

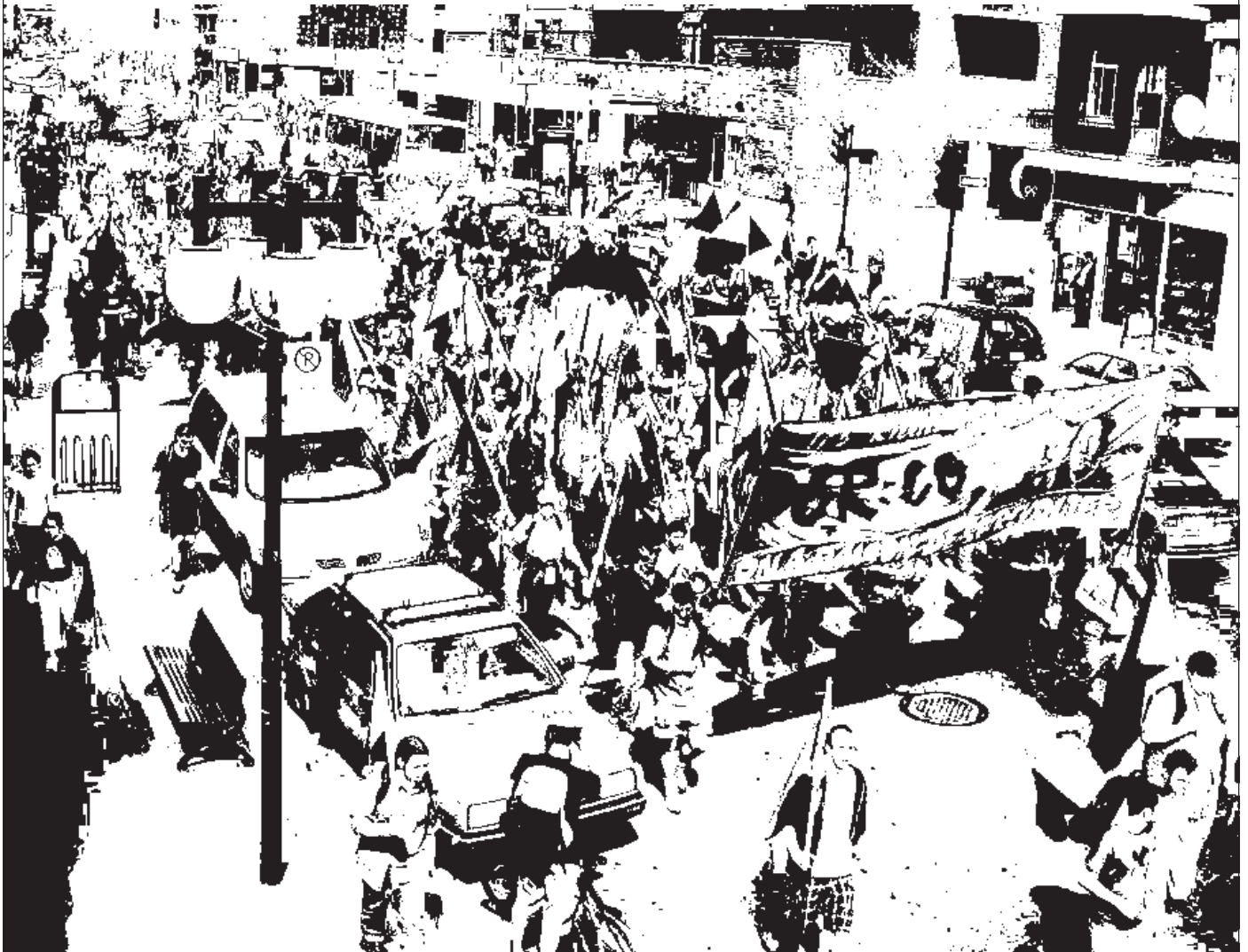
People's War

No. 2
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DIGEST

From Resistance to Revolution

*"Without a People's Army
the people have nothing" (Mao Zedong)*



ISSUED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY
(ORGANIZING COMMITTEES)



DIGEST

People's War DIGEST (PWD) is a Canadian publication entirely dedicated to advocate and promote peoples' war. This publication is for struggle and is truly internationalist. But at the same time, it is totally devoted to the Canadian working class, to its struggle for socialism and for its own liberation.

With People's War DIGEST, we want to propose to the revolutionary activists in Canada a selection of articles and documents produced by a variety of Maoist parties and organizations (or by other revolutionaries if it happens) that will help to understand and to give a wide overview of what the strategic line of people's war is all about. To produce progressively a clear and solid understanding of the people's war, by enlightening the weaknesses and hesitations here and there with the strongest we can find elsewhere: that is the first goal of PWD.

With People's War DIGEST, we want to bring our contribution in producing a true and genuine liaison between the Maoists across Canada—a tool at the service of all activists who wish to develop a true and significant revolutionary practice, like what our comrades from the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP[OC]) are doing in Québec.

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The People's War DIGEST Committee



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To reach the People's War DIGEST Committee:
pwd@pcr-rcpcanada.org

Comptoir Saint-Clément, C.P. 60556
Montréal (Qc) H1V 3T8

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www.pcr-rcpcanada.org

More on the question of waging revolutionary war in the imperialist countries

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“Policy is the starting-point of all the practical actions of a revolutionary party and manifests itself in the process and the end-result of that party’s actions. A revolutionary party is carrying out a policy whenever it takes any action. If it is not carrying out a correct policy, it is carrying out a wrong policy; if it is not carrying out a given policy consciously, it is doing so blindly. What we call experience is the process and the end-result of carrying out a policy. Only through the practice of the people, that is, through experience, can we verify whether a policy is correct or wrong and determine to what extent it is correct or wrong. But people’s practice, especially the practice of a revolutionary party and the revolutionary masses, cannot but be related to one policy or another. Therefore, before any action is taken, we must explain the policy, which we have formulated in the light of the given circumstances, to Party members and to the masses. Otherwise, Party members and the masses will depart from the guidance of our policy, act blindly and carry out a wrong policy.”

“On the Policy Concerning Industry and Commerce”
(February 27, 1948), *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung*,
Volume 4.

* * *

We are publishing these working notes that have been produced at the RCP(OC) Politbureau’s request, in order to pursue the study of the protracted people’s war as a strategy for the imperialist countries.¹

WE LIVE IN A COMPLEX WORLD. Everyday, millions of people are suffering from exploitation, oppression, poverty and hunger. Here in Canada, like in all other countries around the globe, the capitalists are collecting their share of victims. Modern imperialist countries, although they are safe havens for capitalism, are not escaping the dark side of the system.

Looking at the power of the capitalists who rule the world, the oppressed people seem to have little ways to

¹ For an introduction to this discussion, see “Protracted people’s war is the only way to make revolution”, *People’s War DIGEST*, No. 1, June 2004.

express their justified anger, their revolt, their will for a true radical change. Still, all around the world, we see revolutionary struggles springing up again and again. They may take very different forms, but the fact is that billions of people are directly or indirectly involved in such struggles.

It is this strength that led Chairman Mao to state that “*the East Wind is prevailing over the West Wind*” meaning that the will for liberation and revolution prevails over exploitation and capitalism. What gives life to revolutionary struggle and the hope of a real change is precisely the concrete living conditions and the growing exploitation of the working class, as well as their growing opposition to exploitation and oppression.

Our starting point

We, at the RCP(OC), first believe that capitalism can’t be reformed, nor be placed to the service of the masses. Therefore, we must get rid of this system that causes exploitation, poverty and hunger for the vast majority of the people of the globe. Both revolution and revolutionary violence are needed if we want to radically transform Canadian society as well as the entire world.

In order to draft perspectives for the development of the revolutionary movement in our country, we must know what tactics and strategies to apply in order to face the new conditions that have appeared with the development of capitalism. In fact, since the October Revolution in Russia (1917), the revolutionary movements in the imperialist countries have not found a strong enough revolutionary political leadership, one right enough to *break their chains*, as the *Communist Manifesto* put it.

If we analyze most of these organizations’ programs as well as the work they have developed, it reveals that the main factor for the weakness of the revolutionary movement in the imperialist countries is one of a political line. We reiterate that communist revolution must be the most conscious revolution of all. For that to happen, we must know how to learn and put in practice the fruits of our learning.

Today, there is still confusion among many organizations about the path for revolution. This is why there is so little progress accomplished in the imperialist countries. Quite simply, we refuse to see that the reason for us to be so late in the revolutionary path is because of our failure to develop the right strategy to overthrow capitalism in such countries.

This fact must lead us to tightly analyze the objective and subjective conditions for revolution in the imperialist countries, in order to answer this complex question: “What strategy must we develop in a powerful imperialist country if we want to overthrow the capitalist bourgeoisie?”

With that in mind, talking about revolution and people’s war does not mean we must call right now all revolutionary forces in all countries to take arms and open fire on our enemy without preparation and without a clear understanding of the concrete conditions for it to happen.

Talking about revolution means that we must start right now to think about revolutionary war and all the questions it raises; this can be done if the making of it is on the agenda and if we prepare now its development for the future.

As the RCP(OC)'s Programme would say: *"To prepare for revolution is not only a question that we must think about once in a while, between two strikes or election campaigns. Nor something that we should simply write about to finish off an article. It is not something we should start thinking about when the bourgeoisie will have clearly declared war upon us. To prepare for revolution is to make concrete preparations. It is to start to wage struggle politically and ideologically right now."*

Revolutionary violence is necessary

Violence gives birth to history. The great revolutionaries largely repeated this truth. Revolution—the act by which the proletariat tears the state power from the hands of the bourgeoisie—is necessarily a violent act that forces revolutionaries to prepare the ground for the mandatory military dimension of their action, be it in an imperialist or oppressed country. This is what Mao expressed in his famous quote: *"The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle of revolution holds good universally, for China and for all other countries."* ("Problems of War and Strategy", *Selected Works*, Vol. 2)

In their writings as in their actions, the great revolutionary thinkers tried, each by their way and according to the historical conditions in which they were living, to understand and enrich the military doctrine of the proletariat. As per Lenin, one must not refer to a unique and determined form of struggle like per example, the guerilla warfare. He also specified that Marxism requires that we consider the issue of the forms of struggles from a historical standpoint. Mao was totally clear when he was writing that without an army, people has nothing, that political power grows out of the barrel of a gun and that we can solve the issue by the means of war.

Mao summarized these thoughts on the issue of war and revolution in his work entitled *Problems of War and Strategy*: *"According to the Marxist theory of the state, the army is the chief component of state power. Whoever wants to seize and retain state power must have a strong army. Some people ridicule us as advocates of the 'omnipotence of war'. Yes, we are advocates of the omnipotence of revolutionary war; that is good, not bad, it is Marxist."*

But looking at it more closely, we can see that the revolutionary organizations in the imperialist countries—at least, those that recognize the need for armed struggle—don't grasp this highly strategic and determining task. Mao wrote that revolutionary war is *the highest form of revolution*. Therefore it should normally take up a great deal of the time we dedicate to theoretical activity. Revolutionary war should force all communists to include an illegal and mili-

tary dimension in their communist work in order to make it the strategic heart of the revolutionary action.

Revolution leads to change, but it is also a violent act, which brings trouble, destruction and suffering. However, as Mao taught us, there have been different types of wars in history: just wars and unjust wars. When led by the exploited masses, wars have been factors of progress: to take arms to make arms disappear. On the opposite, by not waging these wars we extend the life of the exploiting systems, which is an obstacle to progress.

The insurrectionary strategy

Before the Chinese revolution, we could only rely on one strategy to develop the proletarian revolution: that was the strategy of the insurrection, as set out and put forward by Lenin. The great revolutionary leader applied this strategy in Russia where there was some capitalist relations of production. At that time the proletariat, through the Party, led the masses that took the arms during the revolutionary crisis. They seized the political power and then waged a civil war against the enemy in the entire country. Once it seized the entire territory, then the proletariat did conquer the political power in the whole country.

The insurrectionary strategy as applied by the Bolsheviks was right and did correspond to what was required at that moment. Despite that, it could have failed and the overthrow of the bourgeois power could not have happened. In order to achieve it, Lenin had to fight against various political trends represented by the Mensheviks, which were totally inserted in bourgeois legality (Second International).

Lenin wrote in *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*: *"The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions and especially by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: for a revolution to take place it is not enough for the exploited and oppressed masses to realize the impossibility of living in the old way, and demand changes; for a revolution to take place it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way."*

What Lenin specifies here is that in order to succeed, we need a national crisis affecting both the exploiters and the exploited. The ruling classes must be affected by a crisis that put the most politically backward masses to action as well as weakens the power of the bourgeoisie so it becomes possible for the revolutionaries to quickly overthrow it.

Lenin also had to convince his own Party, where some hesitated to launch the assault against the ruling power. For example, Kamenev and Zinoviev, both members of the Central Committee, publicly denounced the preparation of the uprising, which could have brought big consequences.

Even though the conditions were not ripe for insurrection, Lenin was right to start it up. Nevertheless, civil war, including the possibility of insurrections, was the Bolsheviks'

true strategy, not insurrection. However, based on the Russian experience the communist movement as a whole has developed its understanding of the issues of seizing power relying only on insurrection, evacuating almost completely the issue of the civil war.

Lenin replied in advance to the dogmatists in the following manner: *“One will readily agree that any army which does not train to use all the weapons, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses, or may possess, is behaving in an unwise or even criminal manner.”* *“In politics it is even harder to know in advance which methods of struggle will be applicable and to our advantage in certain future conditions. Unless we learn to apply all the methods of struggle, we may suffer grave and sometimes even decisive defeat, if changes beyond our control in the position of the other classes bring to the forefront a form of activity in which we are especially weak.”*

Now this is precisely after the October Revolution and at the end of World War I that the objective conditions of revolution in an imperialist country were modified, both for the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

On the side of the bourgeoisie:

- 1) We saw a modernization of the state, as the executive branch has centralized and now directly holds the political power;
- 2) Army has become a professional corps;
- 3) The bourgeoisie has experienced the fight against communism at the international level;
- 4) Capitalism in the imperialist countries has developed mechanisms that allow it to last, despite economic crisis.

On the side of the proletariat:

The strategy of insurrection has become the one and only strategy put forward in the Communist International; it required a perpetual and meticulous preparation. All communist parties had to have an illegal apparatus at their disposal, hidden arms and trained militias in order to be ready at the moment when conditions would be fulfilled for insurrection.

In general we can assess that the mechanical application of this strategy led to a long sequence of costly failures. Defeat in Berlin (1919); defeat in Hungary (1919); defeat in Hamburg (1923); in Tallinn (1924); defeat in Italy where the fascists seized power; defeat in Germany where the Nazis took power; Lithuania (1926); Austria (1933); Spain (1936-39); Portugal; etc. Everywhere when threatened by insurrection, the bourgeoisie took the initiative and prevented the proletarian masses to concentrate their forces.

The problem with the insurrectionary strategy is that it is relying on a stereotyped conception of what is a revolutionary situation, as well as that it does not allow to face the modern bourgeois state and the modern bourgeois army

of the capitalists. Still, the historical experience is showing that to launch a war without appropriate military preparation not only is a dangerous game, but it is doomed to failure.

The insurrectionary theory in the communist movement led to two particularly destructive effects:

Firstly, as organizations were waiting for a revolutionary crisis in the imperialist countries after World War II, it led them to be embedded for a long period of time in the bourgeois legal system, which allowed modern revisionism to take place and make its dirty job in these organizations, particularly those born during the first revolutionary wave (1917-1949).

As capitalism was entering its period of growth and development (1945-1975) which was characterized by important social gains for the proletariat in the imperialist countries as well as by victorious national liberation struggles in some oppressed countries, the revisionists did benefit from these gains, which gave backing—at least temporarily—to their conception of the world: pacific coexistence and the possibility of achieving socialism by pacific means. Everywhere, powerful communist parties were co-opted by a new “capitalism with a human face” and embedded in the capitalist state apparatus through parliamentarism.

Despite the lack of a true revolutionary leadership, the workers and the masses succeeded to drag some gains out of the capitalists, both in the imperialist and oppressed countries. However these winnings, although important, did not break the capitalist system. At the best, they improved temporarily the lot of the masses, while intensifying the contradictions of the capitalist system.

Otherwise, the proletariat was transformed by the improvements it won, as well as by the development of capitalism. In fact, the number of workers grew significantly during the reversal of the economic cycle (1975-2005), while we saw a new period of capitalist crisis and of attacks from the bourgeoisie begin, both at national and international levels.

We must notice that during the seventies, the vast majority of the new revolutionary organizations—including most of the Marxist-Leninist movement—born from the agitation of the masses, did not go beyond this same “legal” and domesticated framework that was imposed by the capitalists. At the best, these organizations overflow its borders from time to time, but never did they represent a real threat for capitalism.

Still today, a majority of organizations within the communist movement believe that the insurrectionary strategy is a must because of the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The reasons being that:

- 1) In imperialist countries, the ruling class is highly centralized and relies on a powerful state, which has ramifications all over the territory. It has both technology, means of transportation and communications at its disposal, which can move its armed forces quickly and massively.

2) The general conditions of the masses are not “bad enough” for them to participate actively in revolutionary war, unless the entire society would sink into an intense capitalist crisis, which is relatively rare.

Secondly, that confirmed the idea for some people that the revolution always follows a specific path. According to them, first it must develop in the oppressed countries and then, once a sufficient number of these countries will have succeeded (both qualitatively and quantitatively), we would meet the conditions for this movement to be pursued in the imperialist countries.

This also led to give credibility to the insurrectionary theory that took the form of the “vacuum strategy”. This means that the farther you are from an imperialist country, the more justified it is to take arms; while the closer you are from it, then armed struggle becomes impossible if not terrorist/elitist.

Finally, these conceptions were all important brakes for developing revolution around the world. Still, the insurrectionary strategy, which by the way is the only one that has been applied in the imperialist countries, does not rely on any significant or positive experience since the October Revolution.

In one case on another, that has led exclusively to legal revolutionary work. The goal is to spread communist agitation and propaganda among the masses, until revolutions in the oppressed countries accelerate the possibility for a revolutionary crisis. Then it would be possible to take profit of a situation where the imperialist bourgeoisie would be weakened enough so we could make powerful blows, with the open goal of regrouping the vanguard in order to *be ready for the coming period, be able to meet the challenges, and take all opportunities that will come with the deep crisis affecting in one way or another imperialist and reactionary forces around the world.*

We think that this strategic conception of the communist work in the imperialist countries delays the advance of revolution.

- 1) It leads to refuse or not to understand the reasons that prevented the communist movement from growing in the imperialist countries, during the first wave of proletarian revolutions and thus, we are doomed to repeat the same mistakes.
- 2) It allows the development of right opportunism and of a radical economist line among our ranks.
- 3) It leads to maintain the organization of the masses within the legal framework imposed by the bourgeoisie.
- 4) It leads to delay the building—even though embryonic—of a red army.
- 5) It leads to passive internationalism.

Even though it produced victory in Russia, *the October Road*, i.e. a urban uprising or multiple and simultaneous uprisings at the beginning of a process that leads to civil

war, is no more valid in the imperialist countries as a strategy for seizing power. In order to recover all its validity, the insurrection must be integrated in a wider strategy.

What the visible effect of supporting the insurrectionary strategy is that after more than 80 years of communist struggle, and most particularly since the October Revolution, all revolutions have been developed essentially far from the imperialist centres.

It is possible that at some point, the seizure of power by the proletariat will likely include an uprising phase, and that after the development of a revolutionary war, a crisis will happen for the bourgeoisie, so it won't be possible for her to rule anymore. But we can not suppose that once a revolutionary situation will come up, the masses will start to move and follow spontaneously the leadership of the communists, only because of agitation and propaganda work—even though spread into many years. By acting as such, we would put us at high risk to see the bourgeoisie taking the initiative at all levels.

A general point of view about the people's war

The revolution requires communists to be prepared to seize all opportunities that may happen at any moment. Such preparation should not be restricted to mere propaganda, especially knowing that since the first wave of the world revolution, the ruling classes of the main imperialist countries have been able to accumulate an important sum of experience in the fight against communism and revolution, while developing gigantic military and technological capacities.

In order for the revolutionaries to have enough forces for being able to seize all opportunities and face any situation, it is necessary for them to have learned how to fight. And to learn is not only a theoretical but also a practical activity, which develops when we experience it.

The revolutions are linked together. Struggles waged against imperialism by people from oppressed countries helps revolution to advance here, but the opposite is also true. We think that if revolution is facing more difficulties in the imperialist countries than in oppressed ones, this does not only have to do with the material conditions: it also has to do with the subjective conditions.

Per example, the victory of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 gave a serious boost to the fight for communism and helped propagate Marxism-Leninism around the world, along with a better understanding of the military aspects of armed insurrection. The Communist International gave us a lot of theoretical and practical instructions regarding the latter, confirming its highly important strategic character.

Because we want to advance the revolutionary struggle in Canada, the RCP(OC) supports the strongest military experience which ever existed—that is protracted people's war (PPW). We know that we must be ready to face the bourgeoisie and all the means it will undoubtedly unleash against us: does the capitalists ever hesitate to kill millions

of people when required? According to us, the strategy of protracted people's war is applicable in the imperialist countries and it prevails over the insurrectionary strategy, which can no longer be considered as an effective method to overthrow the bourgeoisie.

For the RCP(OC), being part of the revolutionary movement means:

- 1) To fully adhere to Maoism.
- 2) To develop the PPW strategy according to the concrete conditions of Canada while relying on the concept of urban bases, in order to make the revolution as soon as possible.
- 3) At the international level, to unite with other Maoist parties and organizations.

In developing protracted people's war, the revolutionary forces in Canada and the world are applying the most elaborated strategy for the proletariat regarding the issue of seizing power. The PPW strategy will allow all those who can be united against Canadian and world imperialism to rally together.

The PPW strategy is universally valid, meaning it is applicable everywhere in all type of countries, taking into account their concrete conditions. This is exactly what the Communist Party of Peru showed us in the eighties and what the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is actually showing us. Those parties applied the PPW (more specifically, its general laws) to their own conditions (its particular laws), being formulated in what they respectively called *Gonzalo Thought* and *Prachanda Path*.

In order to break all the obstacles we face and finally abolish capitalism in the imperialist countries, we must carry out revolutionary war. Today, being revolutionary means being Maoist and basing ourselves on Chairman Mao's contributions. This includes the deepening of Marxism-Leninism he pushed for as well as the answers he brought for the revolutionaries who were looking for a coherent and truly revolutionary strategy to abolish capitalism. As mentioned in the RCP(OC)'s Programme, we consider that with Mao's contributions about the PPW, the revolutionary science of the proletariat made an important leap forward.

Just like Lenin, Mao Zedong managed to try out and develop a winning military line. Even if the PPW strategy was elaborated within the conditions of the revolution known as New Democracy, Mao also contributed to develop in a priceless way the whole science of revolution regarding military questions.

Among the principles he developed, some are universal.

- 1) The revolutionary war is a war of the masses: *"It can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them."* (Mao Zedong, "Be Concerned With the Well-Being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods of Work", *Selected Works*, Vol. 1) It allows to liberate the full potential of the masses. The revolutionary war relies

primarily on energy, consciousness and abnegation of the masses who, through people's war, can develop their ability to lead the whole society.

- 2) Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.
- 3) The party must command the guns. The revolutionary party must lead the revolutionary army and the revolutionary war. The army should never lead the party and become the leading force of the revolution or a separated force from the party.
- 4) Strategically, we need to rest on our own strength.
- 5) It is people that are decisive, not weapons—even the most modern ones. *"Weapons are an important factor in war, but not the decisive factor; it is people, not things, that are decisive. The contest of strength is not only a contest of military and economic power, but also a contest of human power and morale. Military and economic power is necessarily wielded by people."* (Mao Zedong, "On Protracted War", *Selected Works*, Vol. 2)

About the universal aspects of the protracted people's war

The laws of the revolution teach us that in order to lead the revolutionary process, we need a party born and steeled in class struggle; such party must be closely linked to the masses and to their organizations. The Maoist party must lead mass mobilization in all fields, at all levels and by all means. The party must lead and stir up the mass mobilization in defending all their conquests, which the imperialist bourgeoisie tries to eliminate. It must lead and promote mass mobilization to make new wins. The party must learn and systematize the laws according to which the revolution proceeds. It is only with this experience that the broad masses, led by the proletariat and its vanguard, will take an increasing part in the war. The war will then become the main form of antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Through the initiation of people's war and its further development, the party's goal is to establish and maintain the political power of the proletariat.

The laws of the revolution also teach us that we need a revolutionary army to lead the masses should they get rid of the discipline imposed by the bourgeois state. Mao made clear that *whoever wants to seize and retain state power must have a strong army*. You can't just build an army as you go along. It should not be left only to the spontaneity of masses.

Once the masses would have decided to resort to organized violence, the communists must be at their vanguard on all issues, including the military problems. As it intensifies, the class struggle invariably gives birth to a group of men and women ready to take part directly—with all the risks that this means—in the all-round revolutionary action against both capitalism and its state.

For the party, the question is to know how to use those incipient, dissipated and often politically confused forces

so that they serve revolution. The first goal is to build the revolutionary party the proletariat needs to carry out its struggle while allowing to forge, within the class struggle itself, the first elements of a people's army.

In return, this embryo of the people's army would have to open the way for the proletarian masses as they get rid of the domestication framework currently imposed by the bourgeoisie. Revolutionary violence can take multiple forms: one—guerrilla, war of partisans, revolutionary war—is carried by the vanguard and the other is generated by the anger of the masses. Both of them (the organized form of revolutionary violence and the spontaneous one) are two sides of the same revolutionary phenomenon.

Mao Zedong set the standards regarding the building of a revolutionary army. This army is different from the bourgeois one as it helps to achieve the political tasks set by the party and based on the interests of the proletariat and its allies.

Finally, the laws of the revolution teach us that we need to create a united front between the revolutionary masses and all the revolutionary groups under party's leadership. Such a united front allows all revolutionary forces to rally together against the reactionaries through people's war. In a modern imperialist country, such united front must rely on the proletariat's leadership represented by its vanguard. This should guarantee the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution, while allowing the revolutionary camp to grow as much as possible.

About the specifics of PPW in the imperialist countries

☆ The revolutionary situation

Since the beginning of imperialism, we saw contradictory cycles in the capitalist economy. The September 11 attacks only exacerbated the crisis of the capitalist society, as well as the problem for capitalists to pursue the accumulation of capital in such context. Now they must take back from the masses and especially from the workers, what they succeeded to gain during the 1945-1975 period.

What should we understand from the current situation? We can see that at the world level, one stage of capitalism is ending and a new one is emerging. We can verify this by the reactionary offensive on one hand, and the revolutionary mobilization of the masses on the other hand. Whether the bourgeoisie can maintain its control over the masses and thus succeed to maintain them within its domesticated legal system: this is what we saw during the huge millions of people demonstrations against the unfair war of the US on Iraq and still, it did not change anything in the imperialist agenda. Or on the opposite, the forces of revolution will take the leadership of the masses. If so, we will then see the advance of revolution and a new society will split from the old one. This is what we currently see in Nepal.

Because of both the reactionary and the revolutionary turmoil as a whole, we see the current world being quite

unstable. A revolutionary crisis is under development, affecting all the countries although at different levels. Thus, at the world level, we see the following:

- Contradictions among imperialist forces being sharper;
- Contradictions between imperialist countries and people in oppressed countries being sharper;
- Contradictions among national ruling classes being sharper;
- Contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat being sharper, as workers are put under pressure and lost their gains from the previous period.

We can imagine that all of this volatile mix is waiting for a strong enough revolutionary upsurge, in order to explode.

We are at the beginning of a new era of revolutionary storms, where the forces of the revolution will have the appropriate arms in order to crush the capitalist order, thanks to Maoism! We need to take profit of it as much as possible if we want to push forward revolution and multiply our victories.

☆ The Canadian landscape

In Canada as well as in all imperialist countries and soon all countries of the world, the people's war will happen mainly in the urban areas. Canada is a highly urbanized imperialist country, where about 80% of the people live in the cities. We can find more than 50% of the urban population living mainly in four areas: Southern Ontario; Montréal and its surroundings; the Low Fraser Valley in British Columbia as well as the southern part of the Vancouver Island; the Calgary/Edmonton corridor. These four big areas are at the heart of Canadian imperialism.

The state apparatus is powerful and sophisticated. There is only one social class that has ensured its own wealth: the capitalists. This highly parasitic class is a mighty one, and represents about 5% to 7% (nearly two millions) of the total Canadian population. The Canadian working class is ferociously exploited by these rulers. In 2004, there were about 60,000 policemen (188 policemen for each 100,000 inhabitants). But this number does not include the dazzling growth of private security agencies acting as police forces, and which are more and more patrolling the industrial zones and the poor urbanized areas in big cities like in Toronto.

Despite its small size, the Canadian Army is a well organized and efficient institution serving the bourgeoisie. There are 83,952 people including 62,000 militaries. Nearly half of them are members of the militia (reservists). The structure of command is a regional one, which is composed of four zones (Western Canada, Centre, Québec and the Maritimes) that cover the whole territory. About 1,500 soldiers are currently deployed in different international operations, the biggest being the ATHENA operation in Afghanistan. Thus, the main role of the Canadian Army is to protect the capitalist interests in Canada, despite its "humanitarian" reputation.

More than 65% of the Canadian population is from the working class, which makes it the leading force and the main one for revolution. Moreover, the working class can gather around it other forces which also have interest in destroying capitalism in Canada: the Native people and some stratum in the petty-bourgeoisie. The total of these forces gives to the revolution its people's character, which could be organized under the leadership of the proletariat and its party.

The hard core of the proletariat can be found among its largest layers, at the basic level. We are talking of millions of workers who don't have anything to lose but everything to win from the overthrow of capitalism. These layers are composed as follow:

- Poor and exploited workers who are confined at the lowest levels of the society;
- The proletarians who are currently excluded from the working force and who composed the "reserve army of labour" for the capitalists;
- The new proletarian stratum coming from migration;
- The women who continue to massively enter the working market;
- The youth who more than the others are suffering from cheap labour and lack of job security;
- The Native workers, who are systematically unemployed and shamefully discriminated.

We must also point out that there are many different type of contradictions within the Canadian society, which could play a more or less important role depending of circumstances:

- Opposition among different sectors of the bourgeoisie;
- Contradictions among imperialist forces;
- Contradictions between the petty-bourgeoisie and other social classes.

As per the Natives, their oppression as well as the robbery of their territory begun as soon as the first Europeans arrived in America, and their conditions are getting worst day after day. The grab of the Native's territories was an essential condition in the formation of Canadian capitalism. Now, the Native nations have become true domestic colonies in this country.

Any strategy for destroying the capitalist power shall rely on a fair evaluation of these contradictions in order to use them for growing the revolutionary camp, as well as for isolating the reactionary one. What is the most determining factor that influence the whole life, both at the material, ideological, political and spiritual levels, is this struggle opposing the interests of the proletariat and of the bourgeoisie in an absolute way. The two opposing camps—the revolutionary and the reactionary ones—are regrouping around these main social classes. What that means is that the revolutionary strategy today in Canada shall be entirely oriented towards the socialist revolution.

First Statement: Because of its current situation, the Canadian bourgeoisie can not continue to manage society without attacking the main conquests made by the workers after World War II: unemployment insurance, healthcare system, public education as well as other social programs. In order to maintain its position at the world level, the Canadian bourgeoisie needs to transform these programs, whether by eliminating them or by removing any value from them. Therefore, since a number of years, the bourgeoisie is in fact directly attacking the organizations of the working class, as well as the working class itself.

Second Statement: The proletariat can no longer win any significant conquests within the capitalist system. Since the mid-seventies, both the living and the working conditions of the proletariat have been deteriorating. In the same period, the proletariat as a class has been developing, and some broad sections of workers have faced significant impoverishment.

Third Statement: There is little chance that we would see a sudden crisis of the Canadian capitalism and its state. This is the case for all imperialist countries, as the capitalists have developed methods and institutions such as banks, capitalist associations, collective bargaining, trusts, the Welfare state model and social services, in order to stabilize any situation that would seriously threat the economic order. This was not the case at the time of the October Revolution.

The different measures and institutions set up by the bourgeoisie are aimed to maintain its power in spite of the most destroying effects produced by capitalist economy while preserving some political stability. In short, under capitalism, the large and powerful crises from the beginning of the last century gave up to new forms of protracted crises.

Fourth Statement: In Canada, the forces of the revolution are small. There is however a potential for a revolutionary crisis to develop in Canadian North between Canadian capitalism and the Natives. The revolutionary struggle of the Native people is aiming to free themselves from the yoke of Canadian imperialism. This struggle is an integral part of the PPW strategy in Canada. We can even say that this fight has to be integrated into the united front led by the proletariat as it is linked in a decisive manner to the proletarian revolution.

What is difficult for the party is to combine the revolutionary struggle for socialism along with the struggle of the Native people. Our proposal for establishing a *Union of the Popular Republics of North America* and our opposition to parliamentarism and bourgeois nationalism are in support of this combination.

Fifth Statement: Labour aristocracy is powerful in Canada. Politically, this layer is the mean by which the bourgeois ideas are penetrating the proletariat. Along with the petty-bourgeoisie, they are also the ones leading the trade unions. The labour aristocracy and the petty-bourgeoisie are not only leading them but they constitute a large part of

the current membership of the organized workers movement. For the moment, these forces are hostile in major part to the revolution. They are totally subjected to bourgeois discipline.

We have to take into account the concrete conditions prevailing in Canada and which are probably quite the same in most imperialist countries:

- Both the bourgeoisie and its institutions are powerful, as well as the various contradictions existing in all spheres of society.
- There are contradictions dividing the proletariat, such as the ideological control from the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie over proletarian organizations.

This contributes to impose a balance of power not in favor of the revolutionary camp at this stage, both in qualitative and quantitative terms. This is the reason why a protracted character is required to fight for the overthrow of bourgeoisie, should it be for the development of its different stages, or in terms of timeframe.

☆ *The preparatory period*

To succeed in an imperialist country, protracted people's war must be preceded by a period of political, organizational and military preparation. In those countries, the accumulation and the development of the revolutionary forces are done in a gradually manner. By applying adequate tactics, the party must avoid to be forced to engage in a decisive confrontation as long as the revolutionary forces will not be superior than those of the bourgeoisie.

The stage where the vanguard fights to create a revolutionary party and a revolutionary army, and to establish new and genuine proletarian organizations (committees, people's councils, etc., so the broad masses can learn how to organize the future proletarian power) corresponds to a mandatory organizational process which will allow, thereafter, to start the first phase of the PPW (that is strategic defensive). We call this preparatory period **the phase of accumulation of forces**. In an imperialist country like Canada, the revolutionary strategy requires such political, organizational and military preparation.

Why a preparatory period?

- 1) Because we need to challenge the political monopoly of the bourgeoisie, by spreading the communist ideas and the communist program in all spheres of activity of the masses, knowing this activity proceeds mainly, for the moment, in the bourgeois legality.
- 2) Because we also need to challenge the complete monopoly imposed by the bourgeoisie on violence. The revolutionary fight cannot develop completely within the framework of bourgeois legality. It needs to radically break with capitalism—in terms of project, but also by concretely challenging the established order. Such breaking must materialize progressively.

The whole is the unity of the opposites. We need to work both inside and outside legality until the second term becomes the dominating pole of the contradiction. As we mentioned, that rises from the material conditions of the class struggle in Canada which imposes a protracted character for the revolution. As a result, the revolutionary forces will grow insofar as the activity of the masses will move from one pole (legality) to the other (illegality).

For the moment, the violence and uncontrolled behavior of the masses are spontaneous. This violence is not coming from a conscious standpoint. It does not aim at abolishing capitalist system but is basically a reaction to the consequences of exploitation. The party must lead and channel this violence in order to build itself.

The accumulation of forces should thereafter make it possible for the party to develop a revolutionary army. The revolutionary army is the higher and organized form of the spontaneous violence from the masses against capitalism. It concentrates the violence of the oppressed and materializes a radical breaking with capitalism. "*The revolutionary army is needed for military struggle and for military leadership of the masses against the remnants of the military forces of the autocracy. The revolutionary army is needed because great historical issues can be resolved only by force, and, in modern struggle, the organization of force means military organization.*" (Lenin, "The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government", *Collected Works*, Vol. 8)

To be able to play its part, the revolutionary army must first exist. It must have its own existence even if it is placed under the party's leadership. This especially implies that armed struggle must have been developed before it becomes the main form of struggle for the proletariat, in a way it would prove to be valid.

In this first phase of accumulation of forces, the embryonic forces of the Red Army must develop a political activity by starting to wage armed propaganda actions. The goal of armed propaganda is not to make war to capitalism, but to make the revolutionary project to be known while helping the future leaders of the revolutionary army to gain experience.

At this stage the guerrilla, with the armed actions it carries, pursues mainly ideological objectives. The increasing activity of guerrilla makes it possible to better separate the camps which are opposed, to influence the class struggle and to accumulate forces for any revolutionary movement.

The experience of the Red Brigades (*Brigade Rosse*, or BR) in Italy (1971-1976) showed that armed propaganda is an effective method to accumulate forces in an imperialist country. However, the same experience (1976-1982) also showed that this activity must be led by a correct line otherwise it will inevitably sink into militarism, economism, armed trade unionism and/or subjectivism.

In the case of the BR, they were able to accumulate important forces as long as they waged armed propaganda as

a way to build the Communist Party. But when they left this ground to launch themselves into an all-out war against the state—especially in a situation where the material conditions were not ripe—they separated themselves from the masses and were easily defeated.

In Canada, there were also some experiences of guerrilla warfare. Thus, at the time of the fight of the Métis people in Manitoba, Gabriel Dumont's guerrilla has seriously defeated the Canadian Army at Duck Lake. In the province of Québec, the FLQ ("Front de libération du Québec" or Québec Liberation Front, 1962-1970) also developed an activity of urban guerrilla warfare, but this one was based on Guevarist conceptions and did not aim to accumulate forces; its aim was above all to stir up the activity of the masses by multiplying examples.

What those historical examples show us is the need:

- 1) to base ourselves on a correct line;
- 2) to build a separate party from the guerrilla—a party who will deal with all aspects of the activity of the masses;
- 3) to have a strategy for destroying state power;
- 4) to ensure the participation of the proletariat and its leadership on the revolutionary process;
- 5) to create base areas.

However, we must pay attention to the fact that this period does not correspond yet, nor cannot be confused with the beginning of the PPW. This one is carried out directly against the bourgeoisie and its state apparatus. Its objective is the seizure of power by the revolutionary proletariat, the destruction of the bourgeois state, the establishment of a proletarian state, the abolition of capitalist system and the building of socialism.

☆ *Strategic defensive*

Strictly speaking, the strategic defensive corresponds to the initiation of the PPW. The brigades who will have carried armed propaganda must then multiply themselves; at the same time the party must build the first guerilla units.

As it is difficult to hide more important units or to even support them in logistical terms, the following problem will arise: how to sustain, in an imperialist country, the revolutionary fight and to build stable bases to develop the people's war whereas the enemy controls all the territory?

In China, the revolutionary war benefited from base areas where the reactionaries could not go and where the revolutionary transformation of the old social relations could start. In the imperialist countries, this cannot apply in the same way. At the beginning, the guerilla units will probably act in guerrilla zones. It is only after the capture of some towns that temporary base areas could appear before we could see stable ones.

The experience of the communist movement teaches us that it is possible to create such bases. To do so, the revolu-

tionaries must resolutely rely on the masses and proceed by setting the political conditions that will allow the creation of stable base areas, according to the line: *from having not/to have, from small/to large, from imperfect/to more than perfect.*

During the armed propaganda period, the brigades must avoid fixing themselves in a specific place. They must rather cover a vast territory applying the principle of mobility—to bite and run away. The bases are then limited to what is needed for the operations' success.

But with the beginning of PPW, the guerrilla units can then operate normally in guerrilla zones. The guerrilla zones are formed by underground networks and party-generated organizations or organizations build by the proletarian masses which challenge the monopoly of the bourgeois power. We saw the most obvious example of guerrilla zones in Europe under the Nazi occupation. Hundreds of networks, newspapers and groups were then organized by thousands of people all working underground.

During World War II, the partisan actions were supported by a far-reaching underground activity in proletarian circles, starting from newspapers production (to claim responsibility for the actions) to targeted sabotage—all of this creating a whole underground net surrounding the enemy.

In Italy, several large cities including Genoa, Turin and Milan, were liberated by the partisans led by the Italian Communist Party even before the Allied forces approach them. In Genoa among others, the partisans unconsciously combined the people's war with an insurrection in liberating the city.

The guerrilla units, while continuing the armed propaganda as in the previous period, will then be able to attack some institutions and people who represent the bourgeois power. The transition from armed propaganda brigades to guerrilla units will require the party to be firmly established among the masses and that they would have recognized its political leadership.

The revolutionary communist party must be prepared if US imperialism intervenes indirectly or directly to support the Canadian bourgeoisie, and be ready to lead a united front against both the Canadian bourgeoisie and US imperialism.

The possibility of a US intervention emphasizes the strategic need for an adequate military preparation to face such a powerful and modern army. This will require serious preparation from the revolutionary forces.

Because the forces of the revolution will be spread out, the country will probably look like a chess set where the bourgeois forces will occupy specific sectors—residential districts, telecommunication and financial centres, military bases—surrounded by guerrilla zones which will be invisible and hidden, but nevertheless in operation. Here it will probably be possible to combine two strategies applied in Vietnam, that of the "cheetah"—where the territory is spotted by guerilla zones—and that of the "banana peel"—to tackle the periphery of the enemy zones.

Because both the guerilla zones and those controlled by the bourgeoisie will be close from each other, guerrilla will have the opportunity to concentrate and attack strategic objectives, while decreasing the risks of a massive surrounding by the enemy; moreover, this proximity will make a part of the enemy's military arsenal unusable. At that time, the strategic attacks of the guerrilla combined with an insurrection in a large city should allow the creation of a first stable support base. Then we could be able to achieve a higher level of military actions by combining guerilla and mobile warfare carried out by regular units of the Red Army.

With a first stable base, the new revolutionary power should be able to exist openly. This will also correspond to the transition to strategic equilibrium whereas the two powers would clash. A military front would probably take shape opposing the two armies. However, because of the proximity with the enemy, and contrary to what happens in the oppressed countries, the role of stable support bases in capitalist countries would be completely geared towards the war and the destruction of the enemy and later only, towards the building of the new power. The fight could even continue within the base areas.

Those support bases will be necessary just like they were in Russia: *"The revolutionary government is needed for the political leadership of the masses, at first in that part of the country which has been wrested from tsarism by the revolutionary army, and later in the country at large. The revolutionary government is needed for the immediate launching of the political reforms, for the sake of which the revolution is being made—the establishment of a revolutionary self-government of the people, the convocation of a truly popular and truly Constituent Assembly, and the introduction of 'liberties' without which there can be no true expression of the people's will. The revolutionary government is necessary for the political unification and the political organization of the insurgent section of the people, which has actually and finally broken away from the autocracy."* (Lenin, "The Revolutionary Army and the Revolutionary Government", *Collected Works*, Vol. 8)

At this point, some cities will have to serve as temporary bases—a phenomenon that will require great attention. In Canada, on a very vast territory surrounding the four main centers of Canadian capitalism, there are a multitude of communities which are made up in major part of proletarians. Those cities are strategically important for revolution in Canada, both by their proletarian composition and the control they could exert on energy resources and various transportation roads. They will progressively become solid bases for the revolutionary camp and will allow the enemy forces to be isolated.

The capture of a large city should help to constitute and train new units of the Red Army. That will then reinforce the front and allow to combine the mobile with the guerilla warfare. That will also make it possible to transit from a war of attrition to a war of annihilation and fast decisions. Then it will be possible to advance towards the strategic

offensive which probably will be a combination of battles and insurrections, until the whole of the territory will be under the control of the revolutionary camp.

To carry out a revolutionary war and make revolution, we must first master and assimilate its laws. This is a less simple process than it appears to be. We must rely on sufficient practical experience as we learn from it, in order to draw a correct assessment.

Having self-knowledge and a good knowledge of the enemy, innovating and advancing in tactics and strategy: all this requires that we seriously start to carry out the revolutionary tasks while bearing in mind that each of our progresses makes the whole movement to go forward.

As Lenin wrote more than 80 years ago, *"History as a whole, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more multiform, more lively and ingenious than is imagined by even the best parties, the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes."*

(April 2005)



THE CANADIAN BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY: A SINGLE PARTY SYSTEM

To boycott is to fight!

(Translated from *Le Drapeau Rouge* newspaper, No. 49, issued before the federal election of June 28, 2004)

ON MANY WALLS AND POSTS through proletarian neighbourhoods, we can read since a few days, handwritten or printed on modest posters, in the spirit of the activist tradition, three clear words, simple and obvious, precise and percussive like a shout: BOYCOTT THE ELECTIONS!

Not misleading words. Not confusing words. Not these usual hesitant words, weak and resigned, which form the same sentences—hollow or with double meanings—that had been pronounced for a century by hostile or manipulative mouths. No! Words that are unlike bourgeois discourse and don't convey any illusion: BOYCOTT THE ELECTIONS!

In politics, the language of the bourgeoisie is now an old language, petrified, that doesn't have meaning anymore and that fewer and fewer workers listen to with respect and submission. The proletariat needs more than ever to speak and act by itself. Today, it is sickening to vote for the bourgeoisie's "*single party*."

Whether this "single party" has two or three heads, is composed of a large obese liberal-conservative body and two sides: a left side and a more or less visible or discrete right side according to the times and circumstances, that doesn't matter very much in the final analysis. What really counts is that the same interests (those of the capitalists) reign at the same time in the government and in the opposition. Thus, when the parliamentary representation changes from one election to another (and it must change to give the system a fake credibility), the nature of the Parliament still remains the same.

The actual bourgeois society seeks its breath, that's obvious. But it's certain that the bourgeoisie cannot find much air on the side of the democracy. Its parliamentarism seems more and more a work of the past, discredited in the present, and deprived of any utility for the future.

Today's activists intend to renew the participation of the exploited and the poor in a radical social transformation. This is what is called revolution. By boycotting the elections, they clearly tell us two things. First: that there are no poor nor revolutionary workers in the Parliaments, and that it is useless to seek them there. We can certainly find there a lot of bourgeois, petit-bourgeois and labour-lieutenants, but not a single poor nor revolutionary worker.

That, in self, is significant. But still, more significant is the revolutionary poor and workers do not seek to enter at all to the Parliament! Their interest rather go in the direction of destroying it, and with it, the other apparatuses of the bourgeois state which are, considered as a whole, the

tools used by the ruling class to ensure the continuation of workers' exploitation.

But then, if the poor don't seek to enter to the Parliament, who are all those candidates who want to "overthrow" the government and install an alternative on the benches of the House of Commons? In fact, they only offer to replace the bourgeois, petit-bourgeois and labour-lieutenants who preceded them and were pushed aside by the circumstances. It is an offer of substitution, not of transformation, even less of revolution.

The communist movement (since 1920) disqualified these substitution attempts of *organic parliamentarism*. The movement back then severely criticized that practice and rejected it completely, but, with passing years, was mistaken on the way to fight it.

Organic parliamentarism is the fusion—through the working and popular members of Parliament—between the working class and the bourgeois democracy. It is the bourgeois Parliament which assimilates and digests the representatives of subordinate classes. It is the reclassification of the proletariat as a simple wheel attached to the mechanism of bourgeois society.

Organic parliamentarism is the liquidation of any revolutionary action. No wonder that all the opportunists and social-democrat reformists are literally obsessed, in Québec and everywhere in Canada, by the idea to penetrate the Parliament and to be molded there like formless polymers. In truth, they are especially afraid of the poor, afraid of the street, afraid of justice, afraid of change. Afraid of conflagration! They pretend to be unaware that only the proletarian revolution, like a fire which regenerates a forest, can regenerate the democracy.

Why boycott?

The activists who campaign for the elections' boycott, like those from the Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committees) (RCP[OC]) don't hide for one second that the options offered to the electorate for June 28 would alone be enough to justify the radical slogan and guideline: *proletarian boycott of the electoral circus!*

The "single party" will take the power again! Big surprise! Its two wings, the Liberal Party and the new Conservative Party are, among all the bourgeois parties in Occidental and imperialist countries, among the five or six parties at most which built the most durable bonds. Their lasting bond is based on their implantation in capitalist backgrounds and the defence of the bourgeoisie's common interests.

If each monopoly has its reserve, then in Canada the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party are the safe protecting the bourgeoisie's politic monopoly on the Canadian society. And this is a safe the proletariat really needs to blow up!

Besides them, the opposition consisting of the New Democratic Party and the *Bloc Québécois*, as well of two

translucent ghosts which hopelessly try to be seen as credible alternatives—the Green Party of Canada and the “Communist” Party of Canada—are each in their way confused parliamentary derivatives of the real struggles led by the workers and the poor. Even the more progressive among them are also obstinate electoralists and are harming the people’s struggle. Paradoxically, the successes of these oppositions (NDP and Bloc Québécois) serve as a guarantee for the single party monopoly and periodically force the bourgeoisie to focus on political interests common to its class—as ruling class—rather than on interests of the fractions.

Never the coloration brought to the House of Commons by a party like the NDP (and this would be the same with a new socialist party or any progressive or citizen alliance, etc.) produces anything but this: much-needed help for the bourgeoisie to assume its functions and to govern, officially *in the name of the entire society* (!), while remaining comfortably inside its general guideline which is to ensure the best conditions for the capital’s reproduction.

The reality of a thing, including the reality of an unpleasant thing, is always what it is objectively and it’s useless to embellish it by means of artifices or speculative chimeras, especially if it’s only to modify the impression produced by this reality rather than the reality itself.

Within this context the reality of the Canadian electoral domain is so sinister that it can’t create any illusion. The illusion rather comes from the recurring temptation to embellish the ugly impression produced by this reality.

What tells us this reality? That democracy is stability since the power never changes. That capitalists are always on top. That politicians speak all the time even if they don’t have anything to say. That elections are 36 days of publicity. That democracy is to watch television and to go vote. That there is *apathy* and *democracy*. Apathy is when the young, the poor and the proletarians shout, fight and demonstrate but don’t vote; and the democracy is when they vote but don’t shout, nor fight nor demonstrate!

This sinister reality makes less and less illusion. All the bourgeois in the country were astounded after 2000’s elections to note that only 61.2% of the electorate voted, the lowest result since 1926’s election (with a 62.9% participation rate). Studies were ordered by politicians to help them understand what occurred, more especially because disaffection has been constant for the past several elections.

Mandated by Elections Canada, professors Jon H. Pammett of the Carleton University and Lawrence LeDuc of the University of Toronto, with help from Decima Research, said in March 2003 to bourgeois politicians (and their quite as anxious little friends from the Bloc and the NDP): *...caution, the voters slip between your fingers like sand.*

Questioned by Decima’s investigators on the reasons of their abstention, 59.4% of the non-voters questioned gave as reason a negative attitude toward politicians, government, candidates, parties and/or chiefs of party. 24.2% mentioned apathy and indifference; 14.5% the uselessness of their

participation and 8.6% lack of competition. In addition, only 5.0% gave as reason a lack of knowledge or information, 1.2% an administrative problem and 0.5% a unsatisfactory electoral system.

We saw these last days that statistical data command bourgeois politicians to lead a battle to reconquer the Canadian youth (Cuckoo Bono!—specific Bloc’s campaign targeting the youth) and to give the illusion that a major renewal of the political practices is already moving in Canada (this topic is important for the Conservative Harper, the Liberal Martin and also the New-Democrat Layton).

So, it is to say that apart from the battle inside the Parliament between the parties, the bourgeoisie’s various wings, another battle takes place, perhaps more important, deeper, more complex, more dangerous, which is explained by the historical tendency under the bourgeois democracy of separation between the Parliament and the masses, e.g. the problem for the bourgeoisie of its political isolation.

Then, shall we fight or encourage this tendency?

Which attitude must the proletarian activists adopt? We do not speak here about organic parliamentarism partisans, which, it is well known, feel sick about this situation, because it threatens their wish to encrust at the Parliament like fleas in a carpet. But for others, the sincere activists, anti-capitalists, who have the workers and oppressed people’s liberation in the horizon?

Pammett and LeDuc showed the progression of the non-voter attitude.

Normal rate of participation since the Second World War:	75.0%
Rate of participation in 2000:	
• of Canadians who became voters between 1974 and 1980	66.0%
• of Canadians who became voters between 1984 and 1988	54.2%
• of Canadians who became voters in 1993	38.2%
• of Canadians who became voters in 1997	27.5%
• of Canadians who became voters in 2000	22.4%

Stages of the formation of the *single party* of the Canadian bourgeoisie

Let’s quickly review the characteristics of the three stages in the bourgeoisie’s *single party* formation.

A) From 1867 to 1921

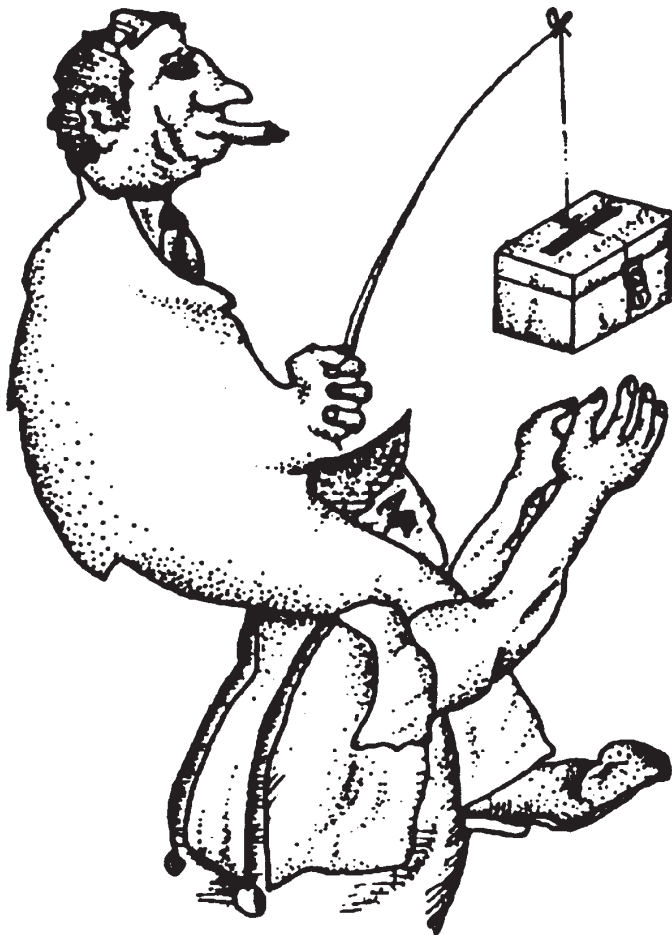
It’s the formation of the Canadian state. It went up from a colonial entity to knock on the door of the imperialist countries’ club. The bourgeoisie needed more than 50 years, in absence of a true powerful revolutionary impulse, to constitute its two main parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals, starting from scattered and contradictory political,

religious, national and regional tendencies which existed prior to the Confederation.

Fifty crucial years during which the bourgeoisie forged its political hegemony, not in democracy but in oppression. During this first stage, only property owners were enjoying electoral rights. Universal ballot was installed only in 1920, with the adoption of the *Dominion Elections Act* (two years after voting rights were granted to women). And still, it was not until 1948 that Canadians of Asian origin could vote and 1960 for the Native people.

Between 1867 and 1920, the voting right was based on the property of a minimal value (established in 1867 to \$400) and on the profession (for example, it could apply to monks, teachers and professions). The women, the Native people, the poor workers and peasants were simply deprived of the right to vote.

At the beginning of the Confederation (1867 to 1872), only approximately 15% of the population constituted the electorate entitled to vote. In 1882, it was less than 20%; 22% in 1891; 25% in 1911; 30% in 1917; and about 50% in 1921. Participation rate in the elections' (more or less 70% for all this period) must with moreover applied to these reduced electorates to comprehend well which particular share of the population forged the only two government parties in the history of Canada.



It has been a crucial period during which the Parliament (and its parties) established their (fake) legitimacy throughout Canadian society, despite the fact that they were the emanation of a minority of rich people. It is nevertheless during these 50 years that Canada carried out its industrialization, developed its railroads, constituted its commercial and financial bourgeoisie, unified its internal market towards the West and on First Nations territories, established new relationships with the British capital and the American capital, forged its main institutions, etc.

B) From 1921 to World War II

What was at stake was quite a different matter. It is a question of literally "assimilating" the other classes, e.g. to adapt the party system that was constituted under the bourgeoisie's solid guidance, to the other social classes that were beginning to show up on the political scene: the agricultural petite-bourgeoisie (farmers) and the working class.

This adaptation will be done as well by the integration (stopping all autonomy) of these classes in bourgeois parties, by disciplining the leaders and the popular classes' organizations, and by repressing the working class, its struggles, its strikes and its party, the Communist Party of Canada (CPC).

At that time, Canada was at the gates of the imperialist world (in September 1929, in a letter to the Communist Party of Canada, the Executive Committee of the Communist International will assert that the Canadian bourgeoisie played more and more an obvious imperialist role). After the First World War and the revolutionary thrust that followed the October Revolution, the Canadian working class also initiated important struggles: Winnipeg's general strike in 1919, creation of the Communist Party in 1921, struggles against repression, 1929's crisis, great thirties strikes. In addition, at the beginning of the twenties, farmers from Ontario and the West constituted the National Progressive Party (which had 63 deputies elected back in 1921) and the United Farmers succeeded in forming governments in several provinces.

The bourgeoisie dealt with these challenges in the following way:

It allowed the emergence the right drift of social-democracy in the parties system (the CCF at the beginning of the thirties, followed by the NDP in the sixties).

It also quickly dispersed the farmers' political activism during the mid-twenties through its own Conservative and Liberal parties, and later within the CCF in the thirties.

Thirdly, it repressed in a very significant way the Communist Party and the working class' revolutionary organizations. As early as September and November 1918, the Cabinet's decrees adopted under the *War Measures Act* prohibited most of the proletarian political organizations (the Socialist Labour Party, IWW, Social-Democrat Party, etc). Therefore, since its foundation in 1921, the Communist Party was illegal. It existed legally under the name of Workers' Party of Canada.

After the *War Measures Act* decrees were cancelled in 1923, in April 1924, the Communist Party of Canada exist legally, but for only a few years. In 1931, in the middle of an economic crisis, the government of R.B. Bennett, by means of Criminal Code Section 98 declared the CPC an “illegal association”. In August 1931, nine CPC leaders were arrested. Eight went to trial for illegal association and seditious conspiracy. While in prison in Kingston, Tim Buck, the Party leader, was a victim of a murder attempt.

In June 1936, the new Mackenzie King’s government withdrew Section 98 from the Criminal Code. But right after, in March 1937, the Maurice Duplessis’ nationalist government in Québec adopted an *Act to Protect the Province Against Communist Propaganda* (also known as “Padlock Law”).

In September 1939, the *War Measures Act* was promulgated again. All the publications and organizations of the CPC were subjected to repression. On June 6, 1940, the Communist Party and 15 other organizations were officially prohibited.

All this second period shows well that for the Canadian bourgeoisie, the apparition and persistence of a left side in its parties system, in its Parliament, made up of social-democrats, of humanist monks, of farmers and petit-bourgeois intellectuals, is an acceptable thing, even very useful. The more its imperialist nature matures, the more this *bourgeois* or *legal socialism* becomes compatible with the advantageous situation of the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, the revolutionary action of the Communist Party in the twenties and thirties, its struggles and its successes, constituted an unacceptable act for the bourgeoisie, followed by a systematic repression.

As the revisionism progressed and settled in the CPC, it answered to its quasi exclusion from bourgeois democracy by the state, by submitting to the bourgeoisie’s diktats and by confining its political horizon to organic parliamentarism.

C) From post-war period to now

The bourgeoisie could benefit from its after-war favorable conditions to reinforce its parties’ position. It is the bourgeoisie’s single party golden age. And that’s not contradictory at all with the government alternation (unequal and irregular) between Canadian Liberals and Conservatives, from Louis St-Laurent (Liberal) to John Diefenbaker (Conservative), from Pearson-Trudeau to Mulroney, from Chrétien-Martin to...

It is, in first place, the parliamentarism as an institution, decorated of this false pretension of being an institution produced by the whole society, by all classes and all groups that constitute the “single party”.

In second place, it’s also the fact that government parties defend quasi identical interests and govern in conformity with the same general guideline, which moves in time and according to conjunctures more than from one party to another.

It’s, in third place, the ceaseless assimilation into the Parliament of more secondary or marginal electoralist movements (social-democrats, ecologists, socialists, etc), thus contributing to bring back fresh forces that are essential to every bourgeois Parliament.

It’s all that which constitutes the current “single party”, one of the most powerful assets for the bourgeoisie, but at the same time, by its own success, a factor which reinforces the separation between the Parliament and the working masses.

The very powerful Liberal organizer of the sixties and seventies, Keith Davey, has summarized in some way this golden age of the Parliament. What he says concerning the Liberal Party applies in fact to bourgeois parliamentarism as a whole, including the institution’s wily character: “[TRANSLATION] We succeeded, to a certain extent, to lead the cities to think that we were for them and the countryside that we were for them too, and even with being at the same time the workers’ and the businessmen’s party—that was a pretty turn!”

And now?

It appears obvious, in the way the RCP(OC)’s activists talk about the boycott of the elections, that this is the introduction and the development of a major impulse contesting the almighty bourgeois power in the country’s politics.

It’s not only an answer to the insufficient *offerings* of the existing parties (like... *there is no satisfying alternative!*). That is still to remain both feet in cement, well inside the agreed limits of organic parliamentarism.

Elections’ boycott rather seems like a coherence found again in action, a clear and powerful class perspective. It is a new will in Canadian politics to start the inexorable march of the poor and exploited towards the people’s and revolutionary power in the country.

It is a content change instead of a simple form change. But at the same time, it also causes change in the means of the struggle because of the renewal of their revolutionary content!

The proletariat exists only towards and against its own exploiters.

To boycott is to exist! To boycott is to fight!

Kathe Voelkner

Le Drapeau Rouge is a Maoist paper published in Montréal, Québec in solidarity with the revolutionary movement in Canada and with the worldwide people’s war. Its editors can be reached by e-mail at ledrapeaurouge@yahoo.ca or by regular mail at C.P. 1004, Succ. C., Montréal (Québec) H2L 4V2. A selection of articles are also available on their Web site at <http://www.geocities.com/ledrapeaurouge>.

THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLES AND THE NORTH:

We must overthrow imperialist domination!

(Translated from **Arsenal** magazine, No. 3, June 2004.
Arsenal is the voice of the Revolutionary Communist
Party [Organizing Committees].)

THE EUROPEANS ARRIVE TO SEIZE THE TERRITORY! To “liberate it” from the obstacles which resulted from its occupancy by the First Nations, and from the modes of existence (scale of production, social relationship and political powers) that they had established. On the basis of *primitive accumulation* (at the same time violent, and falsely legal e.g. the policy of treaties), the Europeans set up a nation—Canada—which would be synchronized perfectly with the development of capitalism, the constitution of a bourgeoisie, possibly rich, and the development of imperialism until today. This is what persists in the relationship between the Canadian bourgeoisie and Natives, including the First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

And this is the reversal:

To retake the territory! To liberate it (without quotation marks!) from the obstacles that resulted from capitalist domination and imperialist exploitation of the resources by the large multinational corporations; and on the basis of this revolution, to set up a new democracy (e.g. the concept of New Democratic Revolution from Mao Zedong). This revolution would establish the sovereignty of the First Nations, would put an end to national oppression, expel the multinationals and all the imperialist interests—Canadian as well as international—and will join the worker’s fight for socialism everywhere in Canada.

In this **reversal** lies a great part of the prospect for revolution in Canada. Indeed, one cannot consider socialism in Canada without revolution and national liberation of the First Nations and consequently, without completely transforming the Canadian state, including the way in which it maintains political unity of his territory. We will not crown a new king on an old throne; nor will we slip a new puppet into the old dress of the Prime Minister. Even more, we will not give the oppressed and popular classes the control of the old bourgeois state.

In this regard, it’s possible and necessary to take inspiration from the Maoist revolutionaries of South Asian nations like Nepal, India, Bangladesh and Bhutan, which, through the particular ways their revolutions unravel, fight for the common perspective to create a *soviet-type federation of South Asian republics*, despite decades of unequal relationships, domination and subordination.

These parties struggle through the people’s war to set up a revolutionary model of unity. This is one of the most glorious and noble of possible objectives. We will also fight to replace the factitious and imposed unity of the capitalists (the bourgeoisie of Canada), with the revolutionary unity of the First Nations, Canadians and Québec people, in a federation never before seen.

This **reversal** is ahead of us. It is to be built. RCP(OC) in its Programme talks about a struggle that will have an extended character: “*The armed struggle for socialism and for setting up the proletarian power will be necessarily of a widespread nature. We will make revolution in Canada through protracted people’s war.*”

It should be understood that the revolutionary fight of the First Nations of Canada is a fundamental aspect and a deciding factor which contributes to the wider character of this fight. It is, for the needs of this article, how we name the reversal: to dispossess those who dispossessed us; to destroy the system that tried to destroy us!

However, we do not believe that all characteristics and all the stages of this New Democratic Revolution by the First Nations of Canada are already entirely known by us. Many things will depend on the conditions, circumstances, struggles and their results, possible setbacks and probable victories. All these things together will certainly create gigantic transformations. But the necessity is obvious as all former Canadian imperialist policy towards the First Nations demonstrates.

The imperialist interest in the North

Lately, the bourgeoisie and the government of Canada have begun to worry about the possibility of the weakening of Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic territories. As reported in *La Presse* newspaper, Canadian military actions will take place this summer [2004] in the Arctic, involving the army, navy and the air force. The goal will be to simulate a military intervention in northern parts of Canada. Next year, drones (recon planes without pilots) will be tested with the aim of being used for the air monitoring of this territory. In addition, the recent budget of the Martin government envisaged \$70 millions to scientifically support Canadian territorial claims against the USA, Russia and Denmark’s complaints (*La Presse*, May 2, 2004).

This preoccupation with Canadian territorial integrity in the Arctic can appear caricatural to us or purely symbolic. It is neither one nor the other. Recall that in 1953, the government moved in a purely authoritative way 17 Inuit families of Port-Harrison in the Nouveau-Québec (now Inukjuak) more than 2,250 kilometers north to Resolute Bay’s and Grise Fiord’s communities, to secure sovereignty claims in Arctic.

Today, it is known that 40% of Canadian’s natural gas and oil reserves are located in the far North. Moreover, with the partial thaw of parts of the ice-barriers, the North-West passage will become a privileged and economic maritime lane (side-by-side with South America’s skirting via

Argentina) for the megatankers and megacargo liners from the whole world which will no longer need to use the Panama Canal anymore, in addition to other extraction and transport activities, the development of economic activities and creation of a new administrative power.

This current preoccupation of the bourgeoisie and the governments is not confined to the Arctic. It's rather a token that testifies to the strategic interests over all the Northern territories of Canadian imperialism. Moreover, it is a demonstration of Canadian bourgeoisie's current project to strengthen its grip over the north of the country, from the 50th parallel to Ellesmere's Island.

These last ten years have seen the development of what now seems to be the final phase of colonization of the First Nations territory by the Canadian bourgeoisie. This process of "seizure" started several centuries ago and results in the total assertion of Canadian ruling class sovereignty (in opposition to First Nations self-determination rights). This sovereignty is a first order guarantor for Canadian imperialist bourgeoisie against its international markets competitors, because of its relatively modest size.

These current years are crucial, of that we should not be mistaken. The Canadian bourgeoisie (this designation includes in this article the imperialist partnership between Québec and Canada) deploys an intense activity to manage the political problems posed by the legal contradictions of the Canadian state: contradictions between the constitutional impossibility of denying the rights of the First Nations and secondly, the political refusal from the bourgeois state to recognize *de facto* self-determination rights of Native people.

This politico-legal pincer, once understood for what it is, that is to say a contradiction between capitalism and the bourgeois state in Canada, if it were *worked out* (i.e. taken as a point of struggle) with lucidity and sound judgement by a fighting leadership within the First Nations, by a *unified militant current* and not by merchants of territories and resources, would lead without a doubt to a quasi-revolutionary situation and truly a movement of liberation.

However, this is not the case. Presently, such a *unified militant current* does not exist. Taking advantage of this absence, the bourgeoisie re-asserted itself after 25 years of First Nations resistance. It loosed, in as far as it can be, the harness which encumbered its movements. For bourgeoisie, happiness is just around the corner; billions of dollars will undoubtedly go in its coffers. The indigenous people will continue to inject misery into their veins. The Aboriginal workers will continue to dig its mines, to open its roads and to run its pipelines from North to South. The imperialist bourgeoisie will keep for themselves and their friends the largest part of the workers production in order to maintain the luxury of their palaces.

A continuing record of dispossession

The current imperialist domination of the Northern Canadian territories is deeply entrenched in the bourgeoisie's

historical record. The bourgeoisie's past was constituted and developed with the initial subjection of the Aboriginal peoples. The bourgeoisie then took all of riches and goodies from them, doing so in being largely supported by the colonizing state's violence.

In the time of the fur trade, a commercial bourgeoisie was constituted (during what is called the stage of primitive accumulation stage) thanks to the superiority of the European armaments and with English and French military victories and also by the early colonies settling who allowed for bourgeoisie to acquire furs via unequal exchanges. In 1760, after the British victory that resulted in the **Royal Proclamation** of 1763, the political heart of commercial capitalism came to reassure the Aboriginal peoples because the proclamation allegedly showed "respect" for their rights. These rights were granted by the Proclamation, unless, as they were told, they were otherwise yielded to the British Crown—exclusively—by means of agreements.

The commercial bourgeoisie did not foresee its own destiny of becoming an industrial capitalist bourgeoisie. The bourgeois did not foresee the need to possess land for agriculture, neither for immigrant populations to settle, nor for industry, etc. The bourgeoisie was by then simply satisfied to be "safe" in its relationship with First Nations by guaranteeing their rights (with the powerful authority of the British Crown), to consolidate its network of transportation and collecting of furs.

This commercial economy quickly came to the end of its rope. The development of agriculture, the demographic growth (via immigration and natural growth) and the first signs of industrial development had already transformed Canada's future.

The true process of primitive accumulation (which is, according to Marx, the passage of the non-capitalist relations to capitalistic production relations, and that Lenin characterized, in the case of Russia, as "*clearing the land for capitalism*") occurred at this time, in the process of monopolization of Aboriginal lands by the state (the Crown first and then the Canadian state) for the profit of private owners—farmers, railroad companies, factories and eventually various industries of extraction. Here we find the origins of the treaties policy. They began a little before the second half of the 19th century and have remained to this day, in spite of being obscured by official political speeches which currently hides the true nature of the so-called "agreements in principle" and other "Peace of the Braves"-like agreements with the Aboriginal nations.¹

1 The so-called "Peace of the Braves" was signed between the Québec government and the Grand Council of the Crees in 2002. In exchange for increased management of their economic and community development, the Crees' representatives agreed at ensuring the completion of major hydro-electric projects within the James Bay Territory and to the continuation of forestry activities on their territories. The agreement also provided for the withdrawal of the multi-billion dollar law suits that were pending before the Courts. The Crees' representatives also undertook not to seek other redress from Québec with respect to the past application of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement.

The 1763 Royal Proclamation, which was a protective cushion for the commercial bourgeoisie and the trade of the furs, became irritating and a constraint: it made compulsory the passage through a policy of the treaties to “liberate” the lands.

The Canadian bourgeoisie adapted itself without difficulty to this legal constraint. Many so-called negotiated and signed treaties of this time were nothing more than theft, systematic deceptions and/or state terrorism, leading to Aboriginal peoples’ migration and eventually to their containment in Indian Act reservations. The historian Stanley Ryerson wrote: “*The fact of the matter is that the Indians were dispossessed of their lands by a colossal operation of fraud, misrepresentation and legalized theft.*” (*The Founding of Canada*, Progress Books, 1972, p. 241) In a document entitled “*Changer le Canada!*” published in 1991 by the Action Socialiste group, we have summarized this process as follows:

[TRANSLATION] “*These treaties were very clearly linked to the wishes of the ruling class to monopolize the natural resources, the important transportation routes, and as such to dispossess the Natives from them.*”

“*The very first treaties signed in Canada around 1850 were like that, commonly called Robinson-Huron and Robinson-Superior Treaties, signed with the Ojibway Nation. These treaties coincided with the rich mineral veins found north of the Great Lakes (in particular Lakes Huron and Superior) and on which the future economic power of Ontario was built. The current industrial and mining centers of Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins are all located on the ancient territories of Ojibway.*”

“*It was unthinkable for the rising bourgeoisie to leave these vast territories and the resources contained in them to the Aboriginal peoples. The colossal resources since accumulated from those were in fact usurped from First Nations.*”

“*Also the Treaty No. 8, from 1899 in Yukon, is another example: it coincides with the gold rush and allowed for their intensive exploitation. It was all the same when oil was discovered in Canada’s North-West, quickly followed in 1921 by the signature of the Treaty No. 11.*”

This monopolization of the territory was initially used for agriculture, then after internal market expansion to the State itself, and finally for the private companies—of which some became multinationals—in forest, mining and the oil industries.

The theft of lands, this legal fraud for the profit of the bourgeoisie, was also a bloody swindle! All this process was possible because the new Canadian State charged its courts, its agents with the application of the *Indian Act* (since 1876), its police force—the RCMP—and its military to mute Aboriginal peoples. The rebellion of the Métis and their Indian allies was repressed in a bloody and legal persecution.

The Canadian and the provincial governments took care, by means of extensive legislation, to prevent the Aboriginal

peoples from creating a nation within Canada. The government was warned to divide these “conquered people”. It held them divided on separate territories. The Pass System was established at the time of Riel’s northwest rebellion in 1885 and maintained until the 1950s. This system prohibited Native people of the Prairies to move between reservations without authorization of the Indian Affairs’ agents. It also prohibited Aboriginal peoples from raising funds to argue their case in front of the courts to protest their oppression (curiously, the 2001 “Peace of the Braves” agreement between the Crees and the government of Québec had also as an aim to eliminate legal lawsuits!).

According to the historian E.B. Titley, the Indian Affairs department controlled a vast network of spies and advisors, including missionaries, police officers, spies inside the Indian Act reservations, in addition to the RCMP, to supervise and sabotage the Native’s political activities. The Mohawk leader F.O. Loft, founder at the end of World War I of the League of Indians of Canada, became a true organizer. He fought against divisions which overpowered the Indians from one end to another of the “Dominion”. Superintendent of the Indian Affairs of the time, Duncan Campbell Scott accused him of being a Bolshevik and a threat to Canada. He did all that was possible, with the assistance of the RCMP, to disorganize Loft’s movement (Geoffrey York, *The Dispossessed*, McArthur & Co., 1999, p. 246-247).

It was thus for hundreds of activists, leaders and members of organizations which sought to gather Aboriginal peoples to organize their political struggle. It should be known: for each move made by the bourgeoisie to increase its domination and to extend its tentacles corresponds a state’s move to destroy, disorganize, disperse whatever obstacle the bourgeoisie encounters.

The current phase

Today, although we’ve seen a new phase in the exploitation of the northern territories by Canadian imperialism, the development, by powerful Canadian multinationals or from other countries and helped by the governments, of immense mining projects, hydroelectric, oil, ports, gas and others, which imply a high concentration of capital (including small indigenous capital), the Canadian bourgeoisie (or American or other bourgeoisie) literally order the state to clear the ground of *all obstacles under the capitalists foot* (to “*clear the land*”, as Lenin would have said), in political or legal prevention which can harm the extraction of the capitalist profits.

We must ask ourselves under these conditions: has the relationship between the imperialist Canadian state and the First Nations changed, during these last 10 years, by the concluding of territorial agreements (and by the negotiations still in progress) which are quasi treaties and/or texts, which bind the Native Bands to this new phase of “clearing” of the territory (i.e. to liberate it with the profit of capitalist exploitation) in exchange of royalties, of annual installments, and of portions of territories for their own use?

Let us explain the things differently. When in 1975, John Ciaccia—a Minister in Québec’s Liberal government—explained in front of the National Assembly the policy of the province in the North, and in fact the significance of the future James Bay Agreement as an opportunity for Québec [TRANSLATION] “...to extend its public administration, its legislation, its institutions and its services to the totality of Québec, in a word to affirm the integrity of our territory” (quoted in “*Regard sur la Convention de la Baie-James et du Nord québécois*”, Québec Amérique Ed., 2002, p. 153): does he then speak a language so different from those of the agents who spoke when they negotiated the treaties in 1850, 1890 or 1920? Did he speak such a different language than that of the Parti Québécois who concluded the so-called “Peace of the Braves” with the Cree in order to “liberate” the Rupert river for hydroelectric exploitation by Hydro-Québec?

The capitalist operations in the North, more often than not, are related to the most powerful sectors of the bourgeoisie, and are currently multiplying. Realized or projected, they constitute a big stake for the ruling class: Diavik and Ekati Mines (diamonds); Voisey’s Bay; the MacKenzie natural gas pipeline; hydroelectricity on the Rupert (Québec) and Lower Churchill Rivers (Newfoundland and Labrador); the Bathurst port project in Nunavut; oil and the natural gas in the basin of the Queen Charlotte Islands (British Columbia); oil sands with the Millenium Project, Syncrude north of Fort McMurray, True North Energy at Forth Hills; the diamond mining developments in Nunavut, Wawa Bush, Snap Lake, the Mont Otish Mount in Québec; the Bell Allard mine (zinc) in Matagami, etc., not to mention the hundreds of other smaller operations.

These capitalist operations constitute right now the headquarters from which the decision of development of the indigenous question in Canada is taking form. At least, that’s the wish of the governments and the capitalists. The bourgeoisie bets (both ideologically and politically) that the impressive scale of these developments will induce aboriginal leaders to believe that in the final analysis, their best policy consists in being the brokers between the iron fisted power of the capitalists and their communities’ needs.

We have to be in agreement with the Maoists when they say that *without state power, all is illusion...* The idea currently in vogue of economic “self-sufficiency” (an incomplete idea if ever there was one), that of community redistribution of the royalties of the capitalist exploitation, are also illusions.

They are and will remain so if there is no revolutionary perspective, i.e. if the First Nations do not fight to overcome the political power of Canadian imperialism.

Marxism teaches us that capitalism only produces riches while simultaneously producing misery. On the MacKenzie, with the Dene, the Cree, to the Innus, water, copper, natural gas, gold, diamonds, used like goods divert the accumulation of riches to a few and produces misery for all others.

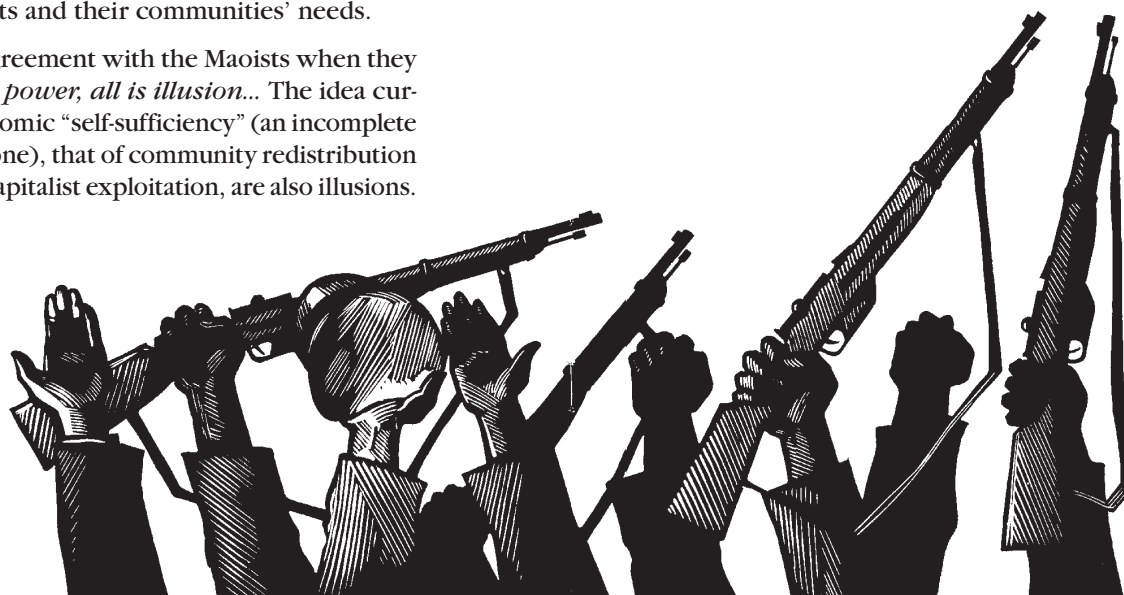
In five years, there will be two million aboriginal people in Canada, and the majority of them will be youth. The great majority are and will increasingly be proletarian. It is to say that they are experiencing what we call the three levels of the reality of our class:

- the misery, the street, disease, of what we often call the lower-proletariat;
- unemployment, occasional work, weeks on sites, of what is known as the reserve army of the unemployed;
- industrial employment, mines, public works, services, wage-earning known as “regular salary”.

It is up to them, starting as of now, to form a unified movement of struggle. From one Band to another! From one nation to another! From one reservation to another! From one city to another! From the North to the South and from the East to the West! Unite and fight! It is necessary to aim at founding a new democracy, an indigenous political power in Northern Canada which can only be achieved by actively resisting Canadian imperialism and by breaking the domination of its powerful companies, monopolies and government agencies over Aboriginal peoples. The means of reaching this point is by a protracted people’s war!

Let’s build a unified movement of struggle!
Let’s support the struggle of the Aboriginal peoples!
Let’s prepare for the people’s war!

R.P. North



DON QUIJOTE BATTLES THE WINDMILLS

The myth of self-management

(Translated from RCP[OC]'s **Arsenal** magazine, No. 2, March 2004)

THE MAJORITY OF MEN AND WOMEN are forced to live under capitalism. Because of an unfavorable strength balance under capitalism, the proletariat is forced to consider its liberation only through its immediate living conditions. To say the least, the proletariat is the prisoner of a system which leaves it very few occasions of escaping.

Doing away with capitalism is the main task of the proletariat. But to eliminate a system so powerful that it will relentlessly defend itself and will not let the exploited organize, more than good intentions are needed: a clear separation must be drawn at all levels (theoretical, practical, organizational) from the bourgeoisie. As long as the bourgeoisie will prevail, this separation will need to neverendingly be started over. It is not spontaneous, neither is it innate within the proletariat: it requires going back more than once on questions that seemed resolved, reexamining, re-doing.

Utopia and revolution

From its beginnings as the proletariat's revolutionary theory, Marxism distinguished itself from utopian socialism, especially from that of Proudhon (1809-1865)'s followers, then those of Bakunin (libertarian communists and anarchosyndicalists), on the central issues of the goals, means and objectives of the revolution. This boundary between anarchists and communists, between utopian socialism and scientific socialism still prevails, although in a different manner.

In the history of the proletariat and its struggle for communism, in the general history of the proletarian revolutionary movement, few issues were the subject of as many debates as the one over the content of the period which follows capitalism and leads to communism. While being opposed on this question, anarchists and communists have at least one thing in common: the objective of a free, equalitarian society rid of any form of exploitation and state. But from that goal, anarchists have made a utopia: communists a revolutionary project. This is a fundamental difference which reflects in all domains of revolutionary activity.

From historical experience, communists draw the following teachings: the proletariat cannot ignore to exert an integral dictatorship over the bourgeoisie in every field and at each step of development of the revolution. Any important

change to the bourgeois system of property over the course of history, as much as through the substitution of slavery by the feudal system, as that from feudalism to capitalism, invariably began by the conquest of power, which supporting itself by the strength of the conquering, proceeded with the transformation of property on a large scale, to consolidation and development of the new property system.

What the dictatorship of the proletariat made up of? Marx gave the most succinct description: *"What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production, 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society."*

To this conception, libertarian communists oppose their own vision of an anti-authoritarian socialism which aims to be *"a radical change of society concretizing workers' spontaneous socialism, realizing libertarian and equalitarian aspirations so often expressed into the exploited's class-struggle and into the oppressed and women's emancipation fights."* This project could be realized *"because production intercourses, the wage-earning intercourse are broken, because big means of production are socialized, collectivized at the basis and not under state-control, because autogestion [self-management] substitutes to the ruler/ruled people intercourse, and because thus, the social division into antagonistic classes is replaced by a reunifying human community, socially and politically equal and free."* Finally, anti-authoritarian socialism would be *"an authentic democracy, because the state mechanic—i.e. the exploiting classes domination mechanic—is broken, replaced by a federalist organization of society and by generalized autogestion, exercised on every bid decision, the actual collective sovereignty, the 'down to up' or 'from the periphery to the center' democracy, the power to the basis Assemblies and to their freely associated Councils."* *"From this follows that the new power will not exclusively be the proletariat's power—even if it weighs in it in a decisive manner—and even less its dictatorship..."*

These quotes are from the *Manifesto for a Libertarian Alternative* from the French organization of the same name (*"Alternative Libertaire"*, or AL). From these is drawn the libertarian communist vision of transition to communism whose merit is at least to be written on paper. AL claims 1) that there is no State-run transitional society between capitalism and communism; and 2) that self-management, practiced on a large scale, insures this transition.

We will draw our attention to these two elements demonstrating that anarchist theses, when put to the test, contradict objective reality on every point. That the anarchist

doctrine, as Lenin wrote over 100 years ago, “*has produced nothing but general platitudes against exploitation. These phrases have been current for more than 2,000 years. What is missing is (alpha) an understanding of the causes of exploitation; (beta) an understanding of the development of society, which leads to socialism; (gamma) an understanding of the class struggle as the creative force for the realization of socialism.*”

Protest struggle and revolutionary struggle

Beaten in its overt form of refusal to engage in the political struggle, the anarchist utopia of social revolution without political revolution, of creating a classless society without a stage in which the proletariat exerts its political leadership onto the whole masses (hence the dictatorship of the proletariat) reappeared under the guise of merging protest struggles and revolutionary struggle, as if both were the same thing and took the same shape.

Contrary to anarchists, Marxists always took good care of distinguishing the masses’ protest struggles (waged in order to keep or win gains, improvements from the bourgeoisie, forcing it to act against its immediate interests) and the revolutionary struggle led by the communists and the proletariat to conquer political power, eliminate the bourgeoisie and its state, establish the dictatorship of the proletariat to then make ahead towards communism. Between these two forms of struggle, there is a qualitative leap the anarchist movement completely ignores, refuses to make or shows itself incapable to accomplish.

For the anarchist movement, protest struggles simply have to go beyond the framework imposed by the ruling class and become less and less compatible with capitalism to see “counter-powers” spontaneously erupt within the base which is challenging the state. However, all of historical experience showed, costing the lives of thousands of revolutionaries, that revolution doesn’t erupt simply from a multiplication of protest struggles, however radical they may be (let’s just think of Argentina), but that it needs the unification of various objective factors: 1) an economical and political crisis which affects all classes; 2) the incapacity for the bourgeoisie to maintain its domination intact; 3) the incapacity for the proletariat and the masses to live like before; and a subjective factor: 4) the existence of a revolutionary political leadership, a Communist Party.

By not distinguishing the revolutionary struggle from protest struggles, the anarchist movement is brought to oscillate between direct action (dead propaganda) and an anarchosyndicalist strategy articulated around following the organized workers’ movement and on the exaltation of all struggles carried by trade unions. This alternative is significantly reproduced in all of anarchism’s history (from the

Bonnot gang to revolutionary trade-unionism in France, from attacks to anarchosyndicalism in Spain, etc.).

A necessary political detour

According to anarcho-communists, the protest and social struggle leads to socialization of means of production, which would not be a concentration of the latter into the hands of the state, but rather collectively possessed by the whole of society, global self-management of production, and self-management of each unit by those employed by it. Everything looks fine on paper, but one essential issue remains: if government was to be abolished, the economy collectivized and self-managed, would exploitation and capitalism be eliminated?

It is paramount to answer this question because it is the basis of the whole world conception of anarcho-communists since Proudhon, who claimed that society could develop on the basis of relationships among producers and between producers and consumers, independently from the state. Leaning on this notion, Bakunin then developed the idea of federalism based on workers’ associations or companies, linked to one another, but free and independent in their decisions, property being managed on a collectivist basis.

To answer our questioning, a sufficiently complete example must be found in history to drive any teachings. Does this example exist? Yes, it does in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) which gives the most advanced example of self-managed anarchist communes, which embraced both agriculture and industry, countryside and cities, on a massive scale. Despite all precautions that have to be taken due to this experience’s short life span, many teachings can be deducted from it, especially since anarchists are using it as an example and have made it “their revolution”. However, as we will see, history’s irony wanted—as is always the case each time doctrinaries come to power—that the Spanish anarchists had to do the opposite of what their doctrinary school taught them; in fact, they prove incapable of mobilizing the masses when they were confronted with the fundamental problems of transforming capitalism into communism.

In Spain, just before the bourgeoisie’s attack led by Franco, anarchists were leading the most important mass trade union (the CNT had more than one million members) and had a political apparatus, despite what they claim, with the *Federación Anarquista Ibérica* (FAI). In a dominating position, anarchists had the organizational capacity and the possibility to lead the proletarian and peasant masses to assault the bourgeois state, which they refused to do, conforming to their doctrinary apolitical stance. The Spanish Civil War was thus imposed by the bourgeoisie, depriving the proletariat and peasantry from the initiative.

ANARCHISM OR MAOISM?

From the first days of the civil war, the void left on Republican terrain by the fleeing of the bosses' and administrative authorities allowed the proletariat and peasantry to easily take over economic power; but once that done, they still had to resolve the difficulty of defending and maintaining the new society. Which depended on the constitution of a genuine proletarian power capable of consolidating the gains and beat the enemy!

With self-management, did production escape the laws of capitalism?

Spanish anarchists believed, like today's ones, that a system of autonomous self-managed communes, with the weakest links between each other, was the alternative to capitalism and Marxism. Hence they thought that as soon as they had collectivized villages in the countryside and places of work in the city, they would have, they thought, suppressed inequalities, capitalism, money, government, the state. But this prove to be untrue.

Anarchist comrades should have rather known that when production is the result of small (or large) independent companies, whether managed by a capitalist or a workers' collective, this production does not lead to more freedom, but quite the opposite: it becomes the most firm basis of development for exploitation and capitalism. Self-management within the federalist framework promoted by anarchists (allowing thousands of businesses, factories and proletarians to be linked not by a conscious and discussed plan, but by the sole forces of the market) though the result of thousands of transactions between these small groups, will constantly regenerate capitalism, divisions between the poor and rich and finally end up with monopolies.

What we will try to shed some light on is that despite the incredible heroism of anarchist activists, the anarchist project in Spain failed because the material bases which gave birth to capitalism, social classes, the capitalist state, are compatible with production, even collectivized. Anarchism failed because it saw in small affinity or production groups (basic assemblies) self-sufficient units, while only proletariat in its entirety—by building its party and leading the revolutionary struggle—can get to control and master the economy, restricts the bourgeois right and at the same time overcome its own exploitation (which is the content of the dictatorship of the proletariat). Finally, anarchism failed because it did not understand the link between freedom and mass revolutionary activity; by the fact, it reflects the bourgeois ideology of “everybody for himself”.

More specifically, the forces of capitalism (market laws) rapidly asserted themselves within communes led by anarchists. These forces were not mainly linked to difficulties of the civil war, but by economical relationships (or absence of)

between communes. The communes' incapacity to overcome inequalities, as with other problems, was noticed by all serious civil war commentators, from various tendencies, and even by some leaders of the CNT. This cannot be denied, except by those who are turning Spain into an Eldorado of revolution but refuse to study what actually happened.

This incapacity to overcome inequality does not mean that the communes were a failure. Some functioned well, others not: positively, they allowed the masses to take charge of business and demonstrating that proletarians could continue production without bosses. But at this point, it is only was a means of struggle, nothing more.

Abolishing the state

Taking control of factories and various workplaces is an inevitable step in the revolutionary process. But to stop there necessarily means that one does not understand the requirements of revolution and the tasks to be accomplished to really abolish capitalism. As Lenin explained, what is to be done is to transit *“from the very simple task of further expropriating the capitalists to the much more complicated and difficult task of creating conditions in which it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie to exist, or for a new bourgeoisie to arise”*.

For the proletariat, it is necessary to repress the bourgeoisie and counter-revolution, to expropriate the upper bourgeoisie, among others banks, major industries and communication networks; to nationalize real estate and other major assets, lands, subsoil and waters; to develop social and collective property of the main means of production; to constitute in all units of production a leadership that will act in the general interest of the proletariat i.e. in the goal of satisfying collective means and serve world revolution; to manage companies according to a national plan and local plans that assign tasks to be accomplished, allocate resources and determine the destination of products.

This demands a proletarian state, since production relationships will not be able to be transformed completely and at all levels at the first attempt; consequently, classes will subsist. Forms of small production will also subsist (let us think of the thousands of small businesses), as repartition according to work, in opposition to needs, will be maintained. Inequalities will persist, for example between those who lead and those who execute.

The anarchist theory during the civil war, as for today, was allergic to all forms of state, centralism and central planning. For anarchism, centralism and democracy are basically incompatible. Facing the necessity of making the communes work with one another, anarchists did not see that revolution required in the first stage a strategic centralization which lays on grassroots initiatives. Instead of directly (by

authority, we would say) and globally taking productive forces, they preferred letting things go, hoping that coordination if necessary between communes would easily be attained through “mutual aid” or “voluntary cooperation” or, in the worst case, by the weakest possible Federalism.

The capitalist state is certainly a monster, but this monster did not simply appear out of nowhere. The state appears when society divides into classes with irreconcilable interests and is always the ruling class's state, i.e. the bourgeoisie under capitalism. This division between antagonistic classes is itself the fruit of production's development; this production and the forces that allow it are under the control of one class, that of the capitalists.

Revolutions from the last century taught us that the proletariat cannot hope to reverse the situation unless it becomes the ruling class. By refusing to support the proletariat's state and proletarian democracy (dictatorship of the proletariat) in the transition phase towards communism, simply by denying the need itself for this transition, the anarchist movement was brought to participate, defend and spare the capitalist state. Confronted with the need for coordination and planning encompassing all of the proletarian and peasantry, anarchists were progressively brought to adopt their adversaries' plans, among others those of the liberal bourgeoisie. This was not a tactical withdrawal meant to favor alliances with other forces to beat the bourgeois army (which is admissible and even in this case necessary), it simply is that anarchists had no independent idea about how to accomplish the necessary centralization.¹

One could oppose to us that communes in Spain had little time to develop. However, for more than a year, anarchists nearly had *carte blanche* to develop communes in the Aragon and Levante regions and in the Barcelona industrial area and, from the beginning, difficulties linked to planning and centralization were experienced. There are good reasons to believe that the problem would only have gotten worse had the experienced lasted.

Eliminating inequalities

In its manifesto, *Alternative Libertaire* states that Federalism leads to “*stabilized structuration of society*”. Coordination of production is done by federations and branches. Precisely, during the Spanish Civil War, one of the objectives of the communes, set by anarchists themselves, was to insure equality for all participants; and one of the privileged instruments to reach this objective were federations and branches. Anarchist activists believed that living conditions between communes would rapidly equalize on the basis of “mutual aid”. Here again, we must admit that it did not happen.

In the countryside, communes were organized in a very different way. In some cases, the commune's merchandise

was centralized in a warehouse; in others, it was not the case. Disparities rapidly established from commune to commune, and from factory to factory. Some communes could count on a much superior income than the poorest ones.

But where did “mutual aid” go, which communes had to commit to each other? The answer is simple: communes, afraid of seeing landowners taking back their land, were more prone to send any surplus to the city or the Front rather than to one another. To insure the cities' and the Front's supply, columns of anarchist militia were used (small detail, these militia people charged with supplying the cities and whose members did not come from these communities, were they not like an armed force separated from the population—and is it not true that this separation of the armed forces from the people is the basis of... the state?). But when time came to attack discrepancies between communes—a task too strenuous, sensitive and complex to be accomplished by mobile militia columns—very little was done. It is precisely what happened in Aragon and Levante, the two areas where land collectivization went the furthest, and this even if regional federations took redistribution between communes very seriously (it was even seen as being their main task). Variations between communes probably indicated historical inequalities, but also reflected the minor role played by the redistribution organized by federations.

The same phenomenon occurred in collectivized factories in Barcelona, which was the main center of anarchist industrial communes. Proletarians had control of the factories, but on the basis of the same anarchist principles applied in the countryside, it proved impossible to establish lasting cooperation.²

More concretely, the anarchist theory brought proletarians to consider their factory as the possession of those who worked in it rather than property of the whole proletariat. While unemployment was high, proletarians in collectivized shops tended more often than not to proceed to improve their own working conditions (better wages, social programs) than to distribute their advantages with other

1 On September 24, 1936 in a congress of the CNT's Catalonia Regional Federation in which 500 delegates took part, the long debate in the anarchosindicalist movement between political and apolitical stance was for the first time clearly resolved in favor of the former. For the sake of antifascist war and syndicalist revolution, the congress decided to participate in the *Generalitat* cabinet. (The *Generalitat* was the legislative power also known as the Parliament of Catalonia. The 1932 Statute of Autonomy granted Catalonia's Parliament its own justice system [with High Court] and its own police force.)

2 Evidence of difficulties in the union-controlled economy soon came in abundance. The Republican Minister of Industry reported that by January 1937 he had received petition asking for state intervention in no less than 11,000 enterprises (Juan Peiró, *De la fábrica de vidrio de Mataró al Ministerio de Industria* - Valencia 1937).

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proletarians. As with agricultural communes, great disparities lasted between working proletarians and unemployed ones, between proletarians from strategic sectors (thus better paid) and those from secondary sectors.³

Facing the difficulties of organizing sustainable cooperation between collectivized factories in Barcelona, how did anarchists react? Despite their declarations against money, they used the same tools as capitalism, namely a central labour bank, an economic council, credit, cash purchases, demand, etc. Not only could they not eliminate accounting, money, they also had to organize forms of banking and financial operations.

One of the most striking effects of the increasing polarization between collectivized workplaces was the loss of independence for many of them. The poorest collectivized workplaces not having the necessary funds to pay wages, got these funds by mortgaging their workplace's equipment, as well as their warehoused material with the bourgeois Catalan government. One by one, workplaces passed from proletarian hands to those of the bourgeoisie without the latter playing any role in this, except that of a pawnbroker.

Suppressing money

Let's take a look at money. Anarchists believed that taking control of workplaces and villages would suffice to eliminate money. For example, in Binéfor, like in 450 other collectivized towns in Aragon, money was declared abolished. An economy totally based on barter being impracticable, the Committee thus proceeded to emitting notes of 5, 6 and 7 pesetas each. The value of each male person's work was set at 7 pesetas, and that of women at... 5 pesetas. The old currency not being seized, a black market bloomed.

So, after announcing that money was suppressed, the autonomous commune's local committee proceeded with emitting local notes which worked for locals like money. Ironically, the fact these notes played the same role as money never struck the anarchists. For them, money was national bank notes, while the local currency, to their eyes, was not. The emission by several communes of differently valued notes had as a consequence to make exchanges between communes more difficult. Many people in the communes were led to think that a national currency was maybe not such a bad thing. The main point here is that anarchists struggled against outside aspects of money—a bank note emitted by capitalist financial institutions—and not against the social and production relationships brought by money.

³ With a work force of about 600,000 before the war, it might be roughly be hypothesized that the unemployed rate in Barcelona ranged from 10 to 15 percent.

Once more, we have to pinpoint that the problem is not that anarchists failed to accomplish the impossible—immediate abolition of money. From the Marxist theory's point of view, it is not surprising that money cannot immediately be abolished. The problem is not the practical measures taken (rationing of first necessity goods, various free-of-charge services, etc.) either. The problem lies in the anarchist theory itself. When the objective reality came to crush all of the anarchist dogmas, they found themselves facing a difficult choice: taking control of the economy and carrying out the dictatorship of the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry, or leaving the bourgeoisie to take over control; and it was the second option that won because for them, centralization was a synonym of authority, which was in their eyes equivalent to capitalism.

The dictatorship of the proletariat

Marxism identifies the need for a relatively protracted period of transition between the beginning of the social revolution and the accomplishment of a classless society which has eliminated government, money, etc. During this period, proletarians must learn to lead society, thus surpassing capitalism. Productive forces must also be developed enough to eliminate the risk of shortages from the masses. During this period, society's division into classes must be practically overcome before the proletariat can avoid using a state revolutionary machine.

As Lenin taught: *"...during every transition from capitalism to socialism, dictatorship is necessary for two main reasons, or along two main channels. Firstly, capitalism cannot be defeated and eradicated without the ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, who cannot at once be deprived of their wealth, of their advantages of organization and knowledge, and consequently for a fairly long period will inevitably try to overthrow the hated rule of the poor; secondly, every great revolution, and a socialist revolution in particular, even if there is no external war, is inconceivable without internal war, i.e., civil war..."*

As it is said in the RCP(OC)'s Programme: *"The state that keeps on existing during the socialist phase but that will progressively "wither away" must lead the masses into assuming leadership of society. The conditions to allow them to do this must be set. This will require spare time for the masses (provided by the reduction of the working week); a collective take over of household chores; the furnishing of tools such as ink, paper and places to hold meetings must also be provided so they can express themselves freely, etc.*

"They must also work in destroying privileges that are imparted to those who are in positions of leadership. One

way to do this is to enable them to vote and to revoke leaders. The reduction of salary disparities between leaders and the proletarian masses and the participation of managers in labour are also tasks that will have to be undertaken.

“In the long run, everyone must assume leadership. Not only that of a firm or of a neighborhood (although this will be a necessary step in the process of learning), but equally that of society as a whole. This means the organization of its activities and the mastery of the direction it will be headed for.

“In order to make this type of participation possible, and to insure it is something authentic and unlike the bogus consultations the capitalists hold on occasion for the people to give them the impression that they are partaking in a democratic process, the State itself must undergo change. It must give birth to new types of leadership, based on the participation of the masses.”

Disarmed before the tasks brought by the revolution, without a theory that is not a dogma but rather a guide for action, the anarchist movement resembles Don Quijote, a great reader of chivalry novels who decided to leave for adventure, conquer glory by valorous deeds and save the world. Like many before him, he will pursue his quest to the end, deluded with his dreams, reinventing the world. Like Don Quijote fighting with flocks of sheep he took for enemy armies, windmills become giants, the anarchist movement stayed too long on the surface of things: while it thought abolishing inequalities, they reappeared; when it thought it had abolished money, one sees it reappear; the State was thought to have vanished, however proletarians were forced to mortgage machinery to it. By paying more attention to form rather than foundation, drawing no lessons from the past, anarchism proved its limits, which we absolutely must overcome.

C. Jacobson

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Doing away with classes and what a proletarian state is good for

This article has been written a few years ago by Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA as part of a series highlighting the basic differences between Maoism and anarchism. The whole series can be access on the *Revolution Website* (www.revcom.us) under the Bob Avakian tab.

FIRST OF ALL, ONE IMPORTANT ASPECT of this question of MLM vs. anarchism is the point that Lenin made in his time about the growth of various trends similar to anarchism, various radical trends that are different from and in some important ways opposed to communism. He said that in a certain sense anarchism and these trends more generally have to be understood as, in his phrase, “*payment for the sins of right opportunism.*” In other words, where and to the degree that the communist movement, the Marxist movement, was not revolutionary enough, then this gave rise to, or gave strength to, anarchism. Honest revolutionary-minded people were attracted to anarchism because it seemed more revolutionary than Marxism. This is one important aspect: where anarchism grows as a trend among people radically opposed to the status quo, this is often partly as a result of the fact that what is supposed to be the most revolutionary ideology and program, namely communism, is not revolutionary itself, or not thoroughly and consistently revolutionary, but is instead some variant of reformism wearing the mantle of Marxism. This is what Lenin meant when he said that, in part, anarchism is “*payment for the sins of right opportunism.*”

Now, a few years back we published a pamphlet on this question, and the title as well as the overall content of that pamphlet brought out that, in reality, there is nothing more revolutionary than Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Although there are many things more revolutionary than revisionist *phony* communism, there is nothing more revolutionary than *genuine* communism—there is nothing more revolutionary than the fundamental interests, the historic mission, and the corresponding world outlook of the proletariat, and the struggle to make this a material reality. And there should be no way that anything can be presented as being more revolutionary—or that we should allow anything to come across as being more revolutionary—than what we’re all about.

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What is our fundamental answer to anarchism—how should we proceed in giving this answer? We should start from the perspective of our final aim—the most thoroughgoing revolution in all of human history—and then talk about what is actually necessary to get there. In other words, in opposing anarchism, rather than proceeding by saying, “You have to understand that we can’t do this right away, and we can’t eliminate that right away, and you don’t understand we have to have a state and we have to have a party,” and so on—instead of getting into it that way—we should start from the point of view of the final aim of communism, which represents the most radical revolution, the most radical ruptures, in all of human history, and put *that* out very clearly as what we’re aiming for, and *then* get into the contradictions that are necessary to struggle through and overcome in order to get to that final aim. Otherwise, we might actually come off as more conservative than anarchism, when in fact, as has been stressed, we’re much more radical than anarchists.

If we’re going to criticize anarchism and struggle with people to take up MLM, we have to unite with the radical inclinations of many anarchists. And we have to struggle with them to deepen these radical inclinations and take them further. We have to do this from a *revolutionary* standpoint—from the standpoint of the most radical transformation in the history of humanity, the proletarian revolution and its communist ideology.

As also pointed out in that pamphlet (“*There’s Nothing More Revolutionary Than MLM*”), and as our Party has consistently emphasized, communism must be—can only be—achieved worldwide. But there is, in the anarchist position, especially as it finds expression within an imperialist country, a certain amount—and in some cases a great deal—of what we could call “imperialist chauvinism.” At least in its objective content, and regardless of the intention of those who put it forward, and even regardless of certain internationalist sentiments of some anarchists, the anarchist position, when put forward in an imperialist country, amounts in a certain aspect to a program of “communizing the plunder of imperialism.” The reason is that if you were to implement the anarchist position that you shouldn’t have any state at all, then there would not be any way to put the interests of the proletariat as a class, and the interests of the masses of people, above the interests of individuals and small groups of people. *And*, along with that, there would be no way to put the interests of the world revolution above the more narrow interests of the people in this or that particular country. And this is especially a problem in a country that has a whole history of imperialist domination and plunder.

From an internationalist point of view

Now, the anarchists actually argue not only that you shouldn’t have a state in their vision of a new society, but that you shouldn’t have an established, organized revolu-

tionary leadership to carry out the overthrow of the existing order. If that line were followed, it would actually mean that you *couldn’t* overthrow the existing order—because, in order to do that, you have to go up against and actually defeat the highly organized and very powerful military as well as political forces of the imperialists and their whole state apparatus.

But let’s say, for the sake of argument, that somehow you did overthrow the old system without any revolutionary leadership of an organized character and then, in accordance with the anarchist position, you tried to do without any kind of state. Well then, really, the way the society and the economy would have to be structured, to be consistent with this anarchist vision, is that every unit of production in society, or small groups of people that got together to carry out production and exchange, should enjoy the fruits and the benefits of what’s produced through their labour. But among the many problems with this is the inescapable fact that, if you were to do this beginning on an economic foundation that resulted from the position of the old imperialist country in the overall international division of labour and accumulation process of the imperialist system, then you would be proceeding on the basis of reaping the fruits and “communizing” the plunder and exploitation that had been carried out by imperialism. And this would be true, even taking into account the unavoidable destruction and dislocation of technology and of the economy overall that would be involved in a revolutionary war to overthrow imperialism—even with all that, you would still be “inheriting” vast and highly developed technology and other productive forces that are, to a significant degree, the fruit of exploitation and plunder carried out over decades and centuries of imperialist domination and colonial conquest throughout the world.

So the question will be: are you going to have an approach of “communizing” those fruits, for the benefit only of the people in that (former) imperialist country, *or* are you going to utilize those productive forces first and above all to advance the world revolution toward the aim of overcoming all exploitative and unequal relations in the world, including the “great divide” between the imperialist and the colonial countries?

The process of doing away with classes

Another way of getting at this is to say that, so long as society is divided into classes—and so long as the economic-material basis exists for such class division—it is only through a socialist state that the highest interests of the proletariat and masses of people can be realized. And what goes along with that is that it is only through such a state that proletarian internationalism can be given its fullest and highest expression. This is the only way that the larger interests of the proletarian class, including its proletarian internationalism, can actually find expression—can actually be imple-

mented and, yes, enforced, against the opposition of the overthrown exploiters and other reactionary forces.

In these conditions, where the basis for class divisions has not yet been overcome and uprooted, without such a proletarian state—without a unifying instrument to give concentrated expression and concentrated material force to the interests of the proletarian class as a whole—then “the best” you would be able to get (and this could only last for a brief period of time) would be small groups of people who were actually exercising a petit bourgeois way of life, operating in a petit bourgeois mode. And if the means of production were owned or controlled by small groups of people, with each owning a small portion of these means of production and organizing production in accordance with this, then by what means and through what mechanisms would economic relations among these different groups, and among the individuals within these groups, be regulated?

It will not be possible to do away with commodity relations and money right away—in fact for a considerable period of time—after the overthrow of the present capitalist system; and if you try to abolish them right away, you will have chaos and the result, politically as well as economically, will be anything but the idealized vision of the anarchists of a society without elites monopolizing authority and power. (This is a decisive point which I will return to later.) So, in fact, if such an anarchist program were implemented, the economic relations among different sectors of the economy, and between the people in society, could only end up being regulated according to the principles of commodity production and exchange—and, more than that, *capitalist* commodity production and exchange. The result would be re-polarization of society along capitalist lines, with the emergence of a bourgeoisie full-blown and a bourgeois society full-blown. And, along with that, the result would be the restoration of imperialist plunder and exploitation throughout the world.

The problem of being “Ben-and-Jerryized”

In other words, if you have not, in reality, uprooted the material conditions that give rise to and underlie the division of society into classes; if you have not overcome the division between mental and manual labour, the social division of labour that involves the oppression of women, and other major social contradictions; if you have not brought into being the conditions that make it possible to articulate the production and exchange of goods and services without commodity relations and money; if you have not accomplished all that—not only in one part of the world but in the world as a whole—and you try to just have small groups of people get together and produce things, you’re going to find yourself forced to “fall back” on capitalist principles in regulating the economy.

First of all, you’re not going to be able to avoid a certain division of labour in society. Individuals, or small groups of

people, are not going to be able to produce everything they need by themselves. So there’s going to have to be some form of exchange. And, again, this will have a worldwide dimension and cannot be limited to just one country or one part of the world. What form is this exchange going to take? How is this exchange—and the production that underlies it—going to be on a basis that contributes to overcoming these divisions and inequalities in the particular society, and also contributes to the world revolution and the transformations necessary for the elimination of classes and social inequality, worldwide?

In reality, these small groups, both in their relations of exchange with each other and within their units of production, would reproduce capitalist relations. They would be in a situation where, in society as a whole, there is no embodiment of interests and, yes, of authority, which is higher than these various different small groups and which can therefore unify the masses of people around those higher interests. And the fact is that, without such embodiment of higher interests and authority, there will be no means for uprooting social inequalities, for uprooting commodity production, for uprooting the material basis that gives rise to class distinctions. So these small units of production, in having to deal in the larger economic arena of both that country and of the world, in having to find their place within the overall accumulation process that exists in the world as a whole, would find themselves “Ben-and-Jerry-ized.” Despite any intentions of doing things for the social good, they would not be able to avoid getting into a situation where some people are exploiting others within that society, and where, on a world scale, they are benefiting from the unequal division of labour and from the exploitative and lop-sided relations.

Unless, through the medium of the state, you move systematically to suppress the forces of capitalism and to realize the higher interests of the proletariat, capitalist forces will (as Lenin put it) be regenerated daily, hourly, continuously, spontaneously, and on a mass scale, out of these underlying economic and social contradictions that you’ve only begun to address. Without a state to provide a higher synthesis and unification of the interests of the people—of the proletariat and the broad masses of people—these different units of production having to exchange with each other are objectively going to be thrown into competition with each other. And this competition is going to lead to some advancing, while others are set back, it’s going to lead to further polarization and inequality, both between different sectors of the economy and within those different sectors.

So in terms of proletarian internationalism and in terms of actually overcoming these inequalities and divisions which continually reproduce the bourgeoisie—which, even after the capitalist system has been overthrown, continually produce forces that strive toward the restoration of the bourgeois mode of production—you cannot do without the

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state right away. In fact, you cannot do without it for a long historical period, until you have completely eradicated the basis for class distinctions and all the social inequalities and antagonisms that are bound up with this. Until you reach that point, without the proletarian state you're going to find the forces of capitalism reinforced, and rather than being able to quickly abolish the state, you're going to find the *bourgeois* state, *bourgeois dictatorship*, exercising its oppressive rule over society, enforcing the bourgeois mode of production with all its exploitation and inequality, both within the country and internationally.

After the present capitalist system is overthrown, not only will old bourgeois forces try to regroup and sabotage and ultimately overthrow the new society, but new bourgeois forces are going to continually emerge, for a long time. These various bourgeois forces are going to seek each other out and form alliances, they're going to gather their forces, they're going to seek allies internationally, and they're going to move to restore capitalism. Without the proletarian state, there's going to be, frankly, nobody to stop them—no unified force, no leadership, to represent the proletariat as a whole in being able to combat this capitalist restoration.

A radically different state

Of course (as I'll return to later in this series), the state in the new, socialist society, must be radically different than all previous states. It must represent the revolutionary interests of the proletariat and the masses of people, and this must be concretely expressed in the institutions of this state and its functioning. It must rely on and continually unleash the conscious revolutionary activism of the masses and increasingly involve them in mastering and transforming all spheres of society, and it must embody and develop the forms for doing this. And our ultimate goal, in this most radical revolution in all of history, is to abolish the state (and generally to bring into being the conditions where there is no longer any need, or basis, for one group of people to institutionalize their leadership in society and for one part of society to dominate and exploit others).

Further, it is true—and historical experience of the socialist revolution has dramatically illustrated this truth—that the most strategically placed forces within socialist society who seek to carry out the restoration of capitalism are precisely high-ranking people within the socialist state (and the vanguard party, which is the leading force within the socialist state) who turn against the revolution. As Mao summed up, the greatest danger of capitalist restoration within socialist society is posed by those in authority who follow the capitalist road. This is a very acute contradiction—and it has a very profound basis in the nature of socialist society as a transition from capitalism to communism (where there will no longer be class distinctions and social inequality). But these very contradictions of socialism (such as the persistence of the differences between mental and

manual labour, of commodity and money relations, of the social conditions that are bound up with the oppression of women, and other major social contradictions) also make necessary the leading role of a vanguard party representing the revolutionary outlook and interests of the proletariat. *And* they make necessary the struggle to continually revolutionize the party itself as a crucial part of revolutionizing society toward the goal of communism. But, until communism is achieved—and we have to emphasize especially here, until it is achieved *worldwide*—until the material (and ideological) basis has been brought into being to abolish the state (and the vanguard party), there is no way other than through the proletarian state (and through the vanguard role of the party of the proletariat) for the highest interests of the proletariat and masses of people to be upheld and acted on.

Along with that, there is no other way for proletarian internationalism to be actually made into a material reality. Instead we'll get the re-emergence and polarization of class forces and the exploitation that are characteristic of capitalism and imperialism. And we'll get a chauvinism of a kind that says that the people who emerge as the more elite strata within this society should once again enjoy the benefits that have been derived from the whole history of imperialist plunder and lop-sidedness and all the exploitative relations and the international division of labour that goes along with that in the world as a whole with the operation of the imperialist system.

Bob Avakian

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Maoism today

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IN 1984, WHILE A GROUP OF communist organizations dared to recognize the loss of socialist China and decided to resist the treason and demoralization of the communist movement by creating the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), capitalism was apparently triumphing. Its ideologists even proclaimed the “death of communism” and even the “end of history”, when the USSR and the Berlin Wall both collapsed. Twenty years later, imperialism is hopelessly trying—by the repressive and devastating force of its armies—to maintain an unjust world and the dictatorship of the rich causing tremendous misery worldwide. This brings the masses of all continents, from Bolivia to Iraq as well as Palestine, Afghanistan, Nepal, India or the Philippines, to be more and more angry, day after day.

By creating the RIM 20 years ago, these revolutionaries built the foundations for the renewal of communism in its most revolutionary understanding—that is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This renewal was made possible by directly attacking the revisionist drifting of many “Marxist-Leninist” organizations which had actually given up on revolution. The revolutionaries who gathered around RIM condemned the return to capitalism in the former socialist countries and began to make a serious assessment of the revolutionary experience in China and the USSR. This Movement—which is a truly living body—constantly grew rich and still continues to progress, thanks to the two-line struggle and political discussions which animate it. The RIM experienced its most important developments through new experiments of revolutionary action and people’s war which were initiated during the last few years and saw spectacular progress, especially in both Nepal and South Asia.

People’s War in Peru and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

Among the events which played a decisive role in the Maoist revival certainly was the launching of the people’s war by the Communist Party of Peru in May 1980. The CPP has been the first organization to refer to Maoism as a new stage of Marxism-Leninism. This Party and the armed struggle it waged—without any external material or military support—in a country that is among the poorest in Latin America became a model of resistance and courage from the masses. The people’s war in Peru initiated an important thought on Mao’s contribution to the revolutionary strategy and brought a new leap as to the crucial role of people’s war in preparation for world revolution.

The development and the progression of people’s war in Peru played an important role in the recognition in 1993 by the RIM of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as “*the ideology of the proletariat synthesized and developed to new*

stages.” RIM’s declaration entitled *Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!* that was issued on December 26, 1993 thus summarized the reasons for upholding Maoism:

“Mao Zedong elaborated many theses on a whole series of vital questions of revolution. But Maoism is not just the sum total of Mao’s great contributions. It is the comprehensive and all-round development of Marxism-Leninism to a new and higher stage. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is an integral whole; it is the ideology of the proletariat synthesized and developed to new stages, from Marxism to Marxism-Leninism to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and Mao Zedong, on the basis of the experience of the proletariat and mankind in class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment. It is the invincible weapon which enables the proletariat to understand the world and change it through revolution. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a universally applicable, living and scientific ideology, constantly developing and being further enriched through its application in making revolution as well as through the advance of human knowledge generally. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the enemy of all forms of revisionism and dogmatism. It is all-powerful because it is true.”



In Canada, the *Action Socialiste* group, which dissolved to integrate the Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committees) in November 2000, had itself adopted Maoism in 1994, inspired by the experience and discussions of the Communist Party of Peru and RIM.

Rectification movement and progression of the people's war in the Philippines

The discussions that happened following the advances of the revolution in Peru and the important critique of revisionism made by the Maoists (including the RIM) certainly contributed to the victory of the Second Great Rectification Movement launched by the Communist Party of the Philippines in 1992. This Party, which had launched the people's war in 1969, had faced important setbacks in the eighties. It was experiencing an important two-line struggle, opposing mainly those who were supporting a revisionist path that pushed towards abandoning the protracted people's war strategy and legalizing the Party, and the revolutionaries who wanted to better grasp and apply the Maoist revolutionary principles.

Whereas the guerrilla fronts and base areas had practically disappeared by the mid-Eighties, the Maoist rectification movement allowed the revival of the Communist Party of the Philippines. This revival was based on the need for developing not only military activity on guerrilla fronts, but also the political and ideological work of building a people's revolutionary power in the zones under its influence. On March 29, 2005, on the occasion of the 36th anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA), the Central Committee of the CP of the Philippines reaffirmed the essential role played by the rectification movement in the important advances carried out in the last few years.

Incidentally, it invited the NPA to raise the strategic defensive to a higher level by raising the number of guerrilla fronts from 130 to 140 in the coming year. With a military and political presence in more than 70 of the country's provinces, encompassing some 800 municipalities and 9,000 villages, the New People's Army and the CP of the Philippines are considered today as being "*the greatest internal security threat to the country,*" according to Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz. He expressed this last April, when demanding that United States enable him to negotiate a peace agreement with Filipino Islamic "terrorists" who used to serve as a pretext for US Army to redeploy its presence in the country.

Revolution on the road in Nepal

Largely inspired too by the people's war in Peru (at some point, more than 10,000 people demonstrated in the streets of Kathmandu in 1993 in support of Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru!), the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is also basing itself on Maoism. In February 1996, it announced the launching of the people's war. In less than 10 years, this Party and the People's Liberation Army it leads became the armed and political tool of a whole people that

looks for freedom and dignity and want to put an end to all forms of oppression: patriarchal, caste, religion, nationality and property ones, cleverly maintained by feudal monarchy.

By establishing base areas free from feudalism and landowners and by creating new organs of people's political power—today this new power exists in most of the country except the Kathmandu Valley—the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) showed the soundness of the Maoist ideology and strategy on which it relies. This guerrilla, made up at the beginning of a few hundred members, began its activity nine years ago with only one rifle and one handgun and nevertheless developed a genuine People's Liberation Army made up of thousands of men and women, who today controls the vast majority of the country and is in the process of driving out an army and police machine of more than 120,000 men.

All that would have been impossible without a correct revolutionary strategy, thanks to Maoism. According to Maoist principles, for a revolution to succeed, it requires the support and participation of the masses, along with a party and a revolutionary army able to tackle and destroy the power of the reactionary classes. The revolution becomes possible when the people themselves contribute and take part, by the force of its best elements, the women and men most determined to overcome oppression and drive out the tyrants and reactionaries with revolution.

Maoist revival in Afghanistan, India and South Asia

The revolution today shaking Nepal has posed new conditions and urgent challenges to Maoists, particularly in oppressed countries. This first challenge was certainly the need to unify the forces and currents supporting Maoism, in order to consolidate the revolutionary camp.

The attacks and armed offensive by US imperialism in various parts of the world, as well as the resistance it meets, create new challenges and opportunities for the revolutionary forces. Their capacity to unleash the fury of the masses as a mighty force for the revolution is at the heart of developments to come.

In 2002, Maoists in Turkey unified under the banner of the MKP, the Maoist Communist Party [Turkey and North Kurdistan], and along with the People's Liberation Army, they raised the flag of people's war by waging armed actions in zones under their influence. A year and a half later, the Afghan Maoists concluded their own unification process, by founding the Communist Party (Maoist) of Afghanistan at the end of a historical congress held in May 2004.

This new Party is the fruit of a process started after the military invasion of Afghanistan by US imperialism and its allies in 2002, thus obliging Maoist forces to arm themselves with a program and a clear political line. Initiated by the Communist Party of Afghanistan and the Struggle Organization for the Liberation of Afghanistan (Peykar), the discussions then continued with another group called Revolutionary Unity of Workers of Afghanistan. The call they

then issued to all the country's MLM forces received a cordial answer. The base of unity of the new Party was formed around the political and ideological principles of MLM, with the New Democracy Revolution as a minimum program and preparing the transition towards the maximum program, socialist revolution and the final goal of communism. The new Party also posed as a base of unity adhesion to the strategy of protracted people's war and the preparation of its launching being the central task of the day.

At its founding congress, participants also put emphasis on internationalism and the struggle within the RIM, in order to build a Communist International of a new type. RIM besides played an important role in the process of unification of Maoist forces in Afghanistan. In 2003, it had called for the holding of a Joint Regional Conference of MLM Parties and Organizations of Iran and Afghanistan, which allowed important steps forward toward unity of the whole MLM movement at the regional level. The contribution of the Communist Party of Iran (MLM) to this process was also underlined by the new Afghan Party.

In September 2004, it was the Maoist revolutionaries from India who achieved unity by creating the new Communist Party of India (Maoist). In this country—the second most populated in the world after China—this event constitutes a major advance for the revolutionary forces and the development of people's war in South Asia. Like returning a negative echo to this new revolutionary breakthrough, the US government officially added the new Communist Party of India (Maoist) on its Other Selected Terrorist Organizations (OSTO) List, in May 2005.

South Asia, with the Maoists of Nepal and India as its vanguard, seems the most active revolutionary zone today at the international level. The guerrilla zones and guerrilla bases stretching from Nepal to the North-East of India is the theatre of a new coordination between revolutionary Maoists, based on their common analysis and the need for fighting in a unified way against reactionary feudal, capitalist and bureaucratic classes. All this at a time when Maoist actions become extensive in western Bangladesh and when a new Maoist Party has been created in Bhutan.

The Maoist challenge: concentrating the anger of the masses towards attacking bourgeois power

Today, revolutionaries, sympathizers and all groups and organizations who want to resist and fight in a consequent way against the imperialist domination on the world, need to be aware of victories and important advances of Maoism towards revolution and its essential struggle against imperialism. Its goal is to give "all power to the masses". Inspired by the Nepalese example as by that of Peru, Maoist forces are progressing in Ecuador, Brazil and Colombia, where support campaigns for the Nepalese revolution were recently organized.

The soundness of the Maoist strategy was and still is incarnated today in the important progress of people's war in oppressed countries, where as in Nepal the oppressed

masses never have been so close of seizing power. It is also incarnated in the new breath which it gave to the Maoist movements in the imperialist countries.

In Europe, Maoists are more and more active, notably in Germany, Turkey, France, Italy and the UK. In the United States, the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA—one of the founding parties of RIM—continues the struggle to develop revolution in the most powerful imperialist country in the world.

In Canada, Maoism lit the necessary spark for organizations and individuals to organize a conference in 2000 which carried out the creation of the Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committees). In fact, Maoism enabled them to elaborate a program, a strategy, and an action plan for revolution in Canada—a strategy which largely remains to be defined within the reality of class struggle inside the country, but whose principles are firmly anchored in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Those comrades—that we fully support!—who adhere to MLM understood, as underlined in an article from the most recent edition of *A World to Win* magazine, that "*without the degeneration and destruction of the reactionary armed forces, as the backbone of the enemy's state power, revolution is impossible in any country.*"

To fight bourgeois power by concentrating the anger of the masses into a party, an army, a united front—in a word, to merge Marxism-Leninism-Maoism with the new rising wave of revolution and to manage to concentrate the anger of the masses towards attacking bourgeois power: this is the tremendous challenge of the Maoists and the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM). In front of the courage of the Maoists and the broad masses which fight against imperialism and reaction in Nepal, the Philippines, Iraq, Peru, in Palestine, India or Turkey, we have the responsibility to take on this great challenge and to invite all revolutionaries to work towards it!

Le Drapeau Rouge is a Maoist paper published in Montréal, Québec in solidarity with the revolutionary movement in Canada and with the worldwide people's war. Its editors can be reached by e-mail at ledrapeaurouge@yahoo.ca or by regular mail at C.P. 1004, Succ. C, Montréal (Québec) H2L 4V2. A selection of articles are also available on their Web site at <http://www.geocities.com/ledrapeaurouge>.



Celebration of RIM 20th anniversary held in Frankfurt, Germany

7 FEBRUARY 2005. A WORLD TO WIN NEWS SERVICE. People were still arriving at around midday at the Youth Centre in Frankfurt on 15 January, some having travelled great distances from around Europe, to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement. There was expectation in the air as the crowd milling around the literature tables greeted each other and exchanged news of recent developments, while others browsed through books, magazines, audio and video cassettes, posters and other material put out by the various revolutionary organisations. While predominantly made up of revolutionary-minded people and political activists from Turkey, the crowd of 350-400 also included a number from Afghanistan, Iran, Germany, Greece, Italy, Austria, Peru, Scandinavia, France, Netherlands and the United Kingdom, the majority of whom were non-native Europeans. Significantly, a large contingent of Nepalese living in Europe turned out, despite intimidation attempts by European police and embassy personnel in the period leading up to the programme.

This event was organised by the Maoist Communist Party [Turkey and North Kurdistan] (MKP) and supporters of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist). The conference began with a three-minute silence for the martyrs who have fallen in the struggle to attain a world without class exploitation and oppression, the division of human society into classes, the cause of communism. A pin-drop silence gripped the air as clenched fists were raised and well-known names were read out from the podium. Draped on the wall behind the keynote speaker from the MKP and the other main speaker from Nepal was the large, colourful RIM founding banner: the planet earth breaking free of its black chains. The chairperson opened the event to thunderous applause, reminding the audience that this occasion was not only to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of RIM's founding, but also to salute the advance of the revolutionary people's war in Nepal. The atmosphere was electric.

The main speaker laid out the great transformations the world has undergone since the 1984 founding of RIM as well as the development of its ideological and political positions and new basis of unity, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, in 1993. He discussed the ideological battles between Marxism and the dogmato-revisionism of the Enver Hoxha brand, along with Deng Xiaoping's revisionism following the counter-revolutionary coup in China after Mao Tsetung died. He highlighted Mao Tsetung's immortal contributions to the communist ideology, forged through intense struggles

against both Soviet and Chinese revisionism, and the struggle for them to gain acceptance. Mention of the people's war in Peru, Nepal, Turkey and the revolutionary armed struggles in other countries drew immediate applause. The importance of the growing unity of revolutionary communist parties and organisations, forged through heightened ideological-political struggles, two-line struggles, within and RIM and outside its ranks, was greatly emphasized.

The speaker not only vehemently condemned imperialism, especially US imperialism, and all reactionaries, but also took the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and China to task. Moreover, he analysed the twists and turns in the development of the international communist movement. There have been events and developments, unprecedented achievements of the proletariat, which are causes for rejoicing, yet there have also been things that should cause us to grieve. He laid out some of the limitations and setbacks of the movement during the Stalin era, during the Comintern period in particular, and the outlook of regarding the interests of the struggle of the proletariat in particular countries as synonymous with—and hence subordinate to—the immediate interests of the then-socialist Soviet Union. He drew attention to some of Comrade Stalin's metaphysical ways of thinking that interfered with the otherwise great achievements of the world proletariat under the Soviet Union's leadership.

Furthermore, the speaker pointed out that many of the errors of the Comintern period, such as the one mentioned above, continued to plague the international communist movement, even during Mao's leadership at the head of the CPC in China. He also said that they ran counter to the teachings of Mao Tsetung. All things, he said, both in nature and human society, without exception, divide into two. That is how we Maoist communists understand contradictions: as a unity of opposites as well as a struggle of opposites. Hence the party of the proletariat, the international communist movement and even RIM are unities of opposites and they all divide into two, without exception.

There are contradictions, two-line struggles in communist parties, and so too within the international communist movement in general as well as RIM, he said, including in RIM's earlier understanding of Mao's many theoretical and philosophical contributions to the science of revolution. At the time of its founding RIM upheld these developments of the science as a new, third and higher stage of Marxism and yet regarded them as Mao Tsetung Thought before the contradiction was resolved—also through struggle between opposites—by RIM's adoption of Maoism in 1993. The speaker discussed the initiation, unfolding and rapid advances made by the Maoist people's war in Nepal, and the role played by RIM. In this light, mention was made of M. B. Singh of the Nepal Communist Party (Mashal) and his views that failed to recognise Maoism as the communism of today, a line that had to be repudiated to pave the way for the initiation of the people's war in that country.

He also mentioned that there had been differences of view within RIM as to which was the principal contradic-

tion in the world, that is, during the Cold War period when the Soviet Union turned into a social-imperialist power vying for world domination and hegemony with US imperialism.

There were and still are different understandings of the concept of proletarian internationalism, he said. The proletariat is a world class, he pointed out, and hence does not have a country. This is how we approach the notion of internationalism: not with a nationalist outlook toward the struggles in other parts of the globe, that is, not with an outlook of “my” or “our country” extending support or solidarity to the “working class of other countries”, but with a firm understanding of oneness with our class brothers and sisters in other lands, as all of us belonging to a single class and waging a single struggle for communism.

The unity of RIM’s participating parties has developed through contradictions, struggle, unity, more struggle and greater levels of unity. RIM has also sought unity among Maoist communists—through ideological and political line struggle—with other parties in the international communist movement, including those waging important revolutionary struggles in the Philippines and India.

This keynote speech was followed by a speaker from the Nepalese revolutionary intellectual organisation. As he delivered his prepared text, darkness suddenly blanketed the hall, the screen behind the stage flashed into light and multi-colours and images of People’s Liberation Army fighters and ordinary people in Nepal intermingling in cultural performances—singing, folk dances and speeches—celebrating the formation of revolutionary districts and autonomous governments, from a specially prepared video.

Clearly the audience was delighted to witness this and greatly enthused by the scenes of the CPN(Maoist) leaders at various levels speaking to the people and participating in collective work and military training and actual combat operations against the Royal Nepal Army and the monarchy. The thousands of poor people assembling expectantly and eagerly in their myriad coloured native costumes was a stirring spectacle even on screen. Here, up close, were scenes of armies of village women descending from great heights to celebrate, singing and chanting, “Long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!” along the way, clutching babies in one arm and toddlers in the other.

The Nepalese speaker told the conference of the two-line struggle leading up to the people’s war in Nepal and the process of initiation of the revolutionary war. In the view of the CPN(Maoist), he said, the initiation had to rupture with old ideas in order to make a material breakthrough; the process entailed not only breaking clean from previous positions and outlooks but also demanded a leap, the consolidation of the new line, a forward thrust in the momentum of the movement and hence culminating in a qualitatively new situation, from a non-revolutionary to a revolutionary one.

He said that the revolution in Nepal is at the stage of strategic offensive and the CPN(Maoist) is poised for a nationwide advance and the palpable possibility of taking

power. He also discussed the danger of foreign intervention, particularly by the Indian expansionists.

Bob Avakian, Chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA was shown on video dubbed with a Turkish translation, while others listened through headphones. His stimulating speech excerpted from a DVD called “Revolution” addressed the problems of winning and holding political power, linked to the kind of socialist society we need, and to the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transition to communism. Avakian spoke to the importance of the vanguard party in really enabling the people to become masters in all spheres of society on the way to achieving communist revolution worldwide. He spoke of learning from the mainly positive experience of past socialist society but also the mistakes, while refuting the bourgeoisie’s attacks on our communist project as “totalitarian”. He stressed the importance of defeating the world ruling class attempts to crush the revolution in Nepal and the importance of internationalism with its most important expression in the RIM. This speech was applauded loudly and long.

A supporter of the Communist Party (Maoist) Afghanistan, speaking in Dari, talked about the rising hatred of the people in Afghanistan for the occupation of the country by the imperialist powers following the unprovoked and blatant aggression by US imperialism in 2001. After describing the enormous hardship endured by the people under the boot of imperialist occupation, she concluded—to cheers from the audience—that the days when Maoist communists were isolated in the mountains are gone.

A series of other messages to the conference were also given live or read out, including those by the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist), the Maoist Communist Party (Italy), the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Naxalbari and the Revolutionary Communist Group from Colombia, along with RIM supporters from the Communist Party of France (Maoist), the Revolutionary Communist Party of Canada, and others.

The different speakers and messages to the celebration reflected both the unity that exists in RIM and the different understandings of some important questions facing the Maoist movement in the world. For example, how to understand the developments within the Communist Party of Peru, how to make revolution in the imperialist countries and how to carry out proletarian internationalism in all kinds of countries. These kinds of discussions and struggle among the Maoists are part of the process by which the movement arrives at a more correct understanding and grows stronger. But communists make a distinction between principled discussion of differences and vile slanders and mud-slinging. When one group used the guise of a solidarity message to launch a vicious and unfounded attack against the Committee of the RIM and some leaders of parties in RIM, they were sharply rebuked by the leadership of the conference, to the applause of the hundreds of participants.

The evening ended with the audience from all over Europe and beyond rising in a thunderous ovation. This was

followed by the *Internationale*, simultaneously sung in different languages.

Avoiding the evening chill outside, many people stayed behind, reflecting on the events of the day, tired but exhilarated. Outside the hall, the walkway and corridor were still abuzz with chatter and animated discussion. Then gradually, around eleven, the crowd began to thin out. Other comrades moved towards the cafeteria, some joining in discussions. For example, a group of people around the Iranian-Afghanistani women's organisation "8th of March", armed with large German beer mugs overflowing with foam, were singing revolutionary songs. The celebrations, it seemed, had not ended.

* * *

Here is the message sent by the RCP(OC) to the Frankfurt meeting:

Dear comrades,

At the beginning of the Eighties, the imperialists and the reactionaries of all countries were celebrating with frenzy and all their hatred against the proletariat and the oppressed people the coup perpetrated by the capitalist-roaders in China. For them, this victory marked the beginning of a new period which was finally going to be favorable to them—at least this was their hope—to the point where some were even going to prophesy the "end of history" and the final death of the communist project.

Misled by the revisionist leaders now in power in China and the USSR, a part of the then international communist movement jumped with the enemy; others choose to disappear in the meanders of dogmato-revisionism; while many simply collapsed under the weight of the defeat and discouragement.

Then a handle of Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations rose and proclaimed highly and strongly that YES!, the revolution was still necessary and possible, and even that it was still the only way to stop the fatal road roller of capitalism and imperialism, which did not cease leading the whole world from one catastrophe to another; but especially, these parties and organizations were saying us that in spite of the 1976's reversal, the historical experience of the Chinese revolution and the whole theoretical developments it has been able to produce under Mao Zedong's leadership, were the key for allowing us to overcome the bend on the road and retake the initiative in the great battle that will determine the future of humanity: it was not **less**, but **more Maoism** which was needed to advance further!

In the best tradition of the international communist movement, these organizations dared to go against the current; they dared to struggle and dared to win so they founded, in 1984, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM). At the same time, the glorious people's war launched by the Communist Party of Peru came to practically refute the imperialists and reactionaries' claims and showed to the whole world the soundness and the possibility of the revolution. It is through these great ideological and political battles that our movement became able to produce the new systematization of the revolutionary science of the proletariat that we now call Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Since then, new communist organizations were born; others that were already existing and had accumulated a long experience of revolutionary struggle, were able to reorganize and successfully undertook rectification campaigns. At a time when imperialism and its main leader, the US imperialism, are intensifying their unbridled offensive against the oppressed people and when those are courageously resisting—such as the heroic Iraqi people—the revolutionary struggles and especially the people's war led by Maoist parties are showing the way towards our liberation.

Coming from an already old history marked by many struggles against revisionism and opportunism, our organization, the RCP(OC), enormously learned from the experience of the Chinese revolution, of the people's war waged by the PCP comrades in Peru, and from the ideological struggle carried out by RIM's participating parties and organizations and its leadership.

Founded four years ago, our organization is now fighting with a renewed strength to establish the Maoist vanguard party that will wage the revolutionary war against the Canadian imperialist bourgeoisie and will thus serve the world proletarian revolution.

It is in this context that in the summer of 2003, the First congress of our Party took the historical decision to undertake a process of unification with the RIM. We are deeply convinced that the future of the international proletariat's struggle depends on the capacity of its vanguard to seize Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and to apply it in practice and by doing so, to realize the unity of the international communist movement on bases that will be more solid than ever before.

Dear comrades,

We want to take this opportunity to warmly greet all of RIM's participating parties and organizations along with the comrades from the CoRIM;

to enthusiastically greet the Maoist parties and organizations from the oppressed countries who are leading protracted people's war or are preparing for it, namely in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Turkey, Peru, Iran, Afghanistan and in the Philippines;

and to warmly greet the Maoist parties and organizations who are leading the struggle within the very heart of the imperialist countries, namely in the United States, Italy and Spain, and who are seeking the way for waging the revolutionary war under the concrete conditions which are theirs.

We especially want to reiterate our full solidarity to the comrades of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) who are currently building a red fortress in the service of the world revolution in South Asia, and to the new Communist Party of India (Maoist), from which we heard the news of its creation with much enthusiasm and who will certainly contribute to the unification of the international communist movement around Maoism and the RIM.

Long live proletarian internationalism!

Long live the unification of the ICM around Maoism!

And long live the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement!

The Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committees), Canada

January 15, 2005

Revolution, the only solution

IT IS THE LATE SPRING OF 2005. The established global capitalist powers are utilizing all of their energy to maintain the façade of control. However, in trouble spots such as Iraq, Palestine and Chechnya, civil war is waged in the open. Other countries are plagued with insurgency and wobble on the brink of war. Although these conflicts are presented under the banner of “the war on terror” and as religiously based, historically war, in its most basic form, is waged due to dissatisfaction with the inequitable division of wealth. The contemporary situation is worsened by environment conditions. What is abundantly clear is that capitalism is in a state of international crisis more serious than at any other period in its history.

In Canada, the benefits of capitalism are also in serious decline. As a first world nation, white English Canada enjoyed unprecedented levels of prosperity following the Second World War. However, in the early 1970s even white English Canada began to experience an erosion of benefits as Canadian capitalists began to choke the social safety net to steal more wealth away from the working class. Consequently, over the last thirty years, wage disparity has struck hard and growing numbers of Canadian citizens are finding themselves in financial distress due to capitalism.

Although Canadians are generally politically unsophisticated, the contemporary setting, nationally, internationally and environmentally, have created an opportunity to reintroduce Canadians to the concepts of capitalism, class-consciousness, revolution and international communism.

Capitalism is the international social system we live under in 2005. It is based on economic-money-power, consumption, profit and ruthless competition. Under capitalism, money is power. The only thing that matters to the capitalists is getting more money. They do not care about anyone or anything beyond their own interests. That is why capitalists will even destroy other capitalists to consolidate more money-power. Capitalists do not care about the environment, and they do not care about other people. Capitalists are greedy, self-interested, egotistical, arrogant, exploiters, murders of the poor, and destroyers of the environment.

Generally, capitalists are also politically sophisticated enough to keep their true intentions, feelings and ideas to themselves. Capitalists know what to do and say to disguise themselves. Capitalists are happy. They like being capitalists. It's fun. They smile at you. They feign excitement when the Queen comes to town. They attend cultural events and serve on community boards. Capitalists walk in the *walkathon* and buy *Girl Guide cookies*. Capitalists support

the food bank and make ostentatious speeches about the need to eradicate poverty at home and abroad. But in reality, capitalists do not care at all. They know that they must be very careful to walk a fine line and keep the workers and the poor as stupid as possible. That is why capitalists promote football, rock concerts and other diversion such as parliamentary elections to convince the powerless that they have power. In short, capitalism is a lie; it is an imaginary world where everyone is equal, happy and content.

Class-consciousness is the intellectual and practical understanding that under capitalism the basis of society is class or power position. Under capitalism, real strength is measured by the amount of capital an entity controls. The rich have money. They like it. They have fun. The filthy rich do not need to work, but can grow their capital by exploiting those who lack capital and who must harness their labour to live under capitalism. The rich have capital; they have power. When someone becomes class-conscious they understand this simple but profound truth. Anyone can become class conscious, rich or poor.

The natural consequence of capitalism and class-consciousness is revolutionary war. Capitalists are not stupid. To maintain their power, capitalists grudgingly allow some comforts to flow down to the poor. There are parks and libraries for the poor. There is a semblance of public transit. In Canada, it is even possible to get by if one is debt-free, willing to live in a dump and willing to work a degrading job. But fewer and fewer Canadians are finding themselves in such fortune. The only resolution for the poor is to overthrow the capitalist system through armed insurrection. To believe that peaceful reform is possible is mistaken, and time will prove this fact.

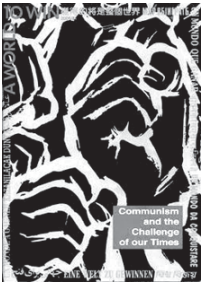
Communism is a social system where responsibility and privileged are equally distributed.

Although Canada is a young and generally politically unsophisticated society, Canada has a brief history of revolutionary activity. [...] The FLQ is most well known for the events of the October Crisis, but the lesson of the early FLQ is that fire is the first tool of the revolution. Every corner has a gas station. You get matches with smokes. Bottles litter the streets.

Today, a small but growing number of Canadians are ready to enter the international conflict. They see the truth of Marx and Lenin in their daily lives. So they study Marx and Lenin and find the freedom of thought necessary for action. But in addition to the words of our leaders, a study of the personalities and activities of the early FLQ, a small group in a long line of Canada's tradition of revolutionary warriors, it is possible to begin to understand that action is the only way to improve our situation.

A reader from Alberta

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Nepal People's War on the Strategic Offensive

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has declared that the People's War it has been leading since 1996 has entered the stage of the strategic offensive, when the balance of power in the country has shifted decisively against the old regime and the revolutionary forces are moving towards the country-wide seizure of power. This article looks at the dynamics behind these developments and at the challenges looming immediately before the Nepalese detachment of the world proletariat—including the threat of US-imperialist backed Indian intervention.

Afghanistan Maoists Unite in a Single Party

At a time when the US imperialists are stepping up their military aggression against the peoples of the world and setting up puppet regimes in the name of democracy, the determination of the world's revolutionaries to step up their own efforts to overthrow imperialism and usher in a new stage in human history, communism, was signalled by the strengthening of the proletarian vanguard with the formation of the Communist Party (Maoist) of Afghanistan, right in the heart of one of the US's most recent conquests.

Lessons for Revolutionaries from the Iraq War

The war in Iraq can be divided roughly into two phases: first, the US invasion and war against Saddam Hussein's regime, which ended in the complete defeat of the Iraqi army and Bush's declaration of victory ("Mission Accomplished") on 1 May 2003, and second, the guerrilla war against occupation, which broke out in Falluja on that same date, and has continued gathering strength ever since. The first of two articles, written shortly after the first phase, examines the imperialists' real military strengths, as well as the Achilles' heel on which these strengths are founded, while the second applies this analysis to later developments.

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