

Building the Revolutionary Party in Theory and Practice

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



By Michael Pröbsting

Published by the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency

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This book is dedicated to all those who devote their lives to the working class' liberation struggle and to the building of the revolutionary world party without which this liberation struggle can not win.

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Introduction

A few months ago, our movement commemorated its 25th anniversary. In the summer of 1989 our predecessor organization, the *League for a Revolutionary Communist International* (LRCI) was founded as a democratic-centralist international tendency based on an elaborated program. The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* (RCIT) continues the revolutionary tradition of the LRCI. Below we give an overview of our history, an evaluation of its achievements as well as mistakes, and a summary of the lessons for the struggles ahead. This book summarizes our theoretical and practical experience of the past 25 years.¹

* * * * *

In Chapter I we will outline a summary of the Bolshevik-Communists' theoretical conception of the role of the revolutionary party and its relation to the working class. In Chapter II we will elaborate on the essential characteristics of revolutionary party respective of the pre-party organization. In Chapter III we will deal with the history of our movement – the RCIT and its predecessor organization. Finally, in Chapter IV we will outline the main lessons of our 25 years of organized struggle for building a Bolshevik party and their meaning for our future work.²

* * * * *

We wish to express our special thanks to comrade Gerard Stephens who performed the English-language editing for this book.

1 Michael Pröbsting, the author of this book, became a political activist at the age of 14. Two years later, in 1984, he became a member of Ernest Mandel's *Fourth International (United Secretariat)*. After a faction struggle against the centrist policy of its leadership, he left them in February 1989 and joined the LRCI (renamed to *League for the Fifth International* in 2003). He served on the leadership bodies of the Austrian section from 1989 and of the LRCI/LFI from 1994 until he and his comrades-in-arms were expelled by the majority of this organization in April 2011. He worked as a fulltime party worker for the LFI since 1991. After their expulsion, the comrades founded the *Revolutionary Communist Organization LIBERATION* in Austria and the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* which today has sections in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Israel/Occupied Palestine, Brazil, USA and Austria as well as comrades-in-arms in Yemen and Sweden. He serves as the International Secretary of the RCIT.

2 We also refer readers to two documents on party building which our movement has previously published and which give a useful overview of our viewpoint: LFI: *The Method and Principles of Communist Organization* (2007), in: *Documents of the League for the Fifth International*, Vol. 1, 2009; LRCI: *Theses on the Early Stages of Party Building*, in: *Trotskyist Bulletin* No. 2 (1992). However, the latter text contains some erroneous formulations concerning the role of intellectuals in a communist pre-party organization which we correct in the present publication.