

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNISM

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Ukraine: Neither Washington nor Moscow!



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff

plus: MayDay, South Africa, Egypt,
Israel, Brazil, Russia, World Situation

WORKERS AND OPPRESSED UNITE!

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Revolutionary Communism

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May Day 2014: The Only Way to Advance the Struggle for Liberation of the Workers and Oppressed – Revolutionaries Stand United!

*Joint Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, the Communist Left of Australia
and the Editor of the Blog vansterparlan.v-blog.se (Sweden), April 2014*

The undersigned organizations send their May Day greetings to all fighters for the liberation of the working class and the oppressed people throughout the world. We live in a world of increasing inter-imperialist rivalry, revolutionary uprisings, and counter-revolutionary threats. In this period of history, so revolutionary in nature, which commenced in 2008 with outbreak of the Great Recession, it is more urgent than ever to unite all authentic revolutionaries and to build new, truly revolutionary parties around the world, and to strive for the foundation of a Fifth Workers' International.

Such a new World Party of Socialist Revolution must be built as a clear and unequivocal alternative to the current official leaderships of various camps – treacherous labor bureaucrats, leaders of the Social Democratic parties, heads of Stalinist parties, Bolivarianism, parties representing petit-bourgeois nationalism, and parties based on Islamism. These current leaderships consciously or unconsciously mislead the workers and oppressed. To replace such leaderships it is, first of all, incumbent to openly denounce them. However, at the same time, it is absolutely necessary for revolutionaries to fight *inside* existing mass movements and to apply the united front tactic towards their leaderships.

In the context of today's complex class struggles and world political events, revolutionaries can only fight for the leadership of the liberation struggle if they pursue correct tactics and a clearly defined program. Time and again, we have seen that all centrist organizations, which purport to represent an alternative leadership, have failed miserably in their evaluations of which side to stand on when the barricades are drawn. In a world of increasing imperialist rivalry and massive class polarization, only an international revolutionary organization based on a solid program and encompassing an internationalist working class cadre can lead the working class along the correct

path towards socialist revolution.

As revolutionaries, we take the following stands regarding current hotspots in the international realm:

* Down with Ukraine's right-wing government, a government in which fascist forces actively participate and which is merely a puppet of US and EU imperialism! Smash the fascists! No support for any faction of oligarchs – neither pro-Western nor pro-Russian! No to Russia's imperialist intervention in the Crimea! At the same time we defend the right of the Crimean population to join Russia! For equal rights and the right of national self-determination for all national minorities such as the Russians in the Ukraine and the Crimean Tatars!

* Down with all Great Imperialist Powers – the US, EU, Japan, China, and Russia! No support for *any* imperialist camp! In the Ukraine, in East Asia, and in any other military conflict between these powers or their puppets, socialists must relentlessly remind the workers: The main enemy is at home! Turn the imperialist war into a civil war against your own ruling class!

* Defeat the semi-fascist provocations in Venezuela! Defend Venezuela against US imperialism! Down with the new "*Pacto de Punto Fijo*"! Mobilize the working class against the attacks of the Maduro government! Break the working class away from the Bolivarian leadership which defends the capitalist system and collaborates with imperialist China! For an independent workers' party based on a revolutionary program!

* Support the mass protests in Brazil against corruption, inflation, and the spending of public money on the rich! For organized self-defense against police repression! Fight within the trade unions to break them away from the PT, and build a new workers' party based on a revolutionary program!

* Down with the military dictatorship of General Sisi in Egypt! Support the workers' strikes and mass protests



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against the dictatorship! Defend the Muslim Brotherhood against repression, but give no political support to their bourgeois leadership! Denounce the support of the Egyptian Communist Party for the Sisi regime!

* Support the revolution in Syria! Down with the Assad-Regime, a puppet of Russian imperialism! No to any intervention from US and EU imperialism! No to the Geneva 2 negotiations which are laying the groundwork for a sell-out of the liberation struggle! No to the pro-Western FSA leadership and no to the Islamist leadership! For workers' and popular councils and militias to organize the civil war against the Assad dictatorship! For international solidarity brigades!

* Defend the Palestinian people against Israel, the Zionist Apartheid state! In any conflict we stand for a military victory of the Palestinian resistance and the defeat of Israel! No political support for the Abbas/Fatah collaborationist leadership or for the reactionary Hamas leadership. For a Free, Red Palestine from the River to the Sea!

* Support the democratic protest movement against the Erdogan regime in Turkey! No support for the equally reactionary movement of Fethullah Gulen or for the CHP! For the right of national self-determination of the Kurdish people, including their right for an independent state!

* Victory to the Bosnian Revolution! Support the multinational struggle of the workers and poor in Bosnia against the capitalist austerity policies! Drive out troops from the US/EU as well as the imperialists' institutions of colonial occupation! No to the imperialist UN trials in Den Haag! Place Karadzic, Mladić, and their ilk – the organizers of the genocidal war of 1992–95 against the Bosnian people – before workers' and peasants' tribunals, composed of the families and friends of the victims in the genocidal war! For workers' and popular councils and militias! For an independent workers' republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a step towards a socialist federation of the Balkan peoples!

* Workers and oppressed unite to fight the imperialist imposed austerity package and fascism in Greece! Fight for equal rights for nationally oppressed migrants and the super-exploited layer of the Greek working class! No illusions in the reformist parties! For a workers government based on working class councils and militias! Build a revolutionary communist party!

* Support the mass protest in Spain against the attack on women's right to abortion! For a revolutionary working class women's movement! Defend the Catalan and Basque peoples' rights to form independent states!

* Down with imperialist aggression and occupation! In Afghanistan, Mali, Somalia, Iran, and North Korea, defeat the imperialist NATO forces and their local allies! Defend those resisting the imperialist invaders! No political support for nationalist, Islamist, or Stalinist forces!

* No to the imperialist border controls which only serve to keep a global Apartheid regime against the oppressed people of the semi-colonial world! For open borders – all migrants are welcome to come and live in the rich countries!

* Defeat the reactionary, pro-monarchist "Yellow Shirts" movement in Thailand! Break the workers' and peasants' rank and file of the "Red Shirts" movement away from the capitalist Thaksin leadership!

* Defend women's rights in India! Mobilize against the

reactionary rape culture! For armed self-defense units of women and progressive men to protect women! No to petty-bourgeois feminism – for a revolutionary working class women's movement!

* Support NUMSA's and other union's break with the ANC and the pro-government faction in COSATU! Call for NUMSA to form a workers' party now! However, don't allow the NUMSA's leaders to derail the prospect of an independent class struggle into a remake of the "Freedom Charter" or the popular-frontist UDF, the failed program of ANC politics in the 1980s. For a new mass workers' party based on a revolutionary program! Denounce the Stalinist SACP which is part of the capitalist ANC government and which supports the repression of the militant workers' vanguard, as it did during the Marikana massacre!

Revolutionaries must intervene in the class struggle and combine all necessary tactics with propagandizing for a program of working class power which can only be achieved by a socialist revolution. Such a program must be built on the methods outlined by Trotsky's Transitional Program of 1938:

* Build action committees in work places and in workers living areas! Purge the trade unions of bureaucrats and collaborators with the capitalists! For democratic rank and file control over the trade unions! Build revolutionary communist fractions inside the trade unions! Transform the trade union in militant instruments for the socialist liberation struggle of the working class!

* For a sliding scale of working hours until everyone is employed without loss of pay!

* For the right of self determination for all oppressed national grouping deprived of the right to secede!

* For revolutionary movements of women, migrants, youth, unemployed, and national minorities! For the right of the oppressed to caucus in workers' mass organizations and their movements!

* Build committees and action councils of the workers, peasants, and poor to organize the struggle!

* For armed workers and oppressed militias!

* Expropriate the capitalist class! Nationalize the large enterprises and banks under workers' control!

* For a workers' government allied with the peasants and urban poor and based on local councils and militias!

* Fight for new workers' parties and for a Fifth Workers' International based on a revolutionary program!

No future without socialism!

No socialism without revolution!

No revolution without a revolutionary party!

Footnote

The Communist League of Australia states that it does not consider China to be an imperialist power.

Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Israel/Occupied Palestine, Brazil, USA and Austria): www.thecommunists.net/

Communist Left of Australia: <http://communistleftaustralia.yolasite.com/>

Editor of the Blog vansterparlan.v-blog.se (Sweden): <http://vansterparlan.v-blog.se> ■

Elections in South Africa: No Vote for the ANC! Critical Support for the WASP! Forward in Building a Mass Workers Party!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 25.4.2014

1. The upcoming elections in South Africa on 7 May will be held on the backdrop of critical political developments related to the class struggle. As the RCIT has previously stated in several documents, since the heroic Marikana miners' strike in the summer 2012, South Africa has entered a new, pre-revolutionary phase. In addition to a number of militant strikes, for the first time we are witnessing a split of significant sectors of the working class from the popular-frontist ANC-SACP government. The most important event of this historic development is NUMSA's break with the popular frontist ANC-SACP government. NUMSA calls for the formation of a united front against the neoliberal attacks of the government, as well as for the formation of a "Movement for Socialism" which many workers interpret as a call for a new mass workers' party. In addition, the petty-bourgeois left-populist *Economic Freedom Fighters*, led by the former ANC Youth leader Julius Malema, attracts a lot of support among black youth and militant workers. Finally, there is also the *Workers and Socialist Party* (WASP), which is led by the right-centrist DSM/CWI, but which has received support from sectors of the workers' vanguard.

2. The above developments can only be characterized as historic. They indeed open the road to the formation of a mass workers' party. Unfortunately, the NUMSA leadership remains trapped in a Stalinist schema of the "national-democratic revolution," and has announced its return to the old ANC program of the 1950s (the "Freedom Charter"). In addition, the leadership of NUMSA vacillates around the question of whether to build a new workers' party now, and refuses to put forth candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections. This is shameful, and revolutionaries in South Africa should explain in their independent propaganda to the workers' vanguard that the NUMSA leadership is heading in the wrong direction. Nevertheless, regardless of such criticism, South African revolutionaries must make every effort to participate in the movement initiated by NUMSA and fight shoulder by shoulder with the workers' vanguard.

3. What should be the position of Marxists vis-à-vis the 2014 South African general elections? Naturally, they cannot call upon workers to vote for the popular-frontist ANC-SACP list, which has implemented a neoliberal policy for the last two decades. Should they, perhaps, give critical support to Malema's Economic Freedom Fighters? While Marxists should definitely deploy the united front tactic in relation to the EFF so as to reach its young militant supporters, a critical vote for the EFF is *not* permissible, since it is not a working class organization.

4. We propose that revolutionaries in South Africa give *critical electoral support to the WASP*. This is because WASP is the *only* working class party standing as an independent force in these elections. While it is small and will probably receive only a small number of votes, it definitely represents more than simply the DSM/CWI, as it has

roots among the workers' vanguard. A strong turnout for the WASP will constitute an important call to the workers' vanguard to found an independent mass workers' party to the left of the ANC and SACP.

5. However, such electoral support – lest it be seen as opportunistic – must be combined with sharp criticism of the WASP program and leadership. WASP's electoral manifesto does not explain that socialism can only be achieved via a workers' revolution. It tirelessly repeats the old reformist slogans of "*democratization of the police*" instead of openly calling for armed self-defense units of the workers and poor to defend the working class against massacres similar to Marikana. All this reflects the rotten program of the DSM/CWI which is based on the illusionary dogma of a peaceful transformation to socialism, and their equally reformist notion that police officers are "*workers in uniform.*"

6. Worse, the DSM/CWI leadership has chosen Moses Mayekiso as their "presidential candidate." While Mayekiso had a militant past as a trade union leader during the 1980s, subsequently he integrated himself in leading posi-

READ MORE DOCUMENTS OF THE RCIT ON SOUTH AFRICA!

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Cartoon by Mogorosi Motshumi

South Africa: The Struggle for Revolution Continues!

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Price: €5 / \$7 / £4,5

tions of the ANC and the SACP and later became a corrupt capitalist involved in shady deals. For example, Mayekiso served as CEO of *Sanco Investment Holdings* which in 1999 received R2.5 million for its service in a huge arms deal with the Swedish corporation SAAB, something Mayekiso himself has admitted. (See e.g. Mail & Guardian: How arms dealers pampered Sanco, 08 Apr 2005 <http://mg.co.za/article/2005-04-08-how-arms-dealers-pampered-sanco>) Mayekiso is a quintessential example of a once leader of the workers who has transformed himself into a traitorous servant of the bourgeoisie. By selecting Mayekiso as their "presidential candidate," the WASP/CWI leadership demonstrates its cynical attitude to the cause of working class liberation. Socialists who are campaigning for WASP must sharply denounce Mayekiso as well as the WASP leadership which supports him, and should call for his immediate removal from the list.

7. The election campaign, as well as the period after the elections, must be utilized to build a mass workers' party, independent of all factions of the bourgeoisie. As we have stated in our statement of 5 February, it would be sectarian to make the adoption of a socialist program a *pre-condition* for participating in the formation of a new workers' party. However, from the outset, socialists should argue for the necessity of adopting an Action Program which outlines the demands to be fought for in order to achieve working class power. Such a program should include the following:

* *Expropriation of the super-rich – whether native or foreign, white or black!*

* *Nationalization of industries and the banks under workers' control!*

* *For a plan of public reconstruction – elaborated in detail by and under the control of the workers and poor – to build the necessary infrastructure (housing, electricity, transport, health sector, etc.)!*

* *Expropriation of white landowners and the nationalization of the land!*

* *For a government of the workers and poor, based on councils and defended by popular militias of armed masses!*

8. We repeat that the most urgent task now is to unite all authentic revolutionaries in a Bolshevik organization which will fight for such a program. At the same time, the members of this organization will actively participate in the process of establishing a new workers' party in South Africa, as well as fight for the creation of a new workers' International which, in our opinion, will be the Fifth Workers' International. To advance the formation of such a revolutionary organization, the RCIT looks forward to discussing these matters and collaborating with all authentic revolutionaries.

We refer readers to the latest RCIT statement on South Africa: South Africa: Forward to the Building of a Mass Workers' Party Based on a Revolutionary Program! 5.2.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/south-africa-workers-party/> as well as other documents in South Africa at <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/>. ■

Look for details of the books at www.cuba-sold-out.net

Michael Pröbsting: Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?

The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It's called *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?*. The book's subtitle is: *The Road from Revolution to the Restoration of Capitalism*. The book is in English-language. It has 5 chapters plus an appendix, 108 pages and includes 19 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the *International Secretary* of the RCIT. In *Cuba's Revolution Sold Out?* Michael Pröbsting analyses the character of the Cuban Revolution 1959-61, its bureaucratic degeneration, and the recent march of the Castro leadership towards capitalism.

The author demonstrates how the Cuban Revolution, despite the initial modest intentions of its leaders, was spurred forward to more radical policies by grass roots struggles of Cuban workers and peasants. In fact, the very abolishment of capitalism by the Cuban regime was no part of the original game plan of either Castro's Movimiento 26 de Julio or of the official Cuban communist party (PSP), but rather was a product of precisely such pressures from below.

Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? describes in detail how a number of relatively recent political, economic, and social measures were purposely taken by the Cuban government to open the road back

to capitalism. Pröbsting elaborates the key role of the world's new great imperialist power, China, in Cuba's state policy as exemplified in the June 2011 Sino-Cuban agreement for a first Five-Year Plan of cooperation between these two states.

Cuba's Revolution Sold Out? examines these developments from the viewpoint of Marxist theory, the nature of the ruling bureaucracy in Stalinist states, and the process of restoration of capitalism under such regimes.

In conclusion, the book proposes a socialist program for political and social revolution in Cuba to halt the advance of capitalism and to eradicate the country's bureaucratic dictatorship.

Price: 8 Euro / 12 US-Dollars / 7 British Pound
(plus delivery charges) ■



The Author: Michael Pröbsting is a revolutionary activist since 30 years. He is the author of many articles and pamphlets in German and English language. He published books or contributed to books on *Rosa Luxemburg* (1999), on the *World Economy* (2008), on *Migration* (2010) and the *Arab Revolution* (2011). His latest book, *The Great Robbery of the South* (published in 2013), analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the "Third World") by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He is the *International Secretary* of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency*.

Egypt: Mobilize International Solidarity against General Sisi's Machinery of Repression!

Mass death sentences are handed down against hundreds alleged supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood as General Sisi announces his candidacy for President. For a Workers' Revolution to overthrow the reactionary Military Dictatorship!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 28.3.2014

1. A court in the Upper Egyptian province of Minya has sentenced to death 529 alleged supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood for the killing of one (!) police officer in clashes in August 2013. The trial lasted only two sessions, during which lawyers for the defense were not allowed to present their case for the accused; in fact, the defendants' lawyers were not even allowed to enter the courtroom! This farce makes the Stalinist show trials in Moscow between 1936 and 1938 look like models of impartial justice! Even the pro-Western *Amnesty International* condemned the trial as "grotesque." At the same time, an Egyptian court has opened and adjourned a second mass trial of 683 alleged supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, including their top leader, on charges of murder, incitement to violence, and sabotage. In addition, three journalists of for Al-Jazeera, including the acting bureau chief, are standing trial, accused of "belonging to or aiding a terrorist organization."

2. The defendants cannot expect any justice from these kangaroo courts in which the judges are nothing more than henchmen for the military dictatorship of General Sisi. This regime came to power on 3 July 2013 following a coup d'état supported by *all* the great imperialist powers: the US, EU, Russia, and China, as well as by Israel and the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad. Since then, according to the *Egyptian Center of Economic and Social Rights*, the regime's armed forces have killed at least 4,482 people and imprisoned another 16,687. The regime has also closed the Egyptian border with the Gaza Strip, completely isolating the 1.8 million persons residing there, and hence exacerbating Israel's campaign of terror against the Palestinian people.

3. Western imperialism's attitude to the Egyptian dictatorship is a paragon of hypocrisy. Imagine that it were not Egypt but Russia which had sentenced to death more than 500 members of the political opposition in a three-day trial! In such a case, it's not at all difficult to imagine the endless flow of crocodile tears and protests that would be heard about "human rights violations"! Remember the outcry of the Western governments and media against the unjust convictions and sentencing of the Pussy Riot activists? However, quite in contrast to Putin's regime in Russia, Egypt's military dictatorship is a close ally of Western imperialism, Israel, and Saudi Arabia. So, while Western imperialism imposes economic sanctions on Russia, less than three months ago, in January 2014, the US Congress agreed to give \$1.5 billion in military and economic aid to post-coup Egypt. Only Israel receives more US aid.

4. Symbolically, on 26 March, only two days after the mass death sentences, General Sisi announced his candidacy for the upcoming presidential elections to be held

in July. This is the next step in the dictatorship's efforts to consolidate its power after it successfully staged the coup d'état last year, followed by the mass killings of thousands of opposition activists, and the rigged referendum on a new "constitution" in January 2014.

5. It is, sadly, typical that most of the centrist- and reformist-left in Egypt and internationally blindly denied the counter-revolutionary nature of the coup d'état and the dictatorship it brought to power. A good example of this is the position of the *Revolutionary Socialists* (closely affiliated with the SWP [UK] and the ISO [USA]). While they were forced, months later, to admit to the reactionary nature of the Sisi dictatorship, they still refuse to participate in and defend the mass mobilizations against the regime which are led by the Muslim Brotherhood. Even worse, from the day of the coup until now, the *Communist Party of Egypt* has hailed General Sisi's seizure of power "as the more profound and mature second wave to correct the path of the revolution of January 25 2011." This stand is no less reactionary than the support of the Iraqi CP for the US imperialist occupation forces after 2003, and demonstrates yet again the thoroughly counter-revolutionary nature of Stalinism in the guise of communism.

6. The RCIT has no sympathy for either the politics or program of the bourgeois-Islamist Muslim Brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood has many dedicated youth in its ranks, but its program and its leadership are inextricably linked to capitalism. Remember how Morsi, during his presidency, looked to make a deal with the army and the imperialist powers and didn't dare to touch the wealth of the super-rich! Consequently, we supported the mass mobilizations against the government of the then president Morsi. However, today, the main enemy is the military dictatorship of General Sisi. *We express unconditional solidarity with the anti-regime resistance. We support the workers' strikes which have witnessed a new upsurge during the past few months. We defend the mass demonstrations, mostly organized by the Muslim Brotherhood, against the brutal repression by the regime. We call for the immediate release of all political prisoners in Egypt.*

7. It is *urgent* that the international workers' movements take actions in solidarity with the resistance against the dictatorship. One possibility is to sign the international petition protesting the mass death sentences in Egypt (<http://egyptsolidarityinitiative.org/>). However, actions in the streets and the workplaces are vastly more important. We call for international solidarity demonstrations and strikes against the repression in Egypt.

8. The central task in Egypt now is to organize a defensive struggle against the regime's repression and against lower wages and unemployment. If the working

class and youth organize and rebuild their forces in this struggle, this will enable them to prepare for the overthrow of the Sisi dictatorship via an armed insurrection.

9. What is fundamentally necessary is to build a mass workers' party as a political alternative to the Muslim Brotherhood and rotten Stalinism. Such a party must be established on the basis of a revolutionary socialist program. We call for all revolutionaries in Egypt to unite in the adoption of an authentic revolutionary program and, with this aim in mind, to open a dialogue and collaboration with the RCIT. Onward to the formation of a revolutionary workers' party in Egypt as part of the Fifth Workers' International!

** Free all political prisoners in Egypt! Down with the show trials against resistance activists of the Muslim Brotherhood and other organizations! For international solidarity demonstrations and strikes against the repression in Egypt!*

** Defend the pro-Morsi demonstrations without giving political support to their leadership. For a broad united front (including Islamists) in defense of democratic rights! For mass action committees to organize the resistance! For armed self-defense units! Prepare for a general strike and an armed insurrection against the military regime!*

** Advance the workers struggle for higher wages and against lay-offs! For the right to form independent trade unions! Fight inside the trade unions against the pro-regime bureaucrats!*

** Down with the new reactionary Constitution! For a Revolutionary Constitutional Assembly elected and controlled by the working people and defended by armed popular militias!*

** Prepare the struggle for a workers' government, with the support of the poor peasantry and the urban poor, and committed to the expropriation of the multinationals, big capital, and banks, all to be placed under workers' control, as well as the replacement of the bourgeois state apparatus by workers' and peasant organs.*

** Onward to a workers' revolution to abolish, once and for all, the capitalist system – the root of poverty, unemployment, and repression! For a workers' and peasants' republic in Egypt as part of a socialist federation of the peoples of the Maghreb and Mashriq!*

International Secretariat of the RCIT

For additional RCIT analyses of Egypt's military dictatorship, as well as reports of solidarity activities, we refer readers to the following articles:

RKOB: Austria: Solidarity with the Resistance against the Military Dictatorship in Egypt! Report (with photos and video clips) of a rally on 25 January to commemorate the third anniversary of the revolution in Egypt, 26.1.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/solidarity-rally-for-egypt/>

RCIT: Egypt: Down with General Sisi's pro-Army Constitution! Boycott the Referendum!, 12.1.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/boycott-egypt-referendum/>

RCIT: Tasks of the Revolution in Egypt, July 2, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/tasks-of-egypt-revolution/>

RCIT: Egypt: Down with the Military Coup d'État! Prepare Mass Resistance! July 8, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-down-with-military-coup-d-etat/>

Yossi Schwartz: Egypt: The U.S. Support for the Military Coup and the Left's ignorance Notes on the role of US imperialism in the military's coup d'état and the failure of the Egypt left, July 11, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-us-support-for-military-coup/>

Michael Pröbsting: The Military's Coup d'État in Egypt: Assessment and Tactics. A reply to the criticism of the WIVP and the LCC on the meaning of the Military's Coup d'État and the slogan of the Revolutionary Constituent Assembly, 17.7.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-meaning-of-coup-d-etat/>

Yossi Schwartz: Egypt: Mobilize Resistance against the reactionary military regime! Down with the army's puppet-government! No political support for Morsi and the Muslim brotherhood! For independent working class mobilization with a revolutionary perspective! 27.7.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-no-to-military-regime/>

Michael Pröbsting: The Coup d'État in Egypt and the Bankruptcy of the Left's "Army Socialism". A Balance Sheet of the coup and another Reply to our Critics (LCC, WIVP, SF/LCFI), 8.8.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-and-left-army-socialism/>

RCIT: Egypt: Appeal for solidarity after steel workers arrested by army, Aug 13, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-solidarity-with-steel-workers/>

RCIT: Egypt: International Solidarity against the Army Crackdown! August 14, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-international-solidarity/>

Nina Gunić: Austria: Solidarity Demonstration in Vienna against the military dictatorship in Egypt. Down with Al-Sisi! Long live international solidarity! Report on the demonstration in Vienna against the military dictatorship in Egypt, Aug 18, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-solidarity-demo-in-austria/>

Yossi Schwartz: Israel and the Coup in Egypt. Israel's primary concerns regarding Egypt are the possible fall of the military regime or a descent into civil war, Aug 21, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/israel-and-egypt-coup/>

Nina Gunić: Egypt: Solidarity Rally in Austria – Workers and oppressed unite! Down, Down, Down with Sisi! Freedom, Freedom for Egypt! Report from a Rally in Austria in Solidarity with the Resistance in Egypt, Aug 25, 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/egypt-solidarity-rally-in-austria/> ■



Egypt: Down with the Dictatorship! No to the Ban of the Muslim Brotherhood! Immediate Release of all 529 activists under sentence of death!

Report of the Revolutionary Communist Organization LIBERATION (RKOB) on the demonstration against the military regime in Egypt (20 April 2014, Vienna), 22.4.2014,

On the 20th April 2014 (Easter Sunday and therefore holiday in Austria) more than 2,000 people demonstrated in Vienna in defense of the 529 Egyptian activists who were sentenced to death. The participants were mostly Egyptian, Turkish and Bosnian migrants. The Egyptian activists were sentenced by the military regime in a deeply undemocratic summary judgment for their alleged involvement in the death of one (!) policeman in August 2013. Never before in Egyptian court history so many people have been sentenced to death at once. During the court proceeding, the defense lawyers were not even allowed to enter the courtroom. They are in the majority activists of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is banned and suppressed by the military regime.

The *Revolutionary Communist Organization LIBERATION* (RKOB) does not give any political support to the Muslim Brotherhood, which is a bourgeois force. But we defend, while upholding all political criticism, the Muslim Brotherhood against the suppression by the military regime. The prosecution and sentencing as well as the suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood are deeply undemocratic and reactionary. The regime itself has come to power through a coup, supported by the EU- and U.S.-imperialists. In contrast the Muslim Brothers are a party roots in the masses, which had come to power as the first party for decades, through parliamentary-democratic elections and the support of a large part of the population. Thus the main enemy in Egypt is currently the military dictatorship which is supported by the imperialist powers!

According to this, the outrage about the regime of General Sisi was large and justified at the demonstration in Vienna. The RKOB participated with a delegation in the demonstration. Michael Pröbsting, our spokesperson and international secretary of the RCIT, was invited to address the demonstration both at the beginning and at the end. Despite the fact that most participants at the demonstration were religious Muslims, both speeches of our comrade were interrupted several times by applause. In one of the two speeches Michael Pröbsting said: *"I am a communist. But I say to the British Government, I say to EU: Hands off the Muslim Brotherhood! Democratic rights for all those, who struggle for freedom in Egypt!"*

It was also remarkable was the awareness of our organization among the activists on the demonstration, who came to meet us with great sympathy, because they knew us from many demonstrations for a free Palestine, for the Arab Revolution as well as solidarity actions with the resistance in Egypt in the past ten years. Among other things this was expressed by chants of hundreds of demonstrators who chanted: *"Dear Michael, dear, dear Michael!"*. (See, for instance, the video of the second speech by Michael Pröbsting both at the beginning and at minute 2:18)

Also notable was the speech of a central organizer of the

protests, Ibrahim Ali, who condemned the U.S. and EU-imperialist policies sharply. Similarly, Ibrahim Ali castigated sharply the bloodshed of the military regime especially against young women and children. The demonstration itself was in its majority composed of young people and at least half, if not in the majority of them were women. It was militant from the beginning to the end and expressed the righteous indignation and anger of a large proportion of the Egyptian masses against oppression by the military regime.

We say: For demonstrations and strikes as long as the regime in Egypt is in power! For a free Egypt! Despite all political criticism – Hands off the Muslim Brotherhood! Immediate reversal of the death sentences and an end to the court proceeding! Freedom for all imprisoned regime opponents! For the abolition of the ban on the Muslim Brotherhood and for their right to stand as candidates for the elections! Against any imperialist intervention! Down with the dictatorship! For the completion of the revolution in Egypt - which means a socialist revolution and the creation of a workers and peasants republic!

Videos of the speeches by Michael Pröbsting:

1. Speech by Michael Pröbsting: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qDS2DdNSg0E&list=UUCSUT4RYehM3d6by9il4AIw>
2. Speech by Michael Pröbsting: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pP3hc1-O0-o&list=UUCSUT4RYehM3d6by9il4AIw>

More about this issue on our international website: <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/stop-repression-in-egypt/> ■



Michael Pröbsting speaks at a rally for freedom in Egypt

Israel: Long Live International Women's Day!

The only solution to violence and discrimination—a socialist revolution!

By Hila Slutsky and Boris Hammerschlag,

Internationalist Socialist League (RCIT-Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine), 8.3.2014

Today, March 8th, is International Women's Day. This day, steeped as it is in socialist tradition for more than a century, has two visages. On the one hand, this is a day when women all over the world celebrate the achievements of their struggle for full equality with men and against all forms of discrimination and violence against themselves. On the other hand, this is a day when women look a harsh reality straight in the eye and define their goals for the future – a critical examination which will lead, in the final analysis, to the next social revolution, one which will eliminate all forms of oppression, non-equality, and violence among women and men. This will be the socialist revolution.

The social oppression of women and the struggle against it is not something new. Class-based society, which began with the passage of human societies from a life based on hunting and gathering to a life based on agriculture and the domestication of animals is its most fundamental cause. Furthermore, any time that a technological or social revolution changed the face of class-based society, the ways and means of oppressing women have changed accordingly. Wherever historical or religious books relate how women have at times filled important leadership roles in society, these are but exceptions which attest to the general rule of class-based society, one in which women more usually find themselves exploited and suffering, yet have sometimes mustered the strength to fight back against discrimination, inequality, oppression, and violence.

The Democratic Revolution that came in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the capitalist form of production led, during its Golden Age, to a tremendous breakthrough in the legal and socio-economic status of women. Women and men fought a bitter struggle and achieved a number of important rights for women, such as the right to vote in parliamentary elections, the right to join the labor force, the right to possess private property of their own, and more. But today we live in the age of the decline and decay of capitalism; an era which is witness not only to more and more military conflicts, the spread of mass hunger, revolutions and counter-revolutions, exacerbated environmental destruction, and the retreat of democracy, but also to a steady increase, worldwide, in the oppression and inequality of women in relation to men.

Here, in Israel, from a very young age, women face countless kinds of oppression, the main ones are:

1) **Violence** – Women suffer physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse from spouses, partners, and relatives. An index including figures up to 2013 revealed that about 200,000 battered women live in Israel and that, during this year, 19 of them were killed. [1] A report examining violence against women, "Women in the Crosshairs," concludes that one in every three women living in Israel will be assaulted sexually during her lifetime. [2] And if all this is not enough, in Israel, ideas along the lines of "the victim

is guilty" in all that's connected to sexual assault and harassment are well rooted.

While we, women socialist revolutionaries, are keenly aware that the solution to violence is multi-systemic and requires profound changes in education, health, infrastructure, policing, law, and legislation, experience has taught us that we cannot count on such solutions being provided by an establishment controlled by capitalists, the vast majority of which are men, nor on the women chosen by the latter to become part of the same establishment. The capitalist establishment will never bring about significant changes in the quality of life of women workers who are poor or who belong to oppressed ethnic groups such as Palestinians or those of Ethiopian origin. The profound change of a rotten society requires a social revolution. We are involved in the building of a revolutionary party of women and men workers, the goal of which is to lead this revolution. The social protest of 2011 in Israel demonstrated, as did the wave of social revolutions in the Arab countries of our region, that the likelihood of the next social revolution's being led by women is immensely higher than any time in the past. Join us and take part in this revolution!

But, until then, we can only rely on ourselves, one on the other, as well as on men who prove, not only in words but in deeds, that they want a just and equitable world free of discrimination on grounds of gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, or any other criterion. Though nature gave the average man greater physical strength than our own, about 200 years after the start of the industrial revolution, for many years the greater physical strength of males no longer constitutes a decisive advantage over woman. As an immediate solution to the surge of violence against women, we suggest getting organized for self-defence! Together, we must organize and prepare ourselves in the use of various martial arts that provide tools for self-defence independent of physical force, and to arm (yes, arm!) ourselves by any means we see appropriate to ensure our physical safety and the integrity of our bodies and minds. Every man who considers raising his arm to abuse a woman should know that this may be the last time that this arm will be raised. Let's see, then, how talkback callers will blame the victim.

At the same time, we must fight for a significant increase in government spending on new and already existing women's centers which will be administered democratically by the women themselves and will be havens for any woman who has fallen victim to violence. In a world in which you can no longer trust the police of the male-dominated establishment, it is the democratically administered women's self-defence organizations which will provide protection for these centers.

We call on every woman to act, to the extent of her ability, in her place of work, study, and residence for the organi-

zation of regular meetings where women can discuss and share with one other their attempts to deal with harassment and violence, as a means of both identifying threatening situations in time and acting collectively to prevent them from actually occurring.

2) Discrimination in hiring and wages – In a press release issued by Israel's Ministry of Industry in 2011, it was affirmed that 80% of Israeli employers acknowledge that there is discrimination against working mothers, while 70% of them admit that Arabs and Ethiopians face discrimination in the workplace. [3] You can only imagine what your status in the labor market would be as a mother, if you had by chance been born a Palestinian or Ethiopian.

Regarding wages, if you were born a woman, according to the statistics of Israel's Social Security administration, you receive a salary 17% lower than that earned by a man filling a similar position, with the same qualifications as your own. To those who argue that the gap is narrowing, a report submitted in 2013 replies that the picture remains unchanged during the last decade and that the differential has even gotten worse. The same report also indicates that governmental intervention in this matter, the continuous rise in the educational level of women, and the percent of the women in the work force have absolutely no influence on these statistics.[4]

The conclusion which repeats itself over and over again is that we women, who seek an equitable world, cannot rely on the various women's lobbies, organizations, and political parties which struggle "from within" to change a system in which discrimination against women is structural, inherent, and built-in and who actually have given up on the idea (even while struggling against it) that the elimination of this discrimination is possible. A woman who earns about 30,000 Israeli shekels a month (approximately \$US 8,600) is probably not very disturbed by her earning 17% less than a man filling an equivalent position, certainly not when compared to a woman who earns 4, 000 or 5, 000 shekels a month (about \$US 1,150-1,430). Women's leadership from the upper-middle class has failed, is failing, and will always fail to advance equality for women in general, and should step aside to allow poor and oppressed working women to take over this leadership. Naturally, we do not expect them to do so voluntarily.

In the interim, until we take back the reins of the social struggles and lead them to revolutionary paths, we must fight for the establishment of women's lobbies operating inside militant trade unions, workers' political parties, and all other workers' institutions. In addition, we must work for the integration of as many women as possible into the ranks of organized labor. We will fight together to ensure that the contents of pay slips are transparent and anchored in collective agreements, and will no longer allow the signing of any agreement that provides less than equal pay for equal work!

We also demand that the government adopt a policy of giving preference to the employment of women from oppressed and other groups discriminated-against in the labor market, as well as to immediately begin employing them in public works, under the supervision and management of women and men workers.

3) The unequal burden of housework – Studies show that since the early 1980s there hasn't been a significant increase in the participation of men in the US and UK in the performance of household tasks such as cleaning and cooking. [5] One can only assume, to say the least, that the figures for Israel are no better. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Beloved sisters! We have no more illusions! The decay of human society is only a symptom of the decay of the capitalist system, which brought about advances in the goal for women's equality in all fields, only to come to a screeching halt.

Again, until the socialist revolution, all the material and consciousness-related elements of which are already in place, with the sole exception of a worldwide revolutionary party of women and men (to be the fifth in number, after the rise and fall of four previous ones), we must fight for the following demands:

For the socialization of housework! Including the establishment of laundries, cafeterias, free and subsidized public child care facilities and institutions for children aged 0 to 18 for all residents of this country, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. For the recognition of housework as productive labor, no longer as a private matter of the family, but as a contribution to society at large. No more endless hours of unpaid labor by women in the raising of children and the performance of household chores.

Tunisia: For the immediate Release of David Leandro Hofstadter!

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 16.4.2014

David Leandro Hofstadter, a socialist journalist working for the Trotskyist Publishing House Rudolph Klement in Argentina, has been detained at his arrival in Tunisia on 6 April. Since then he has disappeared and not been in contact with his friends and comrades. It is obvious that he has been kidnapped by the Tunisian authorities.

The Revolutionary Communist International Tendency denounces this act of reactionary repression. We demand the immediate release of the comrade!

David Leandro Hofstadter covered as a correspondent the revolutionary process that shook Maghreb and Middle

East since 2011. He travelled to Egypt, Iraq and Syria and visited several refugee camps. He is a revolutionary journalist who risks his life in order to advance the liberation struggle of the workers and oppressed.

He needs and he deserves our full solidarity!

We call the international workers movement to show its solidarity with comrade Hofstadter. You can start with sending messages of protest to the Tunisian Embassy in your country as well as to the Interior Minister of Tunisia.

International Secretariat of the RCIT ■

Friends, colleagues, relatives, and other people we meet ask: "Where's all the money going to come for this?" Our answer: from the expropriation, without remuneration, of the tycoons, banks, and the big capitalists, and the transfer of their businesses to the control of the workers. Bottom line, it's either them or us; we who have already been robbed of a large part of our lives filling roles of slaves in a world in which there is not a single country in which slavery is legal. Now, from this matter to the next ...

4) Trafficking in women and prostitution – For many years the State of Israel led the worldwide tables as a center of trafficking in women and, as in all capitalist countries throughout the world, too many women (even one it too many) are forced to provide sexual services to survive, maintain their position, or somewhat move up the economic ladder (the vast majority belong to the first group). However, as a social phenomenon, prostitution was born alongside class-based society, and is not a unique capitalist phenomenon. Therefore, one cannot expect that this phenomenon will automatically disappear just a minute before the disappearance of class society. The aim of women revolutionary socialists, of course, is to completely eradicate the phenomenon of prostitution. While, non-socialist or non-revolutionary feminists declare that their aim is identical to ours, in this matter our positions differ from theirs regarding the road that will lead us to the achievement of this aim.

In our opinion, as long as the capitalistic system exists, revolutionaries should take a stand against any legislative measures designed to punish women involved in prostitution as the source of their livelihood, including legislation that makes customers criminal offenders. Only in a socialist society can heavy penalties be imposed on pimps and customers, because only in this kind of society is no individual, man or women, left without a proper livelihood suited to his or her talents. Capitalist legislation against prostitution is characterized by not a small amount of hypocrisy, primarily the self-absolution of society from the responsibility to provide for the welfare of women from the weakest of social strata. Every woman who considers herself a feminist and yet supports such laws must take into account that their main victims will be the prostitutes themselves.

We call on all women and men who desire to live in a world free from prostitution to support socialist revolution. However, until this comes about, we call on you to support our demands for services that will protect and provide free health care for those involved in prostitution, for massive public investments in the creation and maintenance of vocational training centers with full pay for attendance and participation. These demands are intended to keep women out of the cycle of prostitution, while incurring as little psychological, economic, and health-related damage as possible. In addition, we call for the organization of all those engaged in prostitution into democratic trade unions. "Yes" to the imposition of heavy punishments on pimps, employers, and traffickers in prostitution; "no" to the criminalization of customers!

Who we are

We are women belonging to a revolutionary communist organization named the International Socialist League (ISL). This is an organization whose members include men and women, Palestinians and Israelis, and which consti-

tutes the kernel for the founding of a working-class revolutionary party for those living in the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. The revolution which we aim to foment will create a single, multi-national state under the democratic rule of the working class, between the river and the sea. The ISL is the local branch of a worldwide revolutionary communist organization, the RCIT. The RCIT has similar branches in Austria, South Africa, Sri-Lanka, Pakistan, the United States, Venezuela, and Brazil. The RCIT deals with the building of a worldwide revolutionary party of the working class which will coordinate and lead the struggles of the workers and oppressed populations all over the world against the capitalist system in its various chauvinistic, imperialistic and racist manifestations.

We need strong revolutionary women who want to assume leadership roles in the advance of this organization! If you would like to take part in shaping the organization and implementing its goals, contact us by email at the following address:

INFO@THE-ISLEAGUE.COM

[1] <http://news.walla.co.il/?w=/90/2696268>

[2] <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/law/1.1861236>

[3] <http://www.moital.gov.il/NR/exeres/CE6F2C06-B5F2-4E66-8003-9ADE2DE77DCC.htm>

[4] <http://www.ynet.co.il/articles/0,7340,L-4452689,00.html>

[5] <http://www.haaretz.co.il/news/world/america/.premium-1.218585> ■



Cartoon by Carlos Latuff:
Don't be silent over the abuse of women in Egypt

Occupied Palestine/Israel: Enough with Symbolic Protests! For an Authentic Popular Struggle!

Drawing Conclusions – and the Change in Direction that They Dictate

*Statement of the International Socialist League (ISL) the RCIT's Section in Israel/Occupied Palestine,
on the occasion of the 38th anniversary of the first Land Day (1976)*

The 30th of March – Land Day – has become a symbol for the mass struggle of the Palestinians, citizens of the apartheid Zionist state, against dispossession and oppression. The key question before political activists who oppose both oppression and the regime's attacks upon their standard of living and democratic rights is how to turn this vital symbol into a winnable struggle. To do so, we must first draw revolutionary conclusions about the political situation throughout the world, across our region, and locally at home. If we won't reach such conclusions and then act according to what they dictate, Land Day will be relegated to remaining nothing more than a symbolic struggle.

Last year, on Land Day of 2013, we warned that the heroic struggles for democratic rights occurring across the globe must be transformed into a struggle for a socialist revolution under the leadership of revolutionary workers' parties; that if this will not occur, bourgeois imperialism and its lackeys will respond by establishing totalitarian and even fascist regimes which will endanger the future existence of humanity.

In response to what we wrote, we were told that we are dreamers, that we are detached from reality, and that the correct path dictates a struggle in stages: first of all, our critics replied, there needs to be a worldwide democratic revolution and *only* in the next historical period, *maybe* a socialist revolution will be possible. This year it's even clearer than before just how right we were when we wrote what we did last year. In Egypt, the heart of the Arab world, the democratic revolution in which millions of people participated, demanding bread and democracy, has reached a dead end. The government of the Muslim Brotherhood which was an obstacle to a democratic revolution was toppled in a military *coup d'état* and now, in its place, is a regime of blood-thirsty, pro-imperialist generals who have returned Egypt to the period of Mubarak. In Syria, the murderous regime of Assad continues the slaughter of its own people.

Not in one country has a democratic revolution been victorious. The reason for this is simple – as capitalism declines, the weak bourgeois classes of countries where there never has been a democratic revolution are deathly afraid of the possibility that the mass struggle will get out of control and move forward to a socialist revolution. Their fear of such a scenario is immeasurably greater than their apprehension of imperialistic control of their own country, because at least the imperialists will throw them some crumbs from the super-exploitation of the working masses of their fellow countrymen and women.

Another example which clearly attests to the nature of the historical period during which we are living is provided by recent events in the Ukraine. There, a fascist government came to power with the support of western impe-

rialism under the leadership of the United States. At the same time, Puttin's imperialistic Russia has taken control of Crimea. As a result of the increasingly acute contradictions between the various imperialists, there is a danger that the conflicts of interests between the imperialist powers in their struggle for control of markets, raw materials, and super-exploited workforces will, in the final analysis, lead to the outbreak of the Third World War. In retrospect, we can see that the pulverizing of the USSR by the corrupt Stalinist leadership, and the absence of a truly revolutionary leadership in the Soviet Union, opened the door to the rise of a fascist government in the Ukraine and to the strengthening of extreme right parties not only in Eastern Europe but in Western Europe as well, like, for example, Greece.

The Condition of the Left in our Region

The various leftist movements in this region also bear their share of the responsibility for the failure of the revolutions. In Egypt, movements and parties of the left refused to put into action a program that would prevent the co-opting and kidnapping of the revolutions we have described above, even though developments ultimately confirmed the validity of the theory of the permanent revolution put forth by Leon Trotsky, revolutionary and one of the leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution. Instead, these Egyptian leftists fell in line behind the forces of the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie, rather than struggle for the establishment of a revolutionary workers' party which would fight for a socialist revolution.

In Syria, the Communist Party subdued the working class, subjugated it to the Syrian regime, and prevented it from getting organized as an independent revolutionary force. The Syrian CP continues in this policy, supporting Assad's bloodthirsty regime, while contending that the president and his supporters are struggling against imperialism. All of this while Assad enjoys the full support of Russian and Chinese imperialism and, at the same time, the West refuses to arm the mostly Islamist resistance movement, thereby only strengthening Assad's hand. Other leftist groups refuse to form a military front with the Islamists on the grounds that they are reactionary. No one denies that the Islamist leadership is reactionary, but the more dangerous enemy today is Assad's regime. An authentically revolutionary left would participate in the military struggle against Assad, while struggling for the leadership of the movement, as part and parcel of the unfinished democratic revolution, with the goal of completing it as a socialist revolution.

Despite these setbacks, the rage of the masses throughout the world can yet be reignited at even a higher level of intensity. We must prepare ourselves for such develop-

ments and, while participating in every struggle however localized and specific, tirelessly explain that the *only* way to crush fascism and prevent a Third World War is by fomenting socialist revolution. Contrary to leftist groups which mistakenly support either Russia on the one hand or the fascistic Ukrainian government on the other, the working class has *absolutely no interest* in supporting either a fascistic regime or an imperialistic one. Rather, we must oppose both such reactionary forces on the basis of a revolutionary program for a socialist Ukraine as part of a socialist federation of all Europe, which in turn will be part of the worldwide revolution.

The Right's Gaining Strength Essentially Means that Israel is Getting Weaker

At the same time, today we are witness to the continuous strengthening of the political right in Israel, reactionary forces who seek to eliminate all expressions of criticism for the crimes Israel perpetuates against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. However, Israel is also exacerbating the political oppression of the Palestinian people residing within her 1967 borders, a prominent victim of which is the Member of the Knesset Muhammed Barake, from the Communist Party of Israel. This past week Barake was convicted of assault which he allegedly committed over seven and a half years ago while coming to the defence of the leftist activist Uri Avneri during a demonstration against Israel's Second Lebanon War. In general, Israel continues her wholesale killing of opponents of the Occupation in the West Bank and Gaza, at will heats up her borders with Lebanon and Syria, and repeats her mantra of war threats against Iran. Israel's increased suppression of the Palestinians is a product of her mounting isolation throughout the world. Today, the rulers of Israel can only turn for support to the world's rightist Islamophobes, who openly accept as self-evident the Zionists' need to maintain the suppression of the Palestinian people.

The deepening isolation of Israel manifests itself not only in academic boycotts against the state by various universities around the world and in boycotts maintained by trade unions. It has also been reported that the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva is about to vote on five proposed anti-Israel condemnations, one of which includes a call for the imposition of a boycott of and divestment of investments in West Bank settlements. We shouldn't rely too much on the implementation of such a condemnation, as the UN is an arm of imperialism which, despite the criticism occasionally heard, supports a strong Israel armed to the teeth.

However, the very possibility that this body may condemn Israel reflects the fact that Israel is in a very similar situation to that in which the apartheid regime in South Africa found itself at the end of the 1980s. It is this isolation which leads to a certain amount of tension between the US of Obama and Israel, as the Obama administration, which basically supports Israel, understands that it must distance itself somewhat from the latter in order to maintain its hegemony in the region and continue to control the area's natural resources, primarily oil, while maintaining its strategic superiority relative to Russian and Chinese imperialism. As a result of this American ambivalence, Israel's plan to initiate war, with US support, against Iran

received a critical blow, as today the US is interested in a rapprochement of sorts with the Iranian regime precisely, among other reasons, because of Israel's increasing weakness.

Whither the Palestinian Struggle?

Those who hope that the United States will force Israel to establish a Palestinian mini-state in the territories occupied in 1967, and in this way the oppression of the Palestinian people will come to an end, are totally detached from political dynamics as they are actually dictated in our world by class-based material interests. The United States, like all imperialistic powers, is the enemy of the working class and masses, who in turn are the only social forces who possess the potential of changing the course of history. The deepening contradiction of the capitalist system and the many dangers inherent to the present situation together with, regardless of the setbacks, the still existing revolutionary possibilities, demand of us to focus on a most fundamental question: How can we prepare for and get organized to launch an authentic, winnable mass struggle as an integral part of that of the Palestinian people, who reside in all of the territories in which de facto apartheid exists between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea?

The fight of the Palestinian people for its freedom is a heroic struggle waged opposite the mighty military power of Israel. The collaboration of the Palestinian Authority (PA) with the Zionist oppressor is not only exacerbating the oppression by Israel, but is bringing ever closer the possibility that the PA will collapse, as it becomes clear to more and more Palestinians that all the talk about "two states for two peoples" is not a real option but only allows Israel to continue its dispossession and oppression with the assistance of the PA.

For more and more Palestinians, it is clear that no solution exists other than one in which a single democratic state will replace the Zionist apartheid state currently controlling all the territory from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. This can only be initiated by bringing about the eruption of a new popular Intifada, waged as a struggle for national liberation. However, once it has broken out, this struggle can *only* be winnable if it is transformed from a *struggle for national liberation* into a *revolutionary struggle* the goal of which is the establishment of a workers' state from the river to the sea. In this context, it is worth remembering that the authentic achievements of the Palestinian people, including the recognition of their very existence as a people entitled to self determination in their own land, were the results of the popular struggle conducted during the years of the First Intifada. But, at the same time, let us not forget that these achievements were ultimately neutered by the Oslo Agreements which established the Palestinian Authority with the aim of turning the PLO into Israel's collaborator and lackey.

Today, world public opinion is on the side of independence for the Palestinian people. However, the rulers of Israel repeatedly do all they can to frustrate this right of self determination for the Palestinians, even in the framework of a mini-state lacking any real independence, because they want to retain Israel's control of all the territory between the river and the sea. These intentions are made crystal clear by Israel's massive building project in the lands she

has occupied since 1967. For this reason, all the talk about the realization of the Palestinian self determination in the framework of “two states for two peoples” is a nothing more than a dangerous delusion aimed at weakening the Palestinian people’s resistance to its own oppression and displacement. As long as Israel continues to exist as an ethnically-based state for the benefit of the Jewish people alone, the Palestinians will continue to be oppressed.

The government of Israel, with the goal of perpetuating its conquests of 1948 and 1967, is transparently attempting to put a spin on the negotiations by demanding not only that the Palestinians recognize the State of Israel, but that they explicitly recognize her as a Jewish state; in other words, that Israel is the state of *all* the Jews throughout the world. This demand not only negates the democratic rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel, but aims at ensuring that the Palestinian refugees who were expelled from their country will never return. This spin makes evident the extent to which the slogan of Israel’s being “a Jewish and democratic state” (as Israel likes to see herself) is an inherently *anti-democratic* slogan, and to what extent Israel’s demand to be recognized as such by the Palestinians is really aimed at preventing the founding of even a Bantustan-like state for the Palestinians on 20% of territory between the river and the sea, while at the same time shifting the blame for the failure of the negotiations to the Palestinians who, ostensibly, do not want peace. If the United States were to declare herself “a Christian and democratic state,” Jewish citizens of the US, like all other persons espousing democratic values, would justifiably respond that this is an anti-democratic act which negates the equal status of all US citizens who are not Christians.

It’s only a question of time before a new Intifada breaks out, one that will be directed not only against the Israeli rulers, but also against the Palestinian Authority which is so clearly collaborating with the imperialists, including Israel. The real danger is that this new Intifada will erupt prematurely, before the Palestinians are truly prepared and organized, and will thus be brutally repressed and defeated.

The new Intifada will be victorious if it will have learned the lessons of the previous intifadas – it must include all sections of oppressed Palestinian society: workers, peasants, small business persons, women, youth, and unemployed, as well as Jewish supporters of the Palestinians who recognize that the only road that leads out of the hell created by the Zionist state and its servants, is one of support for an authentically revolutionary Palestinian struggle. In Israel, a call must be directed to the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab citizens: “Enough symbolic protests! Mobilize the masses for a real struggle!” What is a real struggle? – One which begins from a regional perspective and which ties the Palestinian struggle with the unfinished Arab revolution. A determined, serious Palestinian struggle will reignite revolution throughout the Arab world, but the latter can only be winnable if it will become a revolutionary struggle with the working class in its forefront and under the leadership of a revolutionary workers’ party.

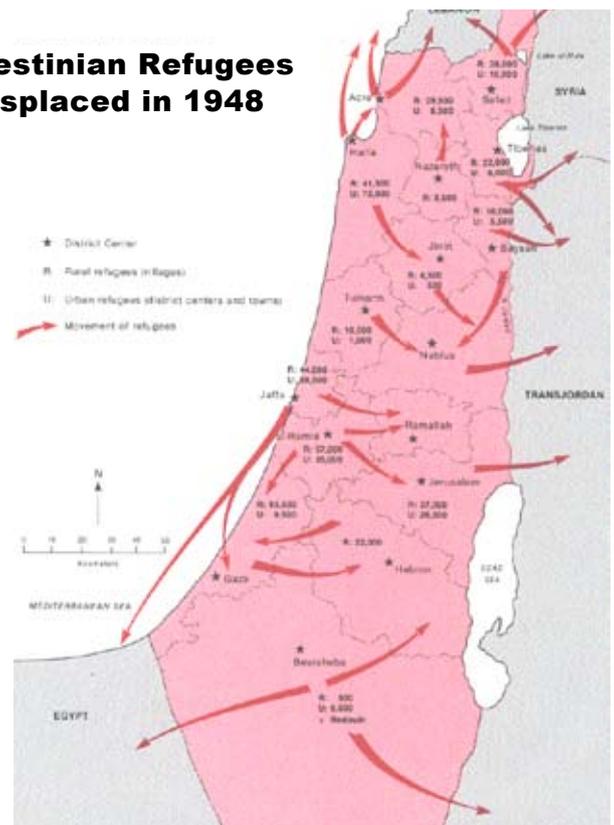
The goal of a revolution in this country must be the founding of a multi-national workers’ state controlling all the territory between the river and the sea, with the national character of this state reflecting its being composed of a Palestinian majority, including the refugees. Within this

new state, the Israeli masses will enjoy equal rights and the Jewish workers who will fight alongside the Palestinian workers will be part of the new ruling class. Only in this fashion will it be possible to get out of the blood-drenched swamp which threatens to totally inundate not only the Palestinians but the Israelis, who are living in a death trap whose days are numbered. Israel, like the United States, is getting weaker, and it’s only a matter of time before Israel reels from a catastrophic military defeat in one of her future wars, wars which the Zionist state has no choice but to initiate.

On this, Land Day of 2014, we once again make the following calls:

- * *Release all Palestinian political prisoners!*
- * *Stop the Judaization of Palestinian neighbourhoods, house demolitions, and ethnic cleansing!*
- * *Rescind Israel’s Land Law, Citizenship Law, Law of Return, and all of the 60 racist laws (reported by the NGO Adalah) the goal of which is to oppress the Palestinians and to ethnically cleanse them from Palestine!*
- * *For the full right of return for all Palestinian refugees to their homeland!*
- * *For the founding of a network of democratic defence committees against Zionist programs and physical assault against Palestinians and migrant workers!*
- * *For the founding of a network of democratic action committees in the neighbourhoods, in cities, villages, places of work, and educational institutions!*
- * *Expropriation of factories and banks, without remuneration, to be placed under the democratic supervision of the workers!*
- * *For a single democratic state between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea!*
- * *For a workers’ government between the river and the sea!*
- * *For a workers’ state between the river and the sea as part of a socialist federation of the Middle East!*
- * *For a new Communist International – The Fifth International! ■*

Palestinian Refugees displaced in 1948



Brazil: Report on Teachers Trade Union Assembly on 4.4.2014

by *Corrente Comunista Revolucionária (RCIT Brazil)*, 8.4.2014

The public sector workers in Sao Paulo are fighting for higher wages. Amongst them, the teachers are in the forefront. The teacher's trade union in Sao Paulo, SINPEEM, who has about 60.000 members, demands a wage increase of 17%. However, the mayor offers only an increase of 13%. Worse, a significant sector of the teachers, namely those who started their job in the last 6 years, is offered even less. In addition, the mayor plans to change the laws for retirement so teachers could also lose some rights in future.

There have already been several mass assemblies of SINPEEM to discuss the struggle for the teacher's demands. The latest one took place on 4 April and was attended by about 1.000 teachers.

The trade union bureaucracy, led by Claudio Fonseca (a former member of the Stalinist PCdoB, now in PPS) hesitates to go on strike in order to implement the teacher's demands. They are delaying the decision to vote on a strike since several weeks. On the mass assembly, they proposed to move the decision to "strike or not" again to another assembly on 11 April. The centrist opposition – dominated by the Morenoite PSTU and PSOL – went along with the bureaucracy's proposal.

The only real opposition to the bureaucracy's delaying tac-

tics came from comrade Joao Evangelista, a representative of the rank and file opposition list MUOC (Movimento Unificado de Oposição Classista) and a member of *Corrente Comunista Revolucionária (RCIT Brazil)*. In his speech he warned against the delaying tactics of the bureaucracy and argued for the immediate decision in favor of a strike. He also called for an indefinite strike for a 17% wage increase till the mayor gives in. In addition, he argued for a joint struggle of the teachers with all other public sector employees.

An increasing number of teachers support such a militant class struggle position. Despite the hostile opposition of the trade union bureaucracy and the centrist opposition, comrade Evangelista's proposal received more than 5% of the votes.

Comrade Joao Evangelista and the comrades from MUOC will intervene again on the incoming SINPEEM assembly on 11 April in order to fight against the union bureaucracy's coward tactics.

A video from comrade Joao Evangelista speech can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nd6hF1himBE&feature=youtu.be> ■

Brazil: Report on Teachers Trade Union Assembly on 11.4.2014

by *Corrente Comunista Revolucionária (RCIT Brazil)*, 19.4.2014

As we already reported, the teachers in Sao Paulo (Brazil) have launched mass protests for higher wages and against attacks on their rights. (For a report on the background of the teachers' struggle see <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/report-sinpeem-4-4-2014/> and <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-speech-at-trade-union-congress/>)

On 11 April, another mass assembly of SINPEEM, the teachers' trade union, took place. Around 1500 people attended. The mayor had not offered anything new so it was clear that the teachers must launch a massive struggle in order to achieve something.

Joao Evangelista, a member of *Corrente Comunista Revolucionária (RCIT Brazil)*, spoke as the representative of the rank and file opposition list MUOC (Movimento Unificado de Oposição Classista) as he did in the past assemblies. Again, he was the only one to argue for the immediate launch of an indefinite general strike of the teachers and the public sector workers in Sao Paulo. The social democratic/Stalinist trade union leadership prefers to delay and to limit the struggle. The official left opposition

– around the centrist PSTU and PSOL – refuses to oppose this course.

Already during his speech, it became clear that the support amongst the rank and file for a militant stand as comrade Joao is advocating has increased significantly. At the vote 30% of the education workers supported his motion for the immediate launch of an indefinite general strike. This shows that via a consistent campaign for a militant struggle, comrade Joao Evangelista and MUOC have been able to substantially increase their support amongst the teachers.

While the bureaucracy could avoid an immediate indefinite general strike, it had to agree to launch an indefinite strike on 23 May. We will continue to report about the struggle.

Causa Operária, the weekly paper of the Partido da Causa Operária (which is also part of MUOC), published an interview with comrade Joao Evangelista. (see <http://www.thecommunists.net/home/portugu%C3%AAs/entrevista-evangelista/> and <http://pco.org.br/movimento-operario/chamamos-os-professores-a-se-unirem-a-nos-na-greve-e-nas-eleicoes-do-sindicato/aajz,b.html>) ■

Counterrevolution and Mass Resistance in the Ukraine

Statement of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 17.4.2014

1. The looming civil war in the east of the Ukraine, the result of the popular uprising in the region, opens a new facet to the deep political crisis which is shaking the country since November 2013. These new developments can only be understood, and accurate tactical conclusions can only be drawn, if one recognizes the overall context. Thus, the RCIT reaffirms its analysis of exacerbation of inter-imperialist rivalry between the great imperialist powers: the US/EU on the one hand and Russia (and China) on the other. The Maidan movement was, and the new regime in Kiev is, a proxy of US and EU imperialism in order to expand its influence to the east. At the same time, the Yanukovich government was an instrument of Russian imperialism. We also reaffirm our refusal to give any support to the reactionary Maidan Movement while, at the same time, giving no support to the reactionary Yanukovich government. After the overthrow of Yanukovich's government, the RCIT stated its defense of the national rights of the Russian-speaking population in the east and south, without giving any support to Russian imperialism. While the mass uprising of sectors of the Russian-speaking population in the east contains contradictory elements, its democratic resistance against the looming oppression by the pro-Western, pro-IMF, Russophobic and right-wing and fascist regime in Kiev is its dominant character. Therefore, the RCIT supports the popular rebellion in the east and calls for its victory against the Kiev-loyalist military forces. At the same time, revolutionaries should fight inside this movement *against* reactionary, pro-Russian imperialist and chauvinist forces. The overall perspective has to be the formation of democratically controlled action councils and workers militias in order to advance the struggle for a workers' government.

The Offensive of US/EU Imperialism and the Counter-Offensive of Russian Imperialism

2. The general background to the developments in the Ukraine in the last half year is the heightening of inter-imperialist rivalry between the great imperialist powers, the US/EU on the one hand and Russia (and China) on the other. Both the US/EU and Russia are struggling for hegemony in the Ukraine. After the overthrow of the Yanukovich government and the imposition of a right-wing regime, US and EU imperialism gained an advantage. In its countermove, the Putin regime struck back by annexing Crimea and placing immense pressure on the Ukraine via its debt obligations to Russia and the natural gas it imports from her.

3. Western governments and media portray Russia as an aggressive Great Power that wants to subjugate the Ukraine. Indeed, Russia is an emerging great imperialist power which has clearly demonstrated its own reactionary character, for example, by its war of extermination against the Chechen people. Nevertheless the Western governments and media are a model of imperialist hypocrisy. Wasn't it the West that continued to collaborate closely with Russia during and following its Chechen

wars from 1994?! Furthermore, haven't US and EU imperialism been waging classic colonial wars in Afghanistan since 2001 (with the help of Russia) let alone the more devastating one in Iraq (2003–2011), wars in which hundreds of thousands of civilians have been killed?! And is it not obvious that it is precisely NATO and the EU which are permanently trying to expand their areas of influence towards the East?! A particular bizarre case of Western hypocrisy is NATO's protest about Russian troops stationed ... in Russia of all places, along its own eastern border! On the other hand, it is quite natural for these Western hypocrites that US and EU warships, combat aircraft, and ground troops operate thousands of kilometers away from their home countries in Central Europe, the Baltic States, and the Black Sea, close to Russia's border! It is a central task for socialists living in the Western and Eastern imperialist countries to counter the reactionary and chauvinist offensive of their respective ruling classes.

A Balance Sheet of the Maidan Movement

4. From the beginning of the political crisis in the Ukraine, the RCIT has closely followed developments there and has expressed its views in a number of statements. Here, we will only elaborate the main conclusions about this key theatre of political events during the past few months. As we have pointed out from the start, the political crisis of the Ukraine originated as a conflict between different factions of oligarchs, whose respective orientations reflected the ongoing rivalry between US/EU imperialism on the one hand and Russian imperialism on the other for influence in the country. This is why the RCIT supported neither side in this conflict, but instead called for independent, working class mobilizations.

5. Obviously the Yanukovich government represented the interests of a group of oligarchs with a pro-Russian orientation. However, at no time did the Maidan movement display a progressive, democratic nature. Rather, the movement was founded, top-down by pro-Western parties, on the very day that President Yanukovich refused to sign the association agreement with the EU. While undoubtedly the movement contained *some* liberal, middle class elements hoping for more democracy, as a whole it was dominated from start to finish by an unstable coalition of two right-wing conservative parties (Fatherland and UDAR), the fascist Svoboda party, and the Neo-Nazis of the *Pravy Sektor*. These reactionary elements attacked progressive and trade union forces as soon as the latter openly intervened with flags and banners.

6. In sum, the Maidan movement differed in a number of ways from a democratic mass movement with a non-revolutionary leadership like those which have arisen in other countries: (1) it came into being as a movement supporting a *reactionary* goal (joining the imperialist EU) instead of, for example, one fighting for democratic rights against a dictatorship; (2) from its emergence until its accession to power, the movement was tightly controlled by a small group of reactionary leaders (including fascists);

and (3) the only time the masses identifying with the movement refused to follow its leadership was when the *Pravy Sektor* Nazis called for the cancellation of the compromise with the Yanukovich government. For these reasons, the RCIT maintains that the *dominant character* of the Maidan movement was *not* the desire for democratic rights (while this certainly played an important role among *some* sectors of the movement); rather we see this movement as having been a reactionary tool which fought for a reactionary goal (joining the EU) and for the interests of a pro-Western sector of the ruling class as well as those of Western imperialism.

7. For these reasons, we consider as politically criminal the support exhibited for the Maidan movement, as a kind of legitimate democratic struggle, by most of the larger centrist organizations (e.g., the Mandelbrot Fourth International, Peter Taffee's CWI, the Cliffite SWP/IST, the ISO [USA], and the Morenoite LIT-FI). These centrists have again demonstrated their capitulation to Western imperialism and have to be characterized as pro-Western social-imperialist Leftists. Once again, we witness how the lack of coherent Marxist methodology and analysis inevitably leads to centrist confusion and vacillations and ultimately into the camp of counter-revolution.

On the Overthrow in Kiev and the New Right-Wing Regime

8. The overthrow itself was the result of the *Pravy Sektor's* military initiative following their rejection of the compromise which the other three parties of the Maidan movement signed with the Yanukovich government. The rapid growth of fascist forces should serve as an alarm for workers' movements both in the Ukraine and throughout Europe in general. For the first time since 1945, fascists entered a European government. However, it would be inaccurate to denounce the present government in Kiev as a "fascist government." Rather, it is a pro-Western coalition government composed of right-wing conservative parties and fascists, the latter being a minority: Svoboda and *Pravy Sektor* hold eight out of the twenty-seven governmental portfolios, and account for four out of twenty-four regional governorships.

The Mass Resistance against the Right-Wing Regime in the East

9. By threatening to abolish Russian as an official language in the Ukraine, the new right-wing government immediately demonstrated that it constitutes a threat for the large portion of the Ukrainian population whose native language is Russian. (According to recent polls, this includes about 43–46% of the country's *total* population, who actually are the *majority* of the population in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine.) In addition, following the overthrow, the Communist Party was outlawed in several regions, and left-wing and trade union organizations were attacked by the fascists. Under these conditions, the RCIT called for mass mobilizations and the formation of armed self-defense units to fight back against the fascist threat. We call for the right of self-determination for national minorities, including the right of secession. The RCIT supported from the beginning the resistance of the

Russian-speaking population and the formation of self-defense movements in the south and east of the Ukraine against the fascists and the new right-wing government.

10. We therefore support the popular rebellion of the workers and poor in the east. Activists have occupied a number of buildings in nine cities in the Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv Oblast. This movement has a contradictory nature but, overall, it is predominantly democratic, which becomes obvious if one compares it with the Maidan movement:

i) The uprising in the east is overwhelmingly proletarian in its class composition in contrast to the Maidan movement. The latter was dominated by the middle class, university students, and rural people from the western Ukraine. The current uprising in the east, on the other hand, is dominated by workers and working class youth. They are now receiving support from organized contingents of the Donbass miners – the heart of the Ukrainian working class.

ii) The uprising in the east is much more spontaneous than the Maidan movement was, and is thus a more authentic expression of the popular will. While the Maidan movement was tightly controlled by the Fatherland party, UDAR, the fascist Svoboda, and the Neo-Nazi Pravy Sektor, the current uprising in the east is not controlled by any party. The parties which have traditionally been strong in the affected regions – the Party of the Regions and the Communist Party – have hardly any influence in the movement.

iii) The uprising in the east was launched as a struggle for democratic rights – against the discrimination of the Russian language and against the dominance by the right-wing regime in Kiev, which included fascists. By contrast, the Maidan movement began based on the demand that the Ukraine join the imperialist European Union.

iv) The powerful influence of fascist forces in the Maidan movement ensured that socialist and progressive forces were beaten and expelled as soon as they openly intervened. Contrary to this, socialist forces like Borotba and others are openly intervening in the proletarian uprising in the east and have achieved an influential in the movement. In addition, demands raised in several declarations include anti-capitalist demands, like the nationalization of the industry.

11. Recognizing the fundamentally democratic and progressive character of the uprising in the east must not cause socialists to overlook the contradictory and reactionary elements participating in this movement (in contrast to various Stalinists and pro-Russian social-imperialist leftists). The spontaneous nature of the movement also has the negative consequence that the working class cannot democratically control the movement and its local leaders. As a result, various adventurer and chauvinist bonapartists are able to take leading positions in the movement. The movement also contains Great Russian chauvinist and semi-fascist elements, albeit they do not dominate the movement as was the case in the Maidan movement. In addition, openly pro-Russian imperialist forces and agents are trying to influence the movement. The RCIT repeats that Ukraine's subjugation to Russia is in no way better than its subjugation to Western imperialism.

12. The democratic uprising in the east is another validation of RCIT's position that every democratic and national movement has to be thoroughly studied, and must

not automatically be viewed simply as a proxy in the intensifying inter-imperialist rivalry. In a world dominated by imperialist monopolies and states, it is unavoidable that these great powers will try to utilize national and democratic struggles to advance their influence. However, one has to analyze concretely whether or not a given movement has become totally subordinate to and a proxy of an imperialist power. Given that the development of movements is determined by the living laws of class struggle, they can naturally also change their character. If, for example, Russian troops would invade the Eastern Ukraine, the local uprising would lose its popular character and become a proxy of Russian imperialism. In such a situation, revolutionaries could no longer support the rebellion.

Crimea, Russians and the Tatars

13. Applying the Leninist policy on national self-determination, the RCIT defends the right of the people of Crimea to secede from the Ukraine and join Russia. While, given the presence of Russian soldiers, the referendum which was held was certainly not conducted under democratic conditions, there is no doubt that it reflected the authentic desire of the Russian majority of the Crimea to join Russia.

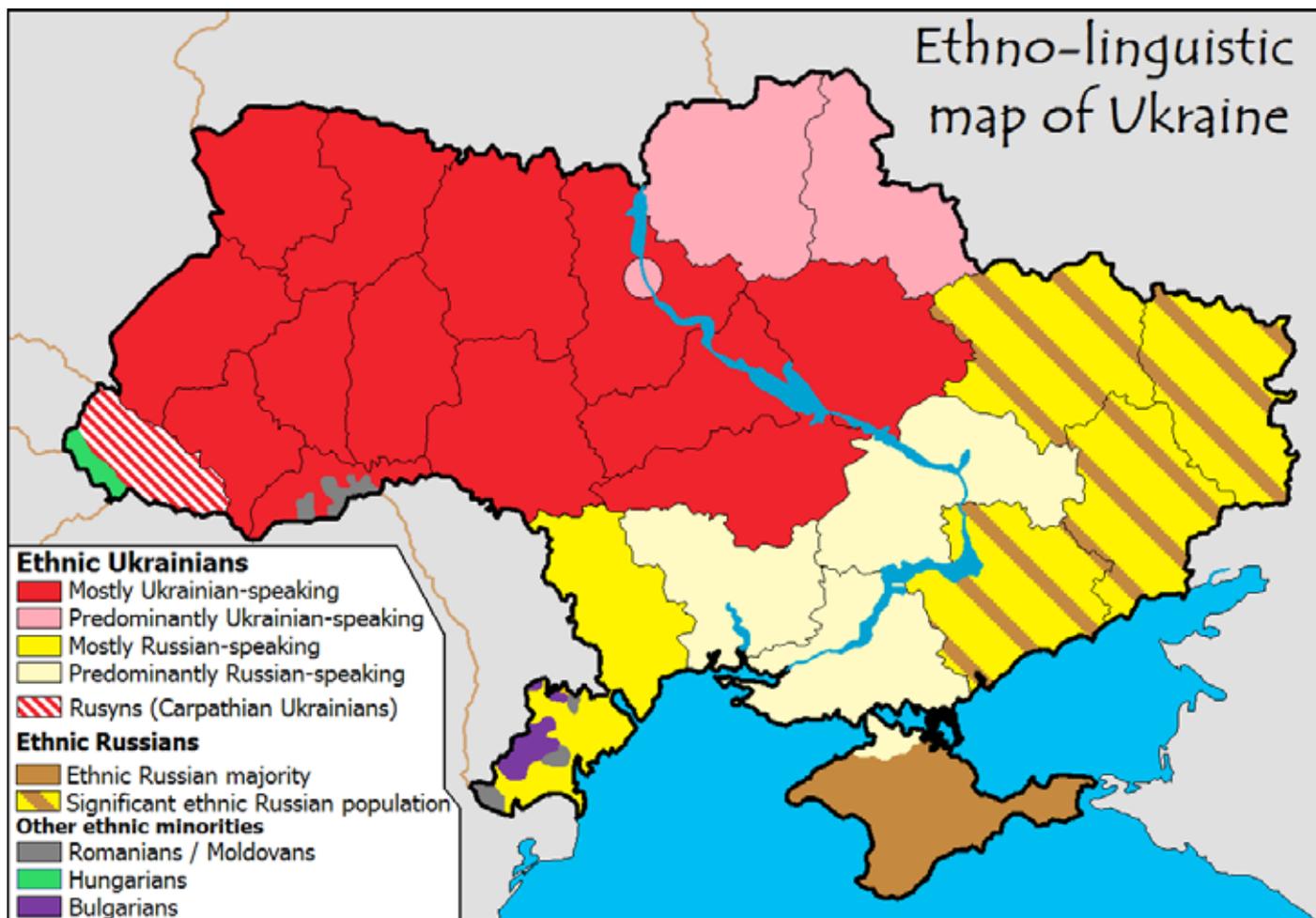
14. At the same time, Marxists must defend the right of self-determination for the national minority of the Crimean Tatars. The Tatars were formerly the majority in Crimea, but suffered systematic oppression and expulsion by the Tsarist Empire. For example, about 100,000 Tatars

were expelled after the Crimean War (1853–56). At the same time, the Tsarist regime encouraged systematic settlement of Russian colonialists in the Crimea. As a result, the Tatars became a minority in Crimea in the later 19th century. In 1897, they constituted 34.1% of the Crimean population and, by 1921, only 25.9%. In 1944, the Stalin regime collectively deported the Crimean Tatars to Central Asia. Today, about 300,000 Tatars live in the Crimea.

15. Following the recent Russian annexation of the Crimea, the Tatars can once again expect new oppressive measures against them. According to the *Moscow Times*, Crimean Deputy Prime Minister Rustam Temirgaliyev wants the “Tatars to vacate part of the land where they now live in exchange for new territory elsewhere in the region” (The *Moscow Times* 19 March 2014). This is understandably perceived by the Tatars as a threat for new expulsions, to which the official leaders of the Crimean Tatars have responded with demands for full autonomy and a referendum on this issue. Not surprisingly, these demands have already been rejected by the pro-Russian Crimean government. The RCIT unconditionally supports the struggle for full and equal national rights for the Crimean Tatars, without giving the slightest political support to their bourgeois leadership.

Perspectives and Tasks

16. The focus of the class struggle is currently in the eastern part of the Ukraine. Revolutionaries should support the popular rebellion in the east and call for its victory



against the Kiev-loyalist military forces. The central task is to transform the movement from one which is focused on the occupation and defense of buildings to regular mass assemblies in places of work and neighborhoods. From these assemblies, action councils should be formed which will elect and control delegates. On such a basis, the movement should call a democratic congress to coordinate the resistance and to form the basis for a workers' government. Equally, such democratic mass organs should control the workers' and popular militias.

17. It is equally central that revolutionaries fight inside this movement against reactionary, pro-Russian imperialist and chauvinist forces. These forces are reactionary henchmen of Russian imperialism. While the Maidan slogan "*Glory to the Ukraine*" is reactionary, hailing Russian imperialism and its President Putin is no more progressive. This is particularly true given the history of the Ukrainian nation which for centuries has been characterized by systematic oppression by Greater Russian chauvinism – first under Tsarism until 1917 and subsequently, from the early 1930s onwards, by Stalinism. The popular uprising in the east must be transformed into an independent working class movement which expels all chauvinist and semi-fascist elements.

18. Socialists should advocate complete equality for the Russian-language in the Ukraine and full autonomy and the right of self-government for the Russian-speaking provinces. While we defend the right of self-determination, including the right of secession, all indicators show that the huge majority of the population in the eastern part of the country does not desire such separation but rather more autonomous rights. Hence, revolutionaries should oppose the breaking up of the Ukraine and the annexation of its eastern provinces to Russia. Under current conditions, calling for the annexation of the east to Russia is simply propaganda for Russian imperialism. It is equally important that socialists struggle against Greater Russian animosity against the population of western Ukraine – even when such animosity disguises itself as "anti-fascism."

19. The democratic and national struggle in the east of the Ukraine has to be combined with the social struggle against the oligarchs and the Kiev regime. The Ukrainian working class will face continuous attacks by the new right-wing government, which has already announced a 50% rise in the price of gasoline effective as of 1 May, as dictated by the IMF. The government is also planning to lay off many public sector workers. These economic attacks against the workers will be exacerbated by Russia's decision to raise the price of natural gas exported to the Ukraine. All this demonstrates how vital it is that the struggle *against* the looming fascist threat and *for* the defense of the rights of the Russian-speaking population of the Ukraine *must* be combined with mobilizations against these social attacks. Ukrainian socialists must link this struggle with a call for an immediate break with the IMF, NATO, and the EU as well as the nationalization of the country's industry and financial sector under workers' control. The goal has to be the overthrow of the present government and the formation of a workers' government. To fight for the implementation of such a program, it is absolutely incumbent upon Ukrainian workers to establish an independent, revolutionary workers' party.

* *Victory to the popular uprising in the eastern Ukraine! For full autonomy rights for the Russian-speaking regions!*

* *Build workers' and popular councils and militias to defeat the reactionary regime and its armed forces!*

* *Down with the reactionary, pro-Western imperialist regime in Kiev which includes fascist forces!*

* *Down with US/EU imperialist expansion towards the East! No to Russian imperialism!*

* *Expropriate all oligarchs! For the nationalization of industry and the banks under workers' control!*

* *Neither Brussels nor Moscow! For an independent workers' republic in the Ukraine which guarantees full and equal rights to all national groups!*

International Secretariat of the RCIT

We refer readers also to the RCIT's past statements on the Ukraine crisis:

Joint Statement of the RCIT and the Movement to Socialism (MAS, Russia): Ukraine: Rivalry between Imperialist Powers escalates after Right-Wing Coup: Stop the Imperialist Saber-Rattling! 2.3.2014

MAS: Ukraine/Russia: The victory over the imperialist colonialism is impossible without the proletarian revolution!

RCIT and MAS: Right-Wing Forces Take Power in the Ukraine: Mobilize the Working Class against the New Government! 25.2.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/right-wing-coup-in-ukraine/>

MAS: No to the Terror of the Bandera-Fascists! Stop the Repression against the Communists of Ukraine!, 22.2.2014 <http://www.nuevomas.blogspot.co.at/2014/02/no-to-terror-of-bandera-fascists-stop.html>

RCIT: "Ukraine: Neither Brussels nor Moscow! For an independent Workers' Republic!" 18.12.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/ukraine-neither-brussels-nor-moscow/>

For an outline of our approach to the complex issues of progressive struggles and imperialist interference see:

Michael Pröbsting: Liberation struggles and imperialist interference. The failure of sectarian "anti-imperialism" in the West: Some general considerations from the Marxist point of view and the example of the democratic revolution in Libya in 2011, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/liberation-struggle-and-imperialism/>

On imperialism in general and Western imperialism in particular we refer readers to:

Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South – Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism (The book has 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures.). You can find more details about the book and how to order it on our website www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net. The RCIT has published a summary of the book on its website at <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-summary/>

On Russian imperialism:

Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 21, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>

Michael Pröbsting: Russia and China as Great Imperialist Powers. A Summary of the RCIT's Analysis, 28 March 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-china-and-russia/> ■

Russia and China as Great Imperialist Powers

A Summary of the RCIT's Analysis

By Michael Pröbsting, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 28 March 2014

Introduction

The world has undergone tremendous changes since the beginning of the new historic period which opened with the Great Recession in 2008. Among the most important new developments is Russia's increasing strength as an imperialist power and the emergence of China as a new imperialist power. Against the background of the decline of crises-ridden capitalism, this has led to a significant escalation in the rivalry between the imperialist powers – most prominently between the US, the EU, and Japan on the one hand and Russia and China on the other. Examples of the sharpening of inter-imperialist rivalry are the war between Russia and US-allied Georgia in 2008; rising Sino-Japanese tensions around the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in the East China Sea; the Russian-American disagreement over the civil war in Syria; and, most recently, the international conflict connected with the crisis in the Ukraine. (1)

In order to understand the global political dynamics of this new historic period and to derive the correct tactics for the class struggle, it is incumbent upon Marxists to elaborate a scientific analysis of the class character of all involved great powers. While for decades Marxists have accepted as axiomatic that the US, the EU, and Japan are imperialist states, Marxists still feverishly debate the class character of Russia and China. Many of those participating in this debate either have a superficial, impressionistic understanding of Russian imperialism or they entirely refuse to accept the imperialist character of these two powers. Obviously, aside from its theoretical import, this question also has tremendous practical consequences for developing a revolutionary program. While obviously each conflict needs to be studied concretely, for Marxists in the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky a widely-accepted principle is to adopt a position of revolutionary defeatism in all conflicts between imperialist powers. At the same time, this principle dictates always supporting a semi-colonial country struggling against imperialism.

The RCIT has extensively elaborated the class character of both Russia and China. (2) In order to make our analysis more accessible to Marxists in general, in this document we provide a summary of our analysis of Russian and Chinese imperialism. This analysis is divided into three sections: the first presents our general definition of an imperialist state; the second provides an economical and political overview of China; and the third does likewise for Russia.

I. What are the Criteria for an Imperialist State?

Before we present a concrete overview of the characteristics of Russia as an imperialist state, we shall start by clarifying our definition of an imperialist state. Our methodological understanding of imperialism is based on Lenin's

theory, which became the basis for revolutionary Marxism from the early 20th century. (3)

Lenin described the essential characteristic of imperialism as the formation of monopolies which dominate the economy. Related to this, he pointed out the fusion of banking and industrial capital into financial capital, the increase in capital export alongside the export of commodities, and the struggle for spheres of influence, specifically colonies. As Lenin wrote in *Imperialism and the Split in Socialism* – his most comprehensive theoretical essay on imperialism:

„We have to begin with as precise and full a definition of imperialism as possible. Imperialism is a specific historical stage of capitalism. Its specific character is threefold: imperialism is monopoly capitalism; parasitic, or decaying capitalism; moribund capitalism. The supplanting of free competition by monopoly is the fundamental economic feature, the quintessence of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in five principal forms: (1) cartels, syndicates and trusts—the concentration of production has reached a degree which gives rise to these monopolistic associations of capitalists; (2) the monopolistic position of the big banks—three, four or five giant banks manipulate the whole economic life of America, France, Germany; (3) seizure of the sources of raw material by the trusts and the financial oligarchy (finance capital is monopoly industrial capital merged with bank capital); (4) the (economic) partition of the world by the international cartels has begun. There are already over one hundred such international cartels, which command the entire world market and divide it “amicably” among themselves—until war redivides it. The export of capital, as distinct from the export of commodities under non-monopoly capitalism, is a highly characteristic phenomenon and is closely linked with the economic and territorial-political partition of the world; (5) the territorial partition of the world (colonies) is completed.“ (4)

The characteristic of an imperialist power has to be seen in the totality of its economic, political, and military position in the global hierarchy of states. Thus, a given state must be viewed not only as a separate unit, but first and foremost in its relation to other states and nations. Similarly, by the way, classes can only be understood in relation to each other. An imperialist state usually enters a relationship with other states and nations whom it oppresses, in one way or another, and super-exploits – i.e., appropriates a share of its produced capitalist value. Again this has to be viewed in its totality, i.e., if a state gains certain profits from foreign investment but has to pay much more (debt service, profit repatriation, etc.) to other countries' foreign investment, this state can usually not be considered as imperialist.

Finally we want to stress the necessity of considering the totality of a state's economic, political, and military position in the global hierarchy of states. Thus, we can consider a given state as imperialist even it is economically weaker, but still possesses a relatively strong political and military position (like Russia before 1917 and, again, in the early 2000s). Such a strong political and military position

can be used to oppress other countries and nations and to appropriate capitalist value from them.

Viewing a state in the context of the global imperialist order is also important because particularly smaller imperialist states (like Australia, Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria, the Scandinavian countries, etc.) are obviously not the equals of the Great Powers, but rather are subordinated to them. Alone they could not play an imperialist role. However, despite their being unequal to the Great Powers – by the way even among the Great Powers themselves there is constant rivalry and no parity – these smaller imperialist states are still not super-exploited by the former. As a result, while there is no significant transfer of value from these smaller imperialist states to the Great Powers, there is a significant transfer of value from semi-colonies to these smaller imperialist states. They ensure this privileged position by entering economic, political, and military alliances with the Great Powers like the EU, OECD, IMF, World Bank, WTO, NATO, and various “partnerships.”

In short, we define an imperialist state as follows: *An imperialist state is a capitalist state whose monopolies and state apparatus have a position in the world order where they first and foremost dominate other states and nations. As a result they gain extra-profits and other economic, political and/or military advantages from such a relationship based on super-exploitation and oppression.*

We think such a definition of an imperialist state is in accordance with the brief definition which Lenin gave in one of his writings on imperialism in 1916: „... imperialist Great Powers (i.e., powers that oppress a whole number of nations and enmesh them in dependence on finance capital, etc.)...” (5)

Imperialism and Super-Exploitation

An important– albeit not exclusive– aspect of imperialism is the systematic and massive super-exploitation of the colonial and semi-colonial world by the imperialist monopolies and states. In our book, *The Great Robbery of the South*, we have elaborated basically four different forms of super-exploitation by which monopoly capital obtains extra profits from colonial and semi-colonial countries:

- i) Capital export as productive investment
- ii) Capital export as money capital (loans, currency reserves, speculation, etc.)
- iii) Value transfer via unequal exchange
- iv) Value transfer via migration

Marx noted how foreign trade serves as an important means by which capitalists counteract the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. The basis of this mechanism, one aspect of the capitalist law of value, is that given the lower level of development of productive forces in (semi-)colonial countries, capital invested there has a higher organic composition, i.e., the share of human labor – variable capital expenditures – is higher relative to that of constant capital – machinery, raw material, etc. Because, according to the law of value, only variable capital contributes to the creation of *surplus value* and the concomitant generation of capitalist profits, investments in (semi-)colonial countries with their higher organic composition – i.e., human vs. mechanized labor – yield relatively more *surplus value* and, consequently, higher average rates of profit.

Surplus value is the share of capitalist exchange value

which is appropriated by capitalists (in order to reinvest it or to consume it), rather than paid for by them as variable or constant capital expenditures (wages, machinery, raw materials, etc). By exporting capital and investing in factories in semi-colonial countries, monopolies can extract extra-profits in one or both of two fashions: (1) By employing the cheaper labor force of semi-colonial countries, the imperialist company reduces its costs, but still sells the produced commodities at the average market price back in the metropolitan country or countries, thereby increasing its profit margins at home. (2) Additionally, the imperialist monopoly can sell the same commodities it produces in the semi-colonial countries, but at a price *below* the average market price there, thereby out-competing local production which also results in increased profits. The major part of these extra-profits are also repatriated by imperialistic monopolies from the semi-colonies to their parent country.

Furthermore, when the commodities of the more developed (imperialist) countries and those of the less developed (semi-colonial) countries are exchanged on the world market, the law of value also enables imperialist capital to transfer huge amounts of value from capitalistically less-developed to capitalistically more-developed countries due to the inherently unequal exchange arising from the higher productivity of the developed economies: The imperialist monopolies’ cheaper commodities (a function of the labor invested) out-compete the more expensive commodities from the semi-colonial countries, and force the latter to sell their own commodities *below* their true value. Despite this competitive step, the locally-produced commodities often remain more expensive on the world market than that of its imperialist rivals. Consequently, the stronger (imperialist) capital can sell its commodities *above* their production price and still remain cheaper on the world market than the commodities of the less competitive (semi-colonial) capital. At the same time, the significance of this is that the semi-colonial countries have to exchange (the equivalent of) more labor time against (the equivalent of) the same labor time of the imperialist countries allowing, once again, the stronger (imperialist) capital to successfully appropriate a part of the surplus value which is created by the weaker (semi-colonial) capital.

This means that unequal exchange provides an important basis for a massive transfer of value from capitalistically less-developed to capitalistically more-developed countries.

Monopolies can also appropriate extra profits via capital export as money capital (loans, currency reserves, speculation, etc.).

Finally, monopoly capital extracts surplus profits not only by means of exploitation of the semi-colonial countries but also via exploitation of migrants from these countries and oppressed nationalities. Imperialist capital draws profit by paying the migrant workers *below the value of their labor force* in several ways:

- i) Capitalists can often exploit the migrants with no or only limited costs for their education, since the migrants are often educated in their home country.
- ii) Capitalists often have to pay either no or only reduced costs for the pensions and social security of the migrants since they have limited access to social services, and when they can no longer work due to age they often return to

their home country.

iii) Capitalists can usually pay the migrants a wage which is substantially lower than the wage paid to the workers who are citizens of the country in which the work is done. To do so they utilize various forms of national oppression (reduced or no rights for workers who are not citizens of the imperialist country; discrimination against the migrants' mother tongue; various forms of social discrimination; etc.). These forms of oppression are implemented not only against first generation migrants, but against their children and grandchildren.

For these reasons the RCIT defines migrants as being, in the vast majority, "a nationally oppressed layer of super-exploited labor."

II. China as an Emerging Great Imperialist Power

China emerged as a new imperialist power in the late part of the first decade of the 2000s. The main reasons for China's successful development into an imperialist power were:

- i) The continuing existence of a strong, centralized Stalinist bureaucracy which could suppress the working class and ensure its super-exploitation;
- ii) The historic defeat of China's working class in 1989, when the bureaucracy bloodily crushed the mass uprising at Tiananmen Square and throughout the entire country;
- iii) The decline of US imperialism which made room for new powers.

This continuing existence of a strong, centralized Stalinist bureaucracy and the historic defeat of China's working class in 1989 enabled the new capitalist ruling class to subjugate the majority of the tremendously expanding proletariat to super-exploitation. Based on this, the capitalists – both Chinese and foreign – could extract massive surplus value for capital accumulation. On this basis, China has become a major economic power. This is reflected in a number of facts.

In terms of the total output measured by the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) China's share of global output has experienced huge growth in the past two decades. While China produced 4.1% of global output in 1991, this figure rose to 14.3% in 2011. This makes it the world second-largest economy. During the same time period the US's share of global output declined from 24.1% to 19.1%. (6)

In manufacturing – the core sector of value production for capitalism – China has even become the world's leading economy. By 2011, a fifth of world's manufacturing came from China (19.8%) while 19.4% originated in the US economy. (7) Parallel to this it has become the world's leading exporter.

China's economic strength is also reflected in its low level of debt to the global financial market. As a share of its Gross National Income, China's external debt stocks stand at only 9.3% while its debt service to exports is a mere 2.5%. (8)

China's Monopolies

In today's global economy, China's monopolies play a leading role. In the *Forbes Global 2000* – an index of the largest, most powerful companies in the world – China already ranks third among home countries. Chinese com-

panies on the list number 121, superseded by only the US (524 companies) and Japan (258 companies). These 121 Chinese monopolies have an aggregate profit of \$168 billion, which constitutes 7% of the total profit of the world's 2000 largest monopolies. (9)

In the *Fortune Global 500* – another ranking of the world's largest corporations which uses different criteria – we see the same prominent and expanding position of China among the home states of the world's super-monopolies. Here, China has already surpassed Japan as the second-ranked country with 73 of these corporations, exceeded by only 132 US monopolies. As indicated, ranked after China is Japan with 68 monopolies, followed by France and Germany with 32 each (see Table 1).

The rulers of China have created a capitalist class. According to the *World Wealth Report 2012*, published by *Capgemini* and *RBC Wealth Management*, China has the fourth highest number of super-rich, only behind the US, Japan, and Germany, but ahead of Britain, France and Canada. (11) A different list of the super-rich – measuring the number of so-called "Ultra high net worth individuals" whose net assets exceed US\$ 50 million – ranks China (behind the USA) in second place. (12)

Today, the majority of China's industrial output is produced by the private sector, as is attested to by figures published by the *World Bank* and the *Chinese Development Research Center of the State Council*. Both of these institutions attribute 70% of the country's GDP and employment to non-state sectors. The state sector's share in the total number of industrial enterprises (with annual sales over 5mn RMB) fell precipitously from 39.2% in 1998 to 4.5% in 2010. During the same period, the share of State Owned Enterprises in total industrial assets dropped from 68.8% to 42.4%, while their share in employment declined from 60.5% to 19.4%. (13) Having said this, the state-capitalist sector continues to play a central role in China's economy.

Super-exploitation of the Working Class

The Chinese capitalist regime has succeeded in introducing the capitalist law of value into its economy, thereby transforming the preponderance of its workers into wage laborers. A decisive step in implementing the capitalist law of value in China's state-owned enterprises was a ruthless wave of layoffs. According to official figures published in

Table 1: Top 10 Home Countries in the Fortune Global 500 Index (10)

Rank	Country	Number of Companies
1.	United States	132
2	China	73
3	Japan	68
4	France	32
4	Germany	32
6	United Kingdom	26
7	Switzerland	15
8	South Korea	13
9	Netherlands	12
10.	Canada	11

the Chinese Communist Party's mouthpiece *People's Daily*, more than 26 million workers were laid off between 1998 and 2002. (14) If we examine the longer period of time between 1993 and 2006, there are estimates that the Chinese capitalist class fired approximately 60 million state-owned enterprise employees. (15)

This wave of mass layoffs was an integral part of the full implementation of the capitalist law of value in China's state economy. According to a report by the Chinese researcher Dongtao, by 2005 over 85% of small and medium-sized SOEs had been restructured and privatized. (16)

Another decisive instrument was the utilization of the old household registration system set up by the Stalinist bureaucracy in 1958. According to this system (called *hukou* in China) "residents were not allowed to work or live outside the administrative boundaries of their household registration without approval of the authorities. Once they left their place of registration, they would also leave behind all of their rights and benefits. For the purpose of surveillance, everyone, including temporary residents in transit, was required to register with the police of their place of residence and their temporary residence. By the 1970s, the system became so rigid that 'peasants could be arrested just for entering cities.'" (17)

Given endemic rural poverty and the opportunities for jobs in the cities, millions upon millions of rural, mostly young, peasants have moved to the cities to seek employment, transforming themselves into what are called in China *migrants*. In their new milieu, these uprooted former peasants often live illegally – because of the *hukou*-system – and thus have no access to housing, employment, education, medical services, and social security. The capitalists continually aim to set the wages paid to migrant workers to little more than the minimum necessary to keep them alive. Consequently, the living conditions of these migrant workers are shockingly poor, most of them residing in overcrowded dilapidated housing, tents, under bridges and tunnels, or even in the trunks of cars. (18)

Following the implementation of capitalism in China, these migrants soon became a major motive force in the process of super-exploitation. The number of migrant workers in China grew exponentially from about 30 million (1989), to 62 million (1993), 131.8 million (2006) and, by the end of 2010, their number grew to an estimated 242 million. In the capital city, Beijing, about 40% of the population are migrant workers, while in Shenzhen nearly 12 million of

the total 14 million inhabitants are migrants. These migrant workers are usually pushed into physically-hard, low-wage jobs. According to the *China Labour Bulletin*, migrants make up 58% of all workers in industry and 52% of those employed in the service sector. (19)

It is only natural that the Chinese working class is mounting a struggle for its rights despite the draconian measures of the Stalinist-capitalist dictatorship. Developments in the past few years attest to a rapidly growing militancy. According to official statistics compiled by China's Academy of Social Sciences, popular protests, dubbed by the regime "mass incidents," increased in a period of one year from 60,000 (2006) to more than 80,000 (2007). The further publication of such statistics was discontinued, ostensibly because the bureaucracy feared that these figures could have an even more inspiring effect on super-exploited migrant and other workers. However, unofficial estimates indicate that in 2009 the number of "mass incidents" had increased to 90,000. The Chinese sociologist Sun Liping estimates that the figure for 2010 was as high as 180,000. (20)

China's Capital Export

China has enormously increased its capital export. This is reflected by both the level of productive investment abroad as well as on the sums of monetary capital (bonds, loans etc.) transferred as financial investments to outside the country. As a result of its immense and rapid accumulation of capital, Chinese imperialism has also accumulated huge volumes of monetary capital, expressed in an extraordinarily fast expansion of its foreign exchange reserves. These reserves positively skyrocketed from US\$165 billion in 2000 to US\$3.305 billion in March 2012. (21) As such, China's foreign exchange reserves equal the combined sum of the next six largest foreign exchange reserve holders!

China is also an active lender of bilateral loans. According to the *Financial Times*, over the past few years Chinese banks have emerged as major financiers. China is already lending more money to so-called developing countries than the World Bank.

However China's capital is not only active on the international loan and bond market, but also as a foreign investor in the industrial and raw material sectors. Since China has only recently emerged as an imperialist power, it is still

Table 2: China's FDI Flow from and to Selected Countries, 2007-2011 (in \$US-billions) (22)

Country	FDI inward stock					FDI outward stock				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
World	1.975	1.790	1.197	1.309	1.524	2.198	1.969	1.175	1.451	1.694
France	96	64	24	30	40	164	155	107	76	90
Germany	80	8	24	46	40	170	72	75	109	54
Britain	196	91	71	50	53	272	161	44	39	107
Italy	43	-10	20	9	29	96	67	21	32	47
Canada	114	57	21	23	40	57	79	41	38	49
USA	215	306	143	197	226	393	308	266	304	396
Japan	22	24	11	-1	-1	73	128	74	56	114
China	83	108	95	114	123	22	52	56	68	65
Hong Kong	54	59	52	71	83	61	50	63	95	81

globally weaker in this realm than the imperialist powers which have been dominant for more than a century. In Table 2 we compare the annual FDI outward flows of a number of imperialist countries during the last five years. One can see that Chinese imperialism has already overtaken rivals like Canada or Italy in Foreign Direct Investment while it has reached parity with countries like Germany. In which regions and countries is China concentrating its investments abroad? According to the most recent calculations published by the *Heritage Foundation*, since 2005 Chinese capitalists have invested significant amounts of capital in all regions. Calculated in \$US billions, the most important countries for China's non-bond investments abroad are Australia (45.3), USA (42), Brazil (25.7), Indonesia (23.3), Nigeria (18.8), Canada and Iran (each 17.2), and Kazakhstan (12.3). There are also important investments of about \$US 5 billion in Greece and in Venezuela of about \$US 8.9 billion (figures for 2005-2010) (23)

While, as we have noted, it is true that China is still substantially behind the old imperialist powers in outward foreign direct investment stocks, its role in the semi-colonial countries is rapidly increasing. In 2010 China became the third-largest investor in Latin America behind the US and the Netherlands. (24) China is also Africa's biggest trading partner and buys more than one-third of its oil from that continent. (25)

China as a Military Power

China's phenomenal rise of power is not exclusive to the economic sphere, but is also both political and military. Between 2002 and 2011 China increased its military spending by 170%. According to the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute* (SIPRI), today China has the world's second largest military budget, surpassed only by that of the US (see Table 3).

Add to the above China's nuclear arsenal, which is fifth in size behind the US, Russia, Britain, and France. (27) During the past decade, China's military has undergone rapid modernization and today possesses serious military capabilities for offensive warfare. It has recently displayed its ability to shoot down satellites. China is also home to large arms manufacturers. In its index, SIPRI names the Chinese weapon-producing monopolies as the fifth biggest competitors in the global armament market.

Revolutionary Tactics in Conflicts Involving China

There should be no illusions about the prospect for a peaceful settlement of the inter-imperialist rivalries between the Great Powers. An imperialist war between the great powers US (and/or Japan) and China is increasingly becoming nearly unavoidable in the coming decade. Both sides need to control Eastern Asia which is a central factor in the global production of value as well as in trade. For this reason it is nearly inevitable that imperialist powers will try to influence and exploit conflicts and wars (e.g., conflicts in the South [or East] China Sea, Libya, Syria, and Iran).

The RCIT considers both the US and China to be imperialist powers. In a military confrontation between the two (or between Japan and China), we Bolshevik Communists will refuse to take the side of one of the two imperialist

rivals. Such an armed conflict would be a war between the respective ruling classes of each of the two sides to increase their hegemony at the expense of the other, and consequently their super-exploitation of the semi-colonial countries. In such a conflict, the correct tactic would be one of revolutionary defeatism according to which workers in both camps raise the slogan "*The main enemy is at home*" and strive to turn the imperialist war into a civil war against their own ruling class.

In the case of a conflict between an imperialist power and a semi-colonial country in the South (or East) China Seas, Marxists must concretely analyze the circumstances of any specific war. This means that we will have to determine whether the dominant aspect of the war is the imperialist drive to subjugate a particular (semi-)colonial nation or, alternately, if a national defense struggle should be seen as a proxy war in the service of a rival imperialist power. From this analysis will follow the position adopted by Bolshevik Communists: revolutionary defencist in the first case or revolutionary defeatist in the second, respectively.

III. Russia: Its Monopoly Capital and its Status as a Great Imperialist Power

Russia's economy is dominated by a small group of monopolies owned by super-rich capitalists, called "oligarchs," who have close relations with the state apparatus. In fact, Russia's monopolies dominate the domestic market even more than their counterparts in other imperialist states. According to a recent OECD study, Russia's small and medium-sized enterprises account for only about one fifth of employment and an even smaller share of output, whereas in most OECD economies both figures are above one half. (28)

Probably the most important Russian monopoly is *Gazprom*, the world's largest gas company, which controls over 93% of Russia's natural gas production and about a quarter of the world's known gas reserves. (29) Another important monopoly is the *Sberbank* which is Europe's third-largest bank when ranked by market capitalization. These two companies, Sberbank and Gazprom, account for more than half of the turnover of the Russian stock exchange. (30) Other huge corporations are *Rosneft* and *LUKoil*, both oil companies; *Transneft*, a pipeline company; *Sukhoi*, an aircraft-manufacturer; *Unified Energy Systems*, an electricity giant; and *Aeroflot*.

Table 3: The World's 10 Largest Military Spenders, 2011 (\$US billions) (26)

Rank	Country	\$Billions spent
1.	USA	711
2.	China	143
3.	Russia	71.9
4.	UK	62.7
5.	France	62.5
6.	Japan	59.3
7.	India	48.9
8.	Saudi Arabia	48.5
9.	Germany	46.7
10.	Brazil	35.4

These Russian monopolies are closely linked with the imperialist state apparatus. The state-capitalist sector plays a decisive role among many Russian monopolies. For example, the state has retained *Golden Shares* in 181 firms. (31) State-backed companies account for 62% of Russia's stock market. (32)

The state capitalist sector controls 36% of Russia's oil sector and 79% of its gas sector. (33) According to the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, the Russian state controls more than 50% of the country's banks and 73% of the transportation industry. Likewise, government control of the oil industry has grown from 10%, at the beginning of the Putin era in 1999, to 45% in 2013. (34)

Russia's Rise as an Economic Power

According to the World Bank, Russia is about to overtake Germany as the world's fifth largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity for 2012. (35) It calculates Russia's GDP at US\$ 3.4 trillion. The International Monetary Fund lists Russia as the eighth largest world economy with a GDP of \$US 2 trillion. Regardless, Russia has become a great economic power. Its ruling class has successfully overcome the collapse of the 1990s. Russia is *not* dominated by other imperialist countries but rather dominates and exploits other countries and peoples.

Russia's successful resistance to being taken over by foreign imperialist powers is related to the history of the country's capitalist restoration. According to one estimate, by 1998 *"only 3% of former state properties had been sold to foreign buyers in the Russian Federation, compared to 48% in Hungary and 15% in the Czech Republic. Moreover, privatization sales to foreigners in the latter groups accelerated after 1998, while it remained practically non-existent in the Russian Federation."* (36)

Russia's rise as an economic power is also reflected in its relatively low level of debt. Since Putin's rise to power, Russia's external debt stocks – as a percent of its Gross National Income – declined from 57.9% (2000) to 31.1% (2011). (37) Equally, Russia's government debts have fallen dramatically from 99% of GDP in December of 1999 to 8.4% of GDP in 2012. (38)

At the same time Russia's foreign monetary reserves have increased significantly to about US\$ 500 billion (equivalent of about 25% of Russia's GDP).

Russia's rise as an economic power is also reflected in the turnaround in the ratio of its reserves and external debt. While the ratio of Russia's reserves to external debt stocks expressed as a percent stood at 16.6% in 2000, by 2011 it reached 83.6%.

Capital Export of Russian Monopolies

Since 2000, Russia has been able to substantially increase its outward foreign investments. Russia's share of global FDI outflows increased from 1% in 2000, to 1.5% in 2005, and reached 4% in 2011. For example, in 2010 Russian companies invested \$US 9 billion for cross-border mergers and acquisitions, up from \$US6 billion in 2005. (39)

Table 4 demonstrates that Russia is increasingly becoming a major foreign investor. Russia (and China) have already overtaken Italy and are in the same league with Germany.

Where do Russian capitalists invest abroad? If we don't include fake foreign investments, i.e., investments in countries which serve Russia as off-shore centers, we see that Russian monopolies exported about 38.1% of its foreign investments to Western European EU countries. The US and Switzerland were also important destinations. However, the Russians also invested about 25.5% of their capital in former USSR countries and Eastern Europe. An additional 4.1% of their FDI went to other former Stalinist states like Serbia, Montenegro, and Vietnam. If we add other semi-colonies like Turkey and Ireland, we see that Russian monopolies invested about 36% of their FDI in semi-colonial countries.

Russia's thirty largest multi-national corporations rank among Europe's largest 500 companies. (41)

Russia as a Great Political and Military Power

Russia's relative power is even greater on the political level. Russia has a permanent seat in the UN Security Council and is/was a member state of the G8. Russia demonstrated her hegemonial role during the war in Georgia in 2008 when she annexed South-Ossetia and Abkhazia against the will of the Western imperialist powers which supported the Saakashvili regime in Georgia. Similarly, Russia is the primary power behind the Assad regime in Syria. In the autumn of 2013, the Putin regime was able to force the Obama administration to back down from its military plans and to agree to a new round of negotiations in Geneva. In the spring of 2014, Russia is once again demonstrating its role as a great power in the context of the Ukrainian crisis as Russia faces off against the EU and US for influence in the Ukraine. These are practical examples which serve to emphasize the extent to which Russia is a great power challenging the influence of the senior Western imperialist powers.

Russia's status as a great power on a political level goes hand in hand with its status as a great military power. As we have shown above in Table 3, today Russia has the

Table 4: Foreign Direct Investment Outflows of various Countries, 2007-2012 (\$US millions) (40)

Country	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Russia	45.916	55.594	43.665	52.523	67.283	51.058
China	22.469	52.150	56.530	68.811	65.117	84.220
Germany	170.617	72.758	75.391	109.321	54.368	66.926
Japan	73.548	128.019	74.699	56.263	114.353	122.551
Italy	96.231	67.000	21.275	32.655	47.210	30.397

Figure 1: Russia's Ethnic and National Minorities (59)

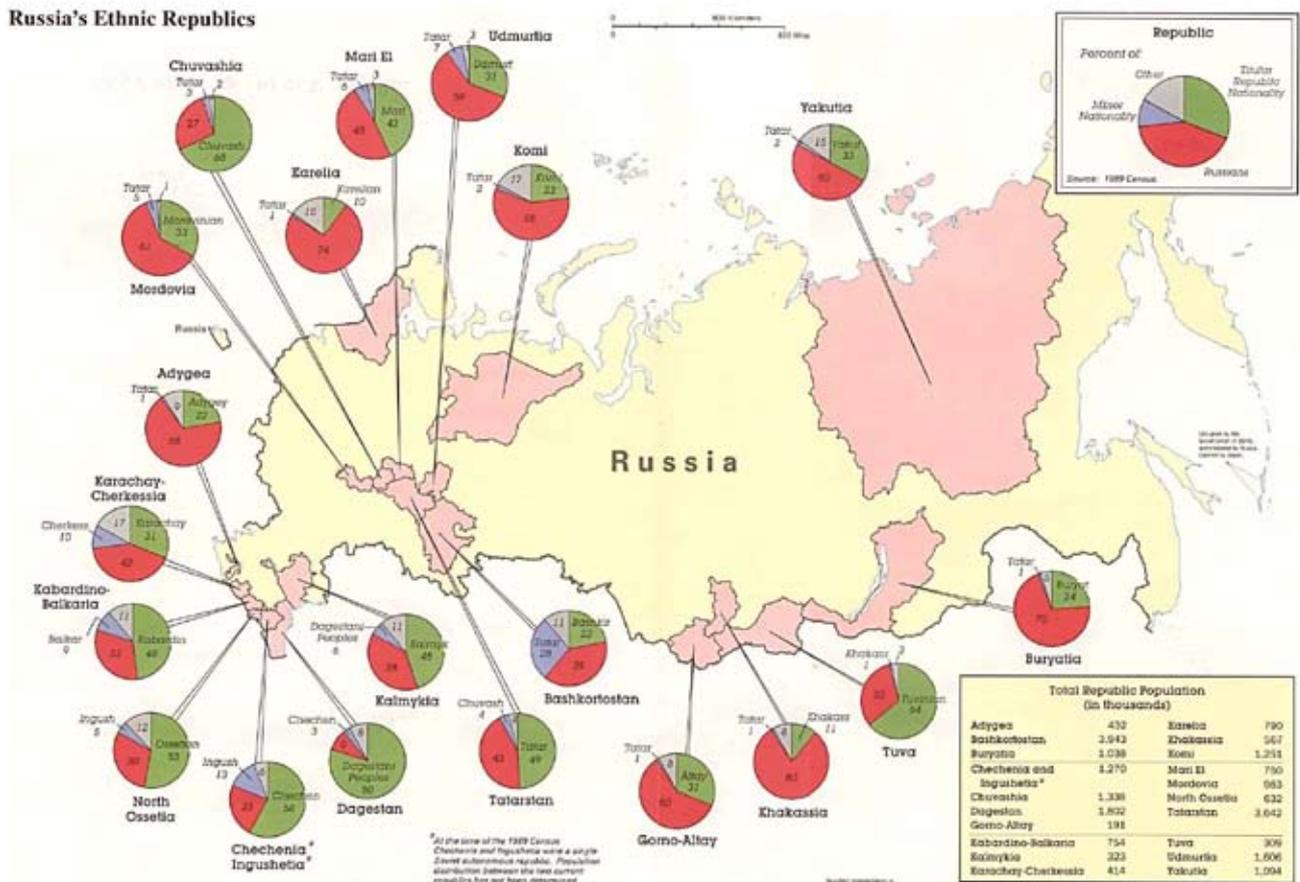


Figure 2: Autonomous Areas in Russia with Ethnic and National Minorities (60)



worlds' third-largest military budget. In addition to this, Russia has the world's second most powerful nuclear arsenal after the US. (42) Its arms monopolies are also the second-ranked competitors in the global armaments market. Another manifestation of Russia's status as a great power is the number of military bases which it possesses abroad. Russia runs military bases in eight CIS countries. In addition to them, Russia also has a naval base in Tartus (Syria).

Russia's Internal Colonies

Lenin showed how great imperialist powers also strive to exploit other countries and to subjugate them to their sphere of influence. Russia oppresses and exploits other nations both inside and outside its state. Nearly one fifth (19.1%) of Russia's population belong to ethnic and national minorities. The most important ones are the Tatars (3.9%), Ukrainians (1.2%), Bashkirs (1.1%), Chuvashes (1.1%), Chechens (1%), the Armenians (0.9%) and other, smaller peoples. All told, there are over 185 ethnic groups living in Russia.

As the following figures show, a substantial share of Russia's raw materials – of which oil and gas are the most prominent but are by no means the only ones – are located in regions with a significant proportion of national minorities (see Figures 1, 2 and 3).

Extreme inequality exists between the different regions

of Russia. This is a legacy of the Tsarist Empire which was never really overcome by the Stalinist USSR. For example, the average monthly income in Moscow is about six times as high as in Kalmykiya. Poverty is particularly widespread in the regions with sizeable national minority populations. Relative poverty varies from 40% in Amur Oblast and the Republic of Buryatia to 30% in Moscow. Absolute poverty is 36% in Buryatia and 21% in Lipetsk Oblast. Samara and Tatarstan show very similar patterns, with relative poverty rates of 37% and 35%, respectively, and absolute poverty rates of 28% and 25%. (46)

Putin's Eurasian Union: An Imperialist Attempt to Subjugate Central Asian and Eastern European Semi-Colonies

Since the 1990s, Russia's ruling class has undertaken a number of initiatives all of which have the goal of creating a political and economic sphere of influence under Russian leadership. Shortly after coming to power, Putin created the *Eurasian Economic Community* in October 2000. For several years, the Putin regime has undertaken serious steps to drive forward a closer economic and political bloc under Russian hegemony. A so-called *Customs Union* was already established in 2007, its current members being Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. A number of semi-colonial states are presently considering joining the Customs Union: Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Gagauzia

Figure 3: Natural Resources in Russia (61)



(the separatist republic in Moldavia), and Tajikistan. Under Yanukovich, the Ukrainian government also expressed interest in joining, but the Maidan coup and the takeover of pro-EU right-wing forces makes this unlikely in the short term. On the other hand, Crimea did split from the Ukraine and has joined Russia. Given the present political crisis in the country, the future of the eastern parts of the Ukraine is uncertain. Finally, the Vietnamese government has also expressed interest in joining the *Customs Union*.

Meanwhile, the Putin regime has moved ahead and introduced steps to form the *Eurasian Union*. This development would create a common market of goods, capital, and labor, and ensure the operation of common macroeconomic, competitive, financial, and other regulations, including the harmonization of policies such as energy and transport. In November 2011, the heads of Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus announced that a *Single Economic Space* would be launched as of 1 January 2012. The *Eurasian Union*, which will be similar to the European Union, is to be launched by 1 January 2015. While Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus are members, other countries currently have candidate status (Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan). (47)

In addition Russia is – beside the European Union – the most important trading partner for the Central Asian and Eastern European countries. In absolute terms, the trade volumes between the Central Asian Republics and Russia increased during the period 1995–2011 by almost 1,100%.

In Table 5 we see that Russia is one of the top three trading partners for Eastern European countries outside the EU.

In the Ukraine, the EU and Russia are the major powers which compete for market share and influence. Before the beginning of the Great Recession in 2008, the EU monopolies were able to continually increase their trade share. However, since the recession the situation has reversed itself. Between 2000 and 2010, the Ukraine's exports to the EU fell to 25.4% and the share of imports from the EU to 31.4%. At the same time the Customs Union (Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan) was able to increase its trade with the Ukraine: exports to and imports from these countries increased to 32.3% and 42% respectively. (49)

When we examine the Central Asian semi-colonies, we note an even more hegemonial position for Russian imperialism. Central Asia is highly dependent on Russian imports (mostly energy products and manufactured products). While the EU comes as the second largest import source, China's share has dramatically increased in the last decade and is now the third largest source of imports. The EU, Russia, and China are also the main export partners of the Central Asian countries. The EU and China managed to increase their market share between 2000 and 2010. During this same decade, Russia's share declined

but it remained the second largest export destination for Central Asia.

To summarize, we can conclude that Russian imperialism has and is increasingly successful in subjugating a number of semi-colonial countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Migration and Super-Exploitation

As an imperialist power Russia also profits from migration. The migrants constitute a sizeable minority among the working class in Russia. As non-Russian workers, they are both nationally oppressed and super-exploited by Russian capitalists. Their lower wages provide an important source for extra-profits from Russia's monopoly capital.

In their vast majority, Russian capitalists profiteer at the expense of migrants who originate from two different sources: On one hand, millions of migrants from Russia's oppressed national minorities relocate to the country's richer metropolises; on the other hand, millions of migrants from Russia's peripheral semi-colonies enter the country.

The population in the poorer regions in Russia – such as the Far East District, Siberia, the Urals or Privolzhje – is being systematically diminished due to emigration. David Lane, a bourgeois expert on Russia, reports: "*National ethnic minorities figured disproportionately in population movement. These areas were ones which had a continuous export of people.*" (50)

Migration from the Central Asian republics has increased dramatically in the last decade. According to official statistics approximately 12.3 million legal migrants currently reside inside Russia. In addition, another 5-8 million migrants have illegally entered the country in order to work there. Estimates of the percent of foreign migrants among all employed in Russia is about 8–10%, which is close to levels in some European countries such as Germany and Austria. However, this appears to be an underestimation. In addition, this figure does *not* include the migrants from oppressed nations within Russia.

Such massive migration is driven by the extreme inequality of wages that exists between Russia and her semi-colonial periphery. For example, at the close of the first decade of the 2000s, the average wage in Tajikistan was just 10% of the average Russian wage, while those in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were just slightly above 20%. Average Russian wages were three times as high as those in Moldova and two and a half times higher than those in Armenia. (51)

Also contributing to migration from the poor semi-colonial countries is surplus population unable to find employment. The majority of Russia's migrants come from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan. By the end of 2010, migrants from these three countries accounted for 55% of

Table 5: Trade Patterns of Non-EU Eastern European Countries, 2010 (in percent) (48)

Country	EU 27's Share of Trade	Russia's Share of Trade	Turkey's Share of Trade
Armenia	32.1 (1st place)	20.8 (2nd)	4.4 (6th)
Azerbaijan	46.9 (1st)	7.4 (3rd)	8.2 (2nd)
Belarus	25.1 (2nd)	48.2 (1st)	0.6 (10th)
Georgia	31.7 (1st)	4.4 (7th)	15.6 (2nd)
Moldova	52.3 (1st)	12.3 (3rd)	4.8 (4th)

the total legal foreign workforce in Russia.

Migration constitutes a massive drain on the human capital of the semi-colonial countries and hence reduces their ability to increase their own national wealth. Between 620,000 and 1,000,000 Kyrgyz migrants are estimated to work abroad currently (most of them in Russia). (52)Migrants account for 17% of the economically active population of Kyrgyzstan, for almost 37% from Tajikistan, and for 15% of the employed population from Uzbekistan.

The RCIT considers Russia, as well as the US and the EU, to be imperialist powers. As we outlined above in our discussion of China, in the event of a military confrontation between two imperialist powers, Bolshevik Communists will refuse to take the side of one of the two warring sides. Instead, in both camps, we will raise the slogan "*The main enemy is at home*".

In a conflict between Russia and an oppressed nation – like the Chechens – we unconditionally defend the right of national self-determination for oppressed nationalities.

Footnotes

(1) The RCIT has elaborated its position on these conflicts in numerous statements.

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More on Russia and China as Great Imperialist Powers

A Reply to Chris Slee (Socialist Alliance, Australia) and Walter Daum (LRP, USA)

By Michael Pröbsting, Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT), 11 April 2014

Chris Slee, a long-time activist from the Socialist Alliance (Australia), has published an article which focuses on whether Russia and China are great imperialist powers. (1) The article is mainly a critical review of the RCIT's analysis of Russia and China, which I have elaborated in several documents. (2)

The author begins his article by presenting a number of my arguments and statistics on Russia which I cited to demonstrate its character as a great imperialist power. At the conclusion of this section of his article, Chris Slee expresses agreement with our position. However, in his section on China, Slee is more critical of the RCIT's position, which is that China is also emerging as an imperialist power. He writes: "I have reservations about classifying China simply as imperialist. I agree that China has imperialist features. But on the other hand, a large part of the Chinese working class is exploited by transnational corporations based in the United States, Europe and Japan. This gives China a semi-colonial aspect."

We believe that Chris Slee is mistaken. Yes, China is an *emerging* imperialist power which entered this status only a few years ago (in the late part of the first decade of the 2000s). Consequently, it still also contains a number of backward, semi-colonial elements. We are fully aware of this, and have even pointed this out ourselves. But we are convinced that the imperialist aspect in China's class character is the *dominant* one and the semi-colonial feature is the subordinated aspect. In the following, we will deal with comrade Slee's arguments one by one and elaborate our counter-arguments.

Western and Chinese Monopolies

Chris Slee first invokes the following argument for his position. He argues that the Western trans-national corporations (TNC) play a very significant role in the Chinese economy and super-exploit – directly or indirectly – Chinese workers.

"The workers are in many cases not directly employed by the TNCs, but are employed by Chinese companies that have contracts with TNCs, sometimes via a chain of intermediate companies. This does not negate the fact that they are exploited by the TNCs. Such contracting chains are also common in places like Bangladesh."

Later he adds: "Probsting points out that China is now economically stronger than Russia. But China's rapid economic growth has in part been due to the decision by many Western TNCs to make China their main base for production for the world market. (...) But despite these changes, production controlled by foreign TNCs remains a very important part of China's economy (even while Chinese TNCs are expanding overseas). Thus China still has a semi-colonial aspect, along with an imperialist aspect."

We certainly agree with Chris Slee that Western monopolies have invested huge amounts of foreign capital in China and derive significant extra profits from this. However,

it would be both incorrect and an exaggeration to maintain that China's economic growth during recent years has been driven by foreign investment and exports. We have already drawn attention to this issue in the chapter dealing with China in our book *The Great Robbery of the South*. A leading magazine of the Western monopoly bourgeoisie – Britain's *The Economist* – has repeatedly emphasized: "It is investment, not exports, that leads China's economy. Spending on plant, machinery, buildings and infrastructure accounted for about 48% of China's GDP in 2011." (3) In another article, *The Economist* cited studies which show that the share of production, in relation to exports, is relatively small. "Arthur Kroeber at Dragonomics, a Beijing-based research firm, argues that investment is not as closely tied to exports as is often assumed: over half of all investment is in infrastructure and property. Mr Kroeber estimates that only 7% of total investment is directly linked to export production. Adding in the capital spending of local firms that produce inputs sold to exporters, he reckons that a still-modest 14% of investment is dependent on exports." (4) This is a clear indicator that the Western TNC and their export-orientated production do not fulfill a dominant position in China's economy. Therefore, it is certainly untrue that the Western TNCs play such a major role in China's economic growth that this is decisive in determining its semi-colonial character.

Another important aspect is the financial sector. Again, we see that the Chinese economy is not dominated by foreign capital. Look, for example, at China's financial sector in which foreign capital hardly plays any role (less than 3% of the banking sector were in foreign hands in 2005). (5) Its external debt stock as a share of the Gross National Income stands at only 9.3%. (6)

Furthermore, in assessing the nature of China's financial sector we need to examine an overall balance sheet of the development of the relationship between China and the US or, more specifically, Chinese and US monopoly capital. If the Western TNCs were playing as dominant a role in China's economy as comrade Slee suggests, their own development during the past decade should have been better than that of their Chinese counterparts. However, in fact, quite the opposite is true.

As we have shown in *The Great Robbery*, there were only twelve Chinese corporations among the *Fortune Global 500* in 2001. At that time, there were 197 US corporations on this list. However, by 2012 there were only 132 corporations from the US among the *Fortune Global 500*, but 73 from China. (7)

Similarly, while in 1991 China produced 4.1% of world output, this figure rose to 14.3% in 2011, making it the world's second-largest economy. At the same time, the US share of global output during this same period declined from 24.1% to 19.1%. (8)

We maintain that these figures convincingly demonstrate that, while US TNCs certainly gain extra profits from their investments in China, Chinese monopolies have profited

much more, and it is precisely for this reason that they have grown much more relative to their Western rivals in the past two decades.

LRP: China as a Semi-Colony

In debating Slee's and the RCIT's position, Walter Daum – the leading theoretician of the US group LRP – expresses the view that China is a semi-colonial country:

“China has clear imperialist aspects, but it remains a very poor country (per capita) whose workers are super-exploited by both Chinese and imperialist capitalists. On balance, it is far from belonging to the group of countries that share in the rewards of the military and economic domination of the majority of the world's countries by the strongest and wealthiest powers. Internationally, it is more exploited than exploiter. Even using the flawed and partial data of foreign direct investment (FDI) as a measure of “capital export” that Michael Proebsting favors, China's inward flow of FDI greatly exceeds its outward flow – in contrast to the genuinely imperialist powers.” (9)

Let us deal with this argument issue by issue. Yes, there is still more Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flowing inward to China than flowing outward from China to the world market. But the gap is constantly narrowing. Also, let us not forget that China is a very recently emerged imperialist power.

Furthermore, FDI is just one of several forms of capital export. China, for example, exports a lot of capital as bonds and loans. As we have shown in *The Great Robbery*, for a number of years, China has been a net capital exporter. It has even become the world's second largest Net Capital Exporter, only slightly behind Germany. (10)

It is certainly true that China is a poor country (per capita)

compared with the rich Western countries. However, as we have elaborated in *The Great Robbery* and other documents, this is not the decisive issue for Marxists in characterizing a given state, and never was the criterion for Lenin and Trotsky. The task is rather to analyze the totality of a given state's economic, political, and military position in the global hierarchy of states. Thus, a given state must be viewed not only as a separate unit, but first and foremost *in its relation to other states and nations*. Hence we concluded: *“In short, we define an imperialist state as follows: An imperialist state is a capitalist state whose monopolies and state apparatus have a position in the world order where they first and foremost dominate other states and nations. As a result they gain extra-profits and other economic, political and/or military advantages from such a relationship based on super-exploitation and oppression.”* (11)

Here, it is not necessary for us to repeat the numerous facts which we have elaborated in our documents which, in sum, demonstrate that China has become a major power in the world economy and global politics. If this were not the case, we ask our critics, why are Western politicians and strategists so worried about the economic and political decisions of China's ruling class?! Why do they fear the rival in Beijing?!

Furthermore, we draw comrade Daum's attention to the numerous historic references we made in our study on Russian imperialism. (12) There, we demonstrated that the laws of uneven and combined development also applied (and apply) to imperialist states. Hence, these states often have different statuses regarding some criterion: some imperialist states are much weaker and poorer than others; some are net capital exporters while others are net capital importers; some are economically strong but militarily

Table 1: National Income, Population and Per Capita Income of the Great Power in 1914 (13)

Country	National Income (\$US billions)	Population (millions)	Per Capita Income (\$US)
United States	37	98	377
United Kingdom	11	45	244
France	6	39	153
Japan	2	55	36
Germany	12	65	184
Italy	4	37	108
Russia	7	171	41
Austria-Hungary	3	52	57

Table 2: Creditors and Debtors, July 1, 1914 (\$US billions) (14)

Principal sources of capital		Principal recipients of capital	
Home country	Amount	Host country	Amount
United Kingdom	18.0	United States	7.1
France	9.0	Russia	3.8
Germany	7.3	Canada	3.7
United States	3.5	Argentina	3.0
Netherlands	2.0	Austria-Hungary	2.5
Belgium	1.5	Spain	2.5
Switzerland	1.5	Brazil	2.2

weak, while others are just the opposite. Here, we reproduce just two of the tables from our document on Russia, which show that comrade Daum's approach is one-sided and un-dialectical.

In Table 1 we show that, during the time of Lenin and Trotsky, there were also huge gaps in per capita income between imperialist states. US imperialism was – measured in per capita income – seven to ten times wealthier than Japan, Russia, and Austria-Hungary. Nonetheless, Lenin, Trotsky, and the Bolsheviks had no doubt whatsoever that these countries were imperialist and not a semi-colonial.

In Table 2 we demonstrate that while several imperialist states were net creditors, others were net debtors. As such, there were huge differences between the old imperialist powers – in particular Britain, France, and Germany – and the newer or weaker powers like the US, Russia, or Austria-Hungary. The older powers were creditors while the newer or weaker ones were debtors.

China as an Intermediate State – between Imperialist and Semi-colonial Status?

Chris Slee puts forward the following argument to support his thesis that China *"has a semi-colonial aspect, along with an imperialist aspect"*. He writes: *"To give an analogy: when analysing the class structure of capitalist society, we recognise that there are social layers that are intermediate between the capitalist class and the working class. Why can't we recognise that states can also be intermediate between imperialist and semi-colonial status?"*

For us, this position seems close to the invalid theory of sub-imperialism with which we have already dealt in *The Great Robbery*. (15) It is no accident that the classic Marxist theoreticians wrote a great deal about the different classes under capitalism which indeed, as comrade Slee has suggested, recognized not only the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but also intermediate classes and layers. (16) However, contrary to this diversity of classes, Lenin and Trotsky did not invent similar categories for states, but rather defined only two categories of states: imperialist vs. colonial (or semi-colonial), as the case may be. They did so because, in the context of the world order during the imperialist epoch, conditions are created whereby states are – in their totality, taking into account the uneven character of their development – either on the side of the profiteers or on the side of the losers in the imperialist order.

This does not mean that we should not differentiate or concretize different capitalist countries. As we have shown, one can distinguish between stronger and weaker imperialist states, more or less advanced semi-colonial countries, etc. Lenin did so, too, as we have demonstrated. (17) But such differentiation does *not* create a separate, new, third category of an intermediate state, in addition to imperialist and (semi-)colonial states.

Tsarist Russia before 1917: An Example of a Partly Imperialist and Partly Semi-colonial State?

Chris Slee quotes Trotsky about Russia before 1917 in order to support his introduction of the concept of China as an *"intermediate state"*. He writes:

"In the following passage discussing Russia's involvement in the First World War, Trotsky seems to imply that tsarist Russia

was intermediate between an imperialist power and a semi-colonial country: "Russia's participation in the war was self-contradictory both in motives and in aims... The participation of Russia falls somewhere halfway between the participation of France and that of China. Russia paid in this way for her right to be an ally of advanced countries, to import capital and pay interest on it – that is, essentially, for her right to be a privileged colony of her allies – but at the same time for her right to oppress and rob Turkey, Persia, Galicia, and in general the countries weaker and more backward than herself" (History of the Russian Revolution, Sphere Books, London 1967, vol. 1, p. 33)."

Comrade Slee is however wrong in his interpretation. First, in the sentence immediately after this quote, Trotsky writes: *"The twofold imperialism of the Russian bourgeoisie had basically the character of an agency for other mightier world powers."*

It is certainly true that Trotsky did emphasize the contradictory, uneven character of Russia before 1917 which contained an important semi-colonial aspect. However, as we showed in our study on Russia, he was unambiguous about the decisive difference between a semi-colonial country (like China) and an imperialist state (like Russia). In his book *The Third International after Lenin* he wrote: *"The Russian bourgeoisie was the bourgeoisie of an imperialist oppressor state; the Chinese bourgeoisie, a bourgeoisie of an oppressed colonial country."* (18)

This is not surprising since this was the classic and undisputed position of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. They certainly recognized the specific character of Russian imperialism (its backwardness, its financial dependency on French imperialism, etc.). Nevertheless, they were clear about the fact that the dominant feature of Russia was its imperialist class character.

Such, Lenin wrote in 1916: *"The last third of the nineteenth century saw the transition to the new, imperialist era. Finance capital not of one, but of several, though very few, Great Powers enjoys a monopoly. (In Japan and Russia the monopoly of military power, vast territories, or special facilities for robbing minority nationalities, China, etc., partly supplements, partly takes the place of, the monopoly of modern, up-to-date finance capital.)"* (19)

In their famous pamphlet explaining the Bolshevik program against the imperialist world war, Lenin and Zinoviev stated in 1915: *"In Russia, capitalist imperialism of the latest type has fully revealed itself in the policy of Tsarism towards Persia, Manchuria and Mongolia, but, in general, military and feudal imperialism is predominant in Russia. In no country in the world are the majority of the population oppressed so much as in Russia."* (20)

And in another theoretical article, the Bolshevik leader Gregory Zinoviev explained that *"the Russian imperialism differs from Western European imperialism in many aspects. It is not an imperialism of the latest stage of capitalist development. Russia is a country which imports capital, which is an object of capital exporting countries. The Russian imperialism is a feudal, militaristic imperialism. (...) There is no imperialism which is cruder, more barbaric, and bloodier than Russian imperialism."* (21)

The same position was repeated by Nikolai Bukharin and Evgenii Preobrazhensky, the authors of the major popular outline of the Bolshevik's program – *The ABC of Communism*.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we think that comrade Slee's and Daum's critiques of our position on China as an emerging imperialist state are wrong. At the same time, we welcome their criticism, because we consider an international debate about Russian and Chinese imperialism to be of greatest importance. It is the emergence of these two Eastern imperialist powers which is one of the most important aspects in the developing world situation in recent years. Without recognizing and analyzing them, it is impossible to understand the present dynamics of increasing inter-imperialist rivalry and to draw the necessary conclusion for the revolutionary program in the period ahead.

Footnotes

(1) Chris Slee: Discussion: Are Russia and China imperialist powers? April 7, 2014, Links International Journal of Socialist Renewal, <http://links.org.au/node/3795>. Chris Slee is a long-time socialist activist and a member of the Australian organization Socialist Alliance. He has published numerous articles and pamphlets on different subjects including China and Cuba. His article was published in LINKS, an international English-language socialist journal. LINKS has been initiated by the Socialist Alliance. On its "Editorial Advisory Board" are well-known representatives of the left from the Philippines (e.g. Sonny Melencio), Indonesia (e.g. Dita Sari), Pakistan (e.g. Farooq Tariq), Canada (John Riddell), Scotland (e.g., Alan McCombes and Murray Smith), the USA (Malik Miah), and Germany (Andre Brie).

(2) These documents are mainly:

On China: See Michael Pröbsting: *The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*, 2013, Chapter 10, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>; Chapter 10 is an enlarged and updated version of the following document: Michael Pröbsting: China's transformation into an imperialist power. A study of the economic, political and military aspects of China as a Great Power, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 4 (2012), <http://www.thecommunists.net/publications/revcom-number-4/>; in March 2014 the publishing house PROMEDIA published a shortened German-language translation of *The Great Robbery of the South*. (The title is: *Der Grosse Raub im Süden. Ausbeutung im Zeitalter der Globalisierung*). This version contains an updated version of the China chapter.

On Russia: Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014, in: *Revolutionary Communism* No. 21, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>

We have also published a summary of these documents in: Russia and China as Great Imperialist Powers

Michael Pröbsting: A Summary of the RCIT's Analysis, 28 March 2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-china-and-russia/>

(3) The Economist: China's economy: Pedalling prosperity. China's economy is not as precarious as it looks, says Simon Cox. But it still needs to change, May 26th 2012, <http://www.economist.com/node/21555762>

(4) The Economist: An old Chinese myth. Contrary to popular wisdom, China's rapid growth is not hugely dependent on exports, Jan 3rd 2008, <http://www.economist.com/node/10429271>;

(5) See World Bank and the Development Research Center of the State Council, the People's Republic of China: China 2030. Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative High-Income Society (2012), Washington DC, 2012, p. 124

(6) World Bank: Global Development Finance 2012, p. 110 and Asian Development Bank: Asian Development Outlook 2012.

Confronting Rising Inequality in Asia, p. 272

(7) See David Shambaugh: Are China's multinational Corporations really multinational?; in: EAST ASIA FORUM QUARTERLY, Vol.4 No.2 April-June 2012, p. 7; Chinese companies push out Japan on Fortune Global 500 list, By Agence France-Presse, July 9, 2012, <http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2012/07/09/chinese-companies-push-out-japan-on-fortune-global-500-list/>

(8) David W. Stelsel: U.S. Share of Global Economic Output Shrinking, June 28, 2012, <http://www.valeofinancial.com/2012/06/u-s-share-of-global-economic-output-shrinking/>

(9) See the discussion section below Chris Slee's article at <http://links.org.au/node/3795>

(10) See also IMF: Global Financial Stability Report, April 2012, Statistical Appendix, p. 3

(11) Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, p. 243

(12) See the chapter "V. The Arguments of Our Critics" in Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, 18 March 2014

(13) Paul Kennedy: Rise and Fall of Great Powers. Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000, London 1988, p. 243

(14) Mira Wilkins: The History of Foreign Investment in the United States, 1914–1945, London 2004, p. 5

(15) Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, pp. 220-228

(16) This is by the way also a result of the emergence of capitalism out of feudalism respectively the Asiatic mode of production; hence the important role of the peasantry and the small traders.

(17) See e.g., the quote from Lenin's *Notebooks on Imperialism*; Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power, p. 31 (footnote 124)

(18) Leon Trotsky: *The Third International After Lenin*, New York 1970, p. 174

(19) V. I. Lenin: Imperialism and the Split in Socialism (1916); in: CW Vol. 23, p. 116

(20) V.I. Lenin/G. Zinoviev: Socialism and War. The Attitude of the R.S.D.L.P. toward the War (1915), in: LCW 21, p. 306

(21) Grigori Sinowjew: Die russische Sozialdemokratie und der russische Sozialchauvinismus (1915); in: W. I. Lenin/G. Sinowjew: Gegen den Strom. Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1914-1916, Hamburg 1921, pp. 174-175 (our translation) ■



Escalation of Inner-Imperialist Rivalry Marks the Opening of a New Phase of World Politics

Theses on Recent Major Developments in the World Situation (April 2014)

Document adopted by the International Executive Committee of the RCIT, April 2014

The following document gives an overview of the most important political developments in the world during the last six months. It expands upon the analyses of the global political situation which the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) published in two documents, in March and September 2013, respectively. (1)

We draw our readers' attention to the fact that the resolution was adopted before the recent escalation of the protests in the east of the Ukraine. The RCIT's analysis and conclusion of these events can be read in our latest resolution on the Ukraine from 17 April. (2)

We also draw our reader's attention to the fact that these *Theses on Recent Major Developments in the World Situation* contain an appendix of 2 graphs. These graphs can not be viewed in the text version of the document for technical reasons. They can however be viewed in the pdf version of this document which is attached below.

I. A New Phase of World Politics Began in the Spring of 2014

1. In the spring of 2014, world politics entered a new phase. Its most important feature is the exacerbation of the *inter-imperialist rivalry between and the US and EU on one hand and Russia (with the tacit support of China) on the other hand* centered on the crisis in the Ukraine. While an armed confrontation between the two camps is unlikely in the near future, it is obvious that a new Cold War has started on the centennial of the start of World War I in 1914. This Cold War will prove to have been the preamble to future wars – first between proxies and later between the Great Powers themselves – if the international working class will not prevent this by taking power via the socialist revolution.

2. Another important characteristic of this new political phase is increased *counter-revolutionary mobilizations* in important countries. Thus, we saw the overthrow in the Ukraine by the reactionary Maidan movement which included an important fascist wing. Similarly, there have been reactionary movements and riots in Venezuela and Thailand which are attempting to bring down bourgeois-populist governments which enjoy mass popular support among the lower classes.

3. In addition, we must point to the *retreat of the Arab Revolution*. The military dictatorship of General Sisi in Egypt has been able to consolidate its power. In Syria, the rebel movement has witnessed a bourgeoisification of its leadership. However, the fundamental process of the Arab Revolution has not been terminated and neither of these reactionary developments is irreversible, as is proven by the continuing just democratic struggle of the masses. In addition, new mass struggles like a third Intifada in Pales-

tine are looming.

4. It is essential to understand the contradictory and uneven character of this new political phase. While there have been several reactionary movements and defeats for the working class, there are also *new revolutionary upheavals*. Most prominent has been the Bosnian revolution, a spontaneous and violent uprising of the Bosnian workers and youth. In addition, we see an important shift to the left among important sectors of the working class and youth in South Africa, resulting in splits from the ANC and the pro-ANC leadership of the trade union federation COSATU. Equally important, the mass protests against corruption and repression in key semi-colonial countries like Brazil and Turkey are continuing. To this one must add the impressive upswing of class struggle in Spain.

5. Finally the publication of the new report on climate change has once again demonstrated the devastating consequences of the climate crisis for whole mankind and in particular for the poorer nations living in the global South. It is now clear that the worsening of the climate situation is irreversible and the question is only how bad it will become. This will have tremendous consequences in accelerating the tempo "natural" disasters, catastrophic hunger, poverty and migration. This, in turn, will also accelerate the upheavals and revolts of the masses. It is not surprising that the US defense department, in its four-year strategic review released in the spring of 2014, calls climate change a "threat multiplier" along with poverty, political instability, and social tensions worldwide.

6. The developments of the new phase of world politics are marked by the continuing crisis of leadership. Nowhere does the working class possess a strong, combative revolutionary party armed with a revolutionary program and a steeled cadre. As a result, the fighting masses are either led by reformist bureaucracies, petty-bourgeois populists, or have no leadership at all. The counter-revolutionary offensive in Ukraine has demonstrated the total absence of any significant independent working class force. The reactionary mobilizations in Venezuela and Thailand are assisted by the disillusionment of various sectors of the masses against bourgeois-populist governments. The Bosnian Revolution, as well as the mass movements in Brazil and Turkey, suffers from the lack of any organized leadership. The mass protests in Egypt are led by the bourgeois Muslim Brotherhood which is itself undergoing a process of internal crisis and divisions. The rebel movement in Syria is dominated by petty-bourgeois Islamists who – while correctly rejecting both the pro-Western FSA leadership as well as the arch-reactionary ISIS – possess no independent strategy. In Spain, given the absence of an authentic revolutionary party, the rotten bureaucracies of the ex-Stalinist PCE and IU are gaining influence in the mass movement.

7. This new political phase clears the ground for

the formation of authentic revolutionary parties nationally and internationally. It tests all forces in the workers' movements and the so-called left in the fire of our historical class struggle. It exposes all those would-be socialists who choose in these historic times the camp of open counter-revolutionary forces or who, wrongly, stand aside in struggles where the proletariat is obliged to support a progressive camp. These events substantially sharpen the contradictions inside the reformist and centrist camps and will help the vanguard workers and youth to see through the "socialist" phrase-mongering of these forces. This will help to expose the charlatanism of "Left Unity" as a reactionary illusion, and hence will make it easier for honest revolutionaries to find their way to Bolshevik-Communism.

8. The key task for the workers' vanguard remains the building of revolutionary parties as well as the founding of a new World Party of Socialist Revolution. As urgent as this task is, it cannot be achieved by a pure feat of will or self-proclamation. The road to build combative revolutionary parties both nationally and internationally passes through the formation of solid Bolshevik pre-party organizations – composed mainly of militants from the working class – which will unite internationally on the basis of a sound revolutionary program, as well as common democratic-centralist discipline. Such authentic revolutionary organizations must be built inside the class struggle – not outside of it, in discussion clubs of the universities. From the outset, they must orient themselves to grow and to train their members not by means of the degenerated milieu of the petty-bourgeois left intelligentsia but the militant – although often politically raw – workers and oppressed. Instead of opportunistic adaptation to the reformist and centrist left, they must combine the highest flexibility in united front work with sharp political demarcation and denunciation of all forces which cause political confusion among militant workers and youth. It is within the mass struggles and movements that small revolutionary organizations will find the forces with which to fuse in order to be transformed from being fighting propaganda groups into revolutionary cadre parties. This is the road of the Bolshevik-Communists.

9. This new political phase also increases the responsibility for authentic revolutionaries all over the world. For many working class militants, the world situation becomes more and more confusing. The emergence of new imperialist powers, the increasing rivalry between them, and the increasing appearance of forces acting as their proxies; the amalgamation of legitimate struggles of the workers and oppressed with conflicts between proxies; the leadership role of non-revolutionary and non-proletarian forces of progressive mass movements – all these complex and contradictory developments make it increasingly difficult for socialist activists to find the correct orientation. Under these conditions, it is the task of the RCIT to defend the revolutionary program, to derive the correct tactics for the class struggle, and to assemble the best revolutionaries under its banner.

10. What is the character of this new political phase? We view it as being neither (pre-) revolutionary nor counter-revolutionary but, rather as one with a contradictory, intermediate character. While the phase that transpired from the beginning of 2011 until the first half of 2013

overwhelmingly saw the masses on the offensive (Arab Revolution, Greece, Occupy Movement, Marikana/South Africa, Turkey, Brazil, etc.), the present phase has both counter-revolutionary and revolutionary features, as we have outlined above. It is currently marked by the qualitative deepening of the inter-imperialist rivalry, which on one hand will provoke increasing chauvinism and social-chauvinism in the workers' movement. On the other hand, this resulting world disorder will also accelerate the search among many militants for a program and organization which advocate anti-imperialism and proletarian internationalism. Let us not forget that we are talking about different phases within one and the same historic revolutionary period which opened in 2008 with the deep crisis of the capitalist world economy. The fundamental dynamics of this period – the decline of the productive forces, the aggravation of the social contradictions, the inevitable provocation of revolutionary and counter-revolutionary upheavals as well as wars – mark all phases within this period. Hence, in such a period counter-revolutionary setbacks are inevitable given the devastating crisis of working class leadership. But at the same time no lasting counter-revolutionary stability is possible because of the repeated clash of social and political contradictions. This period and its crisis-ridden character point repeatedly to the only alternative which stands at its end: *Socialism or Barbarism*.

11. In our last document on the world situation, we have already pointed out that while the aggravation of contradictions inevitably provokes a sharpening of the class struggle, the working class suffers from a crisis of leadership. This crisis of leadership in turn influences the forms and tempo of the class struggle. In particular, it can lead to increasing counter-revolutionary movements – including fascism as its highest or, more correctly, its lowest expression. The failure of the workers' movement and left to provide any revolutionary leadership for the heroic mass uprisings in 2011–13 has led to a certain retreat and to the increasing emergence of counter-revolutionary movements. However, this is neither inevitable nor irreversible. New eruptions of social and political contradictions are inevitable and will create new mass struggles and insurrections – as we have just seen it in Bosnia, beginning in the spring of 2014 – out of which new vanguard layers will emerge.

12. If we prepare a balance sheet of the past three years, we can say that the world has witnessed a massive intensification of the class struggle. We have seen the Arab Revolution which shattered and brought down dictatorships in a number of countries. We have seen the largest general strike in mankind's history (India). We have seen the largest mass mobilizations in key countries of the South for several decades (Brazil, Turkey, South Africa as well as Greece). All this confirms the RCIT's assessment of the nature of the present historic period as a "revolutionary." It also confirms our analysis that the centre of gravity of the world proletariat and its struggle for liberation has moved to the South.

13. The new political phase is the result of the fundamental dynamics and the process of the historic period we are living in. As we noted in the RCIT's world situation document issued in September 2013 the new period began in 2008 with an initial phase in which all classes were in a "state of shock." This was followed by a sec-

ond phase which – starting in late 2010 / early 2011 – was characterized by a “*massive upswing of the class struggle.*” In the class struggle, developments of the last three years we have identified an initial phase which we called an “*innocent phase,*” in which the masses, full of illusions, either followed petty-bourgeois and bourgeois leaderships in movements or elected them into office. Since then we have seen a process of disillusionment and growing opposition to these elected bourgeois-democratic governments or to the leadership of movements. At the same time, there has been no revolutionary party in existence which could have provided an alternative leadership and lead the struggle towards a higher stage. As a result, the masses suffered several defeats, and counter-revolutionary movements have also emerged. These developments contributed to the development of a new world political phase. No less, we have stated in the past that the aggravation of contradictions in the new historic period does not express itself only in the numerous mass struggles around the world, but also in the increasing imperialist aggressiveness and the rivalry between the imperialist powers. This qualitative intensification of imperialist aggressiveness and rivalry has contributed decisively to the change in the world situation.

II. Key Features of the World Situation

14. The *world economy* remains in a state of very weak, fragile, and highly artificial recovery. US net business investment – that is investment after the deduction of the depreciation of existing stock – is still nearly one-third below the pre-crisis peak in the world largest economy. (3) It has dropped lower (as a share of GDP) in each successive recovery since the 1980s. Its present peak only reaches

the trough levels witnessed during the two previous recessions! (4) (See Figure 1) Similarly net investment in Europe is at a historic low. (5) (See Figure 2) These figures reflect that capitalists do not expect sufficiently high rates of profit and therefore hesitate to increase their investment. The reason for this is, as Marx elaborated in Volume III of *Capital*, the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. While the weak recovery will continue for some time, it will sooner or later turn into another, if not worse, worldwide Great Recession.

Heightening of Inter-Imperialist Rivalry

15. The new Cold War between US/EU and Russia is the single most important event in the recent past, and marks the beginning of a new phase of world politics. This *heightening of inter-imperialist rivalry* comes as no surprise. From the beginning of the new historic period, we have consistently pointed out that, given the decline of the forces of production and the general crisis of capitalism, an escalation in the rivalry between the imperialist powers was inevitable. We already witnessed this tendency in the war between Russia and US-allied Georgia in 2008; in the rising Sino-Japanese tensions around the Diaoyu/Senkaku islands in the East China Sea; and in the Russian-American disagreement over the civil war in Syria. This *quantitative* increase of inter-imperialist rivalry reached a new *qualitative* level with the international conflict which broke out in the spring 2014 around the crisis in the Ukraine.

16. The international crisis after the pro-Western coup d'état has not only illustrated the well-established aggressive nature of Western imperialism. It has also demonstrated that Russia, too, has become a Great Imperialist Power, so much so that it was able to stand up against the

Figure 1: US Net Business investment has rebounded – but only to the trough levels seen during the past two recessions



West and annex the Crimea without serious punishment. This crisis has opened a series of mutual saber-rattlings between the imperialist camps: NATO plans to further expand to the East and to increase their military presence in Eastern Europe; at the same time, Russia wants to expand its sphere of influence of even to annex the eastern parts of the Ukraine and Transnistria. While a temporary diplomatic compromise on the Ukraine cannot be excluded as a possibility, it is obvious that this crisis has irreversibly brought out into the open the deep rivalry between the two imperialist camps.

17. These new developments confirm the RCIT's assessment that, in the past few years, Russia has gained increasing strength as an imperialist power, and China has also emerged as a new imperialist power. The RCIT has invested considerable resources in elaborating and disseminating such an analysis of Russian and Chinese imperialism, because it is the only key to understand the present dynamics of world politics. As we have shown in another document, ignoring the imperialist nature of Russia and China forces a number of centrists to walk into the theoretical trap of Kautskyanism, according to which the world incorrectly appears as one of *increasing convergence between the imperialist powers* US, EU, and Japan, i.e., the realization of Kautsky's false utopia of "ultra-imperialism." (6)

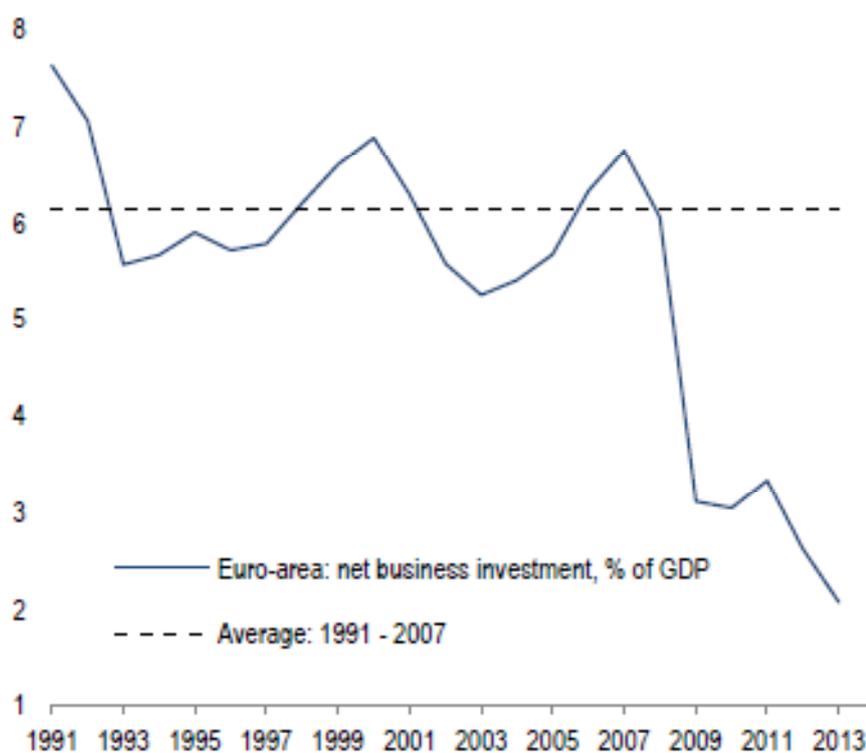
18. The heightening of inter-imperialist rivalry will inevitably lead to destabilization of international relations between the Great Powers. It will multiply the political, diplomatic, and economic conflicts between the imperialist states and will provoke an accelerated armaments race, militarism, and chauvinism on all sides. While, in the short term, the Cold War may not turn into a shooting war in Europe, open clashes between Japan and China are quite

possible in the next few years. If the international working class does not succeed in overthrowing the ruling class in time, a Third World War is the most likely outcome of the escalating inter-imperialist rivalry on the backdrop of capitalism's decline. This rivalry and militarism will most likely increase qualitatively with outbreak of the next, and probably even deeper, Great Recession some time in the next few years. This further deepening of capitalism's crisis will also increase the desire of the desperate ruling classes to look for a military solution to their problems, i.e., by launching a new war.

19. The RCIT restates its Leninist position on conflicts between imperialist states: We defend the program which is associated with the term *revolutionary defeatism*. In both camps, revolutionaries must develop propaganda along the lines "*The main enemy is at home!*" and "*Turn the imperialist into a civil war!*" The international workers' movement must oppose all forms of sanctions issued by the imperialist states against their rivals. They must also resolutely oppose NATO's expansion towards the East as well as Russia's threats of invasion and its economic pressure against the Ukraine, which takes the form of raising gas prices and aggressively calling in debts.

20. An important issue in the next months and years will be the so-called *Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership* (TTIP) between the US and the EU. Its declared goal is the liberalization of trade and investment between the two largest Western imperialist blocs. The international workers' movement in North America and Europe must vehemently oppose the TTIP. We say this not because we reject the economic internationalization between imperialist countries, but because the TTIP is a major attack against the working class and popular masses. The planned changes in business, labor, and consumer legislation will

Figure 2: Net Business Investment to GDP is at a 20-year low in Europe



enormously strengthen the power of the imperialist monopolies against the state, the workers, and consumers.

Counterrevolution in the Ukraine

21. From the beginning of the political crisis in the Ukraine, the RCIT has closely followed developments there and has expressed its views in a number of statements (including joint resolutions with the Russian MAS). (7) Here, we will only elaborate some observations and conclusions about this key theatre of political events during the past few months. As we have pointed out from the start, the political crisis of the Ukraine originated as a conflict between different factions of oligarchs, whose respective orientations reflected the ongoing rivalry between US/EU imperialism on the one hand and Russian imperialism on the other for influence in the country. This is why the RCIT supported neither side in this conflict, but instead called for independent, working class mobilizations. Obviously the Yanukovich government represented the interests of a group of oligarchs with a pro-Russian orientation. However, at no time did the Maidan movement display a progressive, democratic nature. Rather, the movement was founded, top-down by pro-Western parties, on the very day that President Yanukovich refused to sign the association agreement with the EU. While undoubtedly the movement contained *some* liberal, middle class elements hoping for more democracy, as a whole it was dominated from start to finish by an unstable coalition of two right-wing conservative parties (Fatherland and UDAR), the fascist Svoboda party, and the Neo-Nazis of the *Pravy Sektor*. These reactionary elements attacked progressive and trade union forces as soon as the latter openly intervened with flags and banners.

22. In sum, the Maidan movement differed in a number of ways from a democratic mass movement with a non-revolutionary leadership like those which have arisen in other countries: (1) it came into being as a movement supporting a *reactionary* goal (joining the imperialist EU) instead of, for example, one fighting for democratic rights against a dictatorship; (2) from its emergence until its accession to power, the movement was tightly controlled by a small group of reactionary leaders (including fascists); and (3) the only time the masses identifying with the movement refused to follow its leadership was when the *Pravy Sektor* Nazis called for the cancellation of the compromise with the Yanukovich government. For these reasons, the RCIT maintains that the *dominant character* of the Maidan movement was *not* the desire for democratic rights (while this certainly played an important role among *some* sectors of the movement); rather we see this movement as having been a reactionary tool which fought for a reactionary goal (joining the EU) and for the interests of a pro-Western sector of the ruling class as well as those of Western imperialism.

23. For these reasons, we consider as politically criminal the support exhibited for the Maidan movement, as a kind of legitimate democratic struggle, by most of the larger centrist organizations (e.g., the Mandeliste Fourth International, Peter Taffee's CWI, the Cliffite SWP/IST, the ISO [USA], and the Morenoite LIT-FT). Once again, we witness how the lack of coherent Marxist methodology and analysis inevitably leads to centrist confusion and vacillations

and ultimately into the camp of counter-revolution.

24. The overthrow itself was the result of the *Pravy Sektor's* military initiative following their rejection of the compromise which the other three parties of the Maidan movement signed with the Yanukovich government. The rapid growth of fascist forces should serve as an alarm for workers' movements both in the Ukraine and throughout Europe in general. For the first time since 1945, fascists entered a European government. However, it would be inaccurate to denounce the present government in Kiev as a "fascist government." Rather, it is a pro-Western coalition government composed of right-wing conservative parties and fascists, the latter being a minority: Svoboda and *Pravy Sektor* hold eight out of the twenty-seven governmental portfolios, and account for four out of twenty-four regional governorships.

25. By attempting to abolish Russian as an official language in the Ukraine, the new right-wing government immediately demonstrated that it constitutes a threat for the large portion of the Ukrainian population whose native language is Russian. (According to recent polls, this includes about 43–46% of the country's *total* population, who actually are the *majority* of the population in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine.) In addition, following the coup, the Communist Party was outlawed in several regions, and left-wing and trade union organizations were attacked by the fascists. Under these conditions, the RCIT called for mass mobilizations and the formation of armed self-defense units to fight back against the fascist threat. We call for the right of self-determination for national minorities, including the right of secession. We support the resistance of the Russian-speaking population and the formation of self-defense movements in the south and east of the Ukraine against the fascists and the new right-wing government.

26. For these reasons, we defend the right of the people of Crimea to secede from the Ukraine and join Russia. While, given the presence of Russian soldiers, the referendum which was held was certainly not conducted under democratic conditions, there is no doubt that it reflected the authentic desire of the Russian majority of the Crimea to join Russia.

27. At the same time, Marxists must defend the right of right of self-determination for the national minority of the Crimean Tatars. The Tatars were formerly the majority in Crimea, but suffered systematic oppression and expulsion by the Tsarist Empire. For example, about 100,000 Tatars were expelled after the Crimean War (1853–56). (8) At the same time, the Tsarist regime encouraged systematic settlement of Russian colonialists in the Crimea. As a result, the Tatars became a minority in Crimea in the later 19th century. In 1897, they constituted 34.1% of the Crimean population and, by 1921, only 25.9%. (9) In 1944, the Stalin regime collectively deported the Crimean Tatars to Central Asia. Today, about 300,000 Tatars live in the Crimea. Following the recent Russian annexation of the Crimea, the Tatars can once again expect new oppressive measures against them. According to the *Moscow Times*, Crimean Deputy Prime Minister Rustam Temirgaliyev wants the "*Tatars to vacate part of the land where they now live in exchange for new territory elsewhere in the region*". (10) This is understandably perceived by the Tatars as a threat for new expulsions, to which the official leaders of

the Crimean Tatars have responded with demands for full autonomy and a referendum on this issue. Not surprisingly, these demands have already been rejected by the pro-Russian Crimean government. The RCIT unconditionally supports the struggle for full and equal national rights for the Crimean Tatars, without giving the slightest political support to their bourgeois leadership.

28. The Ukrainian working class will face continuous attacks by the new right-wing government, which has already announced a 50% rise in the price of gasoline effective as of 1 May, as dictated by the IMF. The government is also planning to lay off many public sector workers. These economic attacks against the workers will be exacerbated by Russia's decision to raise the price of natural gas exported to the Ukraine. All this demonstrates how vital it is that the struggle *against* the looming fascist threat and *for* the defense of the rights of the Russian-speaking population of the Ukraine *must* be combined with mobilizations against these social attacks. Ukrainian socialists must link this struggle with a call for an immediate break with the IMF, NATO, and the EU, the nationalization of the country's industry and financial sector under workers' control, and the overthrow of the present government. To fight for the implementation of such a program, it is absolutely incumbent upon Ukrainian workers to establish an independent, revolutionary workers' party.

Reactionary Mobilizations in Venezuela and Thailand

29. The semi-fascist mobilizations against the Maduro government in Venezuela represent another attempt by sectors of the old elite and US imperialism to destabilize the country in order to provoke a coup d'état. As the RCIT has claimed in its public statements (including a joint statement made with the comrades of the CSR in Venezuela) it was the task of the workers' vanguard to mobilize – alongside the Bolivarian mass organizations – for the defeat of these provocations. (11) However, Marxists also have to note the substantial shift to the right by the bourgeois-populist Maduro government by its conclusion of a new "*Pacto de Punto Fijo*" with the capitalists' federations (Fedecámaras, Consecomercio, Fedeindustria, and Fedenaga). In addition, the Maduro government has increased the social attacks against the working class. However, this shift to the right increases the potential for divisions and splits in the Bolivarian movement. Hence, the coming period offers excellent opportunities to finally break the near monopoly of the bourgeois-populist PSUV over the working class movement and to build an independent and revolutionary workers' party.

30. Since late 2013, the old reactionary elite in Thailand has been trying to overthrow the current government of Yingluck Shinawatra by mobilizing demonstrations of its middle class dominated "*Yellow Shirts*" of the right-wing "*Democrat Party*." (12) While these provocations have not been sufficiently strong to bring down the government, they have created the pretext for the constitutional court to declare the last elections invalid (in which the right-wing opposition refused to stand because it feared another electoral defeat). Worse, this constitutional court is currently attempting to unseat the government. The political base of the current bourgeois-populist government – the "*Red Shirts*" who are mostly workers and peasants – has now

started their own mobilizations against these threats putting up to 200,000 demonstrators on the streets. Socialists in Thailand should identify the right-wing "*Yellow Shirts*" as the current main enemy. They should work alongside the "*Red Shirts*" in order to break them away from their capitalist leadership and to build a revolutionary workers' party.

The Arab Revolution – In Retreat, for Now

31. Since our last report on the world situation, the military dictatorship of General Sisi in *Egypt* has succeeded in consolidating its power. Following the coup d'état on 3 July 2013, it barbarously smashed the protest camps of the Muslim Brotherhood, carried through a fraudulent referendum on a new constitution, and is now about to elect General Sisi as the new president. All those reformists and centrists who denied the reactionary nature of the coup d'état and the defeat it signified for the working class, or who even welcomed it as a "*Second Revolution*," have been proven as completely bankrupt and useless to meet the tasks of the workers' vanguard. In spite of its massive wave of terror, the regime has not been able to break the resistance. The ongoing mass demonstrations against the dictatorship and the workers' strikes for economic demands show that the Egyptian Revolution has not been smashed. (13)

32. Furthermore, the crisis of the bourgeois Muslim Brotherhood, in particular among its young supporters, and the betrayal of the leadership of the independent trade unions which supports the dictatorship, create a political vacuum for revolutionaries. Provided that revolutionaries understand the nature of the current political process and derive appropriate strategic and tactical conclusions from it, they can utilize the search for a new orientation amongst the workers and youth vanguard in order to build a revolutionary workers' party.

33. The *Syrian Revolution* has suffered a number of setbacks. The lack of a revolutionary leadership has given reactionary forces like the pro-Western FSA and the radical-Islamist ISIS substantial influence in the leadership of the rebel movement. This has created enormous difficulties for the revolutionary struggle. It has weakened the resistance and has given the Assad dictatorship the opportunity to regain some territory. (14)

34. However, contrary to the propaganda disseminated by Assad's, the revolution is neither dead nor is it completely controlled by reactionary forces. Many local popular committees continue to exist and take local matters into their own hands. In addition, a powerful alliance of petty-bourgeois rebel forces has been formed in order to defeat the ultra-reactionary ISIS. Naturally, revolutionaries in Syria and internationally must continue to support the Syrian Revolution. The struggle of rebel forces against the ISIS-scum is justified and necessary. At the same time, revolutionaries must work hard to advance the formation of an independent workers' party based on a revolutionary program to offer the masses a political alternative to the Islamists and pro-Western forces.

35. We also stand on the side of the Kurdish people who fought and fight heroically for freedom. Defend the Kurdish people both against Assad and the reactionary Islamists from ISIS! The Syrian Revolution was, is and will

be also the revolution of the Kurdish people for freedom. For a united socialist Kurdistan of the workers and peasants!

36. *Libya* faces an ongoing revolutionary process marked by a very weak government, a lack of revolutionary leadership, and the dominance of petty-bourgeois Islamist forces. In our previous world situation document, we pointed out that last year Libya witnessed a number of strikes and wage increase struggles by public sector workers. The government is deeply unpopular. In March 2014, Prime Minister Ali Zeidan was voted out by parliament and fled the country to Europe. The parliament itself fears new elections and has unilaterally prolonged its existence, even though its term has already expired. Strikes and occupations of ports and oil refineries are continuing and are mixed with the desire of the population of the east for more autonomy and a share in the income of oil exports. These struggles can easily turn into another civil war, seeing how there are between 100,000–200,000 armed militia fighters (out of a total population of only 6 million people). Socialists should emphasize the need for action committees in places of work, neighborhoods and villages, as well as the formation of workers' and popular militias which are under the control of the working people.

Flashpoint of the Class Struggle

37. The *Bosnian Revolution* has been the most important case of workers' uprisings in the last half year. (15) The uprising has involved a combination of strikes, demonstrations, and a spontaneous violent insurrection in which working class youth played a major role. It opened a revolutionary situation in which the state apparatus and the ruling class were paralyzed and the workers and poor could have taken the power. However, the lack of a revolutionary leadership has meant that the ruling class, with the support of the imperialist EU, could re-stabilize the situation to a certain degree. However, the uprising of the masses has left a number of "*plenum građanki i građana*" (citizen plenum) in all larger cities like Tuzla (the working class heart of Bosnia) Sarajevo, Bihać, etc. These assemblies are not soviets, since they are not based in the residential and working centers of the proletariat. They can rather be compared with the *Assamblea Populare* which came to life in Argentina in 2002. In these assemblies, the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia has a disproportionately large influence and, hence, they play the role of lobbyists in the existing bourgeois parliaments, rather than serving as the organizing centre of the class struggle. While it is essential that revolutionaries intervene in these assemblies, the decisive task is to build the struggle in workplaces, to establish workers' assemblies, as well as to found a revolutionary workers' party in order to break the masses away from corrupted bourgeois parties like the SDA, SDP BiH, etc.

38. The Bosnian Revolution is of historical importance for two reasons. It is so far the peak of the struggle of the masses in the ex-Stalinist states in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe have risen up against the political and social agenda of restored capitalism. (16) Together with the unfinished democratic revolution in Bulgaria, the mass movements in Slovakia against the huge corruption of the government, the general strikes in Slovenia and Rumania, the progressive mass movement in Croatia against

the joining to the European Union and the struggle of the Roma people for equality, the Bosnian Revolution shows the way forward to the working masses of Eastern Europe and the Balkans. This indicates that the dark period in these countries, which started after 1991, is coming to an end. This gloomy period was itself the result of three combined factors: (1) the *political* atomization of the working class by decades of Stalinist dictatorship; (2) the failed political revolution of 1989–91; and (3) the *social* atomization of the proletariat through achieved by the capitalist restoration.

39. Secondly, the Bosnian Revolution is remarkable because of its multi-national and anti-nationalist character. Naturally, the Bosniak workers are playing the dominant role, but this is only logical because: (1) they are the strongest national group; (2) they are the most urbanized, industrialized, and proletarianized national group; and (3) they are much less influenced by reactionary nationalism, precisely because it was they who stood at the centre of the legitimate national liberation struggle in 1992–95 against the terror bands of Karadžić, Mladić, and Milosević.

40. Various developments in *South Africa* prove that, since the heroic Marikana miners' strike in summer 2012, the country has entered a new, pre-revolutionary phase. In addition to a number of militant strikes, we are seeing for the first time a split of significant sectors of the working class with the popular-frontist ANC-SACP government. The most important event of this historic development is NUMSA's break with the popular frontist ANC-SACP government. NUMSA calls for the formation of a united front against the neoliberal attacks of the government, as well as for the formation of a "Movement for Socialism" which many workers interpret as a call for a new mass workers' party. In addition, the petty-bourgeois left-populist *Economic Freedom Fighters*, led by the former ANC Youth leader Julius Malema, attracts a lot of support among black youth and militant workers. Finally, there is also the *Workers and Socialist Party* (WASP), which is led by the right-centrist DSM/CWI, but which has received support from sectors of the workers' vanguard. (17)

41. The above developments can only be characterized as historic. They indeed open the road to the formation of a mass workers' party. Unfortunately, the NUMSA leadership remains trapped in a Stalinist schema of the "national-democratic revolution," and has announced its return to the old ANC program of the 1950s (the "Freedom Charter"). In addition, the leadership of NUMSA vacillates around the question of whether to build a new workers' party now, and refuses to put forth candidates in the upcoming parliamentary elections. This is shameful, and revolutionaries in South Africa should explain in their independent propaganda to the workers' vanguard that the NUMSA leadership is heading in the wrong direction. Nevertheless, regardless of such criticism, South African revolutionaries must make every effort to participate in the movement initiated by NUMSA and fight shoulder by shoulder with the workers' vanguard.

42. What should be the position of Marxists vis-à-vis the 2014 South African general elections to be held on May 7? Naturally, they cannot call upon workers to vote for the popular-frontist ANC-SACP list, which has implemented a neoliberal policy for the last two decades. Should they, perhaps, give critical support to Malema's Economic Free-

dom Fighters? While Marxists should definitely deploy the united front tactic in relation to the EFF so as to reach its young militant supporters, a critical vote for the EFF is *not* permissible, since it is not a working class organization.

43. We propose that revolutionaries in South Africa give *critical electoral support for the WASP*. Why? Because it is the only *working class* party standing for these elections. While it is small and will probably receive only a small number of votes, it definitely represents more than simply the DSM/CWI, as it has roots among the workers' vanguard. A strong turnout for the WASP will constitute an important call to the workers' vanguard to found an independent mass workers' party to the left of the ANC and SACP. However, such electoral support – lest it be seen as opportunistic – must be combined with sharp criticism of the WASP program and leadership. WASP's electoral manifesto does not explain that socialism can only be achieved via a workers' revolution. It tirelessly repeats the old reformist slogans of "*democratization of the police*" instead of openly calling for armed self-defense units of the workers and poor to defend the working class against massacres similar to Marikana. (18) All this reflects the rotten program of the DSM/CWI which is based on the illusionary dogma of a peaceful transformation to socialism, and their equally reformist notion that police officers are "*workers in uniform*." Worse, the DSM/CWI leadership has chosen Moses Mayekiso as their "presidential candi-

date." While Mayekiso had a militant past as a trade union leader during the 1980s, subsequently he integrated himself in leading positions of the ANC and the SACP and later became a corrupt capitalist involved in shady deals. (For example, Mayekiso served as CEO of *Sanco Investment Holdings* which in 1999 received R2.5 million for its service in a huge arms deal with the Swedish corporation SAAB, something Mayekiso himself has admitted.) (19) Mayekiso is a quintessential example of a once leader of the workers who has transformed himself into a traitorous servant of the bourgeoisie. By selecting Mayekiso as their "presidential candidate," the WASP/CWI leadership demonstrates its cynical attitude to the cause of working class liberation. Socialists who are campaigning for WASP must sharply denounce Mayekiso as well as the WASP leadership which supports him, and should call for his immediate removal from the list.

44. The spontaneous mass uprisings in *Brazil* last year constituted a key event of the international class struggle. These demonstrations were the largest since the end of the military dictatorship in 1985. While, in general, the wave of mass mobilizations has declined, it has repeatedly flared up and is likely to return to full strength when Brazil hosts the world cup competition this summer. In addition, this movement has inspired more militant workers' strikes as well as mass protests during the negotiations related to the privatization of the Libra pre-salt oilfields off the coast of Brazil. The reaction of the PT government of

NEW RCIT PUBLICATION ON RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM!

Russia as a Great Imperialist Power

The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire

By Michael Pröbsting, March 2014

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Dilma Rousseff to these developments has been a combination of vague promises and an increase in repression, as has been demonstrated by the escalation of police violence against demonstrators as well as the militarization of the *favelas*. (20)

45. Revolutionaries continue to advocate the formation of action committees in workplaces and neighborhoods as well as the organizing of self-defense units to repel the repression of the state apparatus. They argue for the preparation of a general strike to unite the resistance and to launch a counter-offensive against the government. It is also urgent to conduct debates within the unions, about the need to split with the PT, and to found an independent workers' party based on a revolutionary program.

46. Similarly, in *Turkey* we have also witnessed a decline in the wave of mass mobilizations which shook the Erdoğan regime last summer. (21) However, they too have not entirely disappeared but have repeatedly flared up. This became unmistakable during the huge mass demonstration at the funeral of the 15-year old youth, Berkin Elvan, in mid-March 2014. With two million people demonstrating in fifty-three provinces throughout Turkey, this was the largest mobilization since the military coup d'état in 1980. (22) Clearly, since the summer of 2013, a new political phase has opened in Turkey.

47. This has helped to cause a deep split inside the Turkish ruling class between the Erdoğan regime on one hand and its former ally, the conservative Islamist Gülen movement on the other. The remaining Kemalists in the state apparatus and the CHP are trying to finesse this. While the Erdoğan regime tries to stabilize its power by adopting steps characteristic of an authoritarian regime (e.g., police repression against demonstrations, restrictions of Twitter and YouTube), there is also the danger of a coup d'état by the old Kemalist elite, either via the military or the constitutional court. Socialists must not support either of these bourgeois camps. They should, however, use the increased space to advance the class struggle, as well as the national liberation struggle of the Kurdish people, and to build an independent workers' party based on a revolutionary program.

48. It is in *Spain* that the most important events related to the class struggle in Europe took place during the last six months. During this period the country saw mass demonstrations against the conservative PP government's initiative to outlaw women's right of abortion. This constitutes the most important attack on women's rights in Europe for decades. In late March, the country witnessed the magnificent, two million strong "*Marcha de la Dignidad*" (March of Dignity) against poverty and unemployment. This was organized by 300 collectives and social platforms. However, the reformist, ex-Stalinist PCE and *Izquierda Unida* (IU) exert an inordinate bureaucratic influence on these mobilizations, as they control a strong organizational national apparatus.

49. Revolutionaries in Spain should fight within these movements to advance the formation of action committees of the masses and organize the struggle against the hegemony of the reformist bureaucracy. They should call for a national congress of delegates from all local, regional, and national organizations and initiatives of the working class and the youth. The central slogan should be a call for a general strike as a tool to unify working class resistance

and to orient it to the workplaces. Most importantly, socialists should advocate the need to build a revolutionary workers' party.

50. At the *elections to the European Parliament* between 22 and 25 May 2014, socialists should deploy the tactic of critical electoral support wherever the preconditions for such exist. Such a tactic is valid whenever reformist or centrist parties of the workers' movement stand in elections. (This tactic is also valid for petty-bourgeois forces which lead liberation struggles of oppressed or discriminated against nations.) As Lenin explained at the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920, this tactic involves a call to vote for such reformist or centrist workers' parties, while at the same time warning about their treacherous leaderships, but also calls for the workers to organize the struggle themselves while placing demands on their supposed leaders in order to unmask them. There are a number of countries where left-reformist parties are standing in elections and which represent the hopes for the struggle against the relentless austerity offensive of the ruling class. Hence the RCIT proposes to socialists in their respective countries to give critical electoral support to the IU in Spain, SYRIZA in Greece, the *Linkspartei* in Germany, or the *Front de Gauche* in France. In addition, Socialists in the Basque Country should consider critical electoral support for the left-wing nationalist *Basque Country Gather* (EHB). In countries where the social democratic party is the only force of the workers' movement, critical electoral support for them may *possibly* be the correct tactic.

51. Against the backdrop of the deepening economic and political crisis of capitalism, the *national question in Europe* takes on greater significance. As in all other democratic issues, Marxists have to differentiate between the aspirations of an oppressed, discriminated against, or non-equal nation and those of oppressor or privileged nation. Therefore the RCIT supports the legitimate struggles of the former and vehemently opposes those of the latter. We support the right of national self-determination for the discriminated nations. This means that we call for equality in terms language rights, access to the state resources, etc. In those cases where the majority of a non-equal nation wishes an independent state, Marxists have to support this. Thus they call for an *independent workers' republic* for the given nation and combine this with the slogan of *United Socialist States of Europe*. (23) Furthermore, they have to launch vehement *agitation* against nationalism and for the international unity of the working class. In other cases, Marxists will support the call for autonomy and forms of self-government of the respective territories. Such support for national and democratic rights has to be applied to all non-equal nations, irrespective of whether they are situated within imperialist or semi-colonial states, and regardless of whether they would, after secession, find themselves within another imperialist or a semi-colonial state (if the working class cannot take power in time). This is only logical since all democratic demands against discrimination – like equal rights for women, youth, lesbian and gays, etc – apply not only to the working class members of these groups but also those of the middle class and the bourgeoisie.

52. Based on this methodological approach, the RCIT supports the desire of the Basque and the Catalan people to leave the oppressive Spanish state and to form their own

republics. We say: *“For an independent Workers Republic of Catalonia and of the Basque Country!”* The harsh long-time suppression of the Basque nationalists by the Spanish state and the recent decision of Madrid to ban the planned referendum on independence in Catalonia demonstrate that the national question in Spain has an explosive democratic character. The Spanish workers’ movement must mobilize against the reactionary Spanish state and at the same time advocate the joint workers’ struggle against the austerity offensive of the PP government. On the other hand, there are also reactionary separatist movements like the Venetian one. This is reactionary campaign of a privileged nation which must be resolutely opposed by the workers’ movement.

53. The recently published IPCC Report on the *Climate Change* has again confirmed the warning of Marxists and many progressive ecological initiatives about the dramatic threats of climate change. While the entire world will be affected by the consequences of climate crisis, it is the poor countries of the South who will bear the main brunt of this catastrophe. According to the report, rainfall patterns will change and cause flooding which will threaten to wipe out homes, businesses, and energy supplies. Droughts will lead to a shortage of safe drinking water. Storms will damage the infrastructure. As a result, food production could fall by 2% per decade in the coming period. In short, the climate crisis will substantially spread poverty and hunger. Once again, this demonstrates that the decline of capitalism in the present historic period poses mankind with the alternative: *socialism or barbarism*. Of course, there is nothing inevitable about the climate crisis. According to the IPCC scientists, a figure of \$100 billion per year could help the poor countries to deal with climate change. (Typically, this figure was deleted in the final version of the report at the insistence of the US and other imperialist governments.) The climate crisis will also further contribute to the destabilization of the world capitalist system and provoke more civil wars. It is not surprising that the strategists of the ruling class already prepare themselves for more turmoil and armed conflicts. Such writes the Pentagon in its latest issue of the *Quadrennial Defense Review*: *“Climate change may exacerbate water scarcity and lead to sharp increases in food costs. The pressures caused by climate change will influence resource competition while placing additional burdens on economies, societies, and governance institutions around the world. These effects are threat multipliers that will aggravate stressors abroad such as poverty, environmental degradation, political instability, and social tensions – conditions that can enable terrorist activity and other forms of violence.”* (24)

III. Imperialism, War and the Revolutionary Program

54. We have pointed out that the new world political phase is marked by the heightening of inter-imperialist rivalry and the emergence of a Cold War between the US/EU and Russia (and China). This makes the understanding and application of the Leninist program against imperialist militarism and wars mandatory for the workers’ vanguard. The starting point for every Marxist must be the famous dictum of the Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz who summarized the essence of any military conflict by the famous words, often repeated by Friedrich

Engels and V.I. Lenin: *“War is merely a continuation of policy by other means.”* (25) In Marxist terms this means that the working class must fundamentally oppose its imperialist government equally in times of peace as well as in times of war. It must use – regardless of whether in peace or war – every weakness and crisis of its class enemy to undermine and ultimately overthrow it. This is why Lenin and the Bolsheviks and later Trotsky and the Fourth International made the principle *“Turn the imperialist war into a civil war!”* a pillar of the revolutionary program.

55. To win the workers’ vanguard, and later the entire proletariat, for such a revolutionary anti-war program, Marxists must, even in times of peace, consistently make the case for proletarian internationalism on all issues. They must explain the need for the workers to break *with every form of political and ideological identification with the imperialist national state*. Trotsky explained this in his crucial document *War and the Fourth International*: *“A ‘socialist’ who preaches national defense is a petty-bourgeois reactionary at the service of decaying capitalism. Not to bind itself to the national state in time of war, to follow not the war map but the map of the class struggle, is possible only for that party that has already declared irreconcilable war on the national state in time of peace. Only by realizing fully the objectively reactionary role of the imperialist state can the proletarian vanguard become invulnerable to all types of social patriotism. This means that a real break with the ideology and policy of “national defense” is possible only from the standpoint of the international proletarian revolution.”* (26)

56. From this follows the need for Marxists to mobilize the working class in the imperialist countries not only against all forms of militarism and aggressive foreign policy. They must also explain that the workers must unconditionally support the struggles of the oppressed people against the imperialist states – in particular those who are in conflict with their “own” ruling class. Trotsky summarized this principle in his statement: *“The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A “neutral” position is tantamount to support of imperialism.”* (27)

57. Another expression of proletarian internationalism is the unconditional support of Marxists for the complete liberation of national minorities, including the migrants, living in their own and in all other imperialist countries. Thus Bolshevik-Communists advocate the struggle for equal rights for migrants, who are, in their vast majority, a nationally oppressed layer of super-exploited labor, and national minorities. As the RCIT has elaborated repeatedly, this includes the struggle for equal wages, access to jobs, equal language rights, etc. In addition, Bolshevik-Communists oppose the reactionary control of immigration by the imperialist states. The transformation of the imperialist states into armed fortresses to keep out poor masses from the semi-colonial world is a prime example for the existing global Apartheid regime which divides the world – and hence the world proletariat – in exploiter and exploited nations. Marxists in the imperialist countries must resolutely oppose their aristocratic ruling class and raise the slogan for *“Open Borders.”* This slogan against imperialist border control will substantially increase in importance given the rising tide of migrants from the South hoping to enter the rich North due to the

barbaric super-exploitation of the South and the dramatic, worldwide climate change. During the present period of globalization, in which migrants constitute an ever increasing proportion of the working class in imperialist countries, the struggle for full equal rights for migrants is one of the most important issues about which Marxists must prepare the proletariat in the imperialist world in their campaign against future imperialist aggression and wars. In addition, the fact that migrants represent a substantial minority of the proletariat will create tremendous difficulties for the imperialist ruling class in their future wars. This is because, from the start, they have a sizeable minority which is much less, or not at all, inclined to rally to the defense of the "national fatherland" – in particular if, for example, the ruling class wages wars against oppressed peoples with whom the migrants share either national or religious links. To summarize, the proletarian internationalist struggle for equality of migrants and open borders constitutes *the* most important political and ideological preparation of the working class in the imperialist countries for the coming waves of chauvinism against the backdrop of increasing inter-imperialist rivalry.

58. Concerning the issue of imperialist aggression and war, Marxists have to fight against various opportunistic trends inside the workers' movement. First, we have to fight against pacifism which opposes imperialist wars with helpless appeals to morality and the United Nations, and which renounces violence out of principle. While there is a progressive aspect to such sentiments when they are advanced by politically-raw workers who, in this way, attempt to express their hatred for imperialist wars, when propagated by various petty-bourgeois, social democratic, and Stalinist forces this ideology is utterly reactionary. In such cases it is an ideology cynically used to disarm the workers and oppressed peoples when, in fact, the latter can *only* achieve liberation from the imperialist yoke by means of an armed class struggle.

59. Secondly, Marxists must acutely fight against those reformist and centrist forces which, in one way or another, opportunistically adapt to their own bourgeoisie. If they already adapt to their own ruling class in times of peace, it is guaranteed that they will completely capitulate when the pressure to do so increases. The Japanese Communist Party's support for its governments colonial claims to various islands in the East China Sea, or the refusal of various centrist groups like the CWI or the IMT to defend the semi-colonial nations who have become victims of the aggression of their own imperialist bourgeoisie (Malvinas war 1982, Afghanistan since 2001, Iraq 2003, Palestine, etc.), are glaring examples of this. These forces openly adapt to social-patriotism. In fact, they are social-imperialists. (28) Trotsky already emphasized that Marxists have observed the concrete policy of such "socialist" groups: *"At the same time, it is necessary to follow attentively the inner struggle in the reformist camp and attract in time the left socialist groupings developing towards revolution to a struggle against war. The best criterion of the tendencies of a given organization is its attitude in practice, in action, toward national defence and toward colonies, especially in those cases in which the bourgeoisie of a given country owns colonial slaves. Only a complete and real break with official public opinion on the most burning question of the "defence of the fatherland" signifies a turn, or at least the beginning of a turn from bourgeois positions to proletarian*

positions. The approach to left organizations of this type should be accompanied by friendly criticism of all indecision in their policy and by a joint elaboration of all theoretical and practical questions of war." (29)

60. Finally there are those reformist and centrist forces who oppose the foreign policy of their own imperialist bourgeoisie by giving – directly or indirectly – support to the rival imperialist power. This is often justified by claiming that these powers are less imperialistic or not imperialistic at all, that they are more democratic, etc. For example various Stalinists and centrists claim that China is a kind of workers' state or at least a non-imperialist capitalist country. Others claim that Russia is not an imperialist but a semi-colonial or a "pre-imperialist" state. All these serve as justifications for lending these powers support against the US and EU. Conversely, there are also various petty-bourgeois progressive forces in Russia and China who justify tactical support for the US or the EU because these countries are less authoritarian. All this is a complete betrayal of the principles of proletarian internationalism. Such an opportunistic adaptation to a rival imperialist power has nothing to do with anti-imperialism. It is in fact just another form of social-patriotism. Ignoring the imperialist character of Russia and China forces one to walk not only into the theoretical trap of Kautskyanism but also into the political trap of an inverted social-imperialism. (30) Marxists must follow the principle as formulated by Trotsky: *"The struggle against war, properly understood and executed, presupposes the uncompromising hostility of the proletariat and its organizations, always and everywhere, toward its own and every other imperialist bourgeoisie."* (31)

61. The sharpening of the inter-imperialist rivalry will increase conflicts and wars in the semi-colonial world which are in fact proxy-wars between different Great Powers. An actual example for this is the Maidan movement and the new right-wing government in the Ukraine which acted as a proxy of US and EU imperialism. Naturally, in such cases Marxists must not lend any support for such forces as many centrists have done so in the Ukraine.

62. At the same time, it would be an equal criminal mistake to subsume all struggles in the semi-colonial world as imperialist proxy-wars. While it is unavoidable that various imperialist powers will try to utilize national and democratic struggles in the South to advance their own influence, this does not mean that the struggle for democracy and national liberation ceases to exist as a progressive factor in world politics. This would be a reactionary conclusion which would condemn socialists to stand at the sidelines of the class struggle. In fact it would be a capitulation to the bankrupt methods of *"imperialist economism"* against which Lenin warned already a century ago. As we wrote in another document, Marxists have to *"concretely analyze if a given democratic or national liberation struggle becomes fully subordinated to the imperialist maneuvers and doesn't possess any significant internal dynamic of a workers and peasant liberation struggle. If this is the case, Marxists must change their position and give up critical support for the national liberation struggle."* (32) This was the method on which Lenin and the Bolsheviks based their policy: *"Britain and France fought the Seven Years' War for the possession of colonies. In other words, they waged an imperialist war (which is possible on the basis of slavery and primitive capitalism as well as on the basis of modern highly developed*

capitalism). France suffered defeat and lost some of her colonies. Several years later there began the national liberation war of the North American States against Britain alone. France and Spain, then in possession of some parts of the present United States, concluded a friendship treaty with the States in rebellion against Britain. This they did out of hostility to Britain, i.e., in their own imperialist interests. French troops fought the British on the side of the American forces. What we have here is a national liberation war in which imperialist rivalry is an auxiliary element, one that has no serious importance. This is the very opposite to what we see in the war of 1914-16 (the national element in the Austro-Serbian War is of no serious importance compared with the all-determining element of imperialist rivalry). It would be absurd, therefore, to apply the concept imperialism indiscriminately and conclude that national wars are "impossible". A national liberation war, waged, for example, by an alliance of Persia, India and China against one or more of the imperialist powers, is both possible and probable, for it would follow from the national liberation movements in these countries. The transformation of such a war into an imperialist war between the present-day imperialist powers would depend upon very many concrete factors, the emergence of which it would be ridiculous to guarantee." (33)

63. We have to be prepared that the heightened inter-imperialist rivalry will also increase the confusion and economist deviations in the left-reformist and centrist camp. Against this, the RCIT repeats: The struggle against imperialism and capitalism is *impossible* without the consistent support for the liberation struggle of the oppressed people for democratic rights and national liberation. Those, who fail in this task, fail to understand the essence of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution and mislead the workers' vanguard.

IV. Crisis of Working Class Leadership and the Building of the New International

64. As we outlined above, the new political phase bears a highly contradictory character because of its amalgamation of inter-imperialist rivalry, unfinished revolutions, and counter-revolutionary events. Given the absence of an authoritative revolutionary party, this will have enormously confusing effects for the workers' vanguard. This increases the responsibility of the authentic revolutionary forces to provide the workers' vanguard with a scientific analysis of the world events as well as with clear programmatic answers and perspectives. The RCIT dedicates all its resources to fulfilling this responsibility.

65. The highly contradictory nature of the new political phase will also accelerate the outright bankruptcy of illusions in "the unity of the left" which have been so fashionable in the last few years among left-reformists and centrists. We will see more and more events where these groups will stand on opposite sides of the barricades and, thus, prove how idiotic it was to propagate unity at all costs – a unity devoid of a joint methodology and program. (See, for example, the events in the Ukraine, Syria, and Egypt where left-reformists and centrists of all sorts stood on different sides of the barricades.) Bolshevik-Communists have to refine the lessons of the complete bankruptcy of "left unity" and explain the need for socialists to break with such a liquidationist approach. While most centrists poo-hooed the Leninist conception of a vanguard party, it is now clearer than ever that only a solid program and

a disciplined organization can provide the type of leadership the working class needs.

66. The highly contradictory and confusing character of the new phase will also polarize and politicize the workers' movement. It forces all socialists to take a stand and hence will intensify discussions and debates about perspectives and programs. This will provide excellent opportunities for Bolshevik-Communists to intervene in these debates and win the best elements for a revolutionary perspective. At the same time, it will accelerate the decline of the old centrist left. It has already proven incapable of finding an orientation in the new historic period, and has been marked by crises, splits, and decline. This is only natural when organizations with non-revolutionary programs, orientations, and mentalities collide with the sharp contradictions of an historic revolutionary period.

67. We have repeatedly stated that the crisis of leadership of the working class becomes more and more painfully noticeable in the present historic period. The enormous aggravation of the contradictions, the stagnant state of the world economy, the sharpening of the inter-imperialist rivalry, the climate crisis – all these demonstrate over and over again what we have been stressing for several years. This period is marked by an historic crisis of capitalism which poses the alternative "*Socialism or Barbarism*" and is consequently marked by acute political clashes which will place the "*Actuality of the Revolution*" on the agenda. As a result, increasing urgent has become the need for the timely formation of revolutionary parties on a national level and a *World Party of Socialist Revolution*, which will be the Fifth Workers International. As we have written in another document, *the tempo of the class struggle accelerates much faster than the tempo of accumulation of class struggle-orientated workers organizations*. Hence, class consciousness and class organizations lag far behind the struggle. (34) It is likely that mankind will see historic events in the next few decades which will decide its future, if it has a future at all.

68. Therefore revolutionaries must emphasize that this is absolutely not the time for Marxists to build discussion clubs and purely propaganda circles. No, even when the authentic revolutionary forces are weak, they must build Bolshevik combat organizations with an orientation to exemplary mass work and agitation, serious theoretical work, clear propaganda and sharp polemics against the bankrupt forces inside the movements of the working class and the oppressed. These pre-party organizations must orientate themselves neither to the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia nor the labor aristocracy, but first and foremost to *the proletariat of the South as well as the lower strata of the proletariat in the old imperialist metropolises*. Equally, we repeat that the forces for new revolutionary parties and the new Workers' International will not accumulate by the addition, the "regroupment," or the "left unity" of revolutionaries with left-reformist and centrist forces. Of course there are and will be healthy forces among the socialist left around the world. But only those sharing the orientation towards the new layers of the vastly expanding world proletariat which is joining the class struggle will themselves be able to contribute to the building of the new International. We call upon all militant workers and youth to join the RCIT in its efforts to build a revolutionary leadership which can lead the working class towards victory before

the ruling classes suck mankind down into the abyss of barbarism.

Footnotes

(1) See RCIT: Aggravation of Contradictions, Deepening of Crisis of Leadership. Theses on Recent Major Developments in the World Situation Adopted by the RCIT's International Executive Committee, 9.9.2013, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 15, pp. 24-40, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-september2013/>; RCIT: The World Situation and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Communists. Theses of the International Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, March 2013, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 8, pp.33-42, www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-march-2013

(2) See RCIT: Counterrevolution and Mass Resistance in the Ukraine, 17.4.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/mass-resistance-in-ukraine/>

(3) Ed Dolan: US business investment still stuck. First Look at Q4 Domestic Income Shows Labor Share at Record Low, Corporate Profits at Record High, March 27th, 2014, <http://thenextrecession.wordpress.com/2014/03/30/us-business-investment-still-stuck/>

(4) Credit Suisse: Global Equity Strategy. Four macro trends: Who benefits? Who gets hurt? 29 October 2013, p. 6

(5) Credit Suisse: Global Equity Strategy. Four macro trends: Who benefits? Who gets hurt? 29 October 2013, p. 9

(6) See Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 21, pp. 31-32, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>

(7) We refer readers to the RCIT's latest statement on the Ukraine crisis which contains in its appendix also references to all statements which we have issued until now on this event. See RCIT: Counterrevolution and Mass Resistance in the Ukraine, 17.4.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/mass-resistance-in-ukraine/>

(8) Alan W. Fisher: The Crimean Tatars, Stanford 1978, p. 89

(9) Gwendolyn Sasse: The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict, Harvard 2007, p. 275

(10) Crimean Tatars Asked to Vacate Land, Regional Official Says, The Moscow Times 19 March 2014, <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/crimean-tatars-asked-to-vacate-land-regional-official-says/496451.html>

(11) See RCIT and CSR: Venezuela: Only the Working Class under the Leadership of a Leninist Combat Party can achieve a Revolutionary Socialist Solution of the Crisis!, 16.3.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/venezuela-joint-statement/> as well as other statements of the RCIT on Venezuela (see <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/>)

(12) See also RCIT: Thailand: Defeat the looming reactionary Coup D'état!, 4.12.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/thailand-looming-coup-d-%C3%A9tat/> as well as Michael Pröbsting: Thailand: CWI's Disgraceful Support for the Bosses' "Yellow Shirts", 15.1.2014, [\[asia/cwi-on-thailand/\]\(http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/asia/cwi-on-thailand/\)](http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/</p>
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(13) We refer readers to the RCIT's latest statement on the situation in Egypt which contains in its appendix also references to all statements which we have issued until since the coup d'état in July 2013. See RCIT: Egypt: Mobilize International Solidarity against General Sisi's Machinery of Repression! 28.3.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/stop-repression-in-egypt/>

(14) We refer readers to the RCIT's latest document on the civil war in Syria which contains in its footnote 39 also references to our statements and articles which we have issued in the last 12 months. See Yossi Schwartz: The Myth of Assad's Syria as an Anti-Imperialist Regime, November 2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/myth-of-assad-s-anti-imperialism/>

(15) We refer readers to the RCIT's statement on the Bosnian uprising: Victory to the Bosnian Revolution! 9.2.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/bosnian-revolution/> See also several reports and articles as well as articles in other languages by Almedina "Nina" Gunić and others on the RCIT's website at <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/>, <http://www.thecommunists.net/home/bosanski-hrvatski-srpski/> and <http://www.thecommunists.net/home/deutsch/>.

(16) The only event which had a similar character was the Albanian popular insurrection in spring 1997. However, this insurrection was less directed against the social consequences of capitalism (closure of factories, privatization, etc.) and more limited against the corrupt and authoritarian government of Sali Berisha.

(17) We refer readers to the latest RCIT statement on South Africa: South Africa: Forward to the Building of a Mass Workers' Party Based on a Revolutionary Program! 5.2.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/south-africa-workers-party/> as well as other documents in South Africa at <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/>.

(18) WASP: Only Socialism means Freedom. 2014 Election Manifesto

(19) See e.g. Mail & Guardian: How arms dealers pampered Sanco, 08 Apr 2005 <http://mg.co.za/article/2005-04-08-how-arms-dealers-pampered-sanco>

(20) We refer readers to the latest RCIT article on Brazil: CCR: From the June protests on the streets towards the path of electoral illusions? 11.1.2014, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/latin-america/brazil-report/>. In footnote 10 of this article reader can find references to other statements and articles of our assessment of the class struggle in Brazil in 2013.

(21) We refer readers to the RCIT statement on Turkey: 'Long live the Protest on Taksim Square!' – 'Long live International Solidarity!' 'Yaşasın Taksim direnişimiz!' – 'Yaşasın halkların kardeşliği!', 3.6.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/turkey-victory-to-protest-on-taksim-square/>. See also Yossi Schwartz: Turkey: Down with the repressive Regime of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the AKP! 3.6.2013, <http://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/down-with-erdogan-regime/>

(22) Fevzi Kizilkoyun: Two million marched, 417 arrested during Berkin Elvan protests as 'disproportionate force' probed, Hürriyet, 14.3.2014, <http://www.hurriyetdaily->

news.com/two-million-marched-417-arrested-during-berkin-elvan-protests-as-disproportionate-force-probed.aspx?PageID=238&NID=63566&NewsCatID=341

(23) Therefore we reject the approach of the Moreonite tradition which has repeatedly raised the slogan for an independent state, not as a workers' state but as bourgeois-democratic state, i.e., one with a capitalist class character.

(24) US Department of Defense: 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review, p. 8

(25) Carl von Clausewitz: Vom Kriege (1832), Hamburg 1963, p. 22; in English: Carl von Clausewitz: On War, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1946/1946-h/1946-h.htm>

(26) Leon Trotsky: War and the Fourth International (1934), in: Trotsky Writings 1933-34, p. 305

(27) Leon Trotsky: Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau (1936), in: Documents of the Fourth International, New York 1973, p. 99

(28) On the Marxist position in the struggle of the oppressed people against imperialism see Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism, 2013, Chapter 12 and 13, <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>

(29) Leon Trotsky: War and the Fourth International (1934),

in: Trotsky Writings 1933-34, p. 328

(30) Michael Pröbsting: Russia as a Great Imperialist Power. The formation of Russian Monopoly Capital and its Empire – A Reply to our Critics, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 21, p. 32, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/imperialist-russia/>

(31) Leon Trotsky: Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau (1936), in: Documents of the Fourth International, New York 1973, p. 99

(32) See Michael Pröbsting: Liberation struggles and imperialist interference. The failure of sectarian "anti-imperialism" in the West: Some general considerations from the Marxist point of view and the example of the democratic revolution in Libya in 2011, in: Revolutionary Communism, No. 5 (English-language Journal of the RCIT), p. 30, <http://www.thecommunists.net/theory/liberation-struggle-and-imperialism>

(33) V. I. Lenin: The Junius Pamphlet (1916); in: CW 22, p. 310-11

(34) See RCIT: The World Situation and the Tasks of the Bolshevik-Communists. Theses of the International Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency, March 2013, in: Revolutionary Communism No. 8, p. 41, www.thecommunists.net/theory/world-situation-march-2013 ■

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Successful Meeting on Book Launch of German Translation of “The Great Robbery of the South”

Report from the RKOB (RCIT Section in Austria), 12.4.2014

More than 50 people participated in a meeting in Vienna where the German translation of Michael Pröbsting’s book “*The Great Robbery of the South*” was presented. In addition to the author, Rami Ali (chairman of the „Egyptian-Austrian Youth“) and Hermann Dworzak (a long-time militant of the “Fourth International” of the late Ernest Mandel) spoke from the platform. The meeting was chaired by Hannes Hofbauer from the publishing house Promedia, which published the book. Michael Pröbsting, who is also the International Secretary of the RCIT, summarized in his introduction the main ideas of his book. He showed the increasing control of the world economy by a small group of imperialist monopolies. He also emphasized the shift of capitalist value production and the international working class to the South. Finally, he elaborated the various forms of imperialist super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. After a lively discussion the meeting closed and participants joined the buffet which was prepared by comrades from the RKOB und the youth organization RED*REVOLUTION.

Another meeting about the book will take place in Vienna on 17 May.

You can view photos and videos from the meeting at <http://www.rkob.net/multimedia/bilder-und-videos-gro%C3%9Fer-raub-im-sueden/>

You can order the German translation of “*The Great Robbery of the South*” either via the RCIT or the Promedia publishing house. The book costs 17,90,- Euro.

www.thecommunists.net and <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>

<http://www.mediashop.at/typolight/index.php/buecher/items/michael-proebsting---der-grosse-raub-im-sueden>

The original English version of the “*The Great Robbery of the South*” can be ordered via www.thecommunists.net and <http://www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net/>. It costs 15 Euro / 20 US-Dollars / 13 British Pound) plus delivery charges. ■

New Books from the RCIT

Michael Pröbsting: The Great Robbery of the South

Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism

The RCIT is proud to announce the publication of a new book. It’s called **THE GREAT ROBBERY OF THE SOUTH**. The book’s subtitle is: *Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*. The book is in English-language. It has 15 chapters, 448 pages and includes 139 Tables and Figures. The author of the book is Michael Pröbsting who is the *International Secretary* of the RCIT.

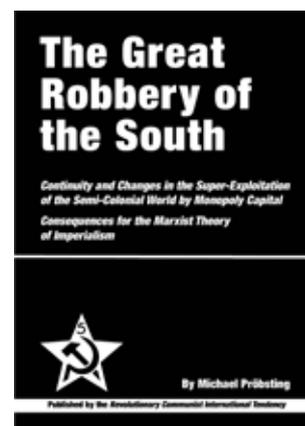
In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting analyses the super-exploitation and oppression of the semi-colonial world (often referred to as the “Third World”) by the imperialist powers and monopolies. He shows that the relationship between the small minority of rich capitalist countries and the huge majority of mankind living in the semi-colonial world forms one of the most important elements of the imperialist world system we are living in. The Great Robbery of the South shows that the past decades have been a complete confirmation of the validity of Lenin’s theory of imperialism and its programmatic conclusions.

The Great Robbery of the South demonstrates the important changes in the relationship between the imperialist and the semi-colonial countries. Using comprehensive material (including 139 Tables and Figures), Michael Pröbsting elaborates that never before has

such a big share of the world capitalist value been produced in the South. Never before have the imperialist monopolies been so dependent on the super-exploitation of the semi-colonial world. Never before has migrant labor from the semi-colonial world played such a significant role for the capitalist value production in the imperialist countries. Never before has the huge majority of the world working class lived in the South – outside of the old imperialist metropolises.

In *The Great Robbery of the South* Michael Pröbsting argues that a correct understanding of the nature of imperialism as well as of the program of permanent revolution which includes the tactics of consistent anti-imperialism is essential for anyone who wants to change the world and bring about a socialist future.

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Look for details of the books at www.great-robbery-of-the-south.net

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We work inside the trade unions and advocate class struggle, socialism and workers' democracy. But trade unions and social democracy are controlled by a bureaucracy. This bureaucracy is a layer which is connected with the state and capital via jobs and privileges. It is far from the interests and living circumstances of the members. This bureaucracy's basis rests mainly on the top, privileged layers of the working class - the workers' aristocracy. The struggle for the liberation of the working class must be based on the broad mass of the proletariat rather than their upper strata.

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

emancipation of the working class.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



