropriation of the bourgeoisie by 1953 and the formation of a Degenerate Workers State (DWS) committed to defending workers property.

Nevertheless, Marx, Lenin and Trotsky knew that once the bourgeois revolution had begun in China the proletariat was the only class capable of completing that revolution as the socialist revolution. The advances and retreats of this 'dangerous class' could not be understood on the national terrain but as part of the international class struggle. Though the 1949 revolution was won on the national terrain by a peasant army under a Stalinist/Maoist leadership, it was the threat of the Chinese working class as part of the international proletariat that made the national bourgeoisie flee China forcing the Stalinist/Maoists to go further than they wanted, and to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Just as the Stalinists were obliged to defend workers property relations in the Soviet Union as the basis of their caste privileges, in China the Maoists were forced to create workers property relations to develop the forces of production where the bourgeoisie had failed.

While the working class was denied a democratic role in the CCP and the state, its potential was as the only historic class that had the social power to produce material wealth. The proletariat is the only 'universal' class that can replace the weak and declining bourgeoisie and lead an international socialist revolution against the decaying capitalist imperialist system. So while workers' power was usurped by the Stalinist/Maoist bureaucracy in China, all that was required was a political revolution, in which the workers and peasants would smash the state machine, overthrow the parasitic bureaucratic caste and implement a genuine workers democracy and socialist plan. Failing that, the stagnation and decline of the DWS would lead inevitably to the restoration of capitalism and subordination of China once more to the existing capitalist imperialist powers.

Restoration re-opens road to Revolution

The question remains however, does the restoration of capitalism in a former DWS lead inevitably to submission to imperialism as a new semi-colony. Perhaps, the unique historical combination and development of a succession of modes of production would allow the former workers state to combine the law of value (or the 'market') with centralised state planning capable of developing the forces of production and accumulating sufficient capital to escape semi-colonial subordination and emerge as a new imperialist power. There is nothing in Marx, Lenin and Trotsky's understanding of the uneven and combined development of capitalism to exclude such an historic outcome in China. In fact there is much in the Marxist tradition to point to the importance of a centralist state machine inherited from previous modes of production being 'carried over' to facilitate the birth of a new mode of production.

While most of this commentary is about the state forms that the bourgeoisie inherited from the feudal state, there is every reason to believe that the DWSs revived bourgeois-bureaucratic state institutions. In Russia one of the criticisms of the Bolsheviks by the anarchists and left com-

munists, was that the Bolsheviks did not smash the state machine and retained some of the Tsarist state forms. Not true! Marx wrote after the experience of the Paris Commune in 1871 that the proletarian revolution must 'smash' the bourgeois state to build a workers state. In 1917 the Bolsheviks smashed the Tsarist/bourgeois state machine but had no compunction in forming a centralised workers' state machine to impose the proletarian 'dictatorship' of the revolutionary soviets.

However when the soviets were usurped by the bureaucracy the degeneration of the workers state was facilitated by the same centralised state machine. The political revolution would therefore have to smash this bureaucratized state machine as the power base of the Stalinist/Maoist caste in order to open the road to socialism. However, with the failure of the political revolution smashed by the bureaucratic dictatorship this same state machine with its historic centralised institutions would become an important instrument the Stalinist/Maoist bureaucracy could use to transform itself into a new bourgeoisie and restore capitalism in a centralised and planned way.

We argue that this historic outcome is the reality today. Against those who say China never had a socialist revolution; or that the CCP has 'reformed' socialism by using the market to stimulate growth in a New Economic Policy; or those who claim that the former workers state is now no more than a semi-colony of the imperialist powers; we argue that China has fulfilled all the expectations that Marx and the Bolsheviks had of the revolutionary role of the 'most dangerous' class; in revolution after revolution, combining modes of production to allow the economic independence of the degenerated workers state and the bureaucratized apparatus of the former workers state, to restore the law of value and make the transition to a new imperialist power. While the restoration of capitalism is a counter-revolution in the permanent revolution, Marx's dialectical method reveals that a restored capitalist China today sharpens and condenses the contradictions of imperialism creating the objective conditions for the 'dangerous class' of hundreds of millions of workers to once again fight for the 'democratic' rights of 'liberty, equality, fraternity' by taking the road to world socialist revolution!

Marx would disown the 'post-Marxists'

The self-proclaimed Marxists are in disarray on China. They have the advantage of outliving Marx for a century-and-a-half but the disadvantage of failing to understand Marx for the same length of time. They suffer from their own particular brand of uneven and combined development where the articulation of historically backward ideas is subordinated to bourgeois ideology. Marx raged against the bourgeois empiricism of surface appearances that separates culture and politics from the mode of production; that takes market relations for social relations; that fails to concretise the truth in any historical situation or draw historical laws of motion to explain events. In the *Critique of the Gotha Program* Marx already confronted the backsliding of his contemporaries towards the vulgar economics of the market and its ruling ideas. In the twentieth century the capitulation of the Second and Third Internationals to imperialism left Trotskyism as the only current that continued the revolutionary Marxism of the Bolsheviks. By the onset of the Second World War Trotsky argued that Marxism faced a crisis, and that the survival of capital-

ism after the War would be a major challenge to Marxism. Unfortunately the post-war Fourth International did not rise to that challenge. Not surprisingly, a more than half a century later, the extreme bankruptcy of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism beset by structural crisis today is matched by the extreme bankruptcy of 'post-Marxist' theories of capitalism dominated by the ideas of the ruling class.

(1) STATE CAPITALISTS

State capitalists argue that the Soviet Union restored capitalism in 1929 (some say 1939) when the Stalinist bureaucracy transformed itself into a capitalist class. This ignores the key concept in Capital, the law of value, whereby the value of commodities equals the 'socially necessary labour time' (SNLT) to produce them, as capitals compete to reduce the price of production. The LOV is the dynamic law that underlies all the laws of motion of capitalism. Even in the imperialist epoch when Lenin argued that the tendency of monopoly capital was to suppress the law of value, it could not be totally suppressed and reappeared at the level of inter-imperialist economic rivalry and wars. Yet in the Soviet Union prices were set by the bureaucratic plan and not by the law of value with some minor exceptions. The result was the failure to reduce labour time, increasing inefficiencies, waste, and ultimately the stagnation of the whole economy. The law of value did not reappear in the Soviet Union until Yeltsin abolished the plan and allowed the LOV to restructure Soviet industry according to global SNLT after 1992.

In the case of China the state capitalists say that in 1949 the revolution in China did not create a workers state because the working class did not make the revolution. Therefore, China was state capitalist at birth. Trotsky already answered the state capitalists in the 1930s in *In Defence of Marxism*.

First, at the level of method, Trotsky critiques the state capitalists' rejection of the dialectical method that treats reality as a unity of opposites. The state capitalists used bourgeois formal logic and split their analysis of the state superstructure from the economic base. They argued that the Stalinist bureaucracy became a new capitalist ruling class, and invented a new theory of state capitalism to justify the failure to defend the workers property and fight for a political revolution to remove the Stalinists. State capitalists cannot show that the LOV operated in the Soviet Union. Commodities were not produced for exchange so there could be no accumulation of capital, business cycles or crises of overproduction. Instead, prices are set by the plan and production extracts a surplus that fails to meet the needs of the workers or meet the plan and so increasingly the bureaucracy cannot maintain its privileges. Attempts by state capitalists, such as Neil Davidson, to make use of Trotsky's concept of the law of uneven and combined development to explain the specifics of capitalist development, is rendered absurd when the key element, the LOV itself, is not understood.

Second, theoretically and programmatically, Trotsky argued that when the Red Army invaded Poland in 1939 and nationalised bourgeois property this represented an extension of workers property in the Soviet Union and created a new degenerated workers state. As in the Soviet Union, such extensions of workers property by means of

Red Army occupations, such as in post-war Eastern Europe, must therefore be unconditionally defended as if it were part of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, such Stalinist occupations are at the expense of workers revolution internationally, and so to open the road to socialism the degenerated bureaucratic caste that rules in place of the workers has to be overthrown by a workers political revolution.

On the basis of this dialectical method, Trotskyists argue that in the case of the Chinese revolution in 1949, the CCP modelled on the Soviet bureaucracy, nationalised

bourgeois property, defeated the imperialists and created a new workers state albeit degenerated at birth. The state capitalists cannot explain why in China the 'state capitalists' have renounced its isolation from the market to join the WTO and allow imperialist penetration, and still accumulate vast amounts of capital which it is now exporting in competition with its long standing imperialist rivals in the re-partition of the world. Hence the abandonment of dialectics and the LOV leads directly to post-Marxist bankruptcy!

People's Republic of China (PRC): Administrative Divisions & Territorial Disputes



(2) MAOIST MARKET SOCIALISTS

In China today, Maoists argue that the CCP still controls the 'communist' state and is developing 'market socialism'. It approves of the Keynesian policies that boost workers wages, but not the market 'reforms' that transfer wealth from poor to the elite. The solution to this problem is for the working class to counter these market reforms winning regulations that redistribute the social wealth to the working masses. Independent unions are a means of mobilising workers democratically to push for socialist reforms. For example this is the strategy promoted in the China Labour Bulletin which attempts to show how the 'communist' state responds to workers defence of their property, rights, living standards etc., by means of reforms.

For the market socialists, the upsurge of worker and farmer protests is an expression of socialist democracy. Despite the incursions of capitalism, the state remains in control. This position is very popular in the Bolivarian states in Latin America, where the 'Chinese road to socialism' is presented as the working class alternative to being exploited by the existing hated 'Yankee' imperialists. Cuba has recently turned also in the direction of China to mask its own restoration of capitalism behind the veil of the Chinese Road.

Market socialists are essentially Mensheviks who understand capitalism in terms of exchange theory where income shares can be determined by state policies. Socialism requires the state to regulate and control the market. They are the same 'Marxists' that Marx himself castigated in The Gotha Program for abandoning his method in capital and backsliding to a fetishised exchange view of the capitalist market. Like all Mensheviks, the socialist revolution has to evolve in stages as the working class has the capacity to bring about the necessary changes to regulate the market when the conditions are ripe. The China Left Review presents this position clearly. Chinese workers are defending the rights one under 'socialism' in their fight against the inroads of the market. In that sense this is the prevailing Menshevik view of the proletariat as the 'dangerous class' forcing the market to adapt to 'Chinese characteristics'.

In China the market-socialists play the same role as social democracy in the imperialist powers. They represent the labour aristocracy and bureaucracy that collaborate with the Chinese ruling class and defend its imperialist foreign policy as 'social imperialism' in the name 'state socialism' in return for sharing the plunder of China's foreign imperialist super-profits. As we argue below however, the contradictions are so heightened in China today that the labour aristocracy will be squeezed between the new imperialist class and the most 'dangerous class' as it sharpens its weapons of class struggle.

(3) A DEGENERATE WORKERS STATE

The Degenerate Workers State arose out of the 1949 revolution with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie in 1953. A number of Trotskyist currents such as the Spartacists, International Bolshevik Tendency, claim that the DWS remains intact today as the influence of the market has not yet led to a transformation in the class character of the state. The argument goes like this. The revolution dispensed with the bourgeoisie and created a degenerated (those in the Spartacist tradition use "deformed")

workers state. The degeneration meant that the revolution was incomplete as the bureaucracy had state power over workers property. The plan was imposed from the top down which meant that the economy stagnated. The bureaucracy therefore responded with NEP type reforms to introduce capitalism to stimulate the stagnating plan. The Chinese economy is still heavily dominated by SOEs, and state subsidies, so that the law of value does not yet determine the social relations. Moreover the impact of the global recession from 2008 has reversed the thrust away from capitalism back to the state owned economy.

The main argument however, is the same as that of the Maoist market socialists, that the CCP is still in power, it has not been overthrown by imperialism or Chinese capitalists and that the state owned sector (and therefore the plan) dominates the economy. The workers, even if represented by a bureaucratic caste, or plagued by corruption, are still the ruling class in a hybridised or bureaucratised form of workers' state because workers property is dominant. China has not yet had the counter-revolution. For that to happen the capitalist class has to kick out the communists and take direct control of the state so that it can free the market to operate without state regulation.

This position breaks from Marx, Lenin and Trotsky's definition of the class character of the state as defined by the property relations it defends and reproduces. It calls for political revolution and unconditional defence of the Degenerated Workers State when that state has already undergone a counter-revolutionary transformation into a capitalist state. However, as we argue below, the state is not defined by the extent of 'privatisation' but by the social relations it defends. The Chinese bureaucracy has committed itself to capitalist restoration by defending the operation of the LOV in all sectors of the economy under the name of 'market socialism' and defeated workers resistance to restoration. The road to power for workers is the socialist, not the political, revolution.

(4) CHINA: CAPITALIST SEMI-COLONY

Capitalism has been restored in China, and the bureaucrats have used the state to turn themselves into capitalists. But China remains a semi-colony exploited and oppressed by imperialist powers such as US, Germany, Japan, etc. rather than an emerging imperialist power. This leads to the position of defending China in wars with imperialist powers not only in the Pacific where the US is re-asserting its hegemony, and in every continent in the world where China is competing with US and EU powers for access to scarce resources.

This position is another instance of 'post-Marxism' which holds that a former workers state that restores capitalism must therefore remain a semi-colony while at the same time it is to be found in virtually every country in the world investing in scarce resources and extracting profits that match that of any imperialist power. As we argue in the document that we wrote challenging this dogmatic position in the FLTI, it is not credible that China acts as an imperialist in the Leninist/Trotskyist sense yet remains a semi-colonial proxy for the established imperialist powers. At the very least this would mean that China would not be accumulating capital in its own state banks and multinational corporations, but would pass this capital on as cheap inputs to its imperialist rivals.

The International Marxist Tendency (IMT) thinks that China is a semi-colony of imperialism too, but makes the very important point that China accumulates surplus capital invested in property speculation and hence explains the pressure to privatise collective property. Yet it is a feature of an imperialist country, not a semi-colony, to accumulate a surplus of national capital so it seems that the IMT cannot explain the existence of surplus capital and the property boom and still hold that China is a semi-colony.

All these impressionistic theories fail to trace their origins to the material reality of China today as a unique combination of historically overlapping modes of production dominated by the capitalist mode of production and the law of value. They fail to show how uneven and combined development produced in China had a national bourgeois revolution that went further and faster than most other semi-colonies, but that the bourgeois-democratic revolution could only be completed by overthrowing bourgeois property relations and creating workers property relations that in the unique conditions took the form of a 'degenerate' workers state where workers power was usurped by a Maoist bureaucracy whose dictatorship caused the stagnation of the economy. This forced the bureaucracy to reintroduce capitalism under the banner of 'market socialism' which inevitably restored capitalist social relations in the whole economy but under conditions which allowed China to escape semi-colonial servitude and emerge as a new imperialist power. Only on the basis of this understanding is it possible to explain the dynamics of class struggle in China today as the basis for a revolutionary program to guide the masses to socialist revolution.

Chinese Imperialism and "the most dangerous class"

China today is an imperialist nation that has a unique historical development. Marx, writing in 1850 after the 1848 revolutions failed in Europe, foresaw that China's bourgeois revolution would be a socialist one. It was prevented from victory by the degeneration of the Soviet Union under the Stalinist bureaucracy. When the bourgeois revolution was completed it was by a Stalinist revolution from above that went further than it wanted to expropriate the national bourgeoisie and create workers property. But the working class never controlled planned production and the economy stagnated. With the collapse of the DWS in the 1980s and 1990s capitalism was restored. What no one foresaw however was that China's national independence allowed it to restore capitalism without being subjected to imperialist oppression. Today it is emerging as the new global imperialist power competing with its rivals to repartition the world. It's drive to expand super-exploits the semi-colonies on every continent and its own massive working class and poor farmers. These are the conditions under which workers and small farmers are fighting back today and to win they need a program that reflects and acts on that reality and transform it in a socialist revolution.

[a] SOCIAL RELATIONS ON THE LAND

Pre-capitalist China dominated by a 'semi-feudal', 'Asiatic mode' or 'Tributary mode' was overturned in 1911. But the bourgeois revolution was incomplete since China was dominated by warlords and imperialist partition. The Chinese bourgeoisie was weak and divided it had to join the Comintern and use the authority of the Bolshevik Rev-

olution to drag the workers into a popular front trap. So as the working class took the lead in the national revolution it was exposed and betrayed by the Stalinist CCP leadership and defeated by the bourgeois Kuomintang army. Relations on the land remained dominated by semi-feudal and bourgeois relations. It took the peasant revolution of 1949 to finally complete the national revolution by overthrowing the bourgeoisie, unifying the country, defeating the imperialists, and liberating the peasantry from serfdom and wage slavery. So the farmers today are not the same as the pre-capitalist or capitalist peasantry who worked as serfs or agricultural labourers.

The 1949 revolution converted the peasants into collective farmers. The restoration of capitalist agriculture after 1978 reversed collectivisation causing a new class differentiation of the peasantry. While land was still collectively owned, land use was privatised, mainly to family farmers. Increasingly collective land was usurped by capitalist interests and family farmers dispossessed. But this process is far from complete. Poor peasants fought to retain their collective ownership and their family plots to augment meagre wages. So what constitutes the 'peasantry' today is an articulation of remnants of petty bourgeois, bourgeois and workers social relations, but now subordinated to restored capitalist social relations on the land, under the conditions of emerging Chinese imperialism caught in a global crisis of overproduction. Thus family farming is petty bourgeois production for subsistence and any excess is sold on the market. But land use under the pressure of emerging imperialism is privatising land on the basis of the law of capital accumulation.

Hence corruption and local crony capitalism are not the defining features of excessive market influences within 'market socialism', but defining features of capitalist appropriation where state power and monopoly capital employs crude methods of privatising land and labour. The process of separating farming families from their means of subsistence is not to serve the greed of Hong Kong land developers and local gangster capitalists but is necessary to create a 'free labour force' whose labor power is then subject to the law of value in the labor market. This has been going on since 1978 with the introduction of the market into agriculture. The peasants are dispossessed as land is aggregated and land use commercialised. Those cast off their land have become a reserve army labour of 10s of millions of migrant workers for China's massive manufacturing and service industries.

What the Wukan rebellion shows is that since 2001 (when Wukan farmers first started resisting land privatisation), the countryside has been exposed to the demands of China's transition to imperialism. Small farmers are the victims of the major restructuring of social relations in a capitalist imperialist economy facing a global crisis. So as well as the basic law of dispossessing workers of their means of subsistence, imperialism creates surplus capital which in China is redirected into capital exports but also speculation in land and property which leads to further dispossession. The the land rights and basic needs of the landless farmers and migrant workers cannot be realised by appeals to the CCP dictatorship but must be based on self-organisation, strikes, and occupation of the land and means of subsistence, combined with occupations and the socialisation of industry under workers control.

[b] LABOUR RELATIONS

The bankrupt Marxism of state capitalism cannot explain the causes of the labour struggles other than general abstractions and empirical impressions [note and cite]. The Market Socialists are proud of China's rising living standards even if they are critical of the authoritarian state. Yet the so-called anti-crisis Keynesian policies to boost the economy in the world crisis are only possible given surplus capital. Such capital is not merely generated by banks and state policy, but by big balance of payments surpluses. Therefore accumulation of surplus capital is a feature not of market socialism or semi-colonial capitalism, both of which are usually bankrupt, but of imperialism. We can see then that it is not sufficient to explain labour 'unrest' in terms of market socialism, DWS, or semi-colonial conditions. The most dangerous class in China today is the result of the emerging imperialist class structure. The conditions prevailing in China today demonstrate clearly that China has become a new imperialist power competing against other imperialist powers in a global crisis of overproduction. The differentiation of the peasantry and the proletariat as well as a growing bourgeoisie all testify to this.

We will summarise the China Labour Bulletin report on the working class in China as proof of this point. The new generation of youthful migrant workers no longer see themselves as peasants. In other words they are now wage workers not dependent on subsistence on family or collective farming. As land is privatised migrant workers are forced to live entirely off their wage which means that they have no choice but to engage in labour struggles. They comprise 2/3rds of migrant workers and are the workers most involved in the waves of labour struggles in both foreign and Chinese owned manufacturing. The demands are mainly over wages which began from a very low point but have risen as China has rapidly invested in new technology to increase labour productivity. What this means is that while wages can rise and with it real living standards, the rate of exploitation is increasing and the share of new value produced is going mainly to capital as super profits. The upsurge in the period since 2008 is particularly significant. It represents the development of independent labour protests outside the official unions or party structures i.e. wildcats. The CCP has tried to revive the official union and impose state run collective contracts, but the wildcats continue. Increasing state expenditure on 'social stability' is unable to contain these wildcat struggles.

What this means is that in China today the extreme contradiction between labour and capital is materialising in the militant class struggle of the 'dangerous class' the proletariat. This is not the same as the Jasmine Revolution in semi-colonial North Africa. Nor the occupations of the indignados in the declining small imperialisms of Southern Europe. China's class struggle reflects a rapid development of the forces of production by an emerging imperialist power which can only fully emerge as other imperialists decline. Not all the aspects of imperialist class structures are present. The SOE workers like state workers everywhere have lost many jobs. There is no time for the formation of a classic labour aristocracy tied to staid unions or the CCP. The labour/capital contradiction is so exacerbated in China that as the skilled workers emerge to

challenge for a share in China's super-profits they are at the same time being squeezed between the new layers of militant migrant workers and the imperialist ruling class.

The most skilled and productive workers are the new educated migrant youth and that fact gives the Chinese working class more independence from the state and the employers than the older imperialist powers. These new layers of militant workers will not have the luxury of being bought off by colonial super-profits and will necessarily take up again the historic role of the militant vanguard of the 'most dangerous class'. China as an emerging imperialist power competing with its established imperialist rivals has the advantage of a massive pool of labour. But as that labour force upskills the organic composition of capital grows and so does the downward pressure on profits. The revolutionary combativity of the dangerous class that came onto the stage of history at the turn of the 20th century is a century later now approaching its appointed time and task – world socialist revolution. The objective conditions are such that with a revolutionary leadership that incorporates the program of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky, the Chinese proletariat can lead the world working class on the road to revolution.

Program for the Socialist Revolution!

** Jobs for all. Sliding scale of wages and hours! A living wage for all!*

** For democratic, fighting unions, independent of boss and state!*

** For self-organisation of rural village, city and workplace soviets, coordinated into regional and national soviets!*

** For local workers and poor farmers militias, coordinated into regional and national militias!*

** For the right to self determination of all national minorities such as the Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongols.*

** No trust in the CCP to deal with corruption! Corruption is endemic to imperialist capitalism it cannot be reformed. We are for the workers and poor farmers in China to make a social revolution against the Maoist dictatorship! For Permanent Revolution!*

** For all strikes and occupations to be generalised into an indefinite general strike to take state power and replace the new imperialist bourgeoisie with a Workers and Peasants Government to implement a revolutionary socialist plan.*

** For the socialisation of land and its distribution to the users, the expropriation of the banks under the control of peasant representatives to finance production on the land.*

** For the socialisation of industry and its subordination to a socialist plan can meet the needs of workers.*

** China is capitalist and imperialist. We do not defend it in a war with the US, Japan or other imperialist powers. We call on the working class and poor peasants to refuse to be missile fodder in an inter-imperialist war. Form workers militia, split the standing army and turn your guns on your own ruling class!*

** Revolutionary workers, build a new revolutionary workers party in the tradition of the Bolsheviks, the Left Opposition, and a new World Party of Socialism based on the Transitional Program of the Fourth International!*

** For a Socialist Republic of China as part of a Socialist Federation of Asia and the Pacific!*

Note by the Editorial Board: The RCIT is in a discussion process with the CWG with the purpose to overcome programmatic differences ■

Forward to a Civil Service General Strike! Workers form Strike Committees!

Leaflet of the Revolutionary Workers Group (RWG) Zimbabwe

Civil servants are earning way below the poverty datum line and are working in deteriorating conditions. Early this year civil servants went on strike demanding a living wage and improved working conditions. The leadership of the civil servants, the Apex council, despite pressure from below did everything it could to squander the anger and energy of the workers who were determined to face the state head on. Instead, and coupled with various political undertones within the unions, the workers were led down a blind alley resulting in an obscene increment on allowances and a non-binding promise by the Prime Minister to look into the issue.

Three months down the line the PM and government are still looking into the issue whilst they have resolved to award themselves salary increments and procure new vehicles for top officials. Only a fool will still believe that the government is sincere about the plight of its workers who are forced to do double jobs and engage in exorbitant borrowings to be able to survive. The civil service has been one of the most militant sector especially the teachers who have borne the brunt of poor wages and harassment by political parties. All the union leaders have proved unable to take effective action that the government really understands such as a civil service wide indefinite general strike that paralyzes government business and make the employers really look into the issue.

Ordinary workers on the ground should immediately form action committees to force the leadership to prepare for action and if that fails take over the leadership of the action. The unions have announced that they are giving the state up to next month to resolve the issue after which

they say they will consult their members on the best action to take. There is no need for any delay let alone to consult the already angry workers who are itching for a fight as they can take no more. The RWG has always supported the workers in their fights and today we are ready to help organise for a strike that hits at the core of state operations and wins the demands of the workers.

The workers should be prepared for the fight against a proposal to amend the current labour laws ostensibly to harmonise the regulations for the public sector workers and private sector workers when in fact the real purpose is to reverse the minimal gains in the current labour law won by the workers after a protracted struggle. Employers are already calling for the repeal of the labour law citing that it is not business friendly as it makes it difficult for them to easily dismiss and victimise workers. Instead any repeal to the laws should strengthen the position of workers against the predatory capitalist machinations. The recent state aided split in the trade union federations should be seen in this context: the state is preparing the ground for an all-out and vicious attack on the workers as demanded by imperialism which is fighting to regain profitability. To that effect a strike by the civil servants must be joined by all workers in the private sector as well as all the unemployed to build a general strike that clearly poses the demands of the workers for a living wage and better living conditions for all.

Note by the Editorial Board: The RCIT is in a discussion process with the RWG with the purpose to overcome programmatic differences ■



Contingent of the RKOB (Austrian section of the RCIT) at the MayDay demonstration 2012 in Vienna

Where is the „League for the Fifth International“ drifting? A Letter from the RCIT to the LFI comrades

By Michael Pröbsting and Shujat Liaqat, 11.5.2012

Dear comrades of the LFI,
We address you in this letter because several of our cadre were members of the LFI until recently. In the last 12 months we have seen divisions, expulsion and splits in the League for the Fifth International. In April 2011 five cadres from the Austrian section, who have formed the *“Bolshevik Opposition”* faction, were bureaucratically expelled by the LFI’s IEC majority. Amongst them were two members of the International Executive Committee (IEC) and three members of the leadership of the youth organisation REVOLUTION in Austria. Around this time a Tamil comrade from the central leadership of the Sri Lanka section, responsible for the union work amongst the plantation workers, resigned too. And several months later a number of members from the Pakistani section (including a Central Committee member), who had formed the *“Left Opposition”* faction, left the LFI. Together with other comrades we have joined forces and formed – also with former LFI members in the USA – an international organisation, the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT).

Politically our origin is in the struggle against the LFI’s majority opportunist adaption towards the union bureaucracy, the reformist and centrist left and its lack of orientation towards workers and nationally oppressed.

However shortly after these expulsion and splits the LFI majority split itself. Recently a number of members resigned from the LFI, amongst them 4 IEC members, central leaders from the British section and the central leader of the Austrian respectively the Czech section. They are a right-wing centrist, liquidationist split reflecting the pressure of the progressive petty-bourgeois strata at the universities and in the occupation movement.

So as a result, all in all in the last 12 month the LFI has lost half of its IEC members and – since the congress in summer 2010 – up to 1/3 of its total membership.

What are the main issues of this letter?

In this letter we point out that:

1. It is the duty of Marxists to make clear which class character political forces have. The leadership of the LFI has *NOT* made clear which class character the liquidationist, petty bourgeois split has.

2. This happens because of the adaption from the leadership of the LFI towards the petty-bourgeois milieu! In the united front/Anticapitalist initiatives projects which WPB joined they don’t have a sharp revolutionary profile and are very soft in criticizing centrist forces or don’t criticise them at all in public. They are even talking about the *“revolutionary left”* when they mean the centrist left.

3. The LFI itself is in its composition dominated by activists coming from petty bourgeois/intellectual layers or the upper strata of the working class since many years. It has a massive lack of workers from the broad mass of the proletariat and from the oppressed.

4. Therefore its political degeneration into centrism is related to the reluctance over years to correct the bad class composition of the LFI. The organisation has developed an opportunist approach towards the politics of libertarian and other petty-bourgeois forces!

5. We characterise the reluctance to win workers and oppressed in deeds (not only as promises and intentions) as part of the problem of *“aristocratism”* that goes hand in hand with the opportunism. It means the orientation to aristocratic layers and the accommodation to various positions and prejudices of the labour aristocracy.

6. One expression of this was the rejection of the slogan *“For a Socialist Tamil Eelam”* in Sri Lanka. It was a consequence of accommodation towards prejudices amongst the petty-bourgeois intellectuals and the aristocratic layers in the working class. We as RCIT are demanding not only a Socialist Tamil Eelam but also an *“Azad, Socialist Kashmir”* and an *“Azad, Socialist Baluchistan”* in Pakistan.

7. We sharply criticise the LFI leadership for pushing the organisation to refuse participate in the August Uprising of tens of thousands of working class youth in Britain in summer 2011. This was criminal especially because it happened in London at the same time as the REVO summer camp, where many comrades from the LFI and REVOLUTION came together. Active participation was rejected by the leaders of the LFI and they didn’t even sent a delegation of members to be in the proletarian districts where the uprisings happened during the nights. They rather preferred to have a summer camp with the slogan *“summer, sun, socialism”* (this was the headline of their report) where the focus was on discussions and drinking instead of being part of the class struggle on the burning streets of London. It is a joke to agitate once or twice in the proletarian districts during the day and to hide in the camp by night when the uprising takes place. Such a leadership is not capable to lead sections in semi colonial countries with sharp state oppression. It demonstrated a lack of revolutionary audacity. This was centrism in deeds and a betrayal of revolutionary principles.

8. Comrades, mistakes can happen, even grave mistakes can happen. But the worst thing is not to make mistakes, but to *fail in recognising them, not to learn from them and not to make the necessary sharp corrections.*

9. The LFI has undertaken a sharp centrist degeneration. It is no wonder that the LFI has shrunken massively.

10. We call all members of the LFI to break with the policy of centrist degeneration which is dominating now the LFI. Comrades, correct these fatal mistakes! Reorient the LFI towards the workers and oppressed!

Why did this happen?

Let us see how the LFI leadership characterises the split of the right-wing liquidationists around Luke Cooper, Simon Hardy (both from Britain), Roman Riedl (Austria) and Martin Mikula (Czech Republic). In its *Statement on Resignations from the British Section of the League* from 28.4.2012,

the International Secretariat (IS) of the LFI correctly criticises the right-wing splitters for their rejection of democratic centralism and the need for a programmatically homogenous organisation. The IS states: *"Their argument was simply copied wholesale from the quasi-libertarian critiques of Leninism and Trotskyism presently fashionable on the English-speaking left."* The IS also describes their views: *"The majority correctly characterised these proposals as liquidationist, both in the political sense, in terms of dissolving our programme and principles, and the organisational sense, in terms of dissolving our tendency."*

It is however characteristic that the IS – while describing correctly several features of this right-wing split – fails to go beyond such a description and to give it a clear political class characterisation. As a result it fails to analyse, characterise and understand the context of this split.

We characterise the group around Cooper, Hardy, Riedl and Mikula as a right-wing, liquidationist split. As all political tendencies and phenomena in a class society it has a class character. As Marxists we have to point out what sort of class character the liquidationist split has. It is a *petty-bourgeois, extreme right-centrist current*. It reflects their *capitulation towards the pressure of the progressive petty-bourgeois layers* (dominated by university students and (pseudo-) intellectuals) who have an important influence in the occupation movement and amongst the left-wing university milieu.

Adaption towards the petty-bourgeois milieu

However the LFI leadership does not give a clear class character of the split and indeed is even incapable to understand the need of it. Why? Firstly because it would force them to rethink their own orientation since it orientates itself to the same petty-bourgeois milieu since years as the right-wing liquidationists are doing. Secondly because it would force them to ask themselves how it could happen that a significant sector of its leadership and membership openly repudiates Leninism and Trotskyism. And thirdly they would have to ask themselves why the same leaders with whom together they enthusiastically expelled future RCIT cadre in April 2011, why these same people desert the organisation and Trotskyism only 12 month later (after they had started in Britain an internal campaign for their liquidationist views for at least half a year)!

For us in the RCIT this development is not surprising and only the logical consequence of the process of centrist degeneration which the LFI unfortunately has undergone in the recent past. Already in late 2009 today RCIT cadres – who at that time had the majority in the Austrian LFI section – fought against the liquidationist tendencies which comrade Riedl and others showed during the intervention in a mass university strike in Austria. They rejected our proposals to intervene openly as members of the LFI and they refused to publicly criticise the wrong policy of the centrists and the left-reformist and libertarian forces which provided the leadership of the movement. Similarly we fought against the "new discoveries" of Riedl and others in 2010 that the IMT (Grant, Woods, Lal Khan) and centrism as such *"are a current of Marxism"*, albeit not a revolutionary one. And we emphasised against Riedl and others that the reformist bureaucracy does not betray the workers because of their "wrong ideologies and lack of

understanding". This is a false, idealistic explain. As Marxists we say it happens because as bureaucrats they have a material interest in controlling and pacifying the working class, they are corrupted and they are therefore also linked with the capitalist state and class.

These internal struggles dealt with questions touching the principles of Marxism, in particular the relationship between the revolutionary vanguard, its petty-bourgeois and labour reformist opponents and sectors of the masses. These were debates which anticipated a number of issues around which the splits/expulsion of the Bolsheviks by the LFI majority occurred in 2011 and around which the split of the right-wing liquidationists in spring 2012 took place.

The left-wing inside the LFI and later cadres of the RCIT defended the traditional Marxist position which the LFI, when it was still a revolutionary organisation, had defended too. But the majority of the LFI leadership wavered. Several of them sympathised more with Riedls positions rather than ours but they hesitated to openly wage a political-ideological struggle against us. So they all agreed that the LFI leadership should not take a position on these debates. In short they proved incapable to understand the task of revolutionary cadres to defend Marxist principles always and from the beginning. They only started to formally defend some of these principles when the right-wing proposed to dissolve the organisation and hence a split was already around the corner.

It is indicative that the LFI majority planned and executed very quickly the expulsion of the *"Bolshevik Opposition"* comrades only a few weeks after they formed a faction in Austria. On the other hand they didn't see any reason to expel the right-wing liquidationists despite their open renunciation of Bolshevism. Would the Cooper/Hardy/Riedl/Mikula group have been less determined to build their "undogmatic anticapitalist networks" and would they have not resigned in mid-April 2012, they would still have a place in the LFI. In fact the LFI leadership actively hopes to win them back as they wrote in their *"Statement on Resignations..."*: *"We can only hope that our former comrades draw this lesson from their own experience quickly, and return to our ranks to build a disciplined international organisation with a clear programme"*. In another statement of the LFI leadership this still existing closeness to the right-wing liquidationist was made even clearer:

"We regret their decision, as they are all talented people, many of whom played an important role in the student movement in 2010-11. While we recognise that there has been a significant divergence in our views over the last seven months, we had hoped that the debate we conducted at our national conference last month and our International Council meeting at Easter could have continued within our ranks. We were disappointed that the comrades chose to leave after such a short discussion. We have made it clear to Simon and the others that we will continue to work with them wherever that is practical and principled. Given the continued similarity of our political views we expect those occasions to be many and frequent." (Reply from Richard Brenner (LFI) to split statement of right-wing, 14.4.2012, <http://louisproyect.wordpress.com/2012/04/14/a-simple-proposal-for-a-new-anticapitalist-left>)

The practice of the past 12 month has shown that while the LFI leadership is totally hostile to the Bolsheviks it is soft and well-coming to the right-wing liquidationists.

They see themselves much closer to the later.

This is in itself an expression of the centrist character of the present-day leadership of the LFI. In Trotsky's days the centrist Stalin leadership exclaimed that it is "fighting resolutely both against the left-wing and the right-wing danger" inside the Communist Party. Trotsky explained that this equation of the currents to the right and to the left of the Marxist line demonstrates itself a petty-bourgeois, centrist position:

„The central idea of the present campaign, that Marxist politics in general consists in a struggle against the right and against the left with the same irreconcilable spirit, is thoroughly absurd. To the right of Marxist politics stands the mighty world of imperialism with its still enormous agency of collaborationists. There is the enemy. To the left of the Marxist line there can be only wrong tendencies within the proletariat itself, infantile disorder in the party, and so forth. The most extreme expression of this false 'leftism' is anarchism. But anarchism's strength and influence are all the smaller and less significant the more resolutely, the more determinedly, the more consistently the revolutionary party fights against opportunism. That is precisely the special historical merit of Bolshevism. In its annals, the struggle against the left always bore an episodic and subordinated character. The Stalinist formula of the struggle 'with the same intransigence' against the right and the left is not a Bolshevik formula but the traditional formula of petty-bourgeois radicalism, whose entire history has been nothing but struggle against 'reaction' on one hand and against the proletarian revolution on the other hand.“ (Leon Trotsky: Crisis in the Right-Center Bloc (1928); in: Leon Trotsky: The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1928-29), p. 302f.)

In fact the present-day leadership of the LFI fought with a much more "irreconcilable spirit" against the left-wing and expelled them when their leaders posed a potential danger inside the IEC. On the other hand they tried every possible compromise and still sending olive branches and appeals to the right-wing liquidationists to come back.

The chimera and the truth about the Bolshevik united front tactic

What is the reason for this? It is because the LFI's leadership itself is politically confused and has become left-centrist in 2011. (Although we would not say that all members have left the former Bolshevik tradition of the LFI and thus it is possible that there might be future internal struggles around key issues in the context of the degeneration process of the LFI as a whole.) It is no accident that they and the right-wingers together attacked and expelled us because of our – as they called it – "sectarianism". They accused the Bolsheviks who later formed the RCIT that they have an "ultra-left understanding of the united front tactic."

What the LFI- and WPB leadership is hiding behind this chimera is its own growing opportunism. As we have shown with a number of quotes (see for this the preface to our essay on the Fifth International in our English-language journal Revolutionary Communism No. 2, p. 26-28; <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/what-sort-of-fifth-international-do-we-need>) the comrades see the reasons for the left-reformist trade union bureaucrats failure in the recent mass struggles against the Tory/LibDem government in their "refusal to think outside the box" and their "fear of the anti-union laws" – not their inability to struggle in the

interest of the workers because of their material interests as bureaucrats. They also identify as the main problem of the left not their petty-bourgeois, centrist or left-reformist policy and subordination to the labour bureaucracy but their "divisions and fragmentations". In its latest proposal for a political platform of the Anticapitalist Initiative WPB repeats this position:

"The leaders of the major unions have postponed and fragmented the fight back called for by their members. The pensions struggle – which had the potential to unify the movement – has been cynically sabotaged by right wing union leaders, and dis-coordinated by 'left wing' union leaders afraid of the antiunion laws. (...) The failure of the official leaderships has been compounded by two key factors:

** the withered and weakened state of workplace organisation, and*

** the inability of the revolutionary left organisations to transcend their fragmentation – instead they project their division into the anti-cuts struggle, building rival anticuts campaigns where a powerful united front is needed." (Workers Power: Draft Proposal for Political Basis for the Anticapitalist Initiative, 21.4.2012, <http://southlondonanticapitalists.wordpress.com/2012/04/30/building-a-new-left-a-great-start/>; our emphasis)*

In effect the remaining left-centrist WPB leadership spreads the same nonsensical idea that there exists not a centrist left but a "revolutionary left" and the problem is that it remains fragmented. In the past we in the revolutionary LFI laughed about such nonsense. Today, the Neo-LFI leadership repeats this stupidity itself! If the various centrist groups would be united in one big centrist organisation ... it would be a unified obstacle, and not an instrument to overcome the crisis of leadership. Why? Because the centrist left is not revolutionary, it is centrist. This means they possess a wrong, centrist method, strategy and tactic. It means that they are politically adapting and dependent of the labour bureaucracy. THIS is the main reason why "the left" cannot challenge the official labour movement leadership!

In addition to this the LFI/WPB leadership also adapts to the libertarian sentiments which are strong amongst the petty-bourgeois sectors of the university student and in the occupation movement. In contrast to the past when we intervened in non-revolutionary organisations, the WPB proposal does not deal with the question of power and therefore lacks the slogan for a workers government.

The LFI/WPB's leadership whole orientation towards the "Anticapitalist Initiative" (ACI) is in itself opportunistically flawed. According to all reports which have been published this initiative attracted less people to its foundation conference on 28th April than the number of people who attended the WPB Anticapitalism event last autumn. About half of the 70-80 people present were members of Workers Power and its two right-wing splits (the Permanent Revolution group and the Cooper/Hardy group). The rest of the participants were in their majority divided between various organised and unorganised leftists and some libertarian university students.

This ACI is neither a reflection of the radicalisation of sectors of the working class or proletarian youth. Nor does it reflect sectors of centrism which are moving to the left. It is rather a combination of centrists moving to the right (who are questioning the "shibboleths" of the revo-

lutionary pre-party organisations, of Bolshevism, who are wondering if Leninism might have been responsible for Stalinism etc.) and some libertarian university students. In short according to all accounts it is a small petty-bourgeois combination of right-wing centrists and libertarian forces. While the LFI/WPB's leadership correctly criticised the right-wing splitters for their capitulation towards libertarian views, they themselves orientate to the same milieu and opportunistically adapt their propaganda to it.

How we did it in the past

This is a break from our revolutionary tradition in the past. While the LFI majority (at that time the left-centrists and the right-wing liquidationist were united against us, the Bolshevik wing in the LFI) accused us of a "sectarian" approach to reformism and centrism, the opposite was and is true. In the 2000s we had proven in practice by our work in the Austrian section that we are capable much better than the rest of the LFI in Europe to intersect with militant sectors of the masses, putting demands on the bureaucracy and repeatedly force the reformists and centrists into united front initiatives with us and combine this with an intransigent revolutionary profile. We initiated or co-initiated a number of demonstrations and school student strikes with thousands of participants. As a result our leading comrades could several times address in speeches thousands of workers and youth at demonstrations. (Some of them you can see at our youtube channel www.youtube.com/revolutioncommunism) We also played an initiating and leading role in an electoral left alliance in summer 2008 (called "THE LEFT"). But in opposite to the LFI/WPB's leadership policy today we did this with a revolutionary programme and with a sharp profile from the beginning. Our slogan "*Expropriate the super-rich!*" enraged the bourgeois media and annoyed the left-reformists and centrists inside the alliance. But we also won sympathies and through our focus on on-the-ground agitation in a working class district in Vienna we recruited a number of workers and youth. The reports about all this can still be found in the section "Austria" on the LFI's website. And on the RCIT website you will find a report, photos and videos of the internationalist MayDay 2012 demonstration in Vienna with 1.500 participants organised by a united front in which the Austrian RCIT comrades played a leading role. In all these years we had not only a sharp, revolutionary, public profile but also a sharp critic against the centrist forces.

In contrast when WPB won a leading position in a mass movement – as it did in the university student movement in 2010 – it unfortunately collapsed into opportunist adaptation towards the petty-bourgeois milieu. When the mass movement hit the streets against the austerity plans of the Cameron government in autumn 2010 and the general strike slogan became an important tactic, the WPB leadership rejected agitation for a general strike and even criticised the SWP for raising this slogan as "too advanced"! Instead of engaging in a sharp political struggle against the various centrist and libertarian forces, the WPB leadership looked for a peaceful co-existence with them in various left-wing university student alliances. In the end LFI/WPB became centrist itself and instead of growing it lost 1/3 of its members in Britain.

Similarly the LFI section in Austria – nearly all of them university students – declined politically and organisationally after our expulsion. They announced in public a self-criticism that they want to correct the "one-sided", "superficial" positions on Palestine and many other issues which the Austrian section published under our leadership in the past decade. Since then not a single document has appeared which proved the so-called "one-sidedness" of our past positions or which contained better, "more differentiated" positions. The ideological class struggle against left-reformism and centrism has de facto disappeared from the LFI Austria propaganda. No theoretical document has been published. They also ceased the publication of their e-mail newsletter, suspended the publication of its paper for half a year and hardly had any public meetings in the past 12 months. At the same time the Austrian RCIT section has not only published a monthly paper, two issues of its theoretical journal, run a regularly updated website and newsletter but also worked hard and successfully to recruit a number of workers and working class youth (including migrants from the lower strata of the working class). And at the same time it participated actively in the formation process of the RCIT. In fact Austria is a model for the charlatanry of the LFI majority's critique against us. They argued for our expulsion as a need "to prevent a damage of the section in Austria". Well, since they "saved" the Austrian section from the Bolsheviks, it hasn't produced any theory, hardly any kind of propaganda and hardly any public meetings took place – this is the new work mode of the sections since then. In addition to it, Riedl who was encouraged from the LFI to lead the section played a central role in the liquidationist split, and the one or other will follow him soon. If this is a successful way to prevent damage, than we hope that we had not learn anything of it.

What is the cause of the centrist degeneration?

All these failures and adaptation's towards centrism are not accidently. The right-wing split is just the most consistent form of the political degeneration which the LFI has undergone in the recent past. These fundamental problems are related to a wrong understanding of the tasks of a revolutionary communist organisation in the present period.

A central task of a communist pre-party organisation is to speak out the truth as it sees it. Unfortunately in the last years a number of LFI cadres have shared the post-modernist, neo-Gramscian method of Luke Cooper which is alien to the materialist dialectic. As a result the LFI majority overthrew at its Congress in 2010 our traditional method of characterising historical periods. Hence they rejected our analyses of the period after 2001 as "pre-revolutionary" and of the present period as "revolutionary". The same petty-bourgeois method led them to reject the Leninist position that the labour aristocracy is a small top layer in the working class which is politically backward and bribed by the bourgeoisie. They rather believe that the labour aristocracy is the best organised and most militant sector of the class who gets privileges because of its class struggle. While the LFI leadership opportunistically overstate the progressive character of the labour aristocracy, it underestimates the importance of the middle and lower

strata of the working class and of the national oppressed layers. This is why they reject our analyses of migrants in imperialist countries as *"in their huge majority nationally oppressed and super-exploited layers of the working class."* At the same time they tend to welcome assimilation of migrants into the majority nation as progressive. This is why we advocate the complete equality of languages of minorities and the abolition of the state language as the Bolsheviks did (again against the opposition of a substantial minority at the LFI congress in 2010). This is why we advocate support for an independent state of oppressed nations if they have demonstrated in past struggles that they wish for this. We combine it with the perspective of working class power. This is why the RCIT advocates a *"Socialist Tamil Eelam"* in Sri Lanka and an *"Azad, Socialist Kashmir"* and an *"Azad, Socialist Baluchistan"* in Pakistan.

This includes the propaganda and agitation of the necessary strategies and tactics for the working class struggle. It also includes the warning of the vanguard from its wrong friends – the right-wing and left-wing labour bureaucrats and the centrists of various colours. It means calling things by their name. That's why the unambiguous advocacy of revolutionary tactics, the sharp criticism of the reformist and centrist forces, the class characterisation of movements and political formations etc. are indispensable for a communist pre-party organisation.

Why did the LFI degenerate so quickly in the last years? Why did a whole sector of its leadership cadre renounce Leninism and Trotskyism and denounce the task of building revolutionary organisations? Of course there are several reasons but the most important factor is that the LFI in most sections has a bad class composition, a dominance of university students, intellectuals and labour aristocrats since many years. It is a joke to have such a composition over years in imperialist countries where the working class (especially the lower and middle strata) represents the absolute majority of the population. This is a serious problem particularly in the new historic period where the class struggle from above and from below is sharpening enormously. In such a period the pressures not only from the bourgeoisie but also from the various sectors of the progressive petty bourgeoisie and the labour bureaucracy are increasing enormously. The worse the class composition of a revolutionary organisation is, the more difficult it is to stand against these political and ideological pressures.

Trotsky once remarked that *"...the more the party is petty-bourgeois in its composition, the more it is dependent upon the changes in the official public opinion."* (Leon Trotsky: From a Scratch – To the Danger of Gangrene (1940); in: Leon Trotsky: In Defense of Marxism, New York 1990, p. 113; <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/edom/dm/21-scratch1.htm>)

Indeed the recent degeneration of the LFI is a living proof for Trotsky observation. The right-wing liquidationist split and the shift of the LFI to the right is a reflection of the public opinion in the labour movement and the petty-bourgeois intelligenzija (via the occupation movement etc.).

A bad class composition is not a disaster in itself ... under the pre-condition that the organisation recognises this situation as a serious weakness which leads to degeneration if it is not overcome after a certain, rather shorter than

longer, period and therefore undertakes bold and decisive measures to improve the class composition. This is why – in the years before our expulsion from the LFI – we proposed and fought for a number of measures for the proletarianisation of the LFI and the Austrian section. As well as we not only argued but also tried to initiate projects to win more young proletarian people, migrants and women to the LFI. One of these projects was the building of women's collectives, followed by a women's organisation in Austria which focused on building roots of the organisation in a proletarian district. While several LFI leaders expressed agreement in general for some of the positions and projects no serious steps were undertaken and in the end we were denounced as "workerists". The LFI leaders even made sure to dissolve the women organisation in Austria.

The leadership explicitly rejected the idea that a bad class composition is a problem for the LFI. It claimed that in small organisation the class composition is necessary and unavoidable like this. In a letter to the LSR conference in February 2011 the leadership of the German section wrote that the social composition of the fighting propaganda group like the LFI sections *"will have a disproportional high share of university students or better educated, political interested workers (skilled workers)"*. The reason they gave is: *"because of the dominant role of propaganda"*. The Austrian supporters of the LFI majority argued similarly in a statement: *"It is perfectly natural that fighting propaganda groups tend because of its very high requirements for a membership tendentially not to be dominated by the lowest layers."*

In other words fighting for the working class interest with a communist programme requires ... "education", i.e. bourgeois education. Therefore, according to the LFI leadership, the mass of the global working class – particularly in the semi-colonial world – which possesses a relatively lower level of education it is rather difficult to meet the requirements of the type of communist organisation the LFI wants to build. For the LFI leaders, the well-educated intellectuals and labour aristocrats (of whom disproportionately many live in the imperialist countries) are more fit. For us this is no Marxism. Is it really "perfectly natural" to build an organisation which should make the future revolutionary party possible, that has the goal to free the working class and all oppressed, that such an organisation is not lead, not even dominated in its composition by workers, women, migrants, oppressed nations although they are the absolute majority in the world? It is only "perfectly natural" in the halls of the universities in the imperialist countries, but in the rest of the world it is just "perfectly pervert".

As a side note it is not without irony that exactly those people who lectured us about the difficulty for workers from the lower strata to meet the *"very high requirements for a membership"*, that exactly the same people who authored these lines deserted the LFI only one year later. The truth is the opposite: it is much more difficult for the petty-bourgeois intellectuals to meet the *"very high requirements for a membership"* than for the workers! The truth is that for workers (excluding the small layer of bribed aristocrats) it is easier to understand the Marxist *Weltanschauung* of their class and to fight for it than for the non-proletarian layers. We have to ask ourselves: Is it healthier to have an organisation of mainly workers and working class youth, even if some of them leave the organisation due to their hard

living conditions and therefore the lack of energy and time? Or should Marxist prefer an organisation of petty-bourgeois intellectuals and labour aristocrats who do not carry Marxist positions into the working class but push the organisation to break with Bolshevism and try to reconcile the political activity with their lifestyle? Ours is the first option. And the LFI? Did we not see in the last years a huge increase of mainly university students who instead of dedicating their life to the cause of working class liberation struggle preferred to reconcile the political activity with their lifestyle?!

Trotsky on the question of the class composition of communist pre-party organisations

In contrast to the views of the LFI leadership Trotsky advised the Bolshevik-Leninists in all phases in the 1920s and 1930s to orientate themselves mainly to the workers and here in particular the mass of the workers and not to the privileged layers or even the university students. For example in 1929 – immediately after the foundation of the Communist League of America – he wrote about the need to find a way to the oppressed layers of the proletariat:

„The trade union bureaucrats, like the bureaucrats of false Communism, live in the atmosphere of aristocratic prejudices of the upper strata of the workers. It will be tragedy if the Oppositionists are infected even in the slightest degree with these qualities. We must not only reject and condemn these prejudices; we must burn them out of our consciousness to the last trace; we must find the road to the most deprived, to the darkest strata of the proletariat, beginning with the Negro, whom capitalist society has converted into Pariah and who must learn to see in us his revolutionary brothers. And this depends wholly upon our energy and devotion to the work.“ (Leon Trotsky: A Letter to the American Trotskyists (1929), in: Trotsky Writings 1929, p. 133f.)

In another document in 1932 he argued in favour of a different approach towards intellectuals than towards workers, in particular from the lower strata. What he said would be most likely denounced as „workerism“ by the present-day LFI leaders – if it would come from our pen and not from Trotsky’s:

“When ten intellectuals, whether in Paris, Berlin, or New York, who have already been members of various organizations, address themselves to us with a request to be taken into our midst, I would offer the following advice: Put them through a series of tests on all the programmatic questions; wet them in the rain, dry them in the sun, and then after a new and careful examination accept maybe one or two.

The case is radically altered when ten workers connected with the masses turn to us. The difference in our attitude to a petty-bourgeois group and to the proletarian group does not require any explanation. But if a proletarian group functions in an area where there are workers of different races, and in spite of this remains composed solely of workers of a privileged nationality, then I am inclined to view them with suspicion. Are we not dealing perhaps with the labor aristocracy? Isn’t the group infected with slave-holding prejudices, active or passive?

It is an entirely different matter when we are approached by a group of Negro workers. Here I am prepared to take it for granted in advance that we shall achieve agreement with them, even if such an agreement is not actual as yet. Because the Negro workers, by virtue of their whole position, do not and cannot

strive to degrade anybody, oppress anybody, or deprive anybody of his rights. They do not seek privileges and cannot rise to the top except on the road of the international revolution.

We can and we must find a way to the consciousness of the Negro workers, the Chinese workers, the Indian workers, and all the oppressed in the human ocean of the colored races to whom belongs the decisive word in the development of mankind.“ (Leon Trotsky: Closer to the Proletarians of the Colored Races (1932), in: Trotsky Writings 1932, p. 112)

In a discussion Trotsky had during his visit in Copenhagen 1932 he advised comrades about their attitude towards a student or an academic, that *„the workers movement for its part must regard him with the greatest scepticism. (...) When he has worked with the workers movement this way (for three, four or five years), then the fact that he was an academician is forgotten, the social difference disappear.“* (Leon Trotsky: On Students and Intellectuals (1932), in: Trotsky Writings 1932, p. 333)

We in the RCIT have the view that a communist pre-party organisation should orientate itself to the working class and not the petty-bourgeois intellectuals and labour aristocrats. Unfortunately the LFI rejects this and has become a victim of what we call *“aristocratism”* – the orientation to aristocratic layers and the accommodation to various positions and prejudices of the labour aristocracy.

This is related to the distortion of the concept of the *“fighting propaganda group”* by the present-day leadership of the LFI. In their recent *“Statement on Resignations...”* they described their view of the *“fighting propaganda group”* as follows: *“We stand by our self-understanding as a group whose principal task is to defend and develop the revolutionary programme and to address the major questions of strategy and tactics facing the working class in its living struggles.”*

This reflects a completely one-sided, un-dialectical understanding of the tasks of a Bolshevik pre-party organisation. Yes, of course its task is to *“defend and develop the revolutionary programme and to address the major questions of strategy and tactics”*. But this alone is not sufficient and even a passive propaganda circle could do this. What is the value of a programme and of strategies and tactics IF they are not transmitted into the class and its vanguard, IF they are not translated into recruiting workers and proletarian youth members who are fighting for this programme and who have roots in the class, IF they therefore do not lead to a communist pre-party organisation with a mainly working class composition?!

If a communist organisation does not achieve this, it is not a *“fighting propaganda group”* but rather a *“commenting propaganda group”* which is isolated from the working class and the oppressed layers.

Ignoring the August Uprising in Britain as the synthesis of theory and practice of Aristocratism

The wrong analysis of the class positions of the labour aristocracy and the lower and middle strata of the working class as well as the nature of national oppression of migrants on one hand and the wrong understanding of the tasks of a communist pre-party organisation on the other hand found their culmination, its test in practice, in the position of the LFI/WPB/REVOLUTION leadership during the *August Uprising* in Britain in summer 2011. This was an Uprising of the working class youth, black and migrants

after the police killed a black father of four children, Mark Duggan. According to figures of Scotland Yard, more than 30.000 youth participated in this uprising which lasted for 5 days. As a completely spontaneous uprising it included a number of lootings. But in the first line it was an uprising against police repression. (Our analysis, perspectives and tactics can be read on our website: Nina Gunić and Michael Pröbsting: *The strategic task: From the uprising to the revolution! These are not "riots" – this is an uprising of the poor in the cities of Britain!*, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/britain-uprising-of-the-poor>; *The August Uprising in Britain - A Report of the RKOB delegation on its visit in London in August 2011*, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/britain-report-from-uprising>; Michael Pröbsting: *What would a revolutionary organisation have done? August uprising of the poor, the nationally and racially oppressed in Britain*, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/britain-august-uprising/>; Michael Pröbsting: *Five days that shook Britain but didn't wake up the left. The bankruptcy of the left during the August uprising of the oppressed in Britain: Its features, its roots and the way forward*, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/britain-left-and-the-uprising/>)

This character was, despite some wavering, occasionally acknowledged even by the LFI/WPB leadership itself. After the Uprising the British comrades wrote in a statement *"The August 2011 riots will be remembered as a working class youth uprising against repression, racism and the recession. Workers Power stands solidly with the youth and against the police."* (Workers Power: The political situation in Britain after the August uprising; Resolution on the political situation after the riots, 19.8.2011, <http://www.workerpower.co.uk/2011/08/political-situation-after-the-august-uprising>)

However despite this literary recognition of the character of this mass uprising (which was contradicted in other statement), the LFI/WPB/REVOLUTION leadership strongly opposed any participation and a call for this in this Uprising. During the same time as the Uprising took place REVOLUTION had its international summer camp close to London. Given the progressive and mass character of the uprising a number of young members of REVOLUTION wanted to join and support the uprising. But the leadership – including Hardy, Cooper, Riedl and the present-day LFI leaders – all categorically opposed any practical support and participation in the uprising. Despite the words quoted above, in fact the leadership saw the uprising as a predominately backward, un-political, and criminal or even reactionary event. This abstention from an important class struggle event was even legitimised by the argument that one does not know the conditions in the area. Leaving aside that not knowing the concrete circumstances in a city did not stop us in the revolutionary past of the LFI to intervene in mass struggles (for example in Genoa/Italy in 2001, in Gleneagles/Britain in 2005 or in Heiligendamm/Germany 2007), it is a damaging acknowledgment if the comrades do not know and don't have any connection to the area in an important working class district in London (Tottenham) where the LFI has its strongest branch since more than 35 years!

In fact this event demonstrated the practical consequences of aristocratism and a petty-bourgeois decadence of middle class people. In a report called *"Summer, sun,*

socialism - that was our international summer camp this year" the comrades told the public about *"interesting workshops"* and the *"opportunity of sports and leisure facilities of the camping grounds"*. *"Every day we watched the events of the 'riots' in London and discussed about it at the Camp plenary. So we adopted for example a resolution and an international united front call against police violence and about the conditions for the British youth. Since as a youth organization we also like to fete, we had in the evening parties at a big camp fire or in the community tent."* (see <http://www.onesolutionrevolution.de/?p=1645>) How can an organization call itself "revolutionary" if it prefers to have parties and drink a lot every evening, while at the same time thousands of youth fight against the police on the streets only a few kilometers away!?

Conclusion

Comrades, mistakes can happen, even grave mistakes can happen. But the worst thing is not to make mistakes, but to fail in recognising them, not to learn from them and not to make the necessary sharp corrections. If this happens a constant repetition and deepening of the mistakes are unavoidable. And indeed as we have shown in this letter and in other documents this is what happened with the LFI in the last year. This is a shame given the enormous possibilities of class struggle in the present period to build a strong international revolutionary organisation. But one cannot achieve this without an unambiguous Bolshevik method and a revolutionary programme which is applied to the concrete practical and theoretical questions of the class struggle. We have summarised our analysis, our lessons and our programme in *"The Revolutionary Communist Manifesto"* (which can be read online – at the moment only in English and German language – on the RCIT website www.thecommunists.net). We would welcome to debate this programme with you.

Comrades, we have drawn our conclusions from the past experience. After the bureaucratic expulsion of the *"Bolshevik Opposition"* in April 2011 and the left-wing splits in other countries comrades in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, USA and Austria have joined forces with other militants and founded the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT). We stand for the continuity of the revolutionary tradition which the LFI represented in the past. We call all members of the LFI to break with the policy of centrist degeneration which is dominating the LFI.

Bolshevik Greetings,

Michael Pröbsting and Shujat Liaquat (for the RCIT) ■



Revolutionary Communist International Tendency:

What does the RCIT stand for?

The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) is a fighting organisation for the liberation of the working class and all oppressed. 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, 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 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 a new, revolutionary workers' party! For a 5th Workers International on a revolutionary basis! Join the RCIT!

*No future without socialism! No socialism without a revolution!
No revolution without a revolutionary party!*



