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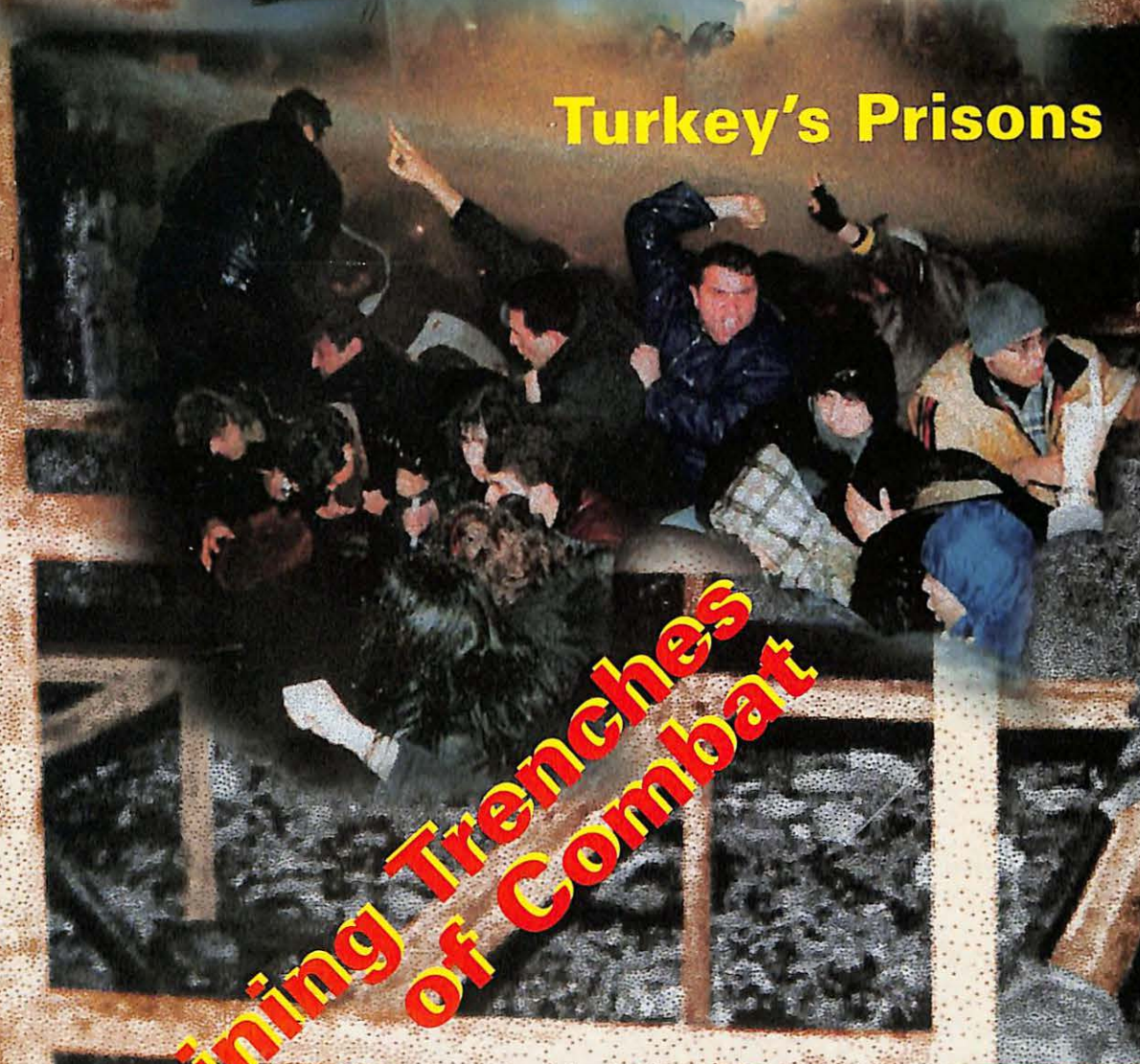
**A WORLD**

عالم در فتح عالم **UN MONDE A GAGNER KAZANILACAK DUNYA**

**UN MUNDO QUE GANAR** जीतनेके लिए सारा विश्व है **UN MONDO DA CONK**



### Turkey's Prisons

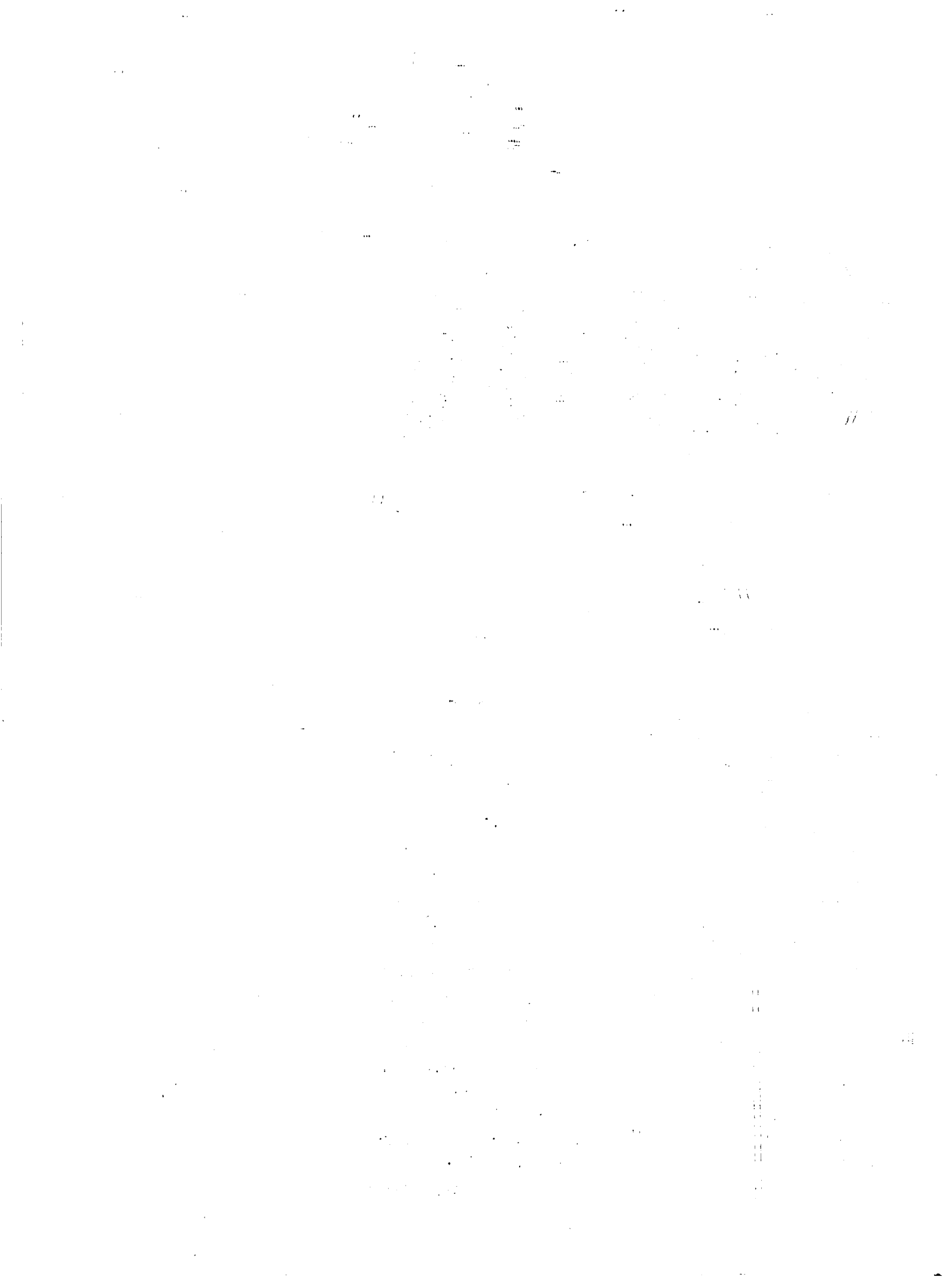


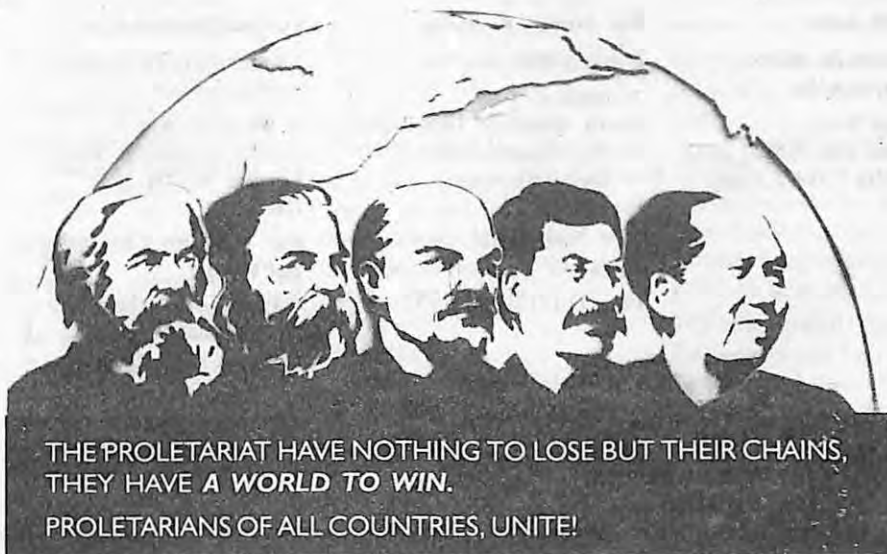
## Shining Trenches of Combat

Exclusive:  
Interview with  
Leader of  
Nepal  
Revolution



جهانی برای فتح **EINE WELT ZU G**





2001/27

### Turkey's Shining Trenches of Combat

For many months, the political prisoners in Turkey have been waging a life-and-death battle against the imperialist-backed regime there. Several thousand political prisoners, living in hell-holes notorious the world over, are fighting efforts of the country's rulers to force them into the even more oppressive conditions of the "F-type prisons". Dozens of the Maoist and other revolutionary political prisoners have already given their lives in this courageous combat.

### Dramatic Twists and Turns in the People's War in Nepal

Five years after the People's War began, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is leading many thousands of fighters, armed with guns and Maoism, to set up people's power in large parts of the country. Faced with this, the reactionaries have been shaken by internal fighting, which burst out most spectacularly with the killing of the royal family in June 2001. Here CPN(M) Chairman Prachanda gives an interview to AWTW dealing with the questions facing the People's War today and its part in the world proletarian revolution; also reprinted are important resolutions from the recently concluded 2nd National Conference of the CPN(M).

### The Masses of Iran Gain Weapon for Making Revolution

Rarely has a vanguard party of the proletariat been so sorely needed or so thoroughly prepared as the newly founded Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist). After the 1979 revolution that overthrew the hated US-backed Shah of Iran was hijacked by the bloody butchers of the Islamic Republic, the masses there have urgently needed a force that can lead them through people's war to seize power, this time for the oppressed. And now they have such a force: reprinted here are important documents from the Founding Congress of the CPI(MLM).

#### Turkey

Shining Trenches of Combat	4
Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist) Statement	10



#### Peru

The People's War Fights On	18
Day of Heroism Anniversary	23
7th IEC Delegation to Peru	25



#### The Emerging New Wave of Revolution

Palestine	29
Kabylia Uprising	31
Genoa	33
May First, 2001	35



Joint Statement of the Maoist Parties and Organisations of South Asia	72
---	----



#### Nepal

Interview with Com Prachanda	38
The People's War: The Bright Future	45
Documents from the Second National CPN(M) Conference	49
On the Massacre of the Royal Family	59



#### Iran

Celebrate the Founding of the Communist Party of Iran (MLM)!55	
CPI(MLM) Resolutions	58



#### The Weapon of Criticism

The Battle of Stalingrad	74
--------------------------	----

#### Art and Politics

The Inexhaustible Source of Ahmad Shamloo's Art: The Life & Struggle of the People	82
--	----



#### RIM

To the Revolutionary Political Prisoners of Turkey	16
Genoa: Throw Oil on the Fire!	30
To the CC of the CPN (Maoist)	60
On the Founding Congress of the CPI (MLM)	68

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# Turkey's Prisons - Shining Trenches of Combat

A WORLD TO WIN 2001/27

For many months now the political prisoners in Turkey have been waging a life-and-death battle against the imperialist-backed regime there. Several thousand political prisoners, living in hell-holes notorious the world over as symbols of torture and repression, have risen up in struggle against the efforts of the country's rulers to force them into even more oppressive conditions. The government is trying to move the political prisoners into new prisons, called F-type prisons. Here the prisoners will be kept in small cells, many with a single prisoner in solitary confinement, while none contain more than six prisoners. The aim of the new prisons is to isolate the prisoners, break their spirit of resistance and turn the prisons from schools of resistance into schools of submission.

Millions around the world have become familiar with the conditions in Turkey's prisons through the films of the Kurdish film-maker Yilmaz Guney, who himself spent many years in prison. Guney's films, like *Yol* and especially *The Wall*, vividly depict the unbearably harsh conditions of life in Turkey's prisons, which became synonymous with arbitrary and cruel authority. Domestic and international human rights groups, including Amnesty International, have documented torture in the prisons and repeatedly issued denunciations of the regime for violations of international standards of human rights in its treatment of prisoners.

Perhaps in part borne out of the



Umraniye Prison. Banner says "Let's Dedicate Our Lives to the People's War."

brutal treatment the prisoners received, another characteristic of prison life was also unforgettably depicted by Guney: the boundless solidarity and tender camaraderie of the prisoners, as they sought to carry on dignified lives in conditions designed to rip away every shred of human dignity.

Now, the Turkish government is acting forcefully to move the prisoners into the even more oppressive conditions of the F-type prison system. In October 2000, as the government began manoeuvres to implement the new prisons, the political prisoners counter-attacked. First a few hundred, then

many hundreds more, launched hunger strikes to expose the government's manoeuvres and to rally domestic and foreign public opinion against the government's strategy. In the battles that followed, many dozens have lost their lives. Yet, as AWTW goes to press, the prisoners are valiantly carrying on their fight. Comrades from the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist) – TKP(ML) – a participating party in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), have played a leading role in this struggle. Also taking part in launching the battle have been members and supporters of the Revo-



Family protest and mourn the death of Ender Can Yildiz.

lutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKPC) and the Communist Workers Party of Turkey (TKIP), neither of which is a Maoist organisation.

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**POLITICAL PRISONERS**  
- "OBSTACLES" ON  
**THE PATH OF**  
**RENEWED GRANDEUR**

---

The political prisoners occupy a special place in the political life of the country. Mass upsurges that rocked the country in the late 1970s and have punctuated political life since then have left many thousands of political prisoners in Turkey. Many had also been imprisoned for participation in, or support for, the revolutionary warfare being waged there, in particular that led along the lines of people's war by the TKP(ML) as well as the war against national oppression waged by the Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK). Both of these are banned organisations. Long years of fascist repression of these various struggles has resulted in an explosive mix of thousands of revolutionary political prisoners of different political stripes in a couple of dozen major prisons scattered across Turkey.

In standing together against

April 2001

**Comrade Ender Can**

**Yildiz** had been a leading member of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist), including a member of its Central Committee. On 18 April 2001, he joined the over 60 others who by then had given their lives in the battle being

waged by the political prisoners of Turkey. He was buried amidst a sea of red flags, with revolutionary slogans punctuating the air. His mother Hanife led the funeral procession. The frail elderly woman had wrapped a red ribbon around her head, with the words "Ender Can is immortal" written carefully in black. When asked by a British reporter how she felt about the death of her son, she carefully chose her words, "My son didn't lose this fight. He won and I'm proud of him. We will keep fighting until victory."

The TKP (ML) Bureau Abroad released a statement on Comrade Ender Can Yildiz's death, which declared:

"Comrade Ender Can Yildiz was arrested in 1985, when he was carrying out struggle among the student youth. He was sentenced to 12 years and 6 months imprisonment. He persisted in the struggle for communism in Metris and Canakkale Prisons. He was released in 1990 and took his struggle to the mountains. He took part in the People's War led by our Party, the TKP(ML). He was a leading cadre of the TKP(ML).

"He was captured by the enemy as a prisoner of war in 1995, for being a TKP(ML) Central Committee member, and the enemy demanded his execution. He persisted in his struggle in the Diyarbakir, Malatya and Elbistan prisons and in the Sincan F-type prison.

"Comrade Ender Can Yildiz was a symbol of communist resistance. His time in prison was spent in total resistance and years and days of constant struggle under torture, interrogation and imprisonment. He defeated the enemy in its own den. He was the symbolic flag of fighting, resisting and winning.

"He persistently defended and carried out the line of the TKP(ML) in every circumstance and was an active defender of the Maoist science."

the cruel repression meted out by the prison authorities, the prisoners have developed deep, cherished bonds of solidarity, camaraderie and mutual respect, despite sometimes sharp political differences. The prisons were turned into schools of revolution, marked by fierce debate and struggle over the direction of the Turkish revolution. They became centres of learning, where peasant youth arrested for something as simple as speaking Kurdish to soldiers might learn to read using Chairman Mao's *Little Red Book*, or where political novices brought in under the draconian "anti-terror" laws for mere possession of a leaflet by a banned organisation learnt to become Marxist political organisers or military strategists. The prisons became centres of internationalist solidarity, closely following revolutionary struggles around the world. The political prisoners in Turkey have, for instance, raised their voice at every crucial point in the eight-year struggle to defend the life of Communist Party of Peru Chairman Gonzalo.

Most of all, the prisons are a centre of unyielding resistance to the reactionary regime. Bit by bit the political prisoners have steadily won the respect of everyone in Turkey that ever harboured dreams that life under the bourgeoisie and generals was not the best possible world. Guney's great film *Yol* provocatively raises the question facing prisoners on day release, of just how much freer they really are when let out into the larger society, where the social roles imposed on people trap them within the less visible walls of class relations. This and other films also reflect the exceptionally weighty role that political prisoners have played in Turkey for many years.

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#### THE F-STYLE PRISONS - FRONT LINES OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE

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Long ago the Turkish government developed plans to break the spirit of the political prisoners by introducing the new F-type isolation cells, and in fact built some of the new prisons back in the early and mid-1990s. According to the evidence compiled by a variety of independent observers, including judicial experts, doctors, human rights groups and journalists, the F-type prison system amounts to a gross violation of international human rights.

The cells are small and have just

enough room for bunks and a table. There is a toilet with a tap just above the toilet basin; so that the toilet doubles as a shower. Some cells have television sets, but these can only be operated by the prison authorities through a central control panel. The prisoners, in other words, have no control over when and what they watch. There are no facilities for exercise or sport, and no access to a library or canteen. The prisons have few, if any, external windows and there is no natural light in the cells. The prisoners will, therefore, be kept in artificial light, which will also be controlled by the prison authorities. Each cell has a door that leads to its own 16 square metre courtyard, which is enclosed by high walls. The government says that the prisoners will have no more than one hour a day access to this yard. In practice, however, access is granted only at the discretion of the prison authorities. The cell doors will be kept closed night and day, and meals will be delivered under or through the doors.

Turkish government propaganda describes these cells as being "nicer than a hotel room". In response, the prisoners have stopped referring to their "cells", and now sarcastically call them their "rooms". A report on the first F-type prison, Kartal Soganlik, by Human Rights Watch concluded that, "apart from weekly family visits lasting half an hour, prisoners are locked down 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, with no social or even visual contact with any other person outside their cell". The entire system is thus designed to impose extreme conditions of isolation upon thousands of political prisoners. Does anyone doubt that the practice of torture, whose widespread usage has been confirmed even by the European Union, flourishes under conditions of such secrecy? They hope terror will race through the head of an isolated political captive every time the cell door creaks open.

To counter the broad international and domestic criticism of the F-type prisons, the government has claimed that they are to be used only against "a small handful of terrorists". In fact, the prisons are the leading edge of a broader and more ambitious reactionary attack. While the F-type prison legislation states that those convicted of "acts of terrorism" will be housed in the prisons, in fact the Anti-Terror Law is so broad that one can be convicted

under its provisions merely for possession of a leaflet by a banned organisation. What's more, the overwhelming majority of political prisoners in Turkey have not been convicted of anything at all! They are merely on remand awaiting or standing trial, which often takes many years.

Everything about this new prison system reflects the fact that the repression of the political prisoners is linked to the goal of strengthening the rulers' hold on society in general and of subduing political resistance throughout the country.

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#### THE POLITICAL PRISONERS - A HARD NUT TO CRACK

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The government initially attempted to impose the F-type isolation system in 1991, but this was met with a mass, courageous struggle by the prisoners. By official count, 17 prisoners lost their lives in the unequal struggle, but the prisoners' cause inspired broad support, and the government, exposed and humiliated, was forced to back down.

In 1996, the government again tried to introduce the F-type isolation system. Yet no sooner had they issued a ministerial circular ordering the system's implementation than an upsurge of resistance broke out once more. A hunger strike swept through the system, during the course of which 12 prisoners died, and broad solidarity developed. Once more, the government, bruised and shaken, had to back down.

So in 2000, when the Turkish authorities announced that they were yet again going to introduce the F-type prisons, no one had any illusions about whether the prisoners would resist. Nor did anyone have any illusions that the ruling classes were launching this attack lightly. Having been forced to back down on the new prisons twice already, making a third attempt clearly indicated that the government was determined that this time it would see this offensive through to the bitter end.

What underlay this perhaps foolish determination on the part of the Turkish authorities was their reactionary fantasy of assuming a greater role in the imperialist division of labour, as power relations in the Near East undergo significant shifts, combined with a sense of urgency in dealing with heightening instability in Turkey.



Map of Turkey showing the location of the main political prisons.

#### TURKEY - CAUGHT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

The ancient city of Istanbul fittingly bestrides the Bosphorous Straits, the ancient border between East and West. Indeed, the city now looks much like many other urban giants of the Third World: a "Western-style" island of glittering steel and glass skyscrapers casts its shadow over vast shanty-towns, which provide refuge for millions from the hinterlands of largely "Eastern-style" peasant agriculture. However, the position Turkey occupies, between imperialist West and oppressed East, is unique. Turkey, though a semi-feudal, semi-colonial oppressed country, is a key member of NATO, the US imperialist-led military alliance centred in Europe, and has been a long-standing applicant for membership of the European Union too. Indeed, until not much more than a century ago, the Ottoman Empire, centred in today's Turkey, ruled over substantial parts of Europe itself.

This unique position and history, bestriding East and West, fuels grandiose fantasies on the part of the Turkish ruling class. They have faithfully served their Western imperialist masters, now mainly the US, for decades, and dream of expanding their role as regional gendarmes.

As part of NATO, Turkey had for decades been a front-line bulwark

against the then social-imperialist Soviet Union. During these years Turkey's rulers secured for themselves a special place in the Western alliance military division of labour, and built up what some consider the fourth largest army in the world, complete with a modern well-equipped air force. With the collapse of the USSR, Turkey's rulers were concerned that this position would be lost. But the Gulf War saw Turkey once again play a key part in the Western military effort, offering its youth up as cannon-fodder for the imperialists. Turkish airfields were a vital

base for bombing runs against Saddam Hussein's regime. Afterwards, Turkey's military prowess was again drawn on in the Balkans conflict, where it has fielded large numbers of troops.

There have, however, been some shifts in Turkey's role since the collapse of the USSR. It now plays a forward role on behalf of the US in establishing roots in Central Asia (Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, etc.). Its role has been key with regard to capturing control of the vital oil fields being developed in this region, and US military aid has been

"...So, in short, each one of our comrades and loved ones, at this very moment, is in the midst of putting into practice their responsibilities towards our family, people, revolution and history, along with their devotion to self-respect and our values and principles written in blood. So in this respect, it is blatantly clear that the length of the days and the harshness of the conditions during our resistance cannot be put forward as excuses. The task has to be shouldered; if not, one is going to roll into the quicksand of treachery or carry water to the water-mill of tyranny and exploitation by slyly reaching out to the so-called middle road.... So we said: Even if one person remains alive in this fight, those who are locked onto the heavens with determination to resist, fight and to win will inevitably find themselves embracing the victory dance."

- from Cafer Tayyar Bektas

(A TKP(ML) Death-fast fighter in Sincan F-type prison, published in *Revolutionary Democracy*, 16-28 February 2001. Cafer Bektas has since died in the struggle.

stepped up as a consequence. In addition, in the last few years Turkey has strengthened its relations with the Zionist rulers of Israel, and has now become one of their most important partners in the region.

The position of Turkey as a bulwark for imperialism in the region has thus been reinforced, not diminished; over recent years. The Turkish rulers nonetheless face some serious obstacles on their path to accomplishing their reactionary fantasy of expanding

Turkey's regional position.

Not least of these has been the intransigent rebellion of the Kurdish masses, concentrated largely in the south-east of the country. The Turkish military has been instituting a programme of ruthless repression in large parts of the country in their efforts to subdue the resistance forces led by the PKK. At the heart of their tactics was drying up the "sea of the people" in which the guerrillas have tried "to swim": this meant, in short, depopu-

lating much of the Kurdish countryside to cut off support for the Kurdish resistance. More than 3000 villages have been burned to the ground, literally disappearing. Millions of Kurdish peasants have been driven into the swelling shanty-towns of Diyarbakir, Ankara, Istanbul and the other large cities. Despite this, vast areas of Turkey remain unsubdued.

In 1999, with assistance thought to come from the CIA and Israel's Mossad, or perhaps both, as well as

## "Let's Dedicate Our Lives to the People's

25 November 2000

What follows is the ceremony speech given by a TKP(ML) death-fast fighter in Sigmacilar Prison. The ceremony was held when the prisoners converted their hunger strike into a death-fast and formally put on the red headbands to denote that they were now on a death-fast. The speech was originally published in *Revolutionary Democracy*, No. 22, 16-31 December 2000. (Note: "Trench comrades" refers to comrades from other organisations that are involved in the political prisoners' battle.)

I salute you all with the strength that we draw from the international proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world. I salute you all with the strength that we draw from our scientific ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. I salute you all with the red colour of the international flag that is rising from the Andes, Himalayas, Naxalbari and the Munzurs.

Comrades and trench comrades; revolution is like the rose-faced baby born screaming in the midst of the painful writhing of the woman. At the end of a long and painful revolutionary war, we will see the birth of this rose-faced baby and through a series of revolutions, proletarian cultural revolutions, we will raise it and ensure its development. ... all the way until we reach a classless, borderless communist society free from exploitation; that perfect world, the golden age of humanity. We are going

through a new and painful period within the revolutionary war; a period in which we are fully engaged so as to achieve this utopia.

At the same time, this is a sharp period, during which the question of what it means to be a revolutionary is being re-tested ideologically, politically and organisationally. Every revolutionary individual, organisation or party that fails to meet the demands of such a sharp period will not be able to keep up with the rhythm of the revolutionary wave that is rising on the world stage and thus will either slip and fall or will be left dragging in its wake.

The responsibilities that we, the imprisoned fighters and political prisoners, are shouldering have further increased as a result of the cell attacks, which are within the framework of the strategic policies of imperialism and fascist dictatorship. The imprisoned fighters, who have never shown any hesitation in shouldering their responsibilities, are continuing to take up their responsibilities today. Over the past year, having gone through a series of battles, some small and some large, we have now reached the summit of our fight to win by undertaking our death-fast assault. In scaling this summit, some of us have been given the task of fighting in the front lines by our parties....

Comrades, trench comrades; at this moment, whilst I am speaking here before you, I feel just as emotional as I felt on the day that I was entrusted with this task. I feel the enthusiasm and

the passion of a guerrilla, a people's warrior, pounding the enemy positions with hundreds of bullets, then not having realised how hot the barrel of his rifle has become, he licks it and burns his tongue.

Wherever we are and in whatever conditions, the feeling that we are experiencing is the enthusiasm of the guerrilla, which is the product of our common spiritual shaping. This is the passion and enthusiasm of locking into revolutionary base areas of political power under our battle-cry: "Let's Dedicate our Lives to the People's War", in defiance of the attacking policies of fascism, which are aimed against the political power that we hold in our sights. This is the passion of knowing that we are pounding the very same target that the guerrillas are pounding.

Alexander the Great, when describing the superiority of his army in battle, said: "My soldiers are fighting not to die but to win."

For a fighter, this is an important point that needs to be grasped. Geronimo, who has taken his place in our souls and in the history of the souls of the oppressed, despite not having written any books about the art of war and the history of war, makes the following statement: "without there being the gate of death, there cannot be a revolution in the wheel of life." This is also a second important point that needs to be grasped by a revolutionary warrior. It is, therefore, necessary to make sac-

more direct help from its long-standing rivals in the Greek intelligence services, Turkey finally managed to capture PKK leader Ocalan, dealing a sharp blow to the Kurdish struggle. The generals at the heart of the Turkish power structure wanted to follow this up quickly and turned their attention to another big obstacle looming on their path: the thousands of political prisoners. By beating down the political prisoners, the imperialist-backed rulers of Turkey were hoping to follow up

## War"

rifices with the courage to die for revolution; it is, therefore, necessary to mobilise the masses for revolutionary war with the courage to die. Consequently, as Comrade Gonzalo, who is a prisoner kept in solitary confinement in the dungeons of Peru by the Peruvian state, says: "it is necessary for us to learn to carry our lives on our fingertips."

This is precisely what we are doing today. Our aim is to win, to win by fighting....

We are revolutionaries, communists; this is why we want revolution, independence, new-democracy and socialism.

This is why we are resisting against the cells, this is why we are insisting on revolutionary war.

...Chairman Mao taught us that only he who is not afraid of death by a thousand cuts can unseat the emperor; and because our leader and guide, Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, taught us to leap with everything we have into the sea of class struggle.

With this consciousness and courage, I am entering the trenches of the death-fast front. I salute you with my comradely warmth and my feelings of trench-comradeship. I wish all of you success in achieving days full of victory.

**Long Live Our Party!**

**We will Win, the People will Win,  
the People's War will Win!**

**TKP(ML) Death-fast Fighter/  
Sagmacilar Prison**

the blow to the Kurdish struggle with a punch to these front-line fighters of the oppressed, intimidating larger ranks of the society and tightening their grip throughout the society in general.

The Turkish rulers were not, however, operating from a position of strength. Despite the rulers' pretensions to European status, Turkey is an oppressed country. Many millions of its people are impoverished peasants tilling the land of absentee landlords in semi-feudal conditions, while millions of others swell the urban shantytowns, providing a constant source of fuel for revolutionary struggle.

Moreover, even as the battle with the political prisoners entered its opening phases, a new threat to the Turkish rulers arose from another quarter. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) had concluded that the country's financial situation was deteriorating, and required that the authorities take harsh counter-measures. A typical IMF austerity programme was imposed: taxes on consumer staples, like petrol, were hiked dramatically and social spending was cut. The value of the Turkish lira fell by 50 per cent, making foreign goods, including many foodstuffs, prohibitively expensive for the basic masses. Gross domestic product per person is set to fall over 20 per cent in one year. As the new Minister of the Economy in Turkey is himself a former IMF official, many concluded that imperialist capital was taking a more direct hand in the affairs of the country. Mass protests, including several conducted by businessmen, rocked the streets of Istanbul and the other main cities.

### TWO-LINE STRUGGLE

The authorities, therefore, had to deal with the prisoners' hunger strike amidst a situation of mounting social turmoil. They had to move very carefully.

For the political prisoners, the decision to launch the hunger strike and enter into decisive battle with the regime's F-type prison plans was taken only after intense debate and struggle. Many parties and organisations opposed the initiative of launching the hunger strike. Some said it was "adventurist" because the control of the reactionary trade unions over the labour movement had, as yet, not been

broken and the mass movement was weak. Therefore, they reasoned, a revolutionary struggle by the prisoners against the state would be "divorced from the masses". Some revisionists said it would even be an obstacle to the working class. The pro-Albanian forces and others argued that the "streets should be taken as decisive", and that struggle centred in the prisons would inevitably fail. Still others preached that this struggle would overshadow the workers' struggles and would cause a deviation in the workers' movement, while yet others said that this struggle would rule out the street struggles and so did not represent a mass line. This mechanical view fixed the prisons as following in the wake of the streets, thereby failing to understand that the prisons had become a leading centre of the revolutionary movement, a front-line symbol of resistance to the regime, and that to unleash the movement in the streets the prisoners must take a leading role.

The position of the prisons on the front-lines of the revolutionary struggle was not something that was necessarily wished for or sought. But history does not only throw up battles that one might wish to fight, but also battles that one cannot avoid fighting. Whatever the desires of the different "left" forces, the prisons had objectively been thrust into the forefront of the class war in Turkey. In response to these arguments, the TKP(ML) made it clear that the state had taken up the task of liquidating one of the centres of the revolutionary movement. Any failure to act at this stage would have meant surrendering the masses to the enemy.

Other parties and organisations also argued that the hunger-strike resistance should be started only after the government storms the prisons. Again, the Maoists pointed out that the government was hoping to capitalise and build on the demoralisation and defeatism that inevitably arose in the wake of the blows inflicted on the PKK, and that the revolutionaries must take the initiative, puncture the wave of gloom and themselves decide the timing and conditions for a battle that everyone agreed was inevitable.

The rightist lines influenced the fact that the supporters of many of these parties and organisations did not initially join the hunger strike. From the beginning, the PKK leadership also

pulled back from this struggle. But once the battle was joined and mass support developed, the situation changed dramatically.

From the beginning, the TKP(ML) has linked the political prisoners' fight with the larger battle against the regime, and, in particular, with the necessity of overthrowing the regime through protracted people's war. In the countryside, the TKP(ML)'s armed forces, the Workers' and Peasants' Liberation Army of Turkey (TIKKO), had

carried out significant armed actions in the Black Sea area and in the Dersim region during the months the regime was setting its F-type prison plans into motion. In January 2000, an elite group of Turkish security forces had been operating in the guerrilla area, seeking revenge for an earlier attack in which an army helicopter had been shot down and several high-ranking officers, including one divisional commander, had been killed. Once again the guerrillas launched an ambush, this time killing

three and wounding several others. The TIKKO guerrillas issued a statement saying that their action was in the service of the People's War and in opposition to government moves to institute the F-type prisons.

The political prisoners themselves have raised the battle cry, "Let's Dedicate Our Lives to the People's War!" In addition to the abolition of the F-type prisons, the strikers are also demanding an end to the oppression of the Kurdish people; abolition of the

# Carry the Death-fast Resistance to Victory!

Call by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist)

The following is a call to the broad masses of people in Turkey by the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist). It was issued in December 2000, as the battle hotted up in the days immediately preceding the government's massive attack on the political prisoners. Tens of thousands of copies were distributed throughout Turkey and in the Turkish and Kurdish immigrant communities of Western Europe.

The process we are now in clearly shows that the crisis of the comprador bourgeoisie and big landlords is growing deep, both politically and economically. The ruling classes are putting the financial cost for their crisis onto the backs of the workers, peasants and other oppressed people.

The state wants to smash the resistance of the democratic demands of the Kurdish nation and other minorities and to attack the democratic demands of the workers, peasants and students.

The fascist Turkish state also attacked the communists and revolutionaries who are between the four walls of the prisons, wanting to capture them not only physically but also ideologically and politically. There are more bloody attacks on the political prisoners now than ever in the past. For this reason they have put forward the "F-

type" prisons.

As a result of this policy of the fascist Turkish state, in the prisons the TKP(ML), DHKPC and TKIP political prisoners have put their bodies into the death-fast and have started a glorious resistance. Their belief in revolution is leading their spirit of resistance, and our Party, the TKP(ML), is certain that the communist and revolutionary prisoners will win.

The political prisoners, who are freedom's sun in the prisons, quickly mobilised their families. Revolutionary resistance against the state has had a big impact on the oppressed masses in a very short time, and has brought people into the streets to protest and fight against the state in cities across Turkey. The Turkish state has tried different manoeuvres in an unsuccessful attempt to pacify the masses, but the oppressed masses, communists and revolutionaries have been writing history with their blood.

Our Party, the TKP(ML), has saluted the communists and revolutionaries' resistance with practical actions. In Karadeniz (Black Sea area), in Dersim (Kurdistan), in Marmara (Istanbul area), and abroad the Party has mobilised all its supporters and other masses in order to unite with the struggle of the communist and revolutionary prisoners, and the Party has played a crucial role in this struggle everywhere.

In every corner of the world, waves of revolution are developing and rising. This new wave is scaring the imperialists and the reactionary ruling class. This struggle in Turkey is part of this new wave.

With the support of imperialism, in September 1992, Chairman Gonzalo (leader of the Communist Party of Peru) was captured by Peru's Fujimori regime. But imperialism and reaction couldn't stop the People's War in Peru. As Gonzalo himself said on 24 September 1992 in his speech from the cage, this is just a "bend in the road" of the People's War. Just as the Fujimori regime in Peru has isolated Chairman Gonzalo, the fascist Turkish state wants to isolate the communist and revolutionary political prisoners in Turkey.

As Maoists, the task today is to fight against collaboration and capitulation wherever we are, in the process of building people's democracy, socialism and communism, and smashing imperialism and the reactionary ruling class.

**Long Live the Death-fast  
Resistance!**

**Long Live People's War!  
Glory to Our Party TKP(ML),  
Our Army TIKKO and Our Youth  
Organisation TMLGB!**

state security courts, which are used to railroad political prisoners; and withdrawal of the IMF economic "reforms", which are causing such hardship for the masses.

As the leaders of the revolutionary proletariat have all forcefully pointed out, any significant step forward inevitably involves fierce struggle against wrong lines. Though initially the resistance was not able to unite as broadly as might have been hoped, the political prisoners were convinced of the justness of their cause, and of the necessity of their action. It would, however, take fierce, protracted struggle and sacrifice to prove them right.

### THE BATTLE IS JOINED

The hunger strike started on 20 October 2000. For the first month, the media adopted an informal ban on news of the political prisoners' resistance. Indeed, no news at all appeared in the major media about the hundreds of political prisoners on hunger strike. The issue was now put squarely on the agenda: would the revisionists and social-democrats be proved right, would the masses stand aside from this battle? The answer was not long in coming.

On 25 November, 10,000 people marched from the Hippodrome in Istanbul to Apdi Ipekci Park in solidarity with the political prisoners' struggle. Two hundred lawyers marched in legal gowns, and nine of them began a hunger strike themselves. Support groups were set up among the different professions: journalists against F-type prisons, human rights activists against F-type prisons, and others. Support poured in from every part of the society, soon exceeding the expectations not only of the revisionists who had opposed the action or vacillated, but even of the revolutionaries who had launched the battle.

Also in November, inspired by the stand of the political prisoners, the common prisoners rose up, seized several prisons, took guards hostage, and demanded, among other things, an end to the brutal conditions in Turkey's prisons.

The families of the political prisoners played a particularly key role. They maintained continual vigils outside the prisons, and some even went on hunger strikes themselves.

Strong support came from the com-



Istanbul, Turkey, 20 December 2000. Demonstration in support of political prisoners.

munity of several million Turkish immigrants who are scattered across Europe, mainly in Germany. Picket lines were thrown up at official Turkish sites throughout the continent. In Rotterdam, a young Turkish man who had gone on hunger strike in solidarity with the political prisoners was stabbed and killed by the Grey Wolves, a Turkish fascist group.

The battle was heating up. By early December, subsequent waves of political prisoners had joined the hunger strike, and over a hundred had begun a death fast. Support demonstrations in the streets became scenes of bitter street fighting with the police. In Istanbul, police shot and killed a young man putting up posters in support of the political prisoners. In the Gazi Osmanpasha district of Istanbul, TIKKO forces counter-attacked by ambushing a police bus carrying anti-riot forces, killing two and wounding 11. In response, thousands of police came out onto the streets to demonstrate, waving their guns and demand-

ing intensified repression. In Ankara, a demonstration in support of the political prisoners turned into a 5-hour pitched battle with the fascist Grey Wolves and the police. It was the fiercest fighting of its kind in the city since the 1980s.

In this escalating situation, government officials suddenly agreed to conduct indirect negotiations through the well-known writer Yashar Kemal and other intellectuals. The Minister of Justice floated the idea that the F-type prisons might be postponed. This was clearly a tactic aimed at demobilising the political prisoners and their supporters, softening them up for what was to come.

The situation was complicated by support for the prisoners coming from some intellectuals and others who were arguing from a strictly human rights perspective. The resistance of the political prisoners was in danger of being narrowed by these forces, who were nonetheless allies, into a discussion over "how many square metres" of cell

space constituted "a violation of human rights" – rather than whether it was right to oppose the F-type prisons as the leading edge of the reactionary regime's broader agenda.

This fight for public opinion between the government and the revolutionary forces, in particular for the support of the middle forces in the country, was a struggle for positioning in the coming showdown.

### THE ATTACK ON THE PRISONS

On 19 December 2000, the Turkish authorities assembled a massive force, consisting of police, army and the notorious "Special Team" security troops, to carry out a simultaneous attack on the political prisoners in 20 different prisons scattered across the country. Bulldozers punched holes in the prison walls so that the security forces could storm in and open fire. Sikorsky helicopters hovered overhead to jam all radio-communications between the prisoners and the outside world, so that they could carry out their vicious plans in secret.

Despite the overwhelming military force they faced, the political prisoners fought back with heroism and courage. According to eyewitness accounts, the prisoners erected barricades and fought back with simple, home-made weapons. They devised gas masks from soda-pop bottles, improvised slingshots and created Molotov-style cocktails from cooking gas. Despite the security forces' military superiority, they suffered the loss of several members and were repeatedly repulsed before the eyes of the entire world. "A Diary of Gebze Prison", an account by some of the women prisoners in Gebze Prison, gives some sense of the fighting that took place on that day.

As they carried out this cowardly attack, the Turkish regime attempted to tighten their control of information about the battle by prohibiting journalists from coming within a mile of the prisons. The Turkish State Security Court issued a decree banning "excessive" coverage of the attack on the prisoners or of the protests in the streets. At the same time, they unleashed a

flood of lies and disinformation to cover their bloody tracks, claiming that the prisoners burned themselves, whereas one of the bloodier crimes of the security forces was to cut a hole in one of the prisons (Bayrampasa) in Istanbul, and pour petrol onto the women prisoners below. This was later confirmed not only by one of the women prisoners, but also by some of the nurses in the hospital treating the injured. Yet the Turkish regime shamelessly called their military attack on the prisons "Operation Restore Life"!

Despite the much superior firepower of the state forces, the political prisoners held out for many hours everywhere, and in some of the prisons for over a day. This gave precious time for thousands of supporters to take to the streets. The London-based Committee to Stop the Repression of Political Prisoners in Turkey reported: "Street protests against the government's vicious attack erupted into violent confrontations with police and the Grey Wolf fascist forces in Ankara, Istanbul, Adana, Izmir and several other cities. Youth and members of the prisoners' families

## "You Have the Support of People Around the World"

**From *Rossoperaio* (a Maoist newspaper in Italy) June 2001:**

"In Italy many sit-ins and other street initiatives in front of consulates and other offices representing the Turkish regime took place in the days following the massacre. They have demonstrated the internationalist unity and high consciousness among the Italian communists, revolutionaries and anti-imperialists of the importance of the struggle of the prisoners against their isolation." Following the 19 December attack on the Turkish prisons, protests took place in 23 cities around Italy. The comrades of *Rossoperaio* and others organised meetings in five cities, including a demonstration in Milan on 23 December. Several hundred people, including relatives of the political prisoners, confronted the Italian police in front of the Turkish consulate, held a minute of silence to honour the fallen martyrs, and sang *The Internationale*.

**Dublin, Ireland:** A number of picket lines have been held in front of the Turkish Embassy in Ireland in solidarity with the political prisoners. The Turkish hunger strike has struck a particularly deep chord in Ireland. A little over 20 years ago, the British government incarcerated hundreds of Irish republican fighters on the flimsiest of grounds under new "internment" laws. The Irish political prisoners struck back, launching a hunger strike. Bobby Sands, a young revolutionary poet and the most well known of the prisoners on hunger strike, defiantly ran for election to the British Parliament from his prison cell, and, against all expectations, won. The British establishment was shocked and outraged, but nonetheless refused to back down. Sands gave his life, but a wave of solidarity and struggle by the masses in Ireland and around the world eventually forced the British government to back down and withdraw the vicious internment laws.

**Excerpt from a statement by the *Revolutionary Worker*, voice of the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA:**

"As Maoist revolutionaries in the belly of the US imperialist beast, we stand firmly with the oppressed people of Turkey and with the revolutionary sisters and brothers of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist). Our struggles may be on opposite sides of the earth – but we are comrades in the world proletarian revolution.

"We know that the political prisoners in Turkey are in a dangerous battle. The Turkish regime is vicious and bloody – they have learned well from their imperialist masters – and they have launched many cowardly assaults on the political prisoners.

"But people around the world have seen and have been inspired by the determined and heroic resistance of Turkey's political prisoners. As they face the latest attacks from the oppressors, the revolutionary brothers and sisters in Turkey's dungeons have the support of people around the world."

played a key part in inspiring many others to join in attacking the police armoured cars with stones and Molotov cocktails. In Istanbul's Taksim Square, 2,000 people fought a pitched battle lasting an hour and a half. The head of the police in Istanbul is reporting that the Workers and Peasants Liberation Army of Turkey, led by the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist), has carried out another ambush on Turkish security forces. On 20 December, in Okmeydani, an Istanbul shantytown, the guerrilla forces trapped a police car and wounded two policemen. A local office of the notorious Grey Wolves was also attacked, with one fascist killed and two seriously wounded."

Ultimately, the security forces used their overwhelming military superiority to re-take the prisons, and then carried out bloody reprisals. Many prisoners were immediately transferred to the F-type prisons. Amnesty International reported that the security forces meted out beatings and torture before, during and after the transfers. Amnesty also reports

that some prisoners have not been seen or heard from since the time of the attack on the prisons.

The 19 December battle was sharp testimony to the fighting spirit of the striking prisoners. If the Turkish rulers had any illusions that they could break the spirit of the political prisoners, these have been dashed. A lawyer for the political prisoners reported in the aftermath of the 19 December attack that, "All those that were on the hunger strike are continuing. Many of them are in a critical condition. Most of them were injured in the raids..." Indeed, since then many hundreds of other political prisoners, who had been stirred by the heroic resistance of 19 December, have joined the ranks of those on hunger strike. Following this decisive struggle most of the political organisations that previously opposed the hunger-strike resistance have joined in the struggle.

#### THE FIGHT CONTINUES

In the months since the December attack, the hunger strike has contin-

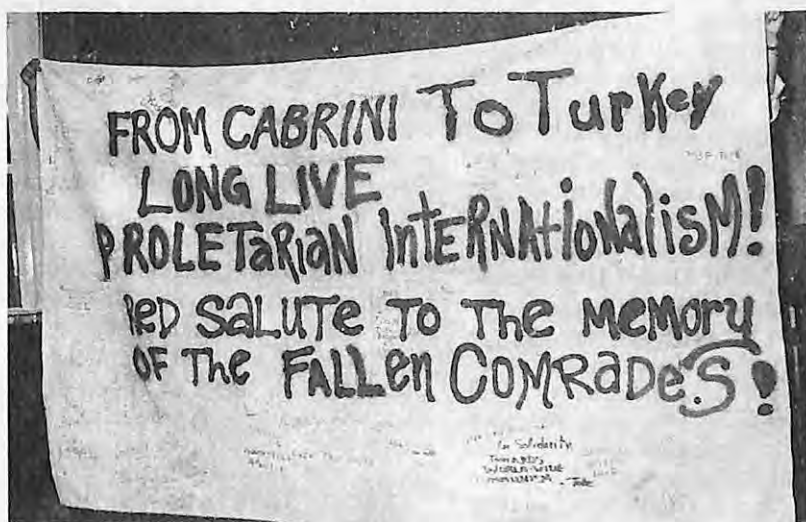
ued, and a number of other political prisoners have given their lives. The political prisoners are continuing their fight under even more arduous conditions. Support has remained strong in Turkey and abroad. In London, on hearing the news of the 19 December attack, 50 supporters seized the London Eye, a gigantic 40-story high Ferris wheel on the River Thames, stopping operations for half a day. Thousands marched through Germany and in many other cities across Europe.

One of the virtues of big battles is that they more clearly sort out friends and enemies. The European powers had previously made a big show of demanding that Turkey "improve its human rights record". In the wake of the 19 December attack, the US and European diplomats in Istanbul "regretted" the methods used in the attack, but then fully justified it, saying that it was of course "necessary" for Turkey to regain control of the country's prisons. Turkey continues to be one of the largest recipients of US military aid in the world.

Unfortunately, some human rights organisations didn't do much better: Human Rights Watch, which had done much to expose the F-type prisons and raise issues of their violation of international human rights, outrageously stated that "the Justice Ministry should clearly not be intimidated by the threat of hunger strikes or prison unrest from taking the right path of action in prison management" – thus turning upside down the truth about who was exercising torture, beatings and compulsion to "intimidate" whom.

Voices were raised in some quarters, particularly from those who had held back from launching this battle in the first place, proclaiming that the government's attack had constituted the defeat of the political prisoners. A statement by the TKP(ML) Bureau Abroad scornfully rebuked this view: "We know this line, for of course those who have limited themselves to getting some temporary rights from the ruling classes cannot and do not want to see the ideological and political victory that has indeed been won. There are never solid guarantees for concessions captured from the system."

The Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) proudly declared to the comrades in Turkey's prisons following the 19 December battle: "Comrades: Your struggle has handed the enemy a political



Several banners of support were sent from the US to Turkey. Above is one from the ghettos of Chicago to the political prisoners in Turkey. It is pictured here amidst a gathering of Turkish immigrants in Europe, on its way to the streets of Istanbul.

**From the Union of Communists of Iran (Sarbedaran), December 2000**

"Your call tells the world that the

masses of people in Turkey and their communist and revolutionary sons and daughters will not permit the Yankee imperialists and their lackeys to stabilise and strengthen this military base to control and suppress the struggle of the people in this region, to prevent the rise of the new emerging wave of world revolution, to ensure stability and calm for the enemies of the proletariat and the people." ■

and ideological defeat. The bombs, helicopters and assault rifles of the Turkish state failed. Audacious revolutionary struggle and unwavering confidence in the masses and our communist cause was advanced. We are confident that you will continue to fight to turn Turkey's prisons into shining trenches of combat. The revolutionary masses and their Maoist vanguard parties and organisations around the world draw inspiration from your fight and stand shoulder to shoulder with you."

Bourgeois commentators regard

the prisoners' struggle with a mixture of contempt and incomprehension. They are unable to understand a perspective that doesn't enshrine an individual's own well-being as the highest good, where one's deepest allegiances go beyond a person's self and immediate family and embrace not only those who stand shoulder to shoulder with them in a common fight, not only the unknown thousands who tomorrow could face imprisonment at the hands of the Turkish state, but also the broader ranks of the oppressed in Turkey and around the world. By

putting their lives on the line, the comrades in Turkey who have been martyred or who face death today have exposed to the world the reactionary plans of the Turkish state to crush the political prisoners and deal a decisive blow to the revolutionary struggle in that country. Their self-sacrificing struggle has certainly contributed to the advance of the revolutionary struggle there.

In the subsequent months, the Turkish authorities have declared that they are granting some reforms in an effort to wind down the fight that is

## A Diary of Gebze Prison

The following is an account of what happened in just one of the prisons, Gebze, when the government stormed the prisons on 19 December 2000. It was originally published in *Revolutionary Democracy* (No. 1, 16-28 February 2001), under the title "Diary of Gebze", and was written by female prisoners, comrades of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist).

During pitch darkness, just before dawn, the owners of darkness came forward once again. There is no need to calculate how many times they came like this before, as each previous arrival has already taken its place in the annals of history.

We knew that this arrival was going to be different to all the previous arrivals. We knew fascism on its deathbed would attack us in a more frantic manner and ask us to surrender, but has anyone ever seen us surrendering to them? So when we were woken from our sleep, we were aware of the kinds of things that we could expect to experience. Despite all their viciousness, we were certain, as certain as is the dawn, that, just like those before us, we would place an anecdote in the new pages of the history books. We confronted them on their arrival with our slogans, we were declaring to all our loved ones and to humanity as a whole that we

would never surrender.

We jumped from our beds as our comrade, who was on lookout duty, chanted the slogan "Long Live Our Barricade Resistance!" The soldiers were storming the prison through the entrance doors. Barricades were erected in no time. All the preparations were completed. Within two minutes the soldiers had taken their positions on the rooftops, and they were waiting with their weapons pointing towards the dormitories. As they entered the main corridor they shouted: "We are coming, if you have anywhere to run, run...Allah! Allah!" They opened fire on our comrades who were on lookout duty in the main corridor. At that point our comrade was injured in his leg with a bullet that came out of a G-3 rifle. Under heavy fire, other comrades managed to erect a barricade at a certain part of the main corridor. Soldiers couldn't pass the barricades, so they started throwing bombs through the holes they had made through the roofs and ceilings. As the excessive build-up of gas fumes filled the air, comrades at the barricades were gasping for clean air through the side windows. Kenan Tayboran went into a coma after the injury he sustained on his head from something that was thrown through the window; nobody knows whether it was a bomb or a bullet. He was

brought into the dormitory by our comrades, he had no pulse and we couldn't get any reading of his blood pressure. With difficulty one of our comrades, who was a doctor, brought him back to life....

The comrades, trench comrades [comrades from other organisations involved in the battle] and other friends from the ninth, twelfth and tenth dormitories, who had managed to erect barricades in part of the main corridor, were continuing their resistance at their barricades and were quickly abandoning the barricades that they could no longer hold and reassembling at another point. New barricades were erected until friends/comrades from the ninth and tenth dormitories were cornered, at which point countless numbers of smoke and gas bombs were thrown at them and pepper gas was sprayed at them....

The resistance in the male dormitories lasted for 12 hours, until the capture of the death-fast resisters; it then continued in the women's dormitories. We [the women] were giving support to our comrades with the slogans we were chanting and revolutionary anthems we were singing at the barricades, until nightfall. When they headed towards our section, the numbers of soldiers on the rooftops had increased dramatically. They were try-

continuing against them, but they are trying to hold out from stepping back further. The political prisoners' struggle continues to inspire protest marches, hunger strikes and other expressions of support throughout the country and abroad. On May Day, support for the political prisoners was one of the main demands of the 20,000 people who marched through Istanbul in defiance of the police.

The fact that such a powerful revolutionary struggle erupted right in the dungeons where the enemy is supposed to be strongest has given new heart to

millions and showed that through struggle under a correct line and with a lofty perspective the world can be changed. The spirit of Mao – "nothing is difficult in this world if you dare to scale the heights" – is one that the political prisoners have truly embodied.

Even when this battle was in its initial stages, the RIM Committee observed prophetically, "As the political prisoners enter this dangerous battle, the eyes of millions will be on them, and the hearts of the oppressed the world over will beat with theirs. Much is at stake. In pre-revolutionary Russia, Lenin's

Bolshevik Party led the political prisoners to turn every effort of the reactionary government to contain the political prisoners into an advance for the revolution – dispersing the prisoners only created more schools of revolution in new areas, while concentrating them only turned the existing prisons into mighty fortresses of resistance. So too in Turkey, the government will learn – only too late – that its vicious suppression of the prisoners, instead of leading to social peace, will prove to be a spark igniting even greater battles to come." ■



Bayrampasa Prison - Istanbul, after 19 December 2000 attack.

cade was erected at the door of the dormitory on the next floor up. The barricade on this floor became the target of similar attacks. Since we didn't have anywhere else to go, we all stood together with

our arms interlinked and continued to chant our slogans. The smoke inside was so dense that we could not see anything. When they entered, they repeatedly threw bombs to the exact point where we were standing with our arms interlinked. Some comrades fainted due to the gas fumes; others were still semi-conscious and chanting slogans as they tried to hold themselves up. They started pouring water on us and beating us with truncheons in order to separate each of us from the others....

Having separated us, they then started pulling us along the corridors lined with awaiting sadists on each side, who beat us as we passed. We were then dragged to the top of the stairs and thrown to the floor below. Meanwhile, we were being beaten to a point close to death and sexually assaulted [in various ways]....

Having taken each one of us to the courtyard, they then attempted to identify the death-fast resisters. We replied by saying: "We are all on death-fast, if you want to take us, take us all."....

Twenty-eight people [from different revolutionary organisations], who were staying in dormitory number eight and were awaiting trial, have all suffered medical problems, such as: tissue trauma, bruising, medium-scale brain trauma, bone fractures, joint dislocations and vaginal bleeding. Despite these problems they have been denied medical treatment, as all our rights have been usurped....

Yes, they came again; they took away the lives of tens of our loved ones by using the most vicious methods, but they could not take away their ideology and their hearts. Those who fell have already been replaced by others; whilst those who have red headbands on their foreheads are continuing to make history in the cells.

The owners of darkness will be brought to their knees, sooner or later. We will win!

- TKP(ML) female prisoners awaiting trial

ing to enter by dismantling the barricades. Having destroyed the barricades behind the doors, they entered the empty fourth dormitory. Following a brief period of the usual search, they started ransacking the place, especially smashing electronic goods, and they ripped female underwear and hung it on the cupboards. They then headed towards the eighth dormitory. Having loosened the supports to the barricade, they managed to make a hole just large enough for bombs to be thrown in, and they started throwing gas bombs repeatedly inside the dormitory. Comrades were stuffing the barrels of the rifles poking through the barricades with specially made wooden pegs. Meanwhile, slogans and revolutionary anthems continued without pause. As bombs started to be thrown through the canteen window, the barricade below was abandoned and a new barri-

# To the Revolutionary Political Prisoners of Turkey on Hunger Strike

28 December 2000

Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

Dear Comrades,

On behalf of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) and its participating parties and organisations, we send our warmest revolutionary communist greetings to you who have led a daring and audacious struggle against the reactionary state of Turkey and made the prisons a shining trench of revolutionary combat. The international communist movement, and especially RIM, hold dear, with deep sentiments, the memory of the comrades of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist) – TKP(ML) – and the other revolutionary political prisoners who laid down their lives in the recent prison struggles for the cause of revolution:

Comrades, your struggle was a crucial battle at this juncture in the life of your country. The ruling classes of Turkey, with the assistance of their imperialist masters, want to consolidate their state and crush the revolutionary sentiments and struggles of the oppressed masses. After the capture of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) leadership, the Turkish state was dreaming of crushing the revolutionary will of the political prisoners. But you turned this dream into a nightmare for the reactionaries and capitulators. This righteous battle brought fresh air to the masses. It inspired tens of thousands of the young generation who are stepping into revolutionary life. This struggle has served the People's War in Turkey and advanced the cause of overthrowing the reactionaries and imperialists. Internationally it has had the effect of raising the flag of resistance, which so urgently needs to become more visible in many parts of the world.

RIM is especially proud of this struggle because one of its participating parties, the TKP(ML), played a key and central role in staging and leading this struggle with a correct line and with revolutionary perseverance. The reactionary state, with the help of the imperialists, tried hard to smother the hunger strike in state-imposed silence. Finally, in desperation, on 19 December 2001 they cowardly used the army to attack 20 of their own prisons to re-gain control. It was tremendously inspiring for the masses of the world to see that even in the darkest dungeons of this brutal regime one can deal blows to the enemy if the flag of resistance and struggle is held high.

Comrades, your struggle has handed the enemy a political and ideological defeat. The bombs, helicopters and assault rifles of the Turkish state failed. Audacious revolutionary struggle and unwavering confidence in the masses and our communist cause was advanced. We are confident that you will continue to fight to turn Turkey's prisons into shining trenches of combat. The revolutionary masses and their Maoist vanguard parties and organisations around the world draw inspiration from your fight and stand shoulder to shoulder with you.

**Down with the Reactionary State of Turkey and Its Imperialist Masters!**  
**Red Salute to the Memory of the Fallen Comrades!**  
**Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!**  
**Yasasin TKP(ML) and TIKKO! Long Live RIM!**

# *The Declaration of the Revolutionary & Internationalist Movement Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!*

Signatories of the *Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement* and Participating Organisations in RIM:

- Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist)
- Communist Party of Afghanistan
- Communist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist-Leninist) [BSD(ML)]
- Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)\*
- Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
- Communist Party of Peru
- Communist Party of Turkey Marxist-Leninist [TKP ML]
- Maoist Communist Party [Italy]
- Marxist-Leninist Communist Organisation of Tunisia
- Proletarian Party of Purba Bangla (PBSP) [Bangladesh]
- Revolutionary Communist Group of Colombia
- Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

\* See this issue for the founding documents of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist).

In addition to the above list of those whose participation in the Movement has been publicly announced by the Committee, a number of other organisations work closely with the Movement to advance its cause and build and strengthen vanguard communist organisations.

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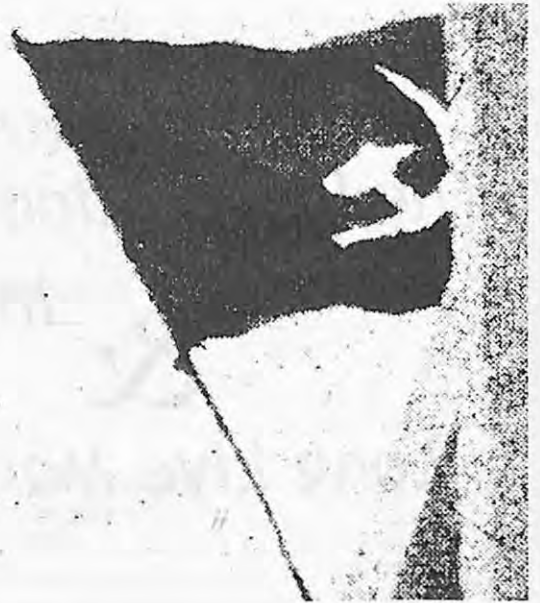
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## Peru

# The Regime Changes

## The People's War Fights on



The People's War in Peru, which began in 1980, continues today to hold high the red flag of revolution. Despite what Communist Party of Peru (PCP) Chairman Gonzalo called a "bend in the road" following his capture in 1992, it is clearly still holding out. This is reflected in the accompanying list of 90 People's War actions during the most recent five-month period (6 January to 3 June 2001).

These actions indicate: continuing confrontations with the reactionary armed forces, and mass work by the People's Liberation Army, in various forms, in several regions of the country. These areas include: the department of Ayacucho, where the peasant war under the leadership of the Party began, in both highland areas and along the Apurímac River basin leading north into the jungles; the eastern-central departments of Cerro de Pasco and Junín; the Huallaga River valley, long an important stronghold for the People's War; the northern departments of Piura and Lambayeque; and Lima, the capital itself.

The interim government that followed the collapse of the Fujimori regime attached no less importance than its predecessor to trying to wipe out the People's War. *Red Sun* indicates that this government mounted some 50 "anti-terrorist" operations in the first six months of 2001. The hunting down and imprisonment of suspected revolutionaries continues. The PCP, for its part, has given great attention to exposing and opposing the transitional

government and its elections, which were intended to install a successor to Fujimori who was less widely discredited. The Party's work to mobilise the masses through the People's War and build an elections boycott movement peaked at the time of the two election rounds, 8 April and 3 June 2001. According to a Peruvian Armed Forces report published in *Caretas* magazine, during the first week of April the PCP carried out 114 actions, throughout the countryside, calling on the people to boycott the elections.

Alejandro Toledo's "victory" was inevitable, since covering him with the mantle of a "popular mandate" was the only purpose of these elections. (As people in Latin America have long said about elections, there is only one vote that really counts – and it is cast in Washington.) But paradoxically, Toledo sank further and further in the popularity polls even as he edged out the other candidates during the first round in April. According to an early report (most likely understated), in the 3 June 2001 run-off election 18.5 per cent of voters refused to go to the polls at all, even though this is illegal and can have serious consequences in Peru, and a further 13 per cent cast blank or spoiled ballots – totalling almost a third of the people registered to vote. Both Peruvian and North American media outlets treated this as a disastrous beginning for the new government. Unlike previous elections, this time it was also the reactionary forces linked to the former regime that tried to

capitalise on popular discontent by calling for blank ballots, but nonetheless the discontent is undeniable, powerful and dangerous to the ruling classes as a whole.

In the capital, where during much of the last decade death squads have murdered people merely for leafleting, the distribution of PCP leaflets calling for an election boycott was greeted as a significant event. Leafleting was reported, among other places, at San Marcos and La Cantuta universities, the La Victoria factory worker district, schools in popular areas and some of the biggest shanty towns.

The Peruvian media and politicians are debating whether or not there is a "resurgence of activity by Shining Path" (as they refer to the PCP). Some pro-Fujimori forces emphasise the number of recent actions in an effort to hold the new government responsible, whilst others claim that putting an end to the People's War is a "job left pending" by the former regime, which is accused of covering up continuing Maoist actions to achieve the "pacification" by propaganda that it could not achieve in the actual fight against the PCP on the ground. The May bombing of the National Elections Board in Lima had a strong impact on this argument.

The truth is that these recent actions did not appear out of nowhere. For example, it is worth recalling that government offensives against the People's Liberation Army (PLA) were beaten back in several areas in Octo-

ber 1999, following the capture of Comrade Feliciano, who headed the PCP Central Committee after Chairman Gonzalo's arrest. In one ferocious battle in the jungles of Ayacucho, the PLA shot down the helicopter carrying the commander who had been in charge of the operations against Comrade Feliciano. A subsequent government attempt to take over the area was defeated in April 2000, when another helicopter was hit by PLA fire. In February 2001 an armed forces helicopter was downed while supplying a military base in Huanta, Ayacucho, a storm centre of the People's War since very early on. Helicopters have been central to the government's military strategy, and, until these incidents, few had been hit.

The ability of the People's War's to persevere, and its existence as a banner to rally uncompromising revolutionary opposition to the ruling classes, is of enormous importance at a time when the ruling circles are engaged in fierce combat amongst themselves, and when all sources indicate a soaring sense of disillusionment among the middle classes with all of the ruling class representatives. Most importantly, an incontestable rebirth of political activity and struggle is taking place among lower sections of the masses, who have been kept under an iron heel for the last decade. In this situation, it is the government and its imperialist backers that have the most to lose and the Maoist revolution that has the most to gain.

The political crisis, which reached a fever pitch when Fujimori was driven from office, is still far from under control. The contradictions within Peru's ruling classes, which led to the US decision to cut the strings to its puppet and let him come crashing down, are not so easily resolved. They interpenetrate with other contradictions, including the mass, often violent, outpourings of protest in the streets that effectively overturned Fujimori's US-approved re-election last year, and the People's War itself.

In fact, it is not clear yet whether the US will benefit from dropping Fujimori or whether it simply risks even greater political exposure once the "lid" has been taken off the political pot. A *Washington Post* article (11 May 2001) describes a dilapidated Lima prison courtyard crawling with dozens of incarcerated Fujimori-appointed army

and intelligence officials, including 18 generals now facing charges for drug dealing and other crimes. As these lackeys themselves bitterly point out, they were in daily contact with their official US counterparts. The former head of the armed forces joint chiefs of staff, Nicolas Hermoza Rios, was an honours graduate of the notorious US Army School of the Americas torture academy in Fort Benning, Georgia. Vladimiro Montesinos, the key player on Peru's political scene after (or alongside) Fujimori, was a CIA asset for decades and met personally and often with Clinton's White House drug czar General Brian McCaffery, General Wilhelm of the US Southern Command, the US ambassador to Peru and many other US bigshots. They all routinely defended Montesinos to the press. Now CIA and other US officials, past and present, would like to claim ignorance that their favourite Latin American regime was the world's biggest drug cartel. This is worse than ludicrous, and not just because many of the basic facts were often reported in the world press, including in these pages. Montesinos was their man for decades, on the CIA payroll at least since the 1970s, when he was kicked out of the Peruvian army for selling secrets to the US, at which point he openly set up shop as a drug lawyer and organised crime confidant.

For 20 years, whoever held the posts of US ambassador and US "drug czar" never missed an opportunity to publicly express confidence in Fujimori and Montesinos. While all the reasons for their sudden fall from US grace are not clear, they probably include the fact that Fujimori and Montesinos and their methods had left the United States with too narrow a base within the Peruvian ruling classes, and had fuelled a mass outrage that could only favour conditions for the People's War. In short, their main and perhaps only crime in the eyes of the US seems to have been that they outlived their usefulness. And just as Fujimori's initial election and subsequent "self-coup", dissolving parliament, the judiciary, etc., were carried out with full US approval, so too his being driven out of office and out of the country and his subsequent replacement by the "made-in-the-USA" Toledo were also fully supported by the US.

The truth is that all along the US knew exactly what was going on be-

cause they were behind it. Fujimori, Montesinos, Hermoza Rios, etc., were handpicked (Fujimori from his career as an obscure academic, Montesinos from the trash bin) to do a job: to serve and protect the prevailing economic and social system in Peru and especially US domination of Peru, and above all to stop the People's War. If they needed drug profits as part of the political glue that held their reactionary war machine together, Washington was comfortable with that, even if those drugs destroyed millions of lives. Their worst crimes were not those for which they were removed from office but the murder, rape and torture that they unleashed upon the masses and the Maoists in their filthy counter-revolutionary war.

Although it seems likely that the US at least allowed and perhaps organised Montesinos' flight abroad, he was forcibly returned to Peru in June when it became apparent that the new regime's inability to put him on trial was a major source of political instability. It seems politically impossible for the new regime to cover up all the crimes of the old regime without weakening itself further. All sorts of crimes against the people have come to light, and outrage has forced some high-level indictments. Two of the most important cases so far concern two notorious death squad massacres committed in the early years of the Fujimori regime: the 1991 execution of a courtyard full of slum dwellers at a fundraising barbecue for the illegal newspaper *El Diario* in the Lima Barrio Alto neighbourhood, and the kidnapping and murder of students and a teacher suspected of pro-People's War graffiti and other activities at La Cantuta University. The memories of these two crimes remain deeply burned in the consciousness of millions of Peruvians. Even in the darkest days of the Fujimori clampdown, relatives of the victims and others risked their lives (sometimes even in the streets) to demand justice. No matter what happens in the courts, this is not a situation that the ruling classes and imperialists can easily resolve to their benefit.

Once again, despite the twists and turns in the People's War in Peru, its persistence and advance still holds the key to the future of Peru, and it is a source of hope and inspiration for the oppressed all over the world. ■

# The Unstoppable People's War



"Long Live the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement!"  
Painting done by political prisoners in Peru before the "Day of Heroism" in 1986, when 300 were killed by government troops.

What follows is a list of some People's War actions in Peru from January to early June 2001 reported in the Peruvian local and national reactionary press. It was compiled by the editors of *Red Sun*, a publication of supporters of the PCP abroad, and has been slightly edited for publication here. The superscript number following each action refers to the location of the action on the accompanying map. -AWTW

## JANUARY

**6 January 2001:** Action by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), in Tocache province, department of San Martín.<sup>1</sup>

**12 January:** Two National Police non-commissioned officers are ambushed in the village of Chicrín, Yaruscayán district, Pasco. The PLA confiscates their weapons.<sup>2</sup>

**27 January:** Night-time confrontation between the PLA and the reactionary armed forces in the Bajo Pacae sector, Juan José Crespo district, Leoncio Prado province.<sup>3</sup>

## FEBRUARY

PLA intercepts a bus in the hamlet Los Olivos, at the 24 kilometre milestone of the *Carretera Marginal* roadway, and annihilates a collaborator.<sup>4</sup>

**15 February 2001:** PLA incursion in the hamlet El Progreso, Chiclayo, near the border of the departments of Piura and Lambayeque, to mobilise the masses and carry out peo-

ple's trials in the area.<sup>5</sup>

**18 February:** In a spectacular feat, the PLA downs a military helicopter in the Viscatán area, Huanta province, Ayacucho, annihilating a sergeant and wounding a lieutenant. The army helicopter was attacked whilst supplying the Monjapata military base, located in the Apurímac river valley.<sup>6</sup>

**27 February:** A PLA company takes the village of Tambogrande (population 20,000), blacks out the electricity and carries out actions against the property of collaborators. Some property is confiscated. This PLA operation is co-ordinated with a mass action in which thousands of protestors destroy the premises of the Canadian mining company Manhattan.<sup>7</sup>

## MARCH

**1 March:** A PLA platoon carries out the selective annihilation of two traitors turned informers in the hamlet Ramal de Aspuzana, in Progreso, Tocache province, leaving leaflets explaining their action.<sup>8</sup>

**2 March:** A PLA company enters a village near the Sivia district in Ayacucho and organises a meeting with the inhabitants.<sup>9</sup>

**3, 5, 11 and 15 March:** The PLA carries out repeated incursions in the town of Aucayacu, in Huánuco.<sup>10, 11, 12, 13</sup>

**5 March:** A platoon of some 30 PLA combatants carry out an incursion and confiscate foodstuffs in the town of Tribolini, department of Apurímac. Chanting slogans supporting Chairman Gonzalo, the PCP and the People's

War, the PLA gathers the villagers and calls on them to boycott the 8 April elections.<sup>14</sup>

In early March, the PLA confiscates dynamite and fuses from an engineering works in Chanchamayo, in preparation for boycott actions.<sup>15</sup>

**8 March:** Confrontation between the PLA and police forces in the Santa Ana area, Las Palmas district, some 18 kilometres south of Huancayo.<sup>16</sup>

**8 March:** Confrontation between the PLA and forces from the National Office against Terrorism (DINCOTE) in Puente Durán, Chinchao district, Acomayo province.<sup>17</sup>

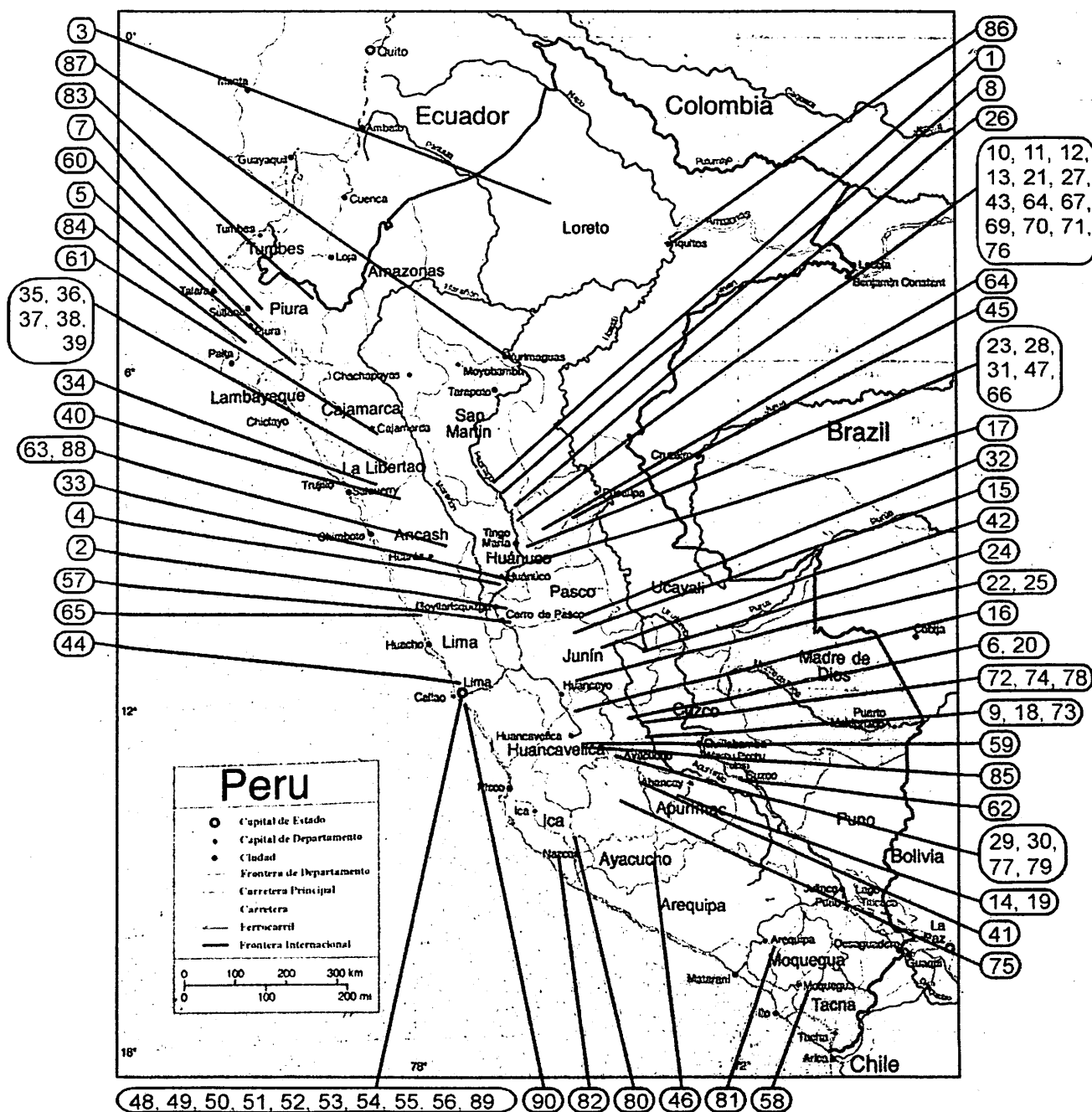
Around **10 March:** In Ayacucho, a PLA company takes villages near Sivia and holds a boycott meeting.<sup>18</sup>

Also around **10 March:** Another PLA company carries out actions calling on people to boycott the elections in Apurímac.<sup>19</sup>

**14 March,** at 2am: a PLA company takes the village Pampa Soris, in Ayahuanco district (Huanta) for two hours. The combatants, including 15 Ashaninkas (indigenous people), gather the villagers at the main square for a meeting. They also confiscate 20 shotguns from the Pampa Soris armed forces-led "self-defence committee", in addition to foodstuffs and other products.<sup>20</sup>

**29 March:** PLA incursion in the village of Puerto Ángel, by the 560 kilometre milestone of the *Carretera Marginal* highway, in José Crespo y Castillo district. Four informers annihilated.<sup>21</sup>

**30 March:** A platoon of some 30 PLA combatants enters the Cuylpapata



A WORLD TO WIN 2001/27

enclosure in the Concepción province, Junín department, and holds a meeting.<sup>22</sup>

**Late March:** The PLA holds a meeting with inhabitants of Tingo María, calling for an elections boycott.<sup>23</sup>

**APRIL**

**Early April 2001:** a PLA company carries out actions in the Ene and Tambo

river valleys, forcing Ministry of Health staff to abandon medical stations.<sup>24</sup>

Also in the beginning of April, the PLA carries out an incursion in the hamlet of Hatunhuasi, Andamarca district, Concepción province, and holds a meeting with the inhabitants.<sup>25</sup>

The PLA gives out leaflets along the Jorge Basadre and Marginal de la Selva roadways, along the route leading to the town of Aucayacu and the

district of Tocache, the latter in San Martín department.<sup>26</sup>

**5 April:** In the Las Rocas enclosure (25 kilometres from Tingo María, in the San José Crespo y Castillo district), the PLA annihilates a collaborator of the reactionary armed forces.<sup>27</sup>

**6 April:** In the early morning hours, the PLA annihilates a criminal in Tingo María.<sup>28</sup>

**8 April** (the day of the first round of

the elections): The PLA bombs the offices of Toledo's Perú Posible Party in the city of Ayacucho.<sup>29</sup> It also carries out an action against the offices of APRA, the party of Alan García, the other main candidate, near the main square in the same departmental capital.<sup>30</sup>

**8 April:** A PLA platoon stages a 20-minute attack on a military base in Mercedes Locro, close to the jungle city of Tingo María, 550 kilometres north-east of Lima.<sup>31</sup>

**8 April:** Anti-elections actions in Villa Rica, Oxapampa, in Pasco<sup>32</sup>; action against the voting premises in a school in Castillo Viejo, Huánuco<sup>33</sup>; red flags with the hammer and sickle hoisted in the hills of Bolonga<sup>34</sup> and Gran Chimú<sup>35</sup> in Trujillo; the PLA enters the town of Rancho Grande, in the jurisdiction of Sayapullo, Gran Chimú province<sup>36</sup>, and gathers the inhabitants; they hoist the red flag and call upon the population not to vote; similar meetings take place in the remote villages Colpa<sup>37</sup>, El Porvenir<sup>38</sup> and Mundo Nuevo<sup>39</sup> in the same area, and in Villa Cruz, jurisdiction of Chacacarán, Santiago de Chucho province.<sup>40</sup>

**8 April:** Armed shutdown against the elections in Vilcashuamán, Ayacucho.<sup>41</sup> PLA combatants paint slogans and the hammer and sickle along several of the streets of Vilcashuamán. Another armed strike against the elections in the town of Satipo and surrounding villages.<sup>42</sup>

**16 April:** PLA combatants take the town of Aucayacu for an hour, with armed agitation and propaganda against the elections and in defence of the life of Chairman Gonzalo, making use of the local radio station, as well as leaflets.<sup>43</sup>

**27 April:** Action of armed agitation and propaganda in the town of Pachacútec, in Ventanilla. A huge hammer and sickle is painted on rocks, 8 metres long and 6 metres wide, on one of the town's hills. During the night, more painting and chanting of slogans.<sup>44</sup>

#### MAY-EARLY JUNE

**Early May 2001:** Action by a platoon of some 30 PLA combatants in Nechuya village, 60 kilometers from Pucallpa, near the Jorge Basadre highway.<sup>45</sup>

**12 May:** PLA fighters intercept a minibus and annihilate the mayor of the

Pacapausa district, Ayacucho.<sup>46</sup>

**13 May:** Bomb explodes on the premises of the military recruitment office 32-A in the town of Tingo María, department of Huánuco.<sup>47</sup>

**16 May:** In an action with high political impact, the PLA sets off a bomb at the National Election Board (JNE) in downtown Lima, wounding several police officers. Leaflets against the elections and supporting the People's War and the defence of the life of Chairman Gonzalo appear.<sup>48</sup>

In the wake of this, the Peruvian reaction also had to admit to some other PLA actions carried out during the first months of 2001. The "Global Report on the Current Situation of the Shining Path Terrorist Organisation", written by the Internal Order Division of the Joint Command of the Armed Forces (see *Caretas* 1671, 24 May 2001), mentions several actions in Lima, including several protests by relatives of prisoners of war<sup>49</sup>; the handing out of leaflets against the elections at the University of San Marcos<sup>50</sup>, at the University of La Cantuta<sup>51</sup>, on the avenue Gamarra in La Victoria<sup>52</sup>, at a school in San Juan de Miraflores<sup>53</sup> at another school in Villa El Salvador<sup>54</sup>, and in the districts of San Martín de Porres<sup>55</sup> and Santa Anita.<sup>56</sup>

Other actions that came to light after the action against the JNE included a series of sabotage actions against mining companies. At a press conference, the chairman of the National Mining, Oil and Energy Association (SNMPE), Ricardo Briceño Villena, complained that what he called the "resurgence of violent actions" is "putting investments in this sector at risk". (*Correo* of Lima, 24 May 2001) According to Briceño, there were 39 attacks against mining companies in April alone, and so far this year there have been actions against the mining sector in nine towns in central Peru: Pasco<sup>57</sup>, Moquegua<sup>58</sup>, Huancavelica<sup>59</sup>, Piura<sup>60</sup>, Cajamarca<sup>61</sup>, Cusco<sup>62</sup>, Ancash<sup>63</sup>, Ucayali<sup>64</sup> and Paramonga.<sup>65</sup>

**16 May:** Among other actions to celebrate the twenty-first anniversary of the People's War on 17 May is the bombing of the Military Recruitment Office in Tingo María; on this occasion PLA combatants also distributed leaflets supporting the People's War.<sup>66</sup>

**18 May:** In the hamlet of Castillo Grande, Tingo María, PLA combatants hoist the red flag with the hammer

and sickle and give out leaflets with slogans supporting the People's War and demanding the public presentation of Chairman Gonzalo. A report on this action appears on Peruvian television.<sup>67</sup>

**18 May:** Armed agitation and propaganda in Castillo Grande hamlet in Tingo María, Huánuco. Slogans supporting the People's War and the symbol of the hammer and sickle painted on the walls of the stadium in Cumaná and in the housing area of San Sebastián in Huamanga, along with leafleting.<sup>68</sup>

**28 and 29 May and 1 June:** The PLA carries out a series of incursions in the hamlet of Pacae in the province Aucayacu. On 28 and 29 May, they paint slogans calling for an armed shutdown and on 1 June two informers are annihilated.<sup>69, 70, 71</sup>

**30 May:** PLA incursion on the slope from the village Tambo to San Francisco, La Mar province, in the department of Ayacucho, as part of the boycott against the elections.<sup>72</sup>

**31 May:** In the early morning hours PLA fighters take a village in the border region of the jungle in the Apurímac valley and hold a meeting against the run-off elections.<sup>73</sup>

**31 May:** A PLA battalion of some 200 combatants stops more than 50 vehicles travelling along the route from Ayacucho to the inner jungle area of the upper Apurímac river valley, at Totumbaro, two hours from the San Francisco district, in the province of La Mar. They call for an armed shutdown against the elections and paint PCP slogans on the vehicles.<sup>74</sup>

**31 May:** A PLA company carries out armed agitation and propaganda against the elections and calling for an armed shutdown, seizing two villages in Ayacucho.<sup>75</sup>

**2-4 June 2001:** Armed strike against the elections in Aucayacu<sup>76</sup>, Huamanga<sup>77</sup>, La Mar<sup>78</sup> and other provinces in Ayacucho. In La Mar, PLA combatants stop and burn a bus on election day, 3 June.

**3 June:** The government Ombudsman's office reports 21 actions to impede the elections in: Ayacucho<sup>79</sup>, Palpa<sup>80</sup>, Arequipa<sup>81</sup>, La Arena<sup>82</sup>, Ayabaca<sup>83</sup> and Catacaos<sup>84</sup> (Piura); Angaraes<sup>85</sup> (Huancavelica); Iquitos<sup>86</sup>, Yurimaguas<sup>87</sup>, Hauri<sup>88</sup> (Ancash); Lima<sup>89</sup>, Callao<sup>90</sup>; and other places. ■

The Day of Heroism,  
19 June 1986

# "This Blood That Has Been Spilt Shall Never Be Forgotten!"



Revolutionary prisoners in Canto Grande Prison, 1991.

The following was prepared by the Information Bureau of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Day of Heroism in Peru:

Fifteen years ago, on 19 June 1986, the Peruvian government coldly murdered about 300 of the prisoners of war who had turned their places of confinement into "shining trenches of combat" to advance the People's War. These men and women comrades set a standard for persisting in revolutionary struggle by any means possible even in the clutches of the enemy; this is a new and higher standard that comrades held captive today in Peru and in other countries are upholding and implementing in many concrete ways. It is a testament to the enduring impact of what has been commemorated by Maoists and other revolutionaries around the world as the "Day of Heroism".

As the People's War in Peru, initiated in 1980, surged forward under the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) and its Chairman Gonzalo, and especially after the success of the Party's policy of organising breakouts, most spectacularly a guerrilla attack on a local prison in Ayacucho that freed hundreds of prisoners, the reactionary regime adopted the policy of concentrating "sus-

pected terrorists" in Lima. But even behind bars these prisoners did not give up. They lived collectively, to the degree possible in these hell-holes, so as to better withstand the enemy's efforts to break their bodies and minds. They carried out political, ideological and physical training and produced art and handicrafts meant to support and spur on the People's War in Peru and revolution throughout the world.

One of the best-known of these was a magnificent multicoloured rug celebrating the founding of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, with the symbol of the globe breaking free of its chains. This tangible token of proletarian internationalist politics and indomitable Maoist spirit was smuggled out of the El Fronton island prison and taken along as part of a world tour in support of the People's War, amazing and inspiring the thousands in Asia, Europe and the Americas who saw it. The paintings, recorded revolutionary choral music and other artworks produced by the prisoners helped advance (and finance) the world-wide movement to support the People's War in Peru, and, along with the poems, songs, plays and other works created while in the clutches of the enemy, continue to play a role in the struggle today.

Rather than being taken "out of

combat" by their capture, these men and women kept striving to concretise the slogan "it's right to rebel" in every way they could. Most importantly, they found methods to use their collective strength and the government's inability to quench their raging spirits to expose the regime and call on the masses in their millions to support and wage more and more People's War. When it became clear that the authorities were about to try to "solve" this problem by desperate and bloody measures, involving transfers and killing, the inmates took over the country's main facilities for political prisoners, declaring: "We are going to resist. They will not transfer us out of here alive. We demand guarantees against the government's plans." On the high walls at El Fronton, they painted, in giant letters, "Finish Off the Great Leap with a Gold Seal", referring to the final phase of the Party's military campaign to win base areas and clearly situating their own actions in this context.

The government hypocritically pretended to negotiate with the prisoners, who had raised the reasonable demands that the government abide by a previous agreement to recognise them as "special prisoners" and not as "terrorist criminals", and that the transfers be abandoned. But soon the government carried out the massacres

it had long planned. It sent in its marines armed with heavy machine guns and anti-tank weapons, helicopter gunships and naval artillery. Prisoners at El Fronton held out through two days of hand-to-hand combat, using slings, home-made crossbows and a small handful of captured weapons. The inmates at Lurigancho kept the armed forces commandos and marines at bay for a full day; most of the prisoners were methodically murdered after the prison was recaptured. Fighters at the Callao women's prison also held off the enemy for about 24 hours, at the cost of several dead and many wounded.

As is well known, this despicable act by the regime backfired. It contributed to the exposure and isolation of the regime and helped to show millions that the People's War, under the leadership of the PCP, is the only way to resolve Peru's problems. In this sense, instead of the political defeat that the regime had sought to inflict on the People's War by "reasserting its authority" and demonstrating its infinite capacity for bloodshed, it was the prisoners who dealt a blow to Peruvian reaction and its imperialist backers.

But of course the enemy's thirst for the people's blood is never satisfied. In 1992, as the Fujimori government plotted another massacre in Canto Grande prison in Lima, prisoners seized the men's and women's cellblocks and demanded the establishment of a commission to oversee the planned transfers of prisoners and guarantee their lives. On 6 May, Fujimori sent in 500 elite troops with rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, dynamite satchels and plastic explosives, as well as a rocket-firing combat helicopter. When they were beaten back, the next day a thousand soldiers tried to storm the prison, once again in vain. Finally, on 9 May, the women and men prisoners summed up that they had fully accomplished their aims, and marched out arm in arm singing the *Internationale*. The cowardly reactionary beasts singled out and murdered many prisoners suspected of being leaders. Among these communist heroes several very important Party members fell.

Despite the difficulties suffered by the People's War after the capture of Chairman Gonzalo in September 1992, the People's War in Peru has never ceased. As part of this, prisoners there

have also kept fighting in the spirit expressed by Chairman Gonzalo in his historic 24 September 1992 speech. From inside a cage, where the government was attempting to humiliate him and the entire revolution before the press, he disparaged his imprisonment as simply "a bend in the road". He defiantly called for the People's War to continue, declaring, "Though the road is long, we shall travel it to the end. We will reach our goal and we will win. You will see it."

Later, a Right-Opportunist Line arose, especially in the prisons, which betrayed this stand, the blood so generously shed by countless people's heroes and the legacy of the Day of Heroism, using Chairman Gonzalo's capture as an excuse to call for an end to the war. What can be said of the People's War as a whole also applies to the prisoners who have held out under the enemy's unrelenting attacks – their political and ideological line and unwavering determination are proving stronger than all the enemy's unlimited capacity for terror.

Important rebellions and other struggles against the regime's attempts to rob prisoners of their revolutionary morale, their humanity and their lives broke out in Peru in early 2000, and again earlier this year. Despite the recent change in government, the new regime is no less backed by, and beholden to, US imperialism than its predecessor, and the country's prisons are still teeming with thousands of revolutionaries held in the most brutal conditions. Above all, Chairman Gonzalo continues to be confined in a barbaric underground dungeon. A major component of our unstinting international support for the People's War in Peru is the struggle to break the isolation of Chairman Gonzalo, to force the government to allow his public presentation so that he can express his views freely; and also to defend the life of Comrade Feliciano, who took up the responsibilities of leadership after Chairman Gonzalo's imprisonment until he in turn was snatched by the enemy and placed in isolation in the same inhuman subterranean cells.

The last two decades have provided dramatic proof of the degree to which the People's War is bound up with the spirit and struggle of its captured fighters. Clearly struggles by captured revolutionaries are closely

linked with people's war, the highest form of class struggle, because the enemy tries to terrorise the people by subjecting its unarmed captives to every conceivable cruelty, while Maoist politics, outlook and class stand can enable them to make major contributions even in the most unfavourable circumstances.

This is being shown sharply by today's ongoing heroic battle by revolutionary prisoners in Turkey, including many members and supporters of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist). In Turkey, too, prisoners turned their places of confinement into beacons, bastions and universities of revolution, and here, too, the imperialist-backed authorities have tried to drown those revolutionary flames with blood. So far, dozens of these imprisoned comrades have given their lives to resist being moved into isolation cells. Their morale is high, in large part because they understand that in attacking them in this way the government is seeking to deal a political and moral blow to the entire revolutionary movement and to the broad millions of masses who look to it, and because they see the links between their resistance today and the fight to advance the cause of people's war in that country.

In Nepal, also, the People's War has inevitably meant growing numbers of comrades crowded into prisons, and likewise the struggle behind the walls is inseparably linked to that outside. Recently the daring escape of six women prisoners, who dug a tunnel out of the Gorkha district prison so that they could successfully rejoin their guerrilla units, has delighted and inspired people on every continent.

As the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Peru said in its statement of June 1986, "The glorious death of these prisoners of war in battle is wrapped in the blood already spilt, and before it we communists, we fighters and sons and daughters of the people, pledge our unwavering commitment to follow their shining example, to advance the People's War in order to serve the world revolution until the inextinguishable light of communism dwells upon the whole earth under the unconquered and always verdant banners of Marx, Lenin and Mao, of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Glory to the fallen heroes, long live the revolution!" ■

# Seventh International Delegation to Peru



Members of the 7th Delegation: Padma Ratna Tuladhar (Nepal), Jaime Bonilla (Colombia), Peter Erlinder (United States), Heriberto Ocasio (United States), Jose Enrique Gonzalez Ruiz (Mexico), Juan Jose Landinez (Colombia). The seventh delegate, Haluk Gerger (Turkey), is not in this picture.

The International Emergency Committee to Defend the Life of Dr Abimael Guzman (Chairman Gonzalo of the Communist Party of Peru) sent its seventh delegation to Lima, Peru for a week in late March and early April 2001. The delegation faced new conditions and problems unlike those experienced by any of the previous delegations. This time, amidst the political turmoil that has been roiling Peru since the collapse of the Fujimori regime, the delegation was able to get much further than ever before in helping to create conditions in which the Peruvian government would be forced to allow the public presentation of Chairman Gonzalo – so that he can present his views freely – and permit contact with attorneys, family and friends, etc. The seven delegation members (four lawyers and three other activists) were able to robustly raise the issue through: a press conference, a string of successful media appearances, private conversations with high government officials and others, and some contact with the masses on the street and elsewhere.

For a few days this delegation was led to believe that it was on the verge of actually being able to visit Chairman Gonzalo, but these hopes were

cruelly disappointed. They met several times with representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the general in charge of the Supreme Council of Military Justice, which still has jurisdiction over the case despite the recent change in government, and the Ombudsman's office. In all of these meetings – which in and of themselves represent a breakthrough in contrast to the stonewalling previous delegations received – these officials had to acknowledge that there are no legal grounds to deny Chairman Gonzalo access to his lawyers (one of the delegates is one of Chairman Gonzalo's international lawyers of record). Yet while this delegation was received cordially, and not simply arrested and expelled (as happened once under the Fujimori regime), and while the interim government took pains to try and present itself as fundamentally different from the dictatorial Fujimori regime, it still did not comply with the legal standards it paid lip service to.

The seven delegates fought on both the legal front and the front of public opinion. They issued a "Message to the Peruvian People" at a press conference held on 29 March 2001 in Lima, attended by broadcast crews from nine television channels and ra-

dio stations widely listened to in remote areas of the countryside, and a horde of reporters from the national and international press. Their release stated, in part, "...we have gone to the civilian and military authorities demanding to meet with Dr Abimael Guzman and verify his state of health and well-being, and we have hopes of being able to achieve this.

"The concerns about Dr Guzman's health, which come from all corners of the world, are so much more important because the Fujimori-Montesinos dictatorship used his isolation to claim to speak in his name. It is unacceptable to attribute declarations to Dr Guzman as long as he does not make them in a direct form before the mass media and without any kind of pressure. No government has the authority to speak on behalf of its political prisoners. And, of course, the only way to verify the changes that the government has indicated regarding his treatment is that Dr Guzman be able to express himself in person."

Chairman Gonzalo was last seen in public on 24 September 1992, in a government-organised "photo opportunity" before a howling pack of jackals from the police and reactionary press, when he stunned the regime, and de-

lighted the world, with a call for the People's War to continue. Following a swift, secret military trial before masked judges, Chairman Gonzalo was placed in a specially-constructed underground hole, where, it was announced, he would remain in total isolation until he died, and his lawyer was later sentenced to life imprisonment. The Fujimori government had declared that Chairman Gonzalo, above all, and everyone suspected of supporting or even sympathising with the People's War under his leadership, are "terrorists" with no rights whatsoever and thus subject to the most inhuman, barbaric and arbitrary treatment. The very presence of such an unprecedentedly broadly representative group from five countries, including, for the first time, a delegate from Nepal (the first prospective South Asian delegate to successfully oblige the Peruvian government to grant a visa), dealt a blow to the interim government's attempts to essentially continue this policy with only minor changes.

All seven delegates spoke to the press and answered questions from the reporters who crowded around them. Haluk Gerger, a journalist from Turkey and supporter of the struggle being waged there by revolutionary political prisoners against the F-type isolation cells, was able to take a hostile question, about where he had received the money to travel to Peru, and turn it around to bring out strong support in Turkey and elsewhere for the delegation's mission. Padma Ratna Tuladhar, a former Nepalese Minister of Health and Labour, took a clear stand, "Well, I am from Nepal, a country far from Peru. Our country is the country of the Himalayas as we have the tallest mountains. In our part of the world, that is, South Asia, and especially India and Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, Comrade Guzman is highly respected as one of the great revolutionary leaders of the world. So when he was arrested, and the people knew that he was ill-treated in prison, especially that he was imprisoned in a cage-like prison, the people worried about his life."

Peter Erlinder, one of two lawyers that represented Chairman Gonzalo before the International Human Rights Court in San José, Costa Rica, also responded directly to press attempts to discount his client as a "terrorist": "your definition or mine about who is

a terrorist, or who isn't a terrorist, is not recognised as relevant with respect to international law and the treatment of individuals accused of a crime, and any attempt to characterise a prisoner with a political label is completely contrary to international law." Heriberto Ocasio, medical doctor and activist with the US Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru, also spoke to this: "With respect to the things that you say about the war that has been led by Dr Guzman, on this we should say that while we (the delegation) have different points of view, different political views, ideologies and methods of struggle, on one thing we are in agreement, and it is that the way the government of Fujimori and Montesinos, and also the United States, through the CIA and their other agencies, try to label movements, to call them terrorist and this type of thing, is something we don't accept, because it is something used to deny the people their fundamental rights." The following day, the lawyer Enrique Gonzalez, the International Emergency Committee (IEC) delegate from Mexico, debated on television with a former top general in DINCOTE, Peru's notorious "anti-terrorist" police.

When the delegation had a chance to walk through the streets of central Lima after the press conference, anonymous people and others expressed strong support, as did messages sent to their hotel rooms. Many of the delegates had already participated in one or more delegations, and this time they found a highly charged, volatile political climate. Crowds engaged in informal debate and even openly (though cautiously) voiced support for the Peo-

ple's War in a main city centre plaza. This contrasted sharply with the far more repressed atmosphere and heavy-handed police measures delegates had encountered on previous trips. But this was only one aspect of the situation, and the delegates themselves noted that they had to fight a tendency to let themselves be lulled by the government's misleading change in tone.

With Fujimori driven from office and his right-hand man, Montesinos, brought back to spill yet more dirt in public as part of the infighting amongst Peru's ruling classes, there are new possibilities for developing the people's struggle in different forms. Yet both the interim government, which dealt with the delegation, and the newly-elected Alejandro Toledo government, set to take office on 28 July, are just as backed by, and beholden to, US imperialism as the Fujimori regime – that is, 100 per cent, with no reservations.

After high-ranking authorities at three major offices, especially the Ministry of Justice, had given the impression for several days that a visit with Comrade Gonzalo was not only a legal right but an immediate possibility, on 2 April the delegation was informed by that Ministry that it would not happen after all. The delegates replied through a press release pointing out the contradiction between the acknowledgement given by the Ombudsman, the Supreme Council of Military Justice and the Ministry of Justice that the isolation of Chairman Gonzalo was illegal, and their attempt to distance themselves from the blatant brutality and open terrorism of





IEC delegate Dr. Enrique Gonzales Ruiz faces off with General Juan Gonzales Sandoval, a former head of the notorious DINCOTE police agency. Photos taken from a video.

Below: IEC delegate Professor Halu. Berger addressing this year's May Day rally in Berlin.



convicted by one of Fujimori's faceless military courts of collaborating in a planned action by the MRTA group (an action that never took place, and to which she was never directly linked). That trial was widely criticised and ridiculed internationally as a travesty of justice. Finally, Fujimori himself

the Fujimori regime on the one hand, and their failure to act accordingly on the other.

At the press conference, Dr. Juan José Landínez, one of the delegates from Colombia, pointed out emphatically that the delegation was being forced to repeat the very same request that had been made to Fujimori by previous delegations years previously, and that the refusal of the new government to end the isolation of Dr Guzman was "a clear violation of Peruvian and international standards [of human rights]".

The case of Lori Berenson speaks volumes about the superficial differences and basic similarity between the old and new regimes. Berenson, an American, has been held in harsh conditions for five years, since she was

was forced to allow his minions to grant her a new trial. But her retrial before a civilian court turned out to be pretty much like the first, and on 20 June, once again, she was sentenced to 20 years in prison for "terrorism". The interim government's Minister of Justice, Diego Garcia Sayan, a man known as an ex-1970s "radical" whom some people would like to put their faith in as the best hope for justice under the Toledo government, was quoted in the press as expressing satisfaction with that outcome.

In this political context, it would be madness to expect the wheels of imperialist justice to stop trying to grind up the masses and especially their revolutionary leaders. As Mao said, sometimes the enemy shoots with real bullets, and sometimes they

try to combine this with shooting sugar-coated bullets, which in this particular case includes promises and vague assurances and changes in style, but not substance. Both the interim government and its successor clearly represent the Peruvian ruling classes as a whole (perhaps even more so than Fujimori did), and are second to none in their determination (as already shown in their military actions, the hunting of suspected PCP leaders, arrests, etc.) to use both kinds of bullets to crush the People's War – the Peruvian people's only hope. By relentlessly exposing the government's hypocrisy, the delegation and the IEC, and the international campaign they are part of, are exposing the government's own lies and contradictions, so as to help force it to meet the central demand: the public presentation of Chairman Gonzalo. This also gives concrete aid and support to the people's struggles there in all its forms.

There have been unconfirmed reports about several short-term hunger strikes by Chairman Gonzalo to protest his conditions of confinement. Such unverified reports from the Peruvian government and reactionary press cannot be accepted at face value, but this further increases concern for Chairman Gonzalo's life and well-being.

Further, Peru's prisons are still teeming with thousands of other political prisoners and prisoners of war subjected to atrocious conditions on a daily basis and even murder. The most outstanding of them is Comrade Feliciano – Oscar Ramirez Durand – who assumed leadership responsibilities after Chairman Gonzalo's arrest until he himself was finally captured and brought to the same underground prison complex. He, too, must be defended and his isolation broken. ■

For more information, to contribute or to support the campaign, please write to:

BCM IEC  
London  
WC1N 3XX  
UK

# The Emerging New



*“We believe that the international situation is generally favourable for the advance of the revolutionary struggle. While we are not yet experiencing the same kind of high tide of revolutionary struggle on a world scale that we have witnessed in the past and will surely see again, we can speak with confidence of an emerging new wave of the world proletarian revolution.”*

- RIM Committee, 2000

# Wave of Revolution

## Condemn the Israeli Occupiers and Support the Just Struggle of the Palestinian People!

By the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

16 October 2000

Since 28 September, the Israeli hoodlums have been firing rubber bullets, lead bullets, armour-piercing rounds and helicopter gunship missiles at Palestinian youth and children. More than a hundred were killed within a few weeks and thousands more wounded. Israeli troops have been shooting at Red Crescent ambulance drivers to make sure that the injured die. And yet the American godfathers of this settler state are condemning the Palestinians and holding them responsible for this cold-blooded bestiality. With the backing of his US masters, Israeli Prime Minister barking Barak arrogantly threatens to bring down a million times more firepower on the youth of Palestine.

Already, hundreds of thousands of the masses in Arab countries and the Middle East have gone into the streets in support of the just struggle of the Palestinian people. We join with them and call upon the proletariat and masses of the world to resolutely condemn and oppose the aggression of Israel's criminal army and secret police against the Palestinians. Let us once again be clear that it is the US that arms and finances the Zionist state of Israel, whose very existence is based on the illegitimate occupation of Palestine. Israel is a dog on an American leash. Its job is to lash out violently against the masses of Palestine as well as the neighbouring countries and the whole region in order to protect US imperialist interests.

As much as the Israeli show of force against rock-throwing youth is ugly, the fearless struggle of the Palestinian people is inspiring. It powerfully demonstrates the great truth that Mao Tsetung always emphasised, that wher-

ever there is oppression there is resistance. Just as these events reveal that the US-sponsored talks and promises about the "peace process" and "a lasting solution" are nothing but lies meant to gain stability for its Middle Eastern gendarme, the struggle of the Palestinian masses proves once again that they will not allow their homeland to be taken away from them by such cynical deal-making.

In the US imperialists' dreams of a "new world order", the Palestinian people were supposed to meekly submit and accept Israel's oppressive existence and its role in the region. And Arafat, in his dreams, was expecting the US to help him get a Palestinian mini-state. Arafat argued that the state of Israel had to be accepted. He declared that his capitulation to the imperialist "peace process" was the only "realistic" solution for the Palestinians. He argued that it would be impossible to fight to overthrow the state of Israel through a revolutionary war of the masses and replace it with a secular (non-religious) democratic state for all the people of Palestine regardless of their religious beliefs. But life itself has made it clear just how unrealistic this so-called realism really is. This road has led only to more and more betrayal. The reality is that the Palestinian national question cannot be solved by the imperialists. The reality is that for more than 50 years the existence of the state of Israel in occupied Palestine has been the lynchpin of the imperialist order in the Middle East - this is why the US subsidises Israel to the tune of billions of dollars a year. The Palestinian national question cannot be solved by recognising the legitimacy of the

occupiers. And since this is exactly the centrepiece of what Arafat proposes to do by embracing the "peace process", this plan offers no solution at all. The occupation is unjust and the Palestinians are absolutely right to fight it. The people of the whole world must support their just struggle. To succeed, the Palestinian people need to understand the comprador-feudal and pro-imperialist nature of Arafat and the Fatah leadership, which can only lead to repeated betrayal.

The Islamic group Hamas offers no more of a solution than Arafat. Hamas was founded and boosted by the reactionary powers during the 1970s and 1980s, when the US imperialists were building up Islamic forces in opposition to the national liberation movements and as a wall against Soviet influence. Hamas criticises the most obvious features of Arafat's capitulationist programme in order to win the support of the masses and move up the ladder of power itself, yet at the same time, spewing Islamic obscurantist demagoguery, it says that the liberation of Palestine must await some future holy "resurrection". In short, Hamas is willing to live with the Israeli occupation if this group is given the status and privileges it seeks. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which backs Hamas and other Islamic forces, is itself a reactionary, oppressive state. During its 20 years of rule it has never hesitated to gun down protesting workers, students, Kurds and others. Moreover, it is notorious for working with the Israeli army in arms deals and in other ways. The Hamas goal of a theocratic state is a reactionary programme. An Islamic theocratic state is

as reactionary as a Jewish theocratic state. The minimum programme for revolutionary change in Palestine can only be the formation of a secular, democratic state for all the people of Palestine regardless of religious belief. We Maoists (revolutionary communists) call for the establishment of such a state throughout the territory of Palestine. That is the only possible realistic solution and it is still the goal. All other programmes are fakes. To make revolution in Palestine and the other Arab and non-Arab countries of the Middle East will in fact be a protracted and difficult task. But the programmes offered by Arafat and Hamas can only lead to betraying and dashing the hopes of the masses and wasting their heroic sacrifices. It is time to end the bitter cycle of rising up and being betrayed by misleaders and reactionary and capitulationist programmes.

Often we revolutionary communists are told that our ideas may be correct "in theory" but that "in practice" there is no choice but to bend these truths to the expediency of the moment. This is a wrong view of this ugly and oppressive world and what has to be done to change it. In fact, this is the outlook behind bargaining away the just struggle of the Palestinian masses to the imperialist "new world order". In every way and every day the enemy demonstrates that "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun". Without a people's war, it is impossible to liberate the masses of Palestine and the neighbouring countries from the clutches of Israel and the reactionary Arab states propped up by US imperialism. People's war is the only possible path to victory and only a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party can lead the masses on this road. Now more than ever the people need their own revolutionary force in the field. The first and immediate step is to lay the foundations of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist organisation in Palestine and the neighbouring countries that can work to defend the independent interests of the proletariat and the oppressed and start the process of building genuine vanguard parties that can lead the people in making revolution. We urge all those who want to play a role in *this* process to get in touch with RIM, the embryonic centre of the world's Maoists, and join your experience and struggle with that of proletarian fighters all over the world.

The formation of such a party and its intervention in the Palestinian struggle will mark a watershed in the advance of genuine revolution in the whole region, just as the advance of the proletarian revolution throughout the region is inextricably linked to the new-democratic revolution in Palestine. With the leadership of such a party, the masses can come out of every round of battles – despite an unfavourable balance of forces and even temporary setbacks – with a sharper focus on how to battle the enemy, discovering the enemy's strength and weaknesses and developing a strategy that can win. The formation of such a party in Palestine would greatly influence the revolutionaries in the neighbouring Arab countries and other countries in the Middle East. The in-

ternationalist unity of the revolutionaries and masses of all these countries would add enormous strength to their struggles and help create a situation in which Israel would be encircled and opposed from all sides, including within.

People all over the world are filled with rage at Israel's crimes – and equally filled with admiration and hope by the Palestinian youth. The Palestinian cause was supposed to be as dead as a cold fire. The imperialists had already celebrated and the Zionist regime thought it could just throw on a few last shovels of dirt. Once again the Palestinian masses have proven that the fires of liberation and revolution can smoulder deep underground but, sooner or later, no matter what, the flames will shoot into the air. ■

## On the Palestinians' Struggle

Since the statement above by the RIM Committee in October 2000, Ariel Sharon has replaced Barak as head of the Israeli government. Sharon is infamous globally as the "butcher of Beirut". As Israeli Minister of Defence in 1982, during Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon, Sharon was in charge of Israeli forces who allowed extreme-right wing Christian Phalangists into the Sabra and Chatila Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. The Phalangists slaughtered hundreds of unarmed Palestinian refugees in cold blood, including large numbers of women and children. The Israeli goal was then – as it is now – to terrorise the Palestinian people into submission.

Putting the reins of power into the blood-soaked hands of Sharon thus delivered an unmistakable message to the Palestinian people that the US-backed regime would be resorting to the cruelest methods. The Israeli stormtroopers are now carrying out a campaign of selective assassination and terror, wreaking high-tech murder and mayhem from the safety of the

skies, with Phantom jets and Apache helicopters targeting "smart" missiles at Palestinian cars, homes and offices. They try to portray this as "surgical strikes against terrorism". The Israelis are hitting some of the same forces with whom they have negotiated and collaborated for years in an effort to compel greater capitulation and to sow widespread terror. The Israelis have proven themselves able junior partners of their imperialist masters in the US, whose own cowardly war tactics more and more emphasise the use of electronic instrument panels located at a safe distance from their targets.

Their problem is, however, that an oppressed people can never be beaten entirely into submission. Not only has their high-tech intimidation failed to cow this new cycle of rebellion, but the Israelis are also encountering increasing opposition and denunciation abroad. The phoenix of the Palestinian resistance has risen from the ashes yet again, and will one day surely stretch its wings over a liberated Palestine.

-AWTW

The advances of the world's Maoist forces, together with the continuing righteous struggle of the Palestinian people, is creating new opportunities to bring Maoism to this crucial battlefield. One key way this can be accomplished is by translating Maoist literature into Arabic and distributing it, including *A World To Win* articles and key documents of RIM like *Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!* To help in this effort generally or with the vital task of translating and getting revolutionary literature into the hands of the Palestinian masses in particular, please contact local RIM forces or write to: BCM AWTW / London WC1N 3XX / UK.

*Emerging New Wave of Revolution*

# Kabylia Uprising - A Ray of Light in Algeria

The upsurge of protest and street battles against the government that broke out in the Kabylia region to the east of Algiers in April is violently shaking the political landscape in Algeria. For the first time in 13 years, and to a degree unprecedented in recent decades, the masses of people and especially the poor youth have stormed onto a political stage from which they have been excluded through a long dark night of murder, torture and enforced hopelessness. Many Algerians are calling this the "Kabylia May 1968", in reference to the events in Paris that shook the French government to its foundations.

The current spiral of upheaval began on 18 April, after Algerian gendarmes (national paramilitary police) machine-gunned an 18-year-old student who had been taken into custody in a town near the regional capital, Tizi Ouzou. When the police then attacked youth protesting this crime, fighting spread to the cities and throughout the towns and villages of Kabylia. For ten days, youth attacked buildings belonging to the government and especially police stations with rocks, Molotov cocktails and iron bars, demanding both the withdrawal of gendarmes from the region and rights for the Amazigh (Berber) people, to whom most of them belong.

The Amazigh are descendents of the occupants of North Africa before the Arab/Islamic invasion. The populations of Tunisia, Libya and Morocco as well as Algeria are heavily marked by their non-Arab roots. Although a thousand-year forced Arabisation and Islamisation has had a big impact, even today 25 per cent of Algeria are Tamazight speaking. In Morocco, the percentage is even higher, perhaps half the population. Although Berber is their more common name, it



Demonstration of 10,000 women. 24 May 2001 in Tizi Ouzou

comes from the Latin word for barbarian and is considered an insult. All these governments deny them the right to use their language (Tamazight) in public life, and their culture is suppressed. They are subject to contempt and discrimination. The gendarmes in Kabylia ride roughshod over the people, taking what they want from small shops, extorting businessmen and especially harassing, beating and sometimes murdering the youth.

Starting in April and during the months since, these youth have turned the tables on the tormentors of the Amazigh people, chanting "ulach smah" (no forgiveness) as they fight back ferociously. On 21 May, more than half a million people took part in an illegal demonstration in Tizi Ouzou,

involving urban dwellers and people who came down from the villages in the densely populated mountains. Then on 14 June, demonstrations in Algiers brought nearly a million people into the streets. Although many Amazigh people live in the country's capital and huge numbers poured in from Kabylia itself, this protest denounced the Algerian government in the name of all of the country's peoples and included a great many non-Amazigh Arabic-speaking youth from the city's slums and shanty towns. Rage and revolutionary violence overflowed as they burned down government installations and attacked the police without mercy.

The masses of people have faced a difficult political situation for years. In



Amazigh youth  
clashing with  
authorities on  
20 June 2001.

1992, at the behest of France, to which the Algerian government is beholden, the ruling generals took power openly to prevent the election of an Islamic regime. Since then, more than 100,000 people have been killed in the context of conflict between the army and Islamic armed groups. These Islamic forces are reactionaries seeking to install a regime like that in Iran. Like their Iranian brethren, they have no use for the masses and great willingness to cut a deal with imperialism, including the US, which has maintained contacts with them. Both sides have carried out massacres in the villages and murderous attacks on sectors of the urban secular middle classes and intellectuals. It is often nearly impossible to tell whether it is the bureaucrat capitalist regime or its equally anti-people Islamic rivals who have committed the countless mass murders and assassinations that have ceaselessly afflicted the people.

It is into this gloomy situation that the people of Kabylia and the youth in general have burst like avenging rays of sunlight.

In order to divide the people, the regime slanders the Amazigh people as being "soft" on French imperialism. It is true that many Amazigh intellectuals and others have preferred to speak French as their second language, rather than the Arabic that is forced on them, and that reformist po-

litical groups in Kabylia have tried to curry French favour. It is also true that the US is circling this situation like a vulture, trying to edge out France and snatch Algeria for its own oil companies and strategic interests. A 1998 US Department of Defence report calls for the US to "welcome the expansion of consciousness by the Amazigh people". But George Bush hosted Algerian President Bouteflika in Washington on 5 July, at the height of the Algerian government's efforts to impose a clampdown, which of course is anything but a coincidence.

The fate of the Amazigh people has long been tied up with imperialism and the struggle against it. In 1871, French generals fresh from drowning in blood the revolutionary Paris Commune carried out the same kind of operation against the Great Kabylia Uprising against French colonialism. During the war for independence against France (1954-1962), Kabylia was a major bastion of the struggle, and the Amazigh peasants bore the brunt of the fighting that eventually broke France's colonial hold. Yet Algeria was not transformed by a new-democratic revolution that could smash bureaucrat capitalism (Algerian capitalists in and out of the government dependent on imperialism) and semi-feudalism. The millennium-old forced "Arabisation" and "Islamisation" of the Amazigh people was continued by the new post-inde-

pendence government as part of the overall continuation of the old social and economic relationships, which mere political independence could not end.

As long as Algeria is dependent on selling oil and gas to the imperialists, it can never be really sovereign or meet the needs of the people. During the last two years, the country's oil and gas income has doubled, whilst unemployment and poverty have skyrocketed. The last decade, during which the International Monetary Fund determined the Algerian government's policies, has been among the worst the people have ever suffered. The Amazigh upsurge has developed within that context and in turn its great promise lies in its ability to spark even greater explosions.

In this light, it is extremely important that the youth and others in the streets have, at least for the moment, slipped out of the grasp of the traditional reformist nationalist forces whose interests are jeopardised by the level of violence on the part of the people. Along with attacking gendarmerie barracks, youth ransacked and burnt the offices of the two main legal "opposition" parties in Tizi Ouzou. To a degree, and for a time, they have glimpsed the fact that only a thoroughgoing revolution can offer them a way out. ■

*Emerging New Wave of Revolution*

Genoa

# Throw Oil on the Fire!

By the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

23 July 2001



Above and below, Genoa.



Seattle, Prague, Nice, Washington, Cancun, Quebec, Gothenburg, now Genoa.... Wherever and whenever the leaders of the major imperialist powers gather, they are confronted by increasingly organised and powerful opposition to their crimes. Whereas previously they had been accustomed to organising their "new world order" in luxurious obscurity, now their every move is hounded.

Each new encounter has been marked by increasingly fierce confrontation pitting the defenders of the existing order of inequality, mass poverty and oppression against youth determined to fight for a more just world. Increasingly, too, the imperialists have shown that their rule of exploitation and plunder ultimately relies



Above and below, Gothenburg.



on naked, brutal and deadly force. On 20 July in Genoa, the Italian police killed Carlo Giuliani with two bullets to the head, making him the first martyr of this movement in the West.

The outrageous inequities of the imperialist system, the shocking reality of a world more and more polarised between a small but extremely wealthy and powerful gang of international marauders on the one hand and the many hundreds of millions who live in conditions of extreme poverty, widespread disease and national subjugation on the other, is leading to an emerging new wave of revolutionary struggle. This is true not only in the

oppressed countries, which are bearing the biggest burden of imperialist globalisation, but even in the capitalist heartlands themselves, such as Europe and the US. New armies of youth are arising there who hate what their ruling classes do throughout the world and are making common cause with the downtrodden of every country. International solidarity has been a hallmark of this movement from the beginning.

This new wave of struggle in the imperialists' own citadels is seriously frightening the enemy. The heads of the most powerful states on earth have decided that in future they can only meet in deserted, remote locations, as far as possible from the masses they claim to represent. In an effort to defeat or derail the movement, the ruling class and their faithful followers are using their whole range of tactics, from outright murder to attempts to divide the movement between so-called "moderates" and "extremists". In Genoa this tactic failed when two hundred thousand came out onto the streets to continue the struggle and upheld the memory of Carlo Giuliani who had courageously battled the police the day before.

For thousands, this movement is their first test under fire. Debates rage over how to advance through every twist and turn of the movement, how to respond to both the bullets and the bullshit of the ruling class, how to unite the people while taking the struggle to a higher level. Vigorous discussion is going on over what kind of

world political and economic system is possible without exploitation. All of this is the true university of struggle.

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), the embryonic centre of the world's Maoist forces, hails the emergence and intensification of the movement against globalisation and salutes the internationalism that has marked these battles. The upsurge of youth in the West is a direct product of the workings of world capitalism and the hypocrisy of its main political representatives. As such, this movement can and must become part of the only force that can ultimately destroy the beast itself: the world proletarian revolution. RIM exists in many countries all over the world, including in Peru and Nepal where our participants, the Communist Party of Peru and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), are waging people's war; in Italy and the United States, where the Communist Party (Maoist) and the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA are working for revolution in these imperialist countries; and in Turkey, Iran, Bangladesh, India, Colombia and other countries where parties of our Movement are also working to turn the victims of "globalisation" into the grave-diggers of imperialism. From Seattle to Genoa, RIM has been present in the "anti-globalisation" fight through its participating parties and organisations. We can and must do more to contribute to the development of these storms in the West as part of the global hurricane that is brewing. ■

Berlin, Germany - May First, 2001. Despite a massive police mobilisation, over 3,000 youth of different nationalities marched through the Kreuzberg district in the revolutionary May 1 demonstration, in which the Revolutionary Communists (FRG) and other forces associated with RIM played a leading role.



# Dare to Take Our Destiny into Our Own Hands!

1 May 2001

By the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

May First is the day when the class-conscious workers of all countries manifest their proletarian internationalism and reaffirm their common goal of achieving communism throughout the world. The division of the world between imperialist countries and those countries oppressed by imperialism, and arising from this the great unevenness between nations and peoples, is one of the main characteristics of the world imperialist system. In each country the proletariat faces distinct tasks stemming from the differing social conditions, but all these struggles flow together to constitute the world proletarian revolution. May First is a magnificent day in which the courage to change the world is tested and tempered.

Today more than ever capitalism is a world-wide system. Capitalism's inner drive to continually expand long ago transformed it into its highest stage, imperialism. These same tendencies now appear as "globalisation" – more of this same imperialism.

However much the reactionaries try to hide it, the collapse of the former Soviet Union and its bloc was not a result of a so-called "crisis of communism" but rather the result of the workings and crisis of the capitalist and imperialist system itself, of which those countries had long been a part. In the ten years since then the US imperialists have had a relatively free hand to impose what they called a "New World Order" or an "age of peace and democracy". But the Gulf War and the fighting in the Caucasus, Rwanda and ex-Yugoslavia show the true nature of this order. Millions are forced to

massacre each other, yet the imperialists call this "peace". The songs of praise to the "free market", which supposedly will benefit people all over the world, cannot hide the reality in which hundreds of millions are driven below subsistence levels. The imperialist institutions charged with overseeing this criminal state of affairs, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation, have justly become targets of the people's wrath, and the gatherings of these blood-soaked exploiters in Seattle, Davos, Nice and Prague have been sites of fierce struggle by progressive youth and others within the imperialist countries themselves.

However much the imperialists tout the permanence and stability of their system, in reality it rests on intense and sharpening contradictions. The emerging revolutionary wave in the storm centres of Asia, Africa and Latin America is testimony to the intensity of the principal contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations. The contradictions between the different imperialist powers themselves are again heightening. And within the capitalist and imperialist countries the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is also sharpening. All this means that there are tremendous opportunities for advancing revolution.

In the world today what stands out starkly is the need for Marxist-Leninist-Maoist leadership of the people's struggles. This is the case in the West, where the exciting emergence of a new revolutionary generation is fertile ground for the development of new communist fighters and leaders. In most of the oppressed nations this is also the case.

The Palestinian people continue their heroic Intifada in the face of unequal odds, not shrinking from any sacrifice. Neither the betrayal of Arafat nor the smoke and mirrors of the Islamic fundamentalists can smother their struggle. But again we see that without Maoist leadership, it is impossible for this struggle to succeed.

Marxist-Leninist-Maoist leadership is essential for defeating the imperialist-sponsored "political solutions" of the reactionaries. The opportunists and reactionaries preach that there is no alternative to seeking some kind of accommodation with the current unjust imperialist order that they consider to be the stage on which the people must act. The only true political solution to reactionary society is the political power that comes out of the barrels of the guns of the proletariat and the people. Our solution is people's war. The rule of the imperialists of today is no more eternal than the slave empire of Ancient Rome or Hitler's Third Reich. And in the future, humanity will look back at the rulers of today with just as much contempt.

Only genuine Marxist-Leninist-Maoist forces, armed with an ideology and programme that represents a real break with all kinds of class exploitation, can lead a thoroughgoing challenge to the current world order. The masses need Maoist leadership because without it they will not be able to take their destiny into their own hands and transform the world.

In Peru, the Communist Party of Peru has fought heroically to overcome the "bend in the road" encountered with the capture of Chairman Gonzalo and to defeat the Right Opportunist Line that emerged in the Party calling for peace accords. The disarray of the Peruvian enemy can be seen in the fleeing of Fujimori and his gang. In these circumstances, it is all the more important to seize the occasion to definitively break the vicious isolation in

Protesters at May Day in London hide their faces from closed-circuit television, the "Big Brother" surveillance cameras that British police have put on most street corners in the central city.





May Day in  
Izmir, Turkey

Prachanda, new political power is being forged in vast areas of western Nepal where several million people reside. The People's War is expanding and deepening simultaneously.

In Turkey, the recent hunger strike by imprisoned fighters of the Communist Party of Turkey (Marxist-Leninist), a participant of Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, and other revolutionary prisoners has turned the enemy's dungeons into a shining combat trench of revolution. This will no doubt further promote the ongoing armed struggle waged by guerrillas of the TKP(ML), with the perspective of establishing red base areas.

Revolutionary armed struggles in India, Bangladesh and the Philippines waged by Maoist forces are also challenging the reactionary order. The clear truth affirmed by the overall world situation is that a new wave of world proletarian revolution is in the making. In other countries, such as Iran, Afghanistan, Colombia, Sri Lanka and the US, parties and organisations participating in RIM and struggling from the perspective of people's war are striving to put Marxism-Leninism-Maoism at the head of this new wave. All of this enables us to reaffirm that this will be a century of people's war, propelling us further toward socialism and our final communist goal.

The RIM is today the embryonic centre of the world's Maoist forces and fights for the creation of a new communist international based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the universal and common ideology of the proletariat all over the globe. The oppressed masses need this ideology and they need communist organisation based upon it. To serve the people, be it in Palestine or Indonesia, Brazil or South Korea, or anywhere else in the world where the masses are struggling without a communist vanguard, means bringing the light of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism into these struggles. It means that the masses will no longer just yearn for revolution but be able to transform their hatred for oppression and their hopes for a different kind of society into an organised revolutionary onslaught, a people's war that can finally turn their dreams into reality.

On the seventeenth anniversary of its formation, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement salutes 1 May 2001 with our communist enthusiasm and our pledge to do everything in our power to accelerate the pace of the world revolution. Together with the masses the world over we reaffirm that: "We only want the earth!"

**Long Live Red May First!**

**Build and Strengthen Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties United in RIM!**

**Forward towards a New Communist International!**

**Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!**

which Chairman Gonzalo has been held for eight years and demand his live presentation to the public. Further, we demand an end to the isolation of Comrade Feliciano and the inhuman conditions of other political prisoners and prisoners of war.

In Nepal, the People's War is surging forward and demonstrating the bright future for the world to see. Under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and its leader, Comrade

# Interview with Comrade Prachanda



Nepalese People's War during the short period of five years. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and objective reality have taught us that in the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, there exists a universal objective basis, in general, for the initiation, defence and development of people's war in the oppressed and underdeveloped countries of the Third World. The main problem in implementing the strategy of protracted people's war in such countries is, in our opinion, the problem of subjective preparations. The principal aspect of subjective preparation is the question of the development of a militant communist party of a new type based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. The rapid development of people's war is inevitable today after this leadership problem is solved through intense struggle

against alien tendencies in the proletarian movement, mainly right revisionism. For the masses there is no alternative to rebellion and revolution, given the objective background of exploitation, repression and poverty prevalent in the semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries of the Third World.

In Nepal, our first effort was to correctly grasp the science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. For this, we strove to link ourselves with the arduous and challenging ideological struggle waged by the genuine communist revolutionaries of the world against the Chinese counter-revolution after the death of Comrade Mao Tsetung. Taking the synthesis of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the highest expression of conscious class struggle, as our starting point, we delved into serious study. We made a particu-

Revolutionary guerrillas guarding red people's power on the "roof of the world" - Rolpa District, western Nepal. Photo courtesy of Li Onesto/RW.

We are pleased to present here an interview with Chairman Prachanda, leader of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the People's War in Nepal. The interview took place on 28 May 2001.

**Chairman Prachanda, we would like to thank you for according an interview to our journal. Our readership has been following the advances in the People's War since the beginning with the greatest interest and enthusiasm. How do you explain the spectacular success in advancing the People's War and arousing the masses, in only five years?**

First of all, I feel honoured and ex-

press my heart-felt gratitude towards *A World to Win* (AWTW), which is well established as an important and leading ideological weapon of the international proletariat, for providing me with this opportunity for an interview. With deep appreciation of the genuinely internationalist support of AWTW, the Committee of RIM and the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, of which our Party itself is a participant, for the initiation, defence and development of the Nepalese People's War, a contingent of the international proletarian army, I wish you continuous progress in your endeavour.

There are definite subjective and objective factors behind the current height of success attained by the

larly fervent study of the ideological struggle that erupted in the process of the development of the Communist Party of Peru, the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA and in other countries. Through continuous ideological interaction with the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement we tried to acquaint ourselves with the principal tendencies in the world today and to attain the highest collective understanding of the international proletariat. Also, we made an attempt to draw lessons from the positive and negative aspects of the revolutionary and national movements of different countries, including India, the Philippines, Turkey, Iran, Sri Lanka and others. In short, driven by a hunger for knowledge, we took pains to arm the Party ideologically, to whatever extent possible, with the advanced consciousness of the proletariat.

This process for ideological clarity was invariably linked with the class struggle of the Nepalese masses and the struggle against different types of right opportunism. From the starting point of the advanced consciousness of the international proletariat, we applied various forms of mass line to develop the understanding and desire of the Nepalese people for freedom. According to the principle of uniting with the masses under all circumstances, the Party applied different tactics, open and clandestine, legal and illegal, advancing and retreating, etc. We summed up the experiences of splitting and uniting in the communist movement. To expand our ties to the masses we laid emphasis on developing different mass organisations, forums and so forth. Throughout all this process, the Party has been following the policy of strategic firmness and tactical flexibility with particular seriousness.

In the end, after a serious investigation of the lessons of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and the international and national particularities of the day, the Party concretised its theoretical commitment to the great march towards communism and proclaimed the People's War on 13 February 1996 through a country-wide shock of rebellion. The People's War has attained the current height after completing six strategic plans with such basic policies as: decentralised actions within a centralised plan and command; balance between political and military offensives against

the enemy; political justification of military action and military justification of political action; utilisation of the contradictions amongst the enemies to isolate the main enemy; organisation and mobilisation of the masses in the quickest and best possible way as exhorted by Comrade Mao; and so on. In our opinion, the real key to the fast development of the People's War is the fusion between the science of proletarian revolution and the needs and the fighting spirit of the Nepalese people. In other words, the principal and decisive factor of this development is the correct ideological and political line of the Party.

**In recent months we have read reports about military operations of the people's armed forces on a whole new scale... Where do things stand now in the process of building a people's army?**

The Party has been striving to develop the people's army according to the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism: "without a People's Army, the people have nothing", "political power grows out of the barrel of a gun", and "armed sea of masses", which are requirements for the revolution. The policy of the Party has been to develop base areas and guerrilla zones throughout the whole country and to build the total armed forces with a main force, secondary force and base [or local] force. In establishing our form of actions, the first, second, third and fourth priorities have been accorded to: ambush and mining, raid and commando attack, various types of sabotage, and selective annihilation, respectively.

To ensure direct participation of the masses in armed activities, the Party has been promoting armed mass actions, and armed propaganda too, as part of military campaigns. Such campaigns have played an important role in ensuring the participation of the masses in the People's War. Following the principle of "learning warfare through warfare", the people's army is now in a position to conduct successful actions at the level of temporary battalion [several hundred soldiers] in terms of military formation; permanent and temporary companies have been built up under different regional commands in the country; and dozens of regular platoons and hundreds of regu-

lar squads are in action. As base forces, general masses have enrolled in the people's militias in the thousands. This process of enrolment in different military formations is advancing at quite a fast pace. The Party has recently resolved to organise this large structure of the people's armed forces, which has been successful in capturing enemy district headquarters and many other barracks of the commando forces, under a more unified and centralised command. Accordingly, it has been resolved, in principle, to establish a central general headquarters and general staff, to name the three armed forces collectively as the People's Liberation Army and to make a public pronouncement of this, to stress the development of mobile warfare, to centralise, decentralise and transfer according to needs, etc., with the aim of converting every village into a trench against the enemy. Military activities have been shaking the country.

**Where do things stand in relation to building up new people's power? What kind of government exists in the base areas?**

Beginning just one year after the initiation of the People's War, the question of the organisation of local people's power has been on the Party's agenda. It is since then that the situation of a power vacuum has occurred in many rural areas of western Nepal. In such areas, embryos of new people's power have sprouted in the form of United People's Committees under the leadership of the Party. After the latest military victories of the people's army the enemy has been confined to the district headquarters in the western region, as well as other districts of the country. Thus, vast rural sections of the country have become a form of liberated area. Of course, they are not fully liberated, as the enemy's last and main military force is yet to be defeated. Nevertheless, in the various districts in the main base area of western Nepal, elections to the local and district level people's government have already been completed. Such local people's governments are in the form of a united democratic government of anti-feudal and anti-imperialist patriotic, democratic and left forces. Whereas the local government has been directly elected by the masses, the representatives of the local people's power have

elected the district people's governments. These governments, known as Local United People's Committees and District United People's Committees, exercise, in essence, both the functions of policy formulation and execution related to the legislative, executive and judicial organs.

To streamline the different functions under their jurisdiction, these people's governments, under the leadership of the Party, are composed of different departments, such as the Construction Department, Co-operative Department, Land Reform Department, Forest Conservation Department, Security Department, Education and Culture Department, Health Department, etc. The system of recall of elected representatives of the masses, if the need arises, has been implemented from the very beginning. At present, the Local United People's Committees have been growing not only in the main base area of western Nepal but also in the base areas under all the regional commands in the country.

As necessitated by the new developments, the Party has now resolved to constitute a united front organism that will play the role of a new-democratic government organising committee at the central level, for the defence, consolidation, expansion and co-ordination of the local people's government. The important point to be noted here is that the Party has been stressing the development of the united front, such as the united front of the peoples of different classes, castes, nationalities and regions oppressed by feudalism and imperialism, according to the specific conditions of Nepalese society. While upholding the rights of the oppressed nationalities to self-determination, the Party has put forward the programme of autonomy for the peoples of various oppressed nationalities and regions. This policy and programme reflects a revolutionary policy of "unite and struggle" on a democratic basis against the enemy's policy of "divide and rule".

It is our Party's firm conviction that the central people's government organising committee will not only co-ordinate the local people's government but also play an important role in the preparation of the future insurrection.

**At different times the Party has spoken of the possibility of negotiations**

**with the old state authorities. Could you please explain your thinking on this?**

I feel the question of negotiations with the old state power is a very sensitive question in the revolutionary movement. It is clear from the experience of revolution from past history to the present day that the reactionary ruling class has been utilising the question of negotiations as a weapon to hoodwink the masses, to engineer a split in the revolutionary movement and to prepare the ground for large-scale massacre. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has taught us that whether to negotiate or not to negotiate with the old state power depends on the concrete analysis of concrete conditions. The principal decisive factor in this is the defence of the basic interests of the people and the revolution. Our guiding principles on the question of negotiations are the experiences and summation of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty under Lenin's leadership and the Chunking negotiations under Mao's leadership.

We consider the question of negotiation as a battlefield that has to be faced by the revolutionary movement under certain concrete conditions. We have launched a serious debate and study on the question of negotiations in the light of the negative experiences of the past and present, including that of Peru. On this question we have struggled, on the one side against narrow dogmatism, and on the other, and principally, against rightist capitulationism and strived to develop a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist conception within the Party and among the general masses. The RIM Committee statement [see AWTW/21] and other material fighting the Right Opportunist Line in Peru have acted as important motivating factors in this process. We are most serious about the whole Party and the masses not having any illusion about negotiations even if the main leadership of the Party were to fall into enemy hands.

We feel that this question should be understood correctly in the context of the particular conditions of the current international balance of power between revolution and counter-revolution and, principally, in the context of the concrete political situation in Nepal. It is self-evident that subjectively the power of revolution is weaker

right now. To lead proletarian revolution to victory in a small and poor country like Nepal is definitely a challenging task. Making maximum use of the tactical flexibility of manoeuvring to the right and left and advance and retreat is the inevitable necessity of the circumstances. The Nepalese People's War has been advancing at a fast pace due to the proper balance between strategic firmness and tactical flexibility and between political offensive and military offensive.

Today, the reactionary state in Nepal is reaching the extremity of its political crisis. The People's War is now at the centre stage of national politics. Every parliamentary clique is going through an extreme crisis of its internal contradictions, and the number one agenda for everyone is the People's War. Due to their own crisis, the ruling classes have from the very beginning clamoured about being in favour of negotiations and conspired to attract the urban middle strata to their side. In this situation, with a view to isolate the main enemy and to educate the middle strata, we clarified that we were not against negotiation *per se* and were ready to fight at the negotiation table if definite conditions were fulfilled. This created another serious debate in national politics. Ultimately the conspiracy behind the negotiations hullabaloo was unmasked and a large section of the masses was won over to the side of the People's War. This we summed up as Mao's policy of "fighting tit for tat".

Now we are marching forward centering on the main slogan of consolidating and expanding the base areas and marching ahead in the direction of establishing the central people's government. The latest towering military actions are the result of the same slogan and plan. Along with this we have called for the dissolution of the parliamentary system and constitution and for convening an all-section conference and formation of an interim government, as immediate tactics. We have made it clear that if the old state is eager to negotiate on this political solution we are ready for it. In the present context of Nepalese politics, this slogan has played a significant role in isolating the hard-line faction of the ruling classes, educating the masses further against the parliamentary hypocrisy and raising the People's War to a new height of development. It is important to grasp that if the Party's

policies and programme for negotiations were to be realised, if the situation so demands, it would draw the victory of the People's War in Nepal closer.

Lastly, we want to assert that there is no reason to be under any illusion or to be apprehensive about the talk of negotiation aimed at advancing the People's War and revolution to victory. We are confident that we are making a creative application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism against right capitulationism and sectarian dogmatism, with the aim of defeating the enemy on the negotiations front also, whilst assuming full initiative in our own hands in a situation of continuous victory of the People's War.

**Some of our readers have asked what the difference is between your negotiation policy and that of the Right Opportunist Line in Peru.**

There can be no comparison whatsoever between our aforementioned conception of negotiation and the Right Opportunist Line (ROL) in Peru. It has slightly amazed us that some of our friends abroad have such big illusions and gaps of understanding about the real situation in Nepal and the Party's policy. In this context, we regret not having been able to elucidate the concrete political situation and the essence of the Party's policies earlier.

The ROL in Peru has talked about negotiations with a view to liquidate the People's War; whereas we have talked about fight on the negotiations front as well with the aim of advancing the People's War to victory. The ROL in Peru has appeared in the form of capitulationism from inside prison, with an admixture of the enemy's conspiracy, at a time of serious setback faced by the People's War after the capture of the main leadership by the enemy; whereas we are talking about negotiations with full initiative in our own hands with the aim of destroying the enemy, when the People's War is advancing on a fast and victorious march. Whereas the ROL in Peru has betrayed the revolutionary gains and revolutionary spirit of the masses, our talk of negotiation has been providing political training to the masses to participate more extensively in the revolution against the enemy. Whereas the ROL in Peru is the product of a defeated mentality, our talk of negotiation is a revolutionary tactic advanced

in a conscious and balanced manner after drawing lessons from the same negative experience in Peru. Hence, there is a difference of night and day between the two. I don't think I need to add anything more on this.

**How do you see the relationship between the new-democratic revolution in Nepal and the struggle going on in other countries?**

The new-democratic revolution in Nepal is an integral part of the world proletarian revolution. Hence it has a close and inseparable relation with national liberation, democratic and socialist movements in other countries. The basic characteristics of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the murderous colonisation process of plundering the world through finance capital under the pseudonym of globalisation and liberalisation by imperialism, and the massive impact of the qualitative change in information technology, especially electronic technology, define the specific relations among the revolutionary movements in different countries. This situation has further enhanced the practical importance of the great theory of proletarian internationalism. The present condition of instant world-wide impact of any positive or negative event in any corner of the earth has been preparing the material ground for world communism at an astonishingly fast pace. This situation has also qualitatively enhanced the process of revolution in a particular country exerting influence on the revolutionary movement in other countries. Hence it is necessary to make new advances in the conscious efforts of the proletarian revolutionaries to further world revolution on the basis of proletarian internationalism.

We have made a deep appreciation in the context of the People's War in Nepal that its development cannot be conceived if it is divorced from the experiences led by the PCP, RCP, USA, RIM and revolutionaries in India, Turkey, Iran, Philippines and other countries since the death of Comrade Mao. The present rapid pace of development would have been inconceivable without the support of communist revolutionaries and freedom-loving people of different countries, and particularly the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, during the period of the historic

initiation of the People's War. That is why we have conceived the new-democratic revolution in Nepal as a base area of world revolution, internationalist in content and national in form. We have seriously sought to develop close solidarity with the struggles in other countries, whatever their level of development might be, to learn from their experiences and disseminate our experiences to them. The consciousness of this proletarian internationalist duty was responsible for highlighting with particular seriousness the Leninist conception of the fusion between the proletarian movement and the national liberation movement by the recent Second National Conference of our Party.

**What is the goal of your struggle? How does it differ from the struggle that nationalist forces are waging in other parts of South Asia, for example?**

It is open and clear that the ultimate aim of our movement is to contribute towards the attainment of glorious communism by ending all forms of exploitation of man by man from the face of the earth. Just prior to the historic initiation of the People's War we had clarified our theoretical commitment that this war would be advanced as an integral part of the proletarian world revolution and that weapons would not be discarded until the final construction of communism. Most importantly, it must be understood that only by marching forward under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the invincible universal ideology of the proletariat, the last and the most revolutionary class in history, can this golden future of humankind be attained.

In South Asia various nationalist forces, which are a product of the state of social development, are valiantly fighting for the right of self-determination. Such nationalist struggles are not able to grasp the particularities of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. It is their limitation not to grasp that it is historically impossible for any national liberation movement to achieve success without being a part of the world proletarian movement under the leadership of the proletariat. On the contrary, the failure to provide correct leadership to the national liberation aspirations of the people is a weakness of the political parties of the proletariat. The proletarian revolutionar-

ies must do their utmost to overcome this weakness. The national movements on their own are not drags on the proletarian movements, but they are fraternal movements to be led on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It is also clear that unless they are led by the political parties of the proletariat such nationalist movements would ultimately be nothing but a tool of one or another of the imperialist cliques. If not a part of proletarian revolution, then surely a part of imperialism. Such is the historical destiny of national movements.

In Nepal, we have been stressing the question of national liberation ever since the time of the historic initiation of the People's War, according to the Leninist principle of the fusion of the national liberation movement with the proletarian movement. The idea behind the concept of a "new Soviet federation at the South Asian level" as advanced by our Party's second National Conference is the strategic objective of providing proletarian leadership to the national liberation aspirations of the peoples of this region. This is important to note.

**Many observers have noted the massive participation of women in the revolutionary struggle in Nepal. What is the significance of this?**

The important key to the intense development and the success of the People's War in Nepal is definitely the massive participation of women. The reactionaries and the revisionists are today "astonished" by the massive participation of women and the records of sacrifice, devotion and dedication set by them in the People's War. As the first heroic event of its kind in Nepalese history, as a source of great inspiration for the women of the world, the women guerrillas have broken open the prison of the old state. In the vast rural areas, the working women have heroically faced untold savageries and atrocities of mass rape by the enemies. Even while their eyes were gouged and their bodies set ablaze by the enemy in the most brutal manner, the women have stood firm in their conviction for liberation. Objectively, the women have left the men behind from the point of view of sacrifice, devotion and dedication in the People's War. Today, thousands of women have come out of the confines of their kich-

ens to graduate into people's warriors. Thousands of women have borne untold misery to assist the People's War. The Party has now made organised efforts and plans to develop women communist leaders as a guarantee of the success of the revolution.

We feel that the motive factors behind such massive participation of women in the movement is the correct policy of the Party in providing an outlet vent for the spirit of rebellion created by the material conditions of Nepalese society. Because of its class character, the bourgeoisie never places confidence in the ability of women. On the contrary, due to its class character, the proletariat acknowledges the vast potential inherent in women. Hence, it is the proletariat alone that can genuinely lead the women to liberation. Our Party has, from the very beginning, upheld the woman question as one of the decisive questions likely to decide the fate of the revolution. With the organisation of women alongside men in the guerrilla army, the women for the first time felt liberated from hundreds of years of feudal patriarchy and have taken their destiny into their own hands. Now the Party has formulated a special organisation and plans for the development of leadership quality in women in the light of five years of experience. The Party is in the midst of a long-term plan to develop women leaders on par with men in the Party committees from the local to central level, in the different levels of people's power and in the people's army, from amongst the women subjected to double exploitation and oppression in both class and gender terms. It is our firm belief that the question of bringing forward communist successors from among the women in large numbers is important, not only for the success of the revolution but for preventing the future danger of counter-revolution.

Nepalese society is constituted as an admixture of Aryan and non-Aryan ethnic communities. From the point of view of intra-family oppression, the women from Aryan communities are subjected to intense atrocities of Hindu feudal patriarchy; whereas women from oppressed Mongolian and other nationalities suffer relatively less from patriarchy. As our movement was more concentrated in the non-Aryan belt of western Nepal, it was culturally more conducive to the participation of women. In the Aryan community, as

there was more exploitation and greater atrocities against women, the People's War provided a concrete method for women's liberation, and there has been increasing participation of women from this community as well. Thus, women's participation from the two different communities accelerated.

**Recently your Party held its Second National Conference [see excerpts of Conference resolutions in this issue]; could you highlight the main achievements of this Conference?**

By breaking through the enemy's conspiracy and several suppression encirclements, we have been historically successful in concluding our Party's Second National Conference. The historic success of this Conference has itself become a powerful blow against the enemy. The historic aspect of this Conference is inherent in its far-reaching important resolutions, which the Party has summed up as epoch-making.

The main subject of the Conference was the ideological synthesis based on the past five years experiences of the People's War and chalking out the future direction of the People's War. The Conference has been totally successful in fulfilling its aim, by unanimously adopting its ideological synthesis in the form of "Prachanda Path" through the document *The Great Leap Forward: Inevitable Necessity of History*. The document has presented the Party's set of ideas in the form of a summation of the international communist movement, an analysis of the specificity of the present international situation and the lessons to be learnt from it, a resolution on South Asia, a general summation of Nepalese history, a new review of the history of the Nepalese communist movement, a new evaluation of the Party's history, a summation of the three instruments of the revolution, a discussion of mass line, and a resolution on great achievement; and at the end an outline of a future plan was presented. The document, which was unanimously adopted through exercising a high-level proletarian democratic and lively debate, has unified the Party on a new basis. That is why the Party has summed up the Conference as the Conference of unity and victory.

After the resolutions of the Conference were made public, especially

the resolution on "Prachanda Path", it has created a big uproar within the reactionary and revisionist camp, while it has created a wave of excitement amongst the revolutionary masses. The military victories achieved in the following period and the successful mass meetings and demonstrations involving hundreds of thousands of people represent the transformation of the resolutions of the Conference into a material force.

### **How has the Party itself changed since the People's War began?**

As has been said by Comrade Mao, people's war is not only an art of fighting against the enemy but it is also a means of cleansing oneself from within: we have been making this clear right from the very beginning. Five years' experience has verified this in practice. First of all, the initiation of the People's War has made a qualitative transformation in the Party's underground structure and its working style. Secondly, along with the development of the People's War, the Party has been able to concentrate on the basic classes, and there have been important changes in the class composition of the Party cadres. Thirdly, the People's War has liberated innumerable Party cadres from the old reformist legacy, and this has given a new lease of life to the Party, and is continuing to do so. Fourthly, the People's War has come out victorious against the Alok tendency, including sectarian and anarchist deviations [referring to the Party's fight against a former leader, Alok, who degenerated], and through this it has created an environment for new unity on a new basis. Fifthly, the People's War has prepared the material basis for successfully implementing the Party's rectification campaign. Sixthly, the People's War has established the Party as the sole revolutionary party among the masses in the whole country. Seventhly, the People's War has raised the Party to the present height of ideological synthesis. In this way the People's War has contributed and is continuing to contribute in multifaceted ways in the process of ideological and material proletarianisation.

**Your conference paid considerable attention to some questions of the history of the international communist movement. Why did you feel such study**

**is necessary? What lesson does it hold for the future?**

Yes! Our Party's Second National Conference has paid special attention to learn from the history of the international communist movement. Having reached the pinnacle of historic victory in the fight for state power, why did our class have to face such a big setback in the world? This question by itself is a very important question. Certainly we have been saying that it is the result of the laws of the ups and downs of class struggle, the treacherous betrayal of the revisionists and the conspiracy of the imperialists. However, this explanation is not enough to convey the total truth, and this will not be able to generate confidence among the masses for the revolution.

The principal factor in the development of any object or process will always be the internal. From this point of view the sensitive question is to find out where our class's revolutionary representatives in the past failed to pay attention or what their weaknesses were on the ideological questions. It is by using the telescope and microscope of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that we can find this out. We have focused our attention on this subject, after five years of experience, for the success of the revolution and keeping in mind the necessity of shielding against the danger of future counter-revolution. In this process we have taken the experience of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as the starting point of our study. This way, in the process of study and discussion our attention has been drawn towards the question of Comrade Mao's evaluation of the 30 per cent errors of Comrade Stalin.

We have tried to dig out even more deeply Comrade Mao's evaluation that, despite being a great and sincere Marxist-Leninist, Comrade Stalin had a fair share of metaphysics, subjectivism and dogmatism when it came to grasping dialectical materialist philosophy. By doing so our Party has opened the door for studying such questions as: why Comrade Stalin's concept of party could not grasp the "unity of opposites" and helped lead to the birth of Hoxhaism; that he made several errors in grasping the nature and conduct of the class struggle under socialism; that he had given wrong directions/instructions on many occasions in regards to the relationship between Soviet social-

ism and world revolution; that he had made the mistake of generalising the Soviet need of forming a united front during the Second World War; that he laid one-sided emphasis on the growth of production and the development of the productive forces as a guarantee for the success of socialism; that he had some problems in grasping the Leninist concept of fusing oppressed countries' national liberation movements with the proletarian movements; that he was not able to grasp the importance of the contribution of the Chinese revolution and that of Comrade Mao; and so on. Throughout the experience of class struggle and ideological struggle we have come to see that many of the groups and old leaders of Nepal, who claim to be advocates of "Mao Tsetung Thought", have been viewing Marxism from the Hoxhaite dogmato-revisionist angle. They view and perceive Comrade Stalin not through Mao's eyes but through Enver Hoxha's eyes. This created obstacles in the development of the Nepalese revolution for decades, and even now one has to struggle against that tendency. We feel that the communist movements in almost all the countries of the world have been confronting this problem in small or big ways. In this situation, there should not be any hesitation on the part of the new generation of communist revolutionaries in learning from the errors of Comrade Stalin. This is because today the reactionary essences of Trotskyism, Khrushchevite revisionism, Euro-communism, "Hoxhaism", "Ho Chi Minh's centrism", "Juche" of North Korea and other wrong trends have been unmasked. For at least now there is no danger of such revisionists taking advantage of our sincere effort to learn lessons from history. On the contrary, this effort of ours to learn lessons from history will help substantially in grasping Marxism-Leninism-Maoism more firmly, in providing successful leadership to the revolution and in preventing the danger of counter-revolution in the future.

**The Conference speaks of "Prachanda Path". Could you briefly explain this understanding?**

Through the application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism's universal truth to the Nepalese specificity, and mainly through the summation of the experi-

ence of five torrential years of People's War, the Conference concluded that a definite set of ideas have been developed. That set of ideas has been named "Prachanda Path". The Party has put forward this nomenclature because it represents the centralised expression of the collective leadership and Comrade Prachanda's "correct and continuous leadership". The Party considers Prachanda Path as an enrichment of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Giving it concrete definition, the Conference has termed Prachanda Path as a set of ideas that is more than a general Party line but which has not yet developed up to the level of "Thought". The Party has defined Prachanda Path in the Nepalese context as a new link of creative Marxism, opposed to both the right revisionists and sectarian dogmatists. The Conference has correctly summed up the role of immortal martyrs of the People's War, the general masses, the revolutionary fighters, the entire Party rank and file, and the central team of leaders, and RIM, together with communist revolutionaries of the world, in developing Prachanda Path as a specific set of ideas. The Party is confident that the synthesis of Prachanda Path will serve the world revolution by giving direction to the forward march of the Nepalese revolution.

#### **What has been the relationship between your Party and the international communist movement?**

The relationship between our Party and the international communist movement has been particularly deep. The very fact that since 1984, the year of the formation of RIM, our Party has been an active member, confirms this relationship. It was through RIM that we got great inspiration and help from the lofty experiences of the People's War in Peru. In its essence, the Nepalese People's War has been a joint effort of our Party and the international communist movement because of the process of continuous debate and interaction throughout the whole process of preparation, initiation and development of the People's War. This reality reflects the specificity and grandeur of our relationship. Along with this we have been maintaining close relationships with revolutionary parties in India, who have extended great help in different ways to the develop-

ment of the People's War in Nepal.

Our entire Party and the masses have been giving great importance to this relationship with the international communist movement. We have been commenting that if the People's War in Nepal faces a big setback then it will not only reflect the failure of our Party but will also reflect the failure of the international communist movement to a significant extent. From this point of view, it is evident that our relationship with the international communist movement is somewhat different from such other relationships in the past. We are confident that, along with the development of the revolutionary movement under the guidance of the great ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and proletarian internationalism, this relationship will serve the world revolution even more profoundly.

#### **How do you see the relationship between the revolution in Nepal and the rest of the South Asia region?**

Because of South Asia's economic, political, cultural and geographical concrete conditions, we feel it is necessary to carry on the revolutionary processes of all the countries in this region in a co-ordinated manner. We have been stressing the importance of co-ordinating the revolutionary movements at the South Asian level in the context in which the region is growing into an important centre of world revolution, and that the imperialists, especially the American imperialists, have been casting their evil eyes on this region, and the Indian expansionist ruling classes, who dream of being a big bully of the region, are kneeling before the American imperialists. It is by going through this process of joint efforts that we have pointed towards the possibility of developing a "new Soviet Federation at the South Asian



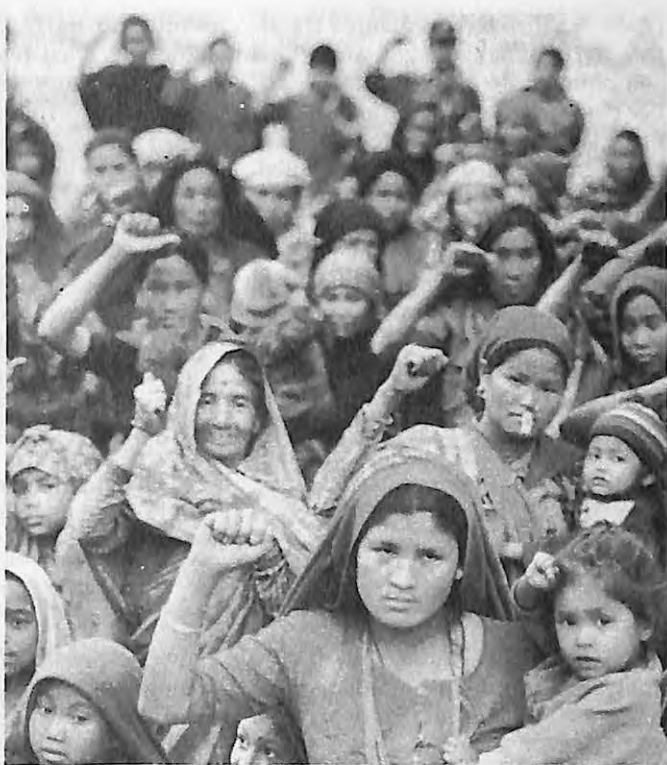
level" in the future. We have seriously considered the importance of advancing revolution in South Asia under a grand strategy.

The Nepalese revolution and our Party have been maintaining a lively relationship with the revolutionary parties and movements in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. In this respect we feel that the Indian revolutionary parties and the Indian revolution will have the most important role to play.

#### **What suggestions would you offer to comrades in other countries who are striving to initiate or develop people's war?**

To all those comrades who are endeavouring to develop various warfronts within a single campaign of world proletarian revolution, we, from the warfront in Nepal, would like to convey our well wishes that the comrades will be fully successful in applying the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the specific conditions of their own respective countries. However tortuous the road may be, the victory of the world proletarian revolution is certain.

Thank you. ■



Youth, including many women, jump at the chance to be part of an organisation that breaks tradition's chains and fight class oppression.

Nepal

# *The Future is Bright, The Road is Tortuous*

In the first half of 2001 the political situation in Nepal developed with dizzying speed. While it was the massacre of the royal family in June that caught the most world attention, at the centre has been the increasing strength of the People's War in that country, the incorporation of ever broader sections of the masses and the serious defeats inflicted on the reactionary armed forces, especially the militarised police forces that had been carrying out the main suppression against the revolution in Nepal. The advance of the People's War has been the main factor driving Nepal's ruling class into a profound political crisis. It is instructive to look at some of the news immediately prior to the royal family massacre in June 2001.

In the first two weeks of May, the

people's armed forces captured 100 rifles, and quite a few enemy were killed and captured. In May alone, 9-10 police posts were completely overrun. In the first week of April two major engagements resulted in 70 enemy killed. The Party had only formed its first military company six months previously. [A squad in the people's armed forces generally consists of nine men and women. A platoon consists of three squads, and a company of three platoons. The platoon is currently the main unit of the people's army.] The people's forces now consist of thousands of organised soldiers, in addition to thousands more armed masses. Now there are several permanent companies. This means that the one hundred or so soldiers in a company manoeuvre as a basic unit, not simply gathering and dispersing. Thus the companies are able to deal with relatively large units of the enemy. Recently the Party had its first experience operating on a brigade level (three companies), but the brigades are not permanent formations at this time.

The military advances of the people's armed forces laid the basis for organising a new political power of the people. In May, the formation of people's governments was announced in huge mass meetings in Western districts of the country that had been the stronghold of the People's War (see the back cover for a photograph of one such meeting).

The militarised police, who in fact have been trained and equipped by the Royal Nepal Army, proved incapable of resisting the people's strength. The Western imperialists and neighbouring India became increasingly alarmed at the growing possibility of a Maoist victory. The Prime Minister of revisionist China, Zhu Rongji, also came to Nepal on 12 May to protect Chinese interests amidst an increasingly turbulent political situation. It was widely reported that the Maoist insurgency was high on his agenda. A leading US State Department official arrived in Kathmandu and began to issue orders. His main point was that the Maoist insurgency must be stopped, and he publicly barked orders to this effect to the then willing Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Koirala.

In the important Terai region of Nepal, the flat agricultural belt lying along the border of India that stretches from one end of the country to the

other, the Party's work has been achieving good results. Most of the country's grain is produced here, and it is home to 40 per cent of the population. The class enemies had hoped in vain to make use of long-standing contradictions between Nepalese of "hill" origin and those of "Indian" origin (most of whom have been in Nepal for generations). In May, for the first time, a heavily armed police post in the Terai, with dozens of defenders, was overwhelmed by the people's armed forces. Most of the landlordism in Nepal is located in this area, and it is key for carrying forward the proletariat's policy of "land to the tiller". The royal family itself is among the biggest landlords in this region.

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#### ENGAGING THE RNA

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It was clear that the only obstacle standing between the Maoist People's War and the capture of nation-wide political power was the Royal Nepal Army (RNA), whose main forces had still not been fully engaged in this fight. Indeed, the full mobilising of the Army was the main demand of the US and the Nepalese Prime Minister.

But calling out the RNA is not as easy as the imperialists and other reactionaries would wish. The People's War had reached such a breadth and depth, and the people's armed forces had developed to such an important degree, that, even to the reactionaries, it was by no means sure what the outcome would be. The "commandos" of the military police, were, in fact, disguised operatives of the Royal Army. Would the soldiers do better than the commandos they themselves had trained and equipped? Further, the Royal Army (and behind it, the royal family) had been putting forward conditions to the whole Nepalese ruling class. On 20 April, Army Chief of Staff General Rana stated: "...But we must not forget that without clear policy goals and directions from His Majesty's Government, and without strong support from all political parties, it is difficult to ensure the success of any national security or development programme. Therefore, if the army is to be used in internal security and development programmes, then there must be strong and long-term support from the common people and all political parties." Translated, this means that the Army would dictate its terms to the

ruling class political parties.

It was in this tumultuous situation that the world was stunned when a massacre took place at the Palace, killing most of the royal family, including the King and the Crown Prince (who was accused of killing his parents and family in an insane rage over a love affair). Very few people in Nepal accepted the rapidly shifting story of the government. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) laid the responsibility for the massacre with US imperialism and the Indian secret services and pointed to King Birendra's reluctance to order the Royal Nepalese Army to directly combat the People's War.

The new king was quick to reveal his colours when the editors of a leading Kathmandu daily were arrested and initially charged with treason for having published an article by Baburam Bhattarai, a senior member of the Political Bureau of the CPN(M). In his article, comrade Bhattarai calls upon patriotic elements in the army to refuse allegiance to the new king and to make common cause with the people of Nepal. A press release issued by the CPN(M) concerning the massacre of the royal family is reprinted in this issue of the journal.

Throughout the war, and increasingly so in the more recent period, the CPN(M) has struggled to make its voice heard throughout the whole society and to take a direct role in the political debate and struggle. The Party refers to this as a policy of "political intervention at the central level", which it considers a necessary complement to the armed struggle for power itself.

The strength of the People's War has meant that the Party's political propositions have been at the centre stage of the country's political life. The Party has not only put forward its basic programme for a New Democratic Nepal, but also proposed immediate solutions to the crisis the country is facing. Even before the massacre of the royal family there were frequent debates in the ruling circles of Nepal as well as widespread interest among urban intellectuals and some other sections of the masses regarding the CPN(M)'s proposal for negotiations with the government under certain conditions. One formal meeting between the CPN(M) Central Committee representative and the Deputy Prime Minister had taken place in late 2000.

Also before the royal family mas-

sacre, the political crisis of the regime was reaching extreme heights. Parliament was paralysed, unable even to meet. The ruling class had been unable to solidify its ranks and unite in a focused attack on the People's War, despite insistent calls from many quarters for exactly such measures. It was already clear, before June, that the *status quo ante* (the previously existing balance of forces) could not be maintained and new dramatic political reconfigurations were inevitable.

It was in this context of heightening crisis that the Party put forward the slogan for a conference of all the institutions in Nepal to scrap the existing constitution, form an interim government and discuss the political reorganisation of the country. After the royal family massacre the Party analysed that the "traditional Nepalese monarchy had come to an end" and called for the resignation of Prime Minister Gijira and for all political forces to join in efforts to form a new interim government.

In the immediate aftermath of the royal family massacre, the armed forces led by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) further intensified the struggle. For example, separate raids were carried out on 6 July on the police posts in three different districts, Lamjung, Nuwakot and Gulmi, killing 41 militarised policemen and injuring many others. People's guerrillas stripped all the camps and equipped themselves with all the arms and ammunition and blazed the posts into ash. Altogether nine Maoist fighters were martyred in those separate battles.

While the military actions were shaking the country the Party carried out other forms of struggle as well. A very successful nation-wide strike, or "bandh", was held on 12 July.

The struggle was heading to a crescendo when 70 policemen were captured by the Maoist-led armed forces in a daring attack on 12 July at Holleri police post in Rolpa. After two hours of fighting, the guerrillas captured an inspector and 69 others from amongst the 72 stationed there. The Girija government, with the support of the new King Gyanendra, promised to "rescue" the captured policemen with the help of the Royal Nepal Army. Press releases were issued claiming that 150 Maoist fighters had been killed and that their defeat in the symbolic stronghold of Rolpa was imminent. The reality was

quite a bit different; there had been no casualties on the people's side. At that moment, the soldiers of the Royal Nepalese Army were unwilling and/or unable to defeat the Maoist armed forces, and the prisoners were released only after giving a pledge not to take up arms against the people.

In this climate, Prime Minister Girija, sharply criticised from within his own party for his inability to deliver on his promises to destroy the insurgency, and discredited among the masses, announced his resignation. He gave a farewell speech in which he singled out the Maoists as the greatest "problem" facing the nation.

With the people's forces storming one stronghold after another and the reactionary armed forces unable to stop the tide, a new prime minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, was chosen from within the ranks of the Nepal Congress Party, one of the main pillars of the reactionary ruling class. Within days of taking power, Deuba called a unilateral cease-fire and called for negotiations with the CPN(M). Chairman Prachanda responded by instructing the Party's armed forces to hold off on any offensive actions but remain on the alert. On 29 July, the state released 15 Maoist prisoners, and a few days later ten more, and hinted they might release others.

#### THE US AND INDIA

The bulk of the Nepalese ruling class seems to have lined up behind Deuba's call for a cease-fire and negotiations. Even the newly appointed United States Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, whose predecessor had pushed for calling out the Royal Army, quickly rushed to Nepal to express support for the new government's policy. It was clear that the ruling class options were quickly evaporating and that the rulers and their imperialist advisors felt that, at least for a while, military and political considerations made negotiations an unavoidable step. But it was also clear that negotiations would be just one more arena of combat. Articles in the ruling class press in Nepal predicted prolonged and fierce discussions before any serious negotiations could be held.

A reporter from the *Nepali Times* asked Baburam Bhattarai, "Is your armed struggle going to be a continu-

ous strategy or do you see the real possibility of that ending for, say, a negotiated settlement?" He responded sharply, "Whether the armed struggle will be waged till the very end or not, depends not on our pious wishes but on the objective and subjective conditions of the revolution, particularly on the policy of the ruling classes. Our openly stated goal is total state power for the oppressed masses. Nothing more, or less. Will the reactionary ruling classes hand over state power through a 'negotiated settlement'? You should ask them."

Indeed, while the revolutionary process has been shown to be rich and complex, the basic task remains the same as it was when the CPN (Maoist) boldly initiated the People's War on 13 February 1996 — the capturing of political power by the proletariat in alliance with the whole people, especially the poor peasantry. As Mao put it, "the seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution". It has also been proven all over the world, time and again, that the ruling class will never step down from the stage of history voluntarily. On the contrary, despite whatever tactics the ruling class might adopt at one time or another, the closer they feel to their doom, the more ferociously they will fight to hang on to their privileges as exploiters. While the divisions in the ruling class are sharpened by the blows of the revolutionary people, fear of revolution will also tend to unite them against the people.

Furthermore, Nepal cannot be seen outside of its international context. The People's War in Nepal is advancing amidst an upswing in the revolution in nearby India, the centrepiece of the semi-feudal, semi-colonial set-up in the whole region. India has long considered Nepal its "protectorate". It is not a question of whether or not India will intervene, but only how and in what forms. India is intensively reinforcing its entire lengthy border with Nepal under the thin pretext of preventing the entry of "Pakistani infiltrators". Permanent paramilitary posts, each containing 30 to 40 personnel, are being established at a distance of 3 to 5 kilometres apart. But the Indian ruling class, although a formidable enemy, is not all-powerful. Indian expansionism is widely opposed by the Nepalese people. The communist revolutionaries in

India are making common cause with the comrades of Nepal, and Maoist-led insurgencies are advancing in Andhra, Bihar and Dandakaranya in India. The Indian ruling classes, which have serious difficulties maintaining their rule over areas such as Kashmir, Assam and northeast India (the scene of massive movements demanding an end to national oppression by the central Indian state), would find it no easy matter to trample on Nepal.

### **STEERING REVOLUTION TO VICTORY**

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) is keenly aware of its responsibilities to the revolution on an international and regional scale. The CPN(M) sees regional co-operation not only as necessary for seizing power but also from the longer-term viewpoint of holding onto power in the face of imperialist and reactionary encirclement, building a socialist economy and transforming all of society. In this light they are calling for the creation of a Soviet Federation of South Asia. This bold orientation is also certain to meet with increased attention by the class enemies in the region and internationally. No doubt the revolutionaries of the region will be carefully considering this proposal and the orientation that lies behind it. The recent meeting of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organisations of the South Asia region showed a resolve to strengthen co-operation among the proletarian revolutionary forces of the region (see their Statement reprinted in this issue). China, which also shares a long border with Nepal, is closely monitoring events. While revisionist China is thoroughly integrated into the imperialist world order, its own reactionary state interests put it in conflict with India. At the same time, the Chinese revisionist rulers, who overthrew the revolution in their own country, fear and hate Maoism reappearing like a phoenix on their own border.

In short, there are many sharply contradictory phenomena both inside Nepal and in the regional and international context that give rise to a complex and dynamic revolutionary process. This rich experience has also generated vibrant discussion inside the Party. Throughout the war, the CPN(M) leadership has paid attention to unfold-

ing two-line struggle. Throughout this whole process the far-sighted leadership of Comrade Prachanda has been affirmed. At the recent Second National Conference (excerpts of the Conference document are reprinted in this issue), the Party consolidated its understanding that the formulation of a "set of ideas" that it calls "Prachanda Path" was an historic accomplishment of the Nepalese revolution. Comrade Prachanda was elected Chairman of the Party. In an interview with *A World to Win*, Chairman Prachanda explains the thinking of the Party on a number of vital questions.

Communist revolutionaries throughout the world are following the developments in Nepal with the utmost interest. Surely it is time that our international movement made some real leaps in building proletarian political power, and the advances in Nepal are filling comrades all over the world with enthusiasm and underscoring the power and vitality of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Furthermore, it is clear that the CPN(M) is grappling with a series of difficult and complicated questions that come with the responsibility of directly leading millions of people and steering the revolution to victory. For most Maoist parties and organisations these are new problems with which the movement still has little recent practice. Through the close interaction between the CPN(M) and the rest of the international communist movement, especially RIM, we can expect that the whole movement will deepen its understanding as it learns about and struggles over the new experiences coming out of Nepal.

It is, of course, impossible to predict the next developments in the unfolding People's War. Reaction in Nepal, India and among the world imperialists is one of increasing alarm at the rapid growth of Maoist-led revolution, and these enemies will use any and all types of covert action and conspiracy, military intervention, political and economic bullying and other means to try to prevent the emergence of proletarian political power on a nation-wide level. The wounded and cornered beast will certainly lash out. But it is just as certain that the revolutionary struggle will press ahead despite whatever twists and turns it must go through toward the unfolding bright future. ■



## Document of the Nepalese Revolution

# From "The Great Leap Forward: Inevitable Necessity of History"

## International Communist Movement and Its Historical Lessons

The following excerpts are from the Document of the Second National Conference of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). They are reprinted from *Himalayan Thunder* (May 2001), quarterly bulletin of the CPN (M), and slightly edited for publication.

Born together with capitalism, the proletariat is the last, revolutionary and international class of history. In Europe, its emergence and struggle against capitalism paved the way for the propounding of Marxism. Of extraordinary talent, Karl Marx along with his very intimate friend, Frederick Engels, discovered the world outlook of the proletariat - dialectical and historical materialism. Known as Marxism, this scientific discovery was nothing but in essence a supreme synthesis of the experience and knowledge mankind achieved in thousand of years. This science, synthesised with the revolutionary objective of transforming the world, not merely explaining it, brought an unprecedented revolution in the thinking of mankind, and provided a scientific device to understand and transform the world, and to fight against all kinds of dogmas, superstitions and evils of society.

Marxism proved irrefutably how a unique production relationship is maintained between some people and other people, with the development of the productive forces in the process of production and reproduction for the fulfilment of material needs, and how the total development of history after the stage of primitive communism is the history of class struggle, as determined by definite scientific laws. This is the allegation of historical materialism about history as a whole.

Exposing the real cause of capitalist exploitation and the accumulation

of capital in the hands of a handful of capitalists in society, Marx put forward the great theory of surplus value. Also, Marxism made it clear how capitalism has created a vicious circle of exploitation by turning human labour into a non-living thing in order to make more profits, and, at the same time, how it is developing huge battalions of the modern proletarian class and is ultimately digging its own grave.

Considering the unprecedented development of the productive forces, and the contradiction between the socialisation of the production process and the private appropriation of production, Marxism presented, bearing the responsibility for social revolution on the shoulders of the proletariat, a scientific ideal of golden communist society by demolishing classes and states, and ending all kinds of exploitation of man by man. Marx and Engels laid the foundation of basic principles relating to the strategy for the proletariat to pursue to achieve the great ideals of communist society. In total, they presented fundamental views on the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist state as an inevitable need for the transitional period from capitalism to communism, the need of violent revolution, the need of the destruction of the old capitalist state and the concept of the development of armed masses. Throughout his whole life, Engels fought fiercely against bourgeois trends appearing in the workers' movement to establish this scientific view.

Against the concept of bourgeois nationalism developed for the security and needs of the market, Marxism upheld the banner of proletarian internationalism. Loudly chanting the slogan "Workers of all countries, unite!", the first Communist International was



founded at the initiative of and under the leadership of Marx and Engels. It spread the scientific ideas of *The Communist Manifesto* among the workers and, simultaneously, fought vigorously against various opportunist trends appearing in the international communist movement. It is in this context that in Paris, France, the proletariat, for the first time in history, seized the state through armed revolt. Renowned as the "Paris Commune" all over the world, this historical revolt not only justified the basic principles of Marxism but also helped Marx and Engels to refine these with the synthesis of experience. Though lasting for a short period of only 72 days due to its inherent mistakes, Marx and Engels declared that its experiences would live forever.

It is particularly remarkable that the views of Marx and Engels on the Paris Commune have been serving as historical inspiration even today to identify and fight against revisionism and opportunism in the communist movement. Due to the defeat of the Paris Commune and the conspiracy of opportunists within, the First Communist International was dissolved. However, after the death of Marx and as per the needs of the new situation, the Second Communist International was formed under the leadership of Engels in 1889, which played a significant role in disseminating Marxism in the primary stage. But after Engels' death, the leaders of the Second International, mainly Karl Kautsky, knelt before bourgeois parliamentarianism and betrayed the revolutionary principles of Marxism. In the course of the hard struggle against reformism and parliamentarianism, a Bolshevik party and revolutionary struggle of a new type developed under the leadership of Lenin, and the socialist revolution was completed in Russia in 1917. During the life-and-death struggle against revisionism for the defence of its scientific and revolutionary teachings, Marxism developed into Marxism-Leninism. Lenin highly stressed that there can be no struggle against reaction unless it is linked with that against opportunism. He elevated the philosophy of dialectical materialism to a new height. The fact that the principle of the unity and struggle of opposites is the only fundamental principle of dialectics was further explained. By analysing and researching the characteristics of imperialism, Lenin contributed qualita-

tively in the field of political economy and defined the new era as the "era of imperialism and proletarian revolution", which made a great contribution in devising the strategy and tactics of revolution. His analyses, which were well justified by later events, are equally correct even today. Lenin not only enriched Marxism on the total aspects of scientific socialism, including the concept of a new party, the strategy of socialist revolution, the struggle against revisionism, uniting the peasants for revolution in the backward countries and the significance of full democratic revolution, the proletarian view on the right of nations to self-determination, the need for proletarian revolution to lead the national liberation movement in the eastern countries, and regarding the development and struggle of the workers and masses in the capitalist countries, which developed in the imperialist period, but also elevated it to a new height of development.

The success of the Great October Socialist Revolution created unprecedented waves in the world. The masses, oppressed for centuries, felt that they had found a new way to real liberation. Fiercely resisting the outlook of the imperialists and reactionaries, the Third International was formed at the initiative of and under the leadership of Lenin in 1919 in order to forge ahead the world revolution in an organised way. Taking the Soviet socialist state, founded in a very large part of the earth, as a base area, he gave emphasis to advancing the world revolution. The revolution of Germany among the developed countries and the issue of the same in countries like India and China among the undeveloped countries were seriously thought over. Declaring that the proletarian revolution in backward countries with a majority of peasants is "very hard and great", he emphasised applying the general principles of communism in accordance with the concrete situation of the country concerned. Eventually, a concept of "National Democratic Revolution" was put forward requiring fighting against colonial and semi-colonial exploitation, too, in such countries. However, Lenin emphasised that the communist revolutionaries of the countries concerned must work out and develop the strategies for revolution themselves. At this juncture, particular attention must be paid to the

stress given by the Comintern led by Lenin on the significance of the creative application of the general principles of proletarian internationalism and Marxism in accordance with the national characteristics of such countries.

At a time when struggle is still needed in the international communist movement against the trend which, even today, represents, on the one hand, sectarian nationalism on the pretext of national characteristics, and, on the other, Trotskyism that undermines national characteristics on the pretext of internationalism, the significance of this is evident.

After the death of Lenin, Stalin led the international communist movement. He served the proletarian movement by undertaking historic tasks such as defeating the right liquidationism that emerged in the form of the so-called permanent revolution of Zinoviev, Kamenev and, mainly, Trotsky; establishing Leninism; strengthening the Soviet Union by collective farming and planned economic development; knocking Hitler fascism to the ground in the Second World War; synthesising the experience of Soviet economic development; and leading the whole international communist movement for about three decades.

Nevertheless, the fact that many serious weaknesses prevailed in Stalin and eventually caused some serious problems should not go unheeded. While doing so, our starting point should be, of course, the evaluation of Stalin made by Mao, in which he has divided Stalin's thoughts and works into two aspects and declared 70% of them correct and 30% wrong.

Advancing on the ground of the general guideline about revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries of the pre-capitalist stage as put forward by Lenin during the initial period of the Third International and greatly influencing the international power balance, the new-democratic revolution was completed successfully in China. This successful revolution in a huge area with the largest population in the world through decades of struggle presented a new model for revolution in the semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries of the pre-capitalist stage. As Lenin had called for, the Communist Party of China led by Mao undertook the "great and difficult" task of revolution in an eastern country by

creatively applying the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism in their own specificities. In this context, the Communist Party of China led by Mao enriched and developed the Marxist science. The theory and knowledge of contradiction in philosophy, the analysis of bureaucrat capitalism in political economy, the development of the strategy for new-democratic revolution, the universal principle of people's war, and the concrete concept of the party, army and united front, clearly show the enrichment of Marxism-Leninism.

During the process of revolution, Mao had to fight hard against right and "left" opportunism of various kinds and against elements who wanted to mechanically copy foreign experience, such as Li Li-san, Wang Ming, Chang Kuo-tao, etc. When deeply cogitated, Mao's struggle against Li Li-san, Wang Ming, etc., seems, in essence, to be related to the struggle against much of the mechanical materialist thinking and working style of Stalin and the Comintern, though Mao never disclosed this. Mao had called upon the people to be alert against the threat of mechanical materialist and metaphysical thinking that existed in the Communist Party of China and the international communist movement not only through his policy of unity and struggle worked out in the case of the united front but also through his great works like "On Contradiction", "On Practice", "Reform Your Study", "Rectify the Style of Work", "On New Democracy", etc.

In the international communist movement, Mao defined the party as a unity of opposites, and not as a monolithic and homogenous unity, and he clarified the fact that two-line struggle inside the party is, in deed, always the motivating force for the party's life. In addition, clarifying the inter-relation between class struggle in society and two-line struggle in the party, he presented a scientific explanation of the fact that as long as classes are there, the party exists, and as long as the party exists, ideological struggle prevails. He declared the concept of monolithic unity to be anti-dialectical and flatly rejected it. His view on the party added a new dimension to the Leninist view of the militant party of a new type. According to Mao, a struggle between right and wrong ideas always runs inside the party, and at a certain stage wrong ideas appear as revisionism,

turning this into a hostile struggle with the revolutionaries. If non-proletarian ideas prevail in the party, the whole party changes its colour. Therefore, the revolutionaries should be always continuously revolutionising the party through two-line struggle.

Thus, the Chinese revolution grounded in Marxist-Leninist thought goaded millions of workers and peasants on their way to be the masters of their own destiny. The Communist Party of China led by Mao put forward a programme for socialist revolution right after the success of the new-democratic revolution under the leadership of the proletariat. In this historical process of socialist revolution, the contradictions between the revolutionaries and the people who had been influenced by the bourgeois character of the new-democratic revolution and joined the revolution intensified. Right at that period, Stalin died in the Soviet Union. Khrushchevite revisionism seized the leadership in the 20th Congress in a counter-revolutionary coup in the Soviet Union, and capitalism was restored. The Khrushchevite clique was successful in overturning socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat, using the pretext of struggle against the personality cult of Stalin. This event shocked the revolutionaries all over the world. Terrorising with nuclear arms, the clique rejected the decisive role of the people in the making of history. The renegade Khrushchevite clique advocated class conciliation instead of class struggle in the name of the "three peacefuls". Khrushchev cloaked his blatant advocacy of bourgeois parliamentarianism with possibilities rising from the changed world situation. Encouraged by the restoration of capitalism in Russia, the Chinese rightists intensified their attack on the proletarian revolutionaries in the party. The Peng Tehuai event is a concrete example of this.

In the face of this complex situation, Mao seriously thought over the class struggle under socialism and upheld the banner of struggle against Khrushchevite modern revisionism outside the country and right opportunism inside the party. During this fierce struggle, Mao put forward, with a scientific analysis of the class struggle in socialism, a concept of continuous revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat as the principle to prevent the restoration of capitalism, and

he led the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution, which is considered an unprecedented mass revolution in the whole history of mankind. With this earth-shaking revolution, Mao armed the proletarian class with a new weapon to prevent the restoration of capitalism in socialist society. This great contribution established Mao as the propounder of a new, third and higher stage of Marxism, i.e. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This great revolution prevented the restoration of capitalism in China for 10 years. Notwithstanding the success of the capitalist-roaders in restoring capitalism in China through counter-revolutionary plots, due to various national and international reasons after Mao's death, the significance of the principle he developed has not declined at all, but instead has grown as a beacon for future revolutions.

What is notable here is that Mao, after the Khrushchevite clique succeeded in restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union without any serious resistance, fought, on the one hand, to safeguard the achievements of the world's first socialist state, and on the other, persevered seriously in studying the weaknesses that caused such an irreparable loss. It is in this context that we must understand his defence of Stalin against the attack of the Khrushchevite clique and Mao's explanation of his various mistakes and weaknesses. Mao's evaluation of Stalin stands apart against both rightist revisionism, which negates him completely, and against sectarian dogmatist revisionism, which accepts even his mistakes and weaknesses. In the international communist movement, the former trend is led by Trotsky, Tito, Khrushchev, etc., while the latter trend is led by Enver Hoxha, etc. Another important point to note is that Euro-Communism, on the pretext of opposing Stalin's concept of monolithic unity and bureaucracy, began opposing the integrated dialectical materialist science of Marxism from a bourgeois anarchist pluralist angle.

When the debate was going on in the international communist movement, and Khrushchev, the ring-leader of modern revisionism, along with imperialism was simultaneously defaming Stalin from a counter-revolutionary angle, it was but necessary to defend Stalin, emphasising his essentially correct and positive aspects. Doing so

did not mean defending him alone but also the whole communist movement, socialism, and overall Marxism-Leninism itself. But today things have changed greatly; Khrushchevite revisionism, later turning into social-imperialism, has fallen completely with the dissolving of the Soviet Union. In China, the Chinese Khrushchevites have usurped power through a counter-revolutionary coup and restored capitalism after Com. Mao's death. Today there is not even a single socialist state in the world.

At this moment, revolutionaries all over the world are free, without any political pressure, to draw the essence of historical experience, and a great responsibility has been laid on their shoulders, to fulfil which they must work hard, no doubt. In this context, we must go into depth on what has been mentioned in the very beginning of the letter entitled "On the Question of Stalin" during the Great Debate launched by the Communist Party of China led by Mao against Khrushchevite revisionism. It states, "The question of Stalin is one of worldwide importance which has had repercussions among all classes in every country and which is still a subject of much discussion today, with different classes and their political parties and groups taking different views. It is likely that no final verdict can be reached on this question in the present century." The century as stated by the Communist Party of China led by Mao has ended, and the 21st century has already started. We must focus our attention on defending Stalin's 70 per cent positive contributions and drawing lessons from his 30 per cent errors. As stated elsewhere in the same article, "It would be beneficial if the errors of Stalin, which were only secondary, are taken as historical lessons so that... the Communists might take warning and avoid repeating those errors or commit fewer errors." Another important point is that his errors contain two aspects - the errors committed inevitably due to lack of experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the errors caused by ideological mistakes. It was not possible to prevent the former errors, but the latter ones could have been.

Listing the errors of Stalin, it is stated in the same article of the Great Debate, "In his way of thinking, Stalin departed from dialectical materialism

and fell into metaphysics and subjectivism on certain questions and consequently he was sometimes divorced from reality and from the masses. In struggles inside as well as outside the Party, on certain occasions and on certain questions he confused two types of contradictions that are different in nature, contradictions between ourselves and the enemy and contradictions among the people, and also confused the different methods needed in handling them. In the work led by Stalin of suppressing the counter-revolution, many counter-revolutionaries deserving punishment were duly punished, but at the same time there were innocent people who were wrongly convicted; and in 1937 and 1938 there occurred the error of enlarging the scope of the suppression of counter-revolutionaries. In the matter of Party and government organisation, he did not fully apply proletarian democratic centralism and, to some extent, violated it. In handling relations with fraternal Parties and countries he made some mistakes. He also gave some bad counsel in the international communist movement. These mistakes caused some losses to the Soviet Union and the international communist movement."

In the context of the experiences of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Maoism and the contemporary international communist movement, what is evident today is the fact that, although he was a great Marxist-Leninist, Stalin's ideological mistakes have substantially influenced the world communist movement subjectively. Categorically speaking, he had some weaknesses in his thinking and understanding and dealing with the fundamental principle of dialectics, the unity and struggle of opposites. Taking the communist party as a monolithic unity, instead of a unity of opposites, led him to errors in identifying the nature of and ways of dealing with two-line struggle inside the party. As a result, it was declared, on the grounds of rapid economic growth through the elimination of private ownership, collective farming and industrialisation, that there was no hostile class contradiction in Soviet society, which violated basic principles of Marxism-Leninism. Such analysis made Stalin think one-sidedly that a threat to Soviet society could occur only from external intervention and con-

spiracy. The emphasis on the possibility of counter-revolution from external intervention and conspiracy, instead of paying adequate attention to how new capitalists are produced within the communist party itself in Soviet society and how to control them, violated at times Lenin's basic postulates on the relationship between the formation in one country of socialism and the development of the world revolution during the primary period of the Comintern. Though there was no ill intention at all, the emphasis on safeguarding Soviet society from external threat virtually undermined internationalism and exaggerated Russian nationalism, which created a lot of confusion about understanding and advancing the world revolution and the functioning of the Comintern. It is to be remembered that Lenin, while forming the Comintern, had stressed the concept of the world revolution and a world communist party and that everything would be subsumed under it, but under the leadership of Stalin, the world revolution was considered as a part of Soviet society, instead of vice-versa. This is what has been pointed out by Mao as Stalin's wrong advice on the international communist movement. Stalin took collective farming, industrialisation and the rapid development of production and the productive forces due to centralised planning in the economic field as sufficient grounds for the guarantee of socialism's success and kept on stressing it one-sidedly. It undermined the importance of resolving the differences prevailing in society and revolutionising the production relations. This helped in developing a new bourgeois class, which was represented later by the counter-revolutionary Khrushchevite clique inside the party, and which established the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie by overturning that of the proletariat.

Drawing lessons from the errors of Stalin due to historical limitations and ideological weaknesses, Mao studied seriously economic policy and pointed out its positive and negative aspects to elevate the Marxist-Leninist principles regarding the class struggle in a socialist society to a new height in order to prevent the restoration of capitalism, and he presented a new model of socialist economy that required one to be red and expert, to walk on two legs, etc. Collective ownership of pro-



Local militia and villagers escorting guerrillas out of a village in Rukum District, Western Nepal

Photo courtesy of Li Onesto/RW.

duction alone does not guarantee the success of socialism, because many kinds of differences, such as mental and manual labour, city and village, and the capitalist stage of the production of commodities, still exist in society and continue to provide material ground for the growth of a new capitalist class. Therefore Mao made it clear that characteristics of both communism and capitalism exist in socialism, and there remains the danger of capitalist restoration. He aptly presented the scientific truth that the march towards communism is possible by regulating capitalism through the process of continuous revolution after the proletariat seizes political state power.

On the basis of this principle, he led the people to exercise the right to rebel against the capitalist-roaders of the party who advocated the Khrushchevite line that advocated that it was good to be rich. He drew a clear demarcation line between the Marxist revolutionaries and the revisionists with the principle of 3 Do's and Don'ts: "Practice Marxism, not revisionism; Unite, don't split; Be open and above-board, don't conspire and intrigue". With the slogan, "Bombard the bourgeois headquarters", he called upon the people to invade the revisionists' fortress. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, through the struggle against the renegades Liu Shao-chi, Lin Biao and Teng Hsiao-ping, he further developed the dialectical method of achieving new unity on a new basis in the party through a process of unity-struggle-transformation

and emphasised the need to form party committees according to the principle of 3 in 1, with old people, adults and youths in order to transfuse new blood into the party. However, it was not possible to sweep away all the rightists who had reached higher echelons in the party and government, because of several negative effects of the international communist movement and the historical limitations of the class struggle, and since it had been virtually late in exposing them. But it has enhanced the importance of the principle developed. Some people do not realise the complexity of the Cultural Revolution period and blame Mao for a number of compromises in the later period, which is completely wrong. He had been promoting the rise of revolutionaries, including Chiang Ching and Chiang Chun-chiao, as a revolutionary core in the party. He was in fact leading the so-called gang of four and was the most far-sighted.

In this regard, an important question may be raised: why didn't he take any initiative towards building a new communist international, though he had the experience of waging the historic struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism and conducting the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution? In reply, several negative experiences of the Comintern in the latest period might be put forward, but that simply cannot be the major factor. As a matter of fact, Mao had been ideologically leading the international communist movement by waging struggle against Khrushchevite revisionism and by leading the Great Proletarian Cultural

Revolution, and by supporting, cooperating with and disseminating national-liberation, new-democratic and socialist revolutions all over the world. But objectively there were some serious practical difficulties in giving these an organised form. Among the visible ones were the dogmatist-revisionist, centrist and chauvinist communist parties of Albania, Vietnam and North Korea, etc., who rejected the universal contributions of Mao. And it was not possible to form the communist international by ignoring all of them at that time.

But today the situation has changed greatly. There is not even a single socialist state in the world. Genuine revolutionaries have upheld Maoism as higher stage of Marxism-Leninism. A new wave of revolution is appearing on the horizon. Now, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is there as an ideological foundation for the creation of a new communist international. All the communist revolutionaries need to march forward seriously so as to give it an organised form through class and ideological struggle. Today the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has already emerged as an embryo of it. Everybody has to attempt to refine and develop it. Special attention must be paid to conduct discussions and interactions with revolutionaries outside RIM, and unite them in the Movement.

While doing so, the communist revolutionaries should seriously look into the experiences of the Comintern and try to resolve the issues of evaluating the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, the Second World War and the dissolving of the Comintern, the suggestions given to the communist parties of several countries to form a government with the anti-fascist bourgeoisie and Lenin's criticism of Millerandism, the position of the communist parties of Greece, Italy, France, Spain, India, China, etc., and Stalin's role, etc. These questions lie in front of the international communist movement as challenges. Maoism has already provided the scientific basis for the answers to these questions. Therefore, the communist revolutionaries of the world need to accelerate their initiative to learn from the positive and negative experiences of the past by applying Maoism. ■

## Some Fundamental Characteristics of the International Situation

The analysis of the basic characteristics of imperialism made by Lenin just before the great Russian October Revolution is still correct. Accordingly, the world is in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution even today. In today's world, there are four kinds of basic contradictions: the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and proletariat, the inter-imperialist contradiction for profit and plunder, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed countries and people, and the contradiction between the capitalist system and socialist system. Among them, the fourth is not at the surface now but as per the past experience and for future guarantee, we must take it into account continuously. The socialist revolution comes out of the first contradiction and that is its solution. The second contradiction leads to world war for redivision of the world but has not been permanently resolved. As Mao has said, the proletariat should attempt to prevent world war as far as possible, but if unsuccessful, they should carry out the policy to turn the world war into world revolution. The third contradiction leads to the national liberation movements and the contradiction ends with their success.

Among these, the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed countries and people is the principal world contradiction today. The Party should be clear about some important ideological and political questions as regards deciding about the principal world contradiction, because a wrong trend to undermine and neglect the historical significance of national liberation movements and label them sectarian nationalism has been prevailing in the international communist movement. Moreover, Trotskyist and, chiefly, Khrushchevite revisionism has influenced it to a great extent.

The first thing to note here is that, in the course of the development of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution, the founding of Russian socialism and the forming of the Comintern in order to advance the world revolution and formulate its

strategies, Lenin stated that the proletarian revolution and national liberation movements should fuse into each other and that this fusion would be a historically important task. Imperialism has been blocking socialist revolution by creating an aristocratic class even within the working class, with a portion of their unaccountable profits extracted through merciless exploitation and plunder of the masses of the colonial and semi-colonial countries of the world. Therefore, Lenin, paying due attention to the importance of incorporating national liberation movements within the proletarian movement, forwarded the slogan, "Workers and oppressed people of the world, unite!" He concentrated maximum attention on the national liberation movements of the oppressed countries, including India and China. On the basis of this analysis of Lenin, Mao developed in the world proletarian movement a total concept of the significance and the question of the leadership of the national liberation movements.

Imperialism has been maximising the exploitation, oppression and political suppression of the people of the oppressed countries by using their reactionary ruling classes. It has been making the people poorer and poorer, by making use of the economy of the oppressed countries as its own integral part and by drawing excessive profits through cheap labour and raw materials. That is exactly what has made the situation mature for new-democratic revolution in Asia, Africa and Latin America. This is why Mao declared these regions storm centres of world revolution and asserted revolution as being the basic trend of the world. He proclaimed the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed nations as the principal contradiction of the world. Grasping the historical truth that the national liberation movements had become an integral part of the world proletarian movement, Mao developed, the strategic method of establishing proletarian leadership over them.

Despite important changes in form, Mao's analysis stands correct in essence even today. During the Cold War,

Russian social-imperialism and US imperialism spent huge amounts of money on arms for the expansion of their influence and eventually turned into superpowers. They imposed various kinds of regional wars on the oppressed countries, and another world war appeared very close. But Russian social-imperialism could not maintain its old form, due to the imperialist crisis, and collapsed politically and economically. Ironically, Western imperialism propagated this collapse as the collapse of communism and celebrated joyously its unipolar hegemony.

This event definitely gave US imperialism more opportunity for direct plunder, exploitation and intervention in the "Third World" and the entire world. This accelerated the unhindered mobilisation of financial capital on a world scale. This is what has been hailed by imperialism as "globalisation". Through this "globalisation" imperialism has entrapped the whole economy of the oppressed countries and has been dictating and pressurising the ruling reactionary classes of these countries to pursue the policy of liberalisation in order to speed up the flow of capital. Through the economic giants like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, etc., imperialism has created an environment to play the role of director and controller of the economic affairs of the oppressed countries. Mainly US imperialism grew more and more encouraged to grab unlimited profits by mixing up the unprecedented progress in science and technology, including electronics, with the cheap labour of the Third World.

After all, what ultimate objective result has the imperialist campaign of "unipolar world", "globalisation" and "liberalisation" brought? The experience of the last 10 years has already shown the truth. That is the intensification of the contradictions between different classes and between the rich and poor countries. Even according to the data prepared by the imperialists (which is manipulated to best suit the interests of the authority concerned) the rich countries, with only 25 per cent of the population of the world, own 80

per cent of the world's wealth... Today, 2.5 billion people are extremely poor and one billion people are living an extremely miserable life below the absolute poverty line. Eighty million people of the Third World are forced to leave their country for their livelihood every year. More than 20 million children are forced into labour. The class contradiction is intensifying, even in the imperialist countries. Even in the US, the number one hoodlum of the world, more than 20 million people are suffering from absolute poverty. Racial discrimination, inequality, unemployment, homelessness, social insecurity, women's oppression, etc. are growing day-by-day. They cause the resentment of the people from time-to-time, to suppress which the ruling classes are compelled to use special military force and devise new strategies. In Western Europe, unemployment has been institutionalised and people resort to street struggles because of shortages and inflation. Suppression, terror, religious and communal riots against the people's resentment, and against the national liberation movements and socialist movement, which are developing everywhere in the Third World countries, have been the daily routine of the imperialists and reactionaries.

The fact that their political cover, bearing the signboard of parliamentary democracy, has been torn to pieces, has been splendidly brought about by the recently conducted drama of the US presidential election. If a country advocates even a little economic and political freedom, the imperialists take no time in imposing economic sanctions against them, resorting to political pressure, military intervention and genocide. Their intervention in Iraq, Yugoslavia, Palestine and Mexico, along with other Asian, African and Latin American countries, verifies this.

Imperialism has built a gigantic mechanism of military force and strategy in order to maintain the "new world order". US imperialism has developed a military strategy "to keep up" its global economic plunder and hegemony. According to the data of their defence budget, US imperialism has allocated \$262 billion to defence alone, which is almost half of that of the world. When the defence budget of its alliance partners, like the NATO countries, Japan, Israel and South Korea, are also included, it exceeds 80 per cent of the

world's total. Today, the US has become the main headquarters for arms smuggling. US imperialism has, through its military-industrial complex, been successfully looting the world and fooling their people by parting with a small portion of its loot. It has put on alert a huge military force in the Gulf and in the Korean Peninsula to fight against Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, North Korea and Cuba, whose total defence budget amounts to \$15 billion only. As Lenin has stated about imperialism, the US has been giving priority to its military force to continue its political and military hegemony over its allies, and is intensifying its activities with its global military hegemony in countries like India and China in order to capture the huge store of cheap labour and raw materials. On top of this, its strategic alliance with Indian expansionism has been rapidly growing, and dark clouds of massive plunder and genocide in South Asia are looming larger. The opening of an FBI branch in Delhi is its evidence. These facts show the importance of Mao's concept of Three Worlds in the immediate tactical sense.

However, facts have also indicated that objectively the imperialists, mainly Yankee imperialism, have been getting fully engulfed in the contradictions with the oppressed countries and people. Though there is no contention between the super-powers at present, following the end of the Cold War, the so-called unipolar dream is what can never come true, as shown by open and disguised clashes and conflicts of economic and political interests between the US, the European Community, Japan and Russia. With this crisis the possibility of revolt by millions of masses is intensifying day-by-day.

We must seriously pay attention to the following distinct situation, created by imperialism with the evil intention of grabbing profits in the present world. Firstly, it has guaranteed the acceleration of the people's consciousness to move from the world of necessity to that of freedom, by linking high technology with the cheap labour of the huge population of the masses. Secondly, with globalisation to grab profits, unprecedented development in the field of information technology, mainly electronics, has narrowed down the world just to a small rural unit. Therefore, it is very likely that an event in any place will have a great positive or negative impact on the world as a

whole, and vice versa. Thirdly, the world-wide system of imperialism producing and distributing arms has been indirectly playing a role for the technical preparation of people's war on a world scale. Fourthly, the unlimited production and globalisation of its social process has strangely built a material basis, in a rapid way, for the communist principle of work according to ability and distribution according to need. Fifthly, and mainly, imperialism, by intensifying the class struggle, principally the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed countries and people, to the maximum, has been preparing a revolutionary objective situation for 80 per cent of the people of the world.

Through the internal contradiction of the imperialists, unequal development and distribution as per the inherent character of capitalism, the development of this objective situation will lead to revolution in any country in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and its international importance is just evident. It magnificently justifies Mao's analysis that Asia, Africa and Latin America shall be the storm centres of revolution. These characteristics clearly indicate that the twenty-first century shall be a century of people's wars and the triumph of the world socialist system. Apart from this, it also shows that there has been a significant change in the prevailing concept of the model of revolution since 1980. Today, the fusion of the strategies of armed insurrection and protracted people's war into one another has been essential. Without so doing, a genuine revolution seems almost impossible in any country.

The historical need today is to advance the world revolution through the means of people's war in accordance with the particular characteristics of each country by developing genuine communist parties on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to lead the masses in different countries. This historical responsibility cannot be borne until the universality of Mao's contributions for world revolution is upheld and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is established as its ideological commander.

The new situation has been preparing the ideological and material ground for the formation of a new communist international to advance the world revolution by learning lessons from past experiences. RIM (Revolu-

tionary Internationalist Movement), constituted on the principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to co-ordinate the revolutionary movements of various countries and to advance the world revolution, is a significant step in this direction. It has been developing through the experiences of the revolutionary movements and ideological struggles of various countries. Serious challenges are posed before RIM for the development of a new international, like: developing an integrated understanding through scientific synthesis of the world communist movement, mainly, the Comintern, the Second World War and Stalin's role; struggling against the ultra-internationalist Trotskyist deviation that minimises the national liberation movement, on the one hand, and the ultra-nationalist de-

viation that undermines proletarian internationalism, on the other; co-operating to develop the genuine Maoist parties in various countries; and uniting with all existing revolutionary parties through struggles, etc. Facing these challenges successfully, all genuine proletarian revolutionaries need to accelerate their initiatives for the development of a new international.

What is most important is to correctly grasp the nature of the contradiction between imperialism and the oppressed countries and people and to establish proletarian internationalism as the leader of the national liberation movements. A world revolution isolated from the struggle to establish the world-wide significance of revolution developed in any backward coun-

try of Asia, Africa and Latin America is just impossible.

Finally, it is crystal clear, from analysing the world situation, that the world order of the imperialists is the rotten, barbarian and terrorising system that is but a curse for the whole of mankind. The material conditions for the establishment of the great ideals of communism with the complete elimination of exploitation and oppression of man by man has been growing more and more mature, and the political parties of the proletariat need to take initiatives from new heights in order to courageously advance the world revolution. The twenty-first century shall be the century of world revolution. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism shall be its ideological leader.

## On the Situation in South Asia

South Asia, which has 20 per cent of the world's population, has suffered greatly from poverty, scarcity, illiteracy and unemployment due to feudal and imperialist suppression. The people of this region have for years been dedicated and made a series of sacrifices in the national liberation and democratic movements for their progress and liberation. It should be comprehended that both feudal and imperialist suppression, and the just struggle of the people against it, are reaching a climax and are heading towards the decisive collision. The more the revolutionary struggle of the people intensifies, the more the reactionary ruling classes of Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh kneel down before imperialism, increase the exploitation and suppression of the people and heighten state terror. The ruling classes of each country of this region are facing severe contradictions with the needs and aspirations of the masses. Armed national liberation movements, democratic movements and people's war are shaking the whole region. The advancing Maoist revolutionary movement, by posing grave challenges to the reactionary classes and presenting a concrete alternative for the masses, is another positive aspect of this region.

The Indian monopoly capitalist ruling class, the true successor of British imperialism, has been pursuing the

expansionist policy of pressure, intervention and sabotage against the national aspirations of the people and neighbouring countries. It has been endeavouring to quell, with guns and state terror, the aspirations of the people of Kashmir and the north-eastern states and the new-democratic movements in Andhra and Bihar, and intensifying the pressure, sabotage and provocative activities under the strategy of making Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka as new Sikkim [referring to India's annexation of Sikkim]. With an intention to isolate Pakistan after the end of the Cold War and fulfil its desire for regional hegemony, the Indian ruling class has knelt down before US imperialism and has opened the door for them for the merciless exploitation of the people of this region under the pretext of liberalisation. The Indian ruling class has been abetting the imperialist master-plan to encircle China and make it capitulate completely by taking India in its grip. It has been blatantly making interventions in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries in order to enthrone its agents and advance the process of "Sikkimisation". It has been harbouring plots to link the People's War in Nepal, which has been going on for five-years, with Pakistan, China and smugglers and thereby confuse the Indian people.

It has been the characteristic of the

Indian ruling class to conspire to use the common aspirations of national democratic revolution against the semi-feudal and semi-colonial conditions, the distinct nature of its geo-political position and the economic, political, religious and cultural relations established among the people historically, to fulfil its regional hegemonistic aspirations. The Indian ruling class and its aspirations have been working behind the similar policies and suppressive and terrorist intrigues practised by the ruling classes of all the countries of the region.

This distinct condition provides a unique nature to the need, possibility and importance of unity in the just struggle of the people of all countries of this region. Theoretically, the possibility of the direct fusion of the national liberation movement and the proletarian movement, as stated by Lenin, can also be witnessed here. Due to the uniqueness of the economic, political, cultural and geographical conditions and the unchallenged hold of Indian monopoly capitalism, it will be very difficult for any single country of this region to successfully complete the new national-democratic revolution and, even if it succeeds following the distinct contradictions, it will be almost impossible for it to survive. The revolutionaries need to seriously concentrate on the fact that a particular country, or a particular territory of a coun-

try, shall be liberated through the force of the common and joint struggle, of the people of this region following the unequal stage of development, and that it can play only a particular role of base area for the revolution in the whole region.

Right here, all the revolutionaries of the region should pay attention to Lenin's efforts to generalise the great Russian October Revolution of 1917, the founding of the Soviet Union, and to their experience. It is clear that real liberation is impossible unless it becomes a part of, or serves, the world revolution on the basis of proletarian internationalism. This is the peculiarity of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. The workers have no country, and the slogan "Workers of the world, unite" has always made the proletarian revolutionaries cautious about their international responsibility. The challenge of applying the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the particularity of the national liberation and democratic movements of this region, under the guidance of the great idea and aspiration of proletarian internationalism, remains formidable. The unification of the struggles for the right of nations to self-determination and the proletarian movement alone can meet this challenge. To grasp this properly, we should seriously ponder the concept of the national-democratic revolution put forward by Lenin, after the founding of the Soviet Union and in the initial period of the Comintern, and the concept of new-democratic revolution put forward by Mao.

When we think over this, because of the distinct conditions of this region, it becomes clear that it is inevitable for the communist revolutionaries to devise an integrated strategy against the Indian ruling classes of the monopoly bourgeoisie and their agents in the various countries. This inevitability has knocked on the door of the necessity of turning the region into a new Soviet federation of the twenty-first century. Therefore, the Maoist revolutionaries in the various countries of this region are required to debate from this height and to work out a unified understanding, an integrated strategy, an organisational structure of a distinct kind, and long-term and short-term plans of struggle.

Apart from the economic, political, cultural and geographical peculiari-



Militia women in Rolpa District, western Nepal. Photo courtesy of Li Onesto/RW.

ties, from the perspective of the growth of the communist movement the region-wide influence of the Naxalbari movement led by Charu Majumdar against modern revisionism, fraternal relations and the exchange of ideas and technical co-operation growing among the Maoist revolutionaries, and common programmes at the people's level, etc., have been preparing the concrete basis for the fulfilment of this historical need. It is clear that the more the revolutionary struggle develops, the more the counter-revolutionary conspiracy intensifies, and, therefore, there is need to develop integrated efforts among the revolutionaries.

The process of applying the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-

Maoism to the regional peculiarity will play an effective role in waging struggle against the conspiracy of US imperialism in this region, mainly in India. Thus, the unified initiative of this region, as an integral part of the world revolution, will make an important contribution to the world revolution. Hence, the co-operation of mainly RIM and other revolutionary internationalist forces is essential in order to advance this process in a natural and scientific way. However, the important thing is the responsible initiative of the revolutionaries of the region themselves. The road is difficult and challenging, but the future is bright; the victory of proletarian internationalism and that of the masses of the people is guaranteed.

## Prachanda Path

# A Great Achievement

This was also excerpted from the Document of the Second National Conference of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and was edited for publication from a translation by a supporter. - AWTW

As an inseparable organ of the international proletariat, the Party decided the line of the Nepalese revolution in the midst of class struggle and two-line struggle, based on the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This was the first important achievement of the Nepalese revolution in the direction of the formation of ideas. A new historical epoch was initiated on 13 February 1996 with the historic initiation of the People's War, guided by this same line, with the great aim and determination of reaching communism through new-democratic, socialist and cultural revolutions. Under the leadership of the Party, this historic attempt in itself was another great qualitative leap in the direction of defending and applying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and revealing the specific laws of the Nepalese revolution. Today, the synthesis of the experience of five stormy years of People's War has developed into a set of ideas guiding the Nepalese Revolution, which is based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This has been a great achievement of five years of the People's War.

This outstanding achievement stands on an immense foundation, the long history of untold grief, pain, bravery, courage, sacrifice and deep reflection by the millions of masses and revolutionary fighters. This achievement has been acquired at the cost of blood that has flowed into the soil, the blood of thousands of the best sons and

daughters of the Nepalese people. This great achievement has been attained through the consistent contribution of the whole Party and the leftist, progressive, patriotic and democratic forces, along with RIM and all the communist revolutionaries of the world. Throughout this process, the Party has resisted the reactionary regime's campaign of massacre, it has exposed revisionist treason and lies, as well as deviations inside the Party itself, and it has led all the struggles successfully, adhering to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Because of this successful leadership, today not only the Party's set of ideas but also a team of worthy leaders at the central level and a radiant section of thousands of cadre, our revolutionary heirs, have been developing.

Because of the correct and consistent leadership of General Secretary Comrade Prachanda, a strong proletarian headquarters has been developed, as a centre of gravity of the Party, bringing Party unity up to the height of this ideological synthesis. So by "Prachanda Path" the Party means the set of ideas that has developed as a form of centralised expression of the collective leadership. Developed in the context of prolonged discussion inside and outside the Party and the international communist movement, most importantly a high level of theoretical interaction with the RIM Committee, Prachanda Path, by enriching Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, expresses the set of ideas of the Nepalese people. This set of ideas emerging in the form of Prachanda Path will guide the basic line in the forward march of the Nepalese Revolution.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the

science of social revolution of the proletariat. As a science, it serves the development of the class struggle to change the world, and the synthesis of the experiences of the Party is Prachanda Path, the application of the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the practice of the Nepalese revolution. This synthesis of Nepalese experience is based upon the indivisible dialectical relationship between international essence and national expression, universality and particularity, the whole and the part, the general and the particular, and it objectively serves the world proletarian revolution and proletarian internationalism.

This synthesis of experience has been acquired through the process of "practice - knowledge - again practice - again knowledge", based on the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has taught us that this is a never-ending cycle. Through the practice of class struggle and ideological struggle, the Party has developed the Party line as initial knowledge, applying that knowledge again to change the world, which results in new knowledge in the form of the present synthesis. It is clear that this process is not going to end and be completed here; it is bound to continue all the way, through the process of "again practice" and "again knowledge". To understand and guide the dialectical laws of the motion of progress in a correct way, communist revolutionaries should continuously try to be expert in applying the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

# On the Massacre of the Royal Family in Nepal

Press Release issued by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)  
11 June 2001

The Politburo meeting of our glorious Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN(M)), which was called for discussing the horrendous massacre in the royal palace, has successfully concluded with resolutions of far-reaching importance. The brief summary of the resolutions is as follows:

It is now clear that this horrendous massacre in the royal palace has been enacted as part of a conspiracy of the imperialists to "smash" the Maoist People's War, which has been advancing in the form of the Nepalese people's powerful patriotic and democratic movement. Behind this lies the strategy of the Americans, who want to tighten their hold on South Asia so as to encircle China, and that of the Indians, who want to "consolidate" their expansionist interests. It is crystal clear that the reason behind the massacre of King Birendra's entire family was his reluctance to mobilise the royal army to crush the People's War and the other forms of the Nepalese people's patriotic movement, which was marching forward by challenging this colonial master plan of the imperialists and expansionists. In this heinous massacre, the role of Gyanendra as a villain within the palace is now getting exposed. Today, the palace itself is justifying the saying "one lie leads to another lie" by conspiring to fabricate colourful theories in order to conceal the crime of this horrendous massacre. In such a situation it would be a big irony even to think that the truth will come out from the so-called investigation committee constituted by the murderers themselves.

From this whole episode it is clear that the traditional monarchy based on feudal nationalism has ended. King Birendra will always be remembered in

history for adopting a liberal policy towards the people's patriotic movement and not readily succumbing to the imperialists, mainly the Indian expansionists. The dignified patriotic Nepalese have already upheld the truth that Gyanendra, the main culprit of the massacre, cannot claim to be the King, from both a legal and moral point of view. Today, the traitorous, corrupt and murderous Girija clique has become a stooge of a stooge and destroyed even the achievements of the people's movement of 1990. There cannot be a bigger slavery than granting legitimacy to those who have committed such a heinous crime by tearing up their own constitution and value system. In this situation, to propagate that the traditional monarchy still exists and to talk of safeguarding the present constitution and parliament, which has murdered thousands of patriots from Madan Bhandari to King Birendra, eventually means playing into the murderers' hands.

In this hour of grave crisis, great historical responsibility has descended upon the whole patriotic Nepalese masses to remain firmly united and to safeguard the sovereignty of the country and the dignity of the nation. For this purpose all patriotic, democratic and leftist political groups and forces should independently initiate the process of forming a united interim government. In the present circumstances, when objectively the monarchical system has ceased to exist, the formation of an interim government will play a historic role in institutionalising the people's democratic republic. Those royal army personnel owing allegiance to King Birendra and patriotic Nepalese masses in the past should now not defend the foreign stooges and

murderers, but should perform their glorious duty towards the country by helping and giving support to the formation of the interim government of the patriotic Nepalese masses. As for those genuine patriots who saw in the king and the monarchy the means of safeguarding the country, there is no reason why they should feel terrified by the Maoist movement, towards which King Birendra had a liberal view. If two and a quarter crores [1 crore = 10 million] of Nepalese masses become united, then no power in the world can make us bend. It is not the foreign lackey and murderous Gyanendra-Girija clique but the interim government, representing the whole patriotic Nepalese masses, that can safeguard national unity and lead the country towards progress. For this our Party is prepared to unite openly with all patriotic Nepalese, with full seriousness and responsibility.

There cannot be any other method than the present one to develop Nepal into a really beautiful garden by means of a new national unity on a new basis of all the people of every oppressed class, caste, nationality, region and sex. Hence our Party makes a strong appeal to all leftist, progressive, patriotic and democratic forces and the general masses to create a powerful movement so as to consolidate the republic, which has been born with this dramatic chain of events and surprising speed, by unifying the country through an interim government. In this hour of crisis we are impatient to dedicate ourselves to serve the country with open arms.

**Chairman Prachanda**  
**Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist),**  
**Central Office**

# To the Central Committee, Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)



People's army special forces during the boycott of 1999 elections in Nepal.

1 May 2001

Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

Dear Comrades,

We would like to take the occasion of May First to send you our heartfelt congratulations for the successful convening of the Second National Conference of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (CPN(M)). Further, we would like to extend our thanks for your invitation to our Committee to attend your Conference and regret that logistical difficulties prevented us from attending. Whilst not present physically at the Conference, we were there in spirit.

Although we have eagerly read news accounts of your conference, it was only recently that we received a thorough report on the conference from the Party itself. On this basis, our Committee has discussed the Conference results and concluded that it represents a great victory for your Party and will have important positive repercussions for the international communist movement as a whole. For our part, we will study deeply the documents of the Conference, and we are sure that all of the parties and organisations of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) will do the same, so that we can even more thoroughly learn from the great advances your Party has been making.

Comrades, in just five short years you have transformed the face of Nepal. The People's War you so daringly initiated on 13 February 1996 has unleashed and mobilised the revolutionary energy of the toiling masses of your country, who have long suffered under the burden of imperialism and feudalism. You have built up a powerful people's army, which has been delivering resounding blows against the enemy, and all the more so since



Photo courtesy of Li Onesto/RW.

the victorious conclusion of your Conference. Hundreds of thousands of people have directly participated in people's power. Relying on the proletariat's alliance with the peasantry, especially the poor and landless peasants, as the core of the united front, you have united the broad masses of the people of all the revolutionary classes and strata. You have overcome feudal practices that divided the people on caste lines; you have unleashed a torrent of struggle among the women of Nepal; you have given new hope and orientation to the youth and revolutionary intellectuals; and you have defended the interests of the nation against imperialism and Indian expansionism. You have demonstrated firmness in principle in making the waging of war the central task of the Party, whilst fighting on every front to serve this central task. In short, the proletariat has put itself at the head of the whole people and is leading them forward in revolution.

The basis for these great accomplishments is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the scientific ideology that binds our Movement together. From its very foundation the comrades from Nepal have played an energetic role in RIM. With the victories won by the CPN(M) in further grasping and developing the correct political line, as well as your victories on the battlefield, this role has become all the more important in RIM and the international communist movement more generally. Your Conference has powerfully reaffirmed and further strengthened the proletarian internationalist line and orientation that has marked the CPN(M). We know that your pledge to turn Nepal

into a base area of the world revolution is not mere words; already it is reality in the making and it is exercising an increasingly important role in accelerating the world revolution, especially in the crucial South Asian region, which is seething with struggle.

Your Conference has summed up the experience of the communist movement in Nepal and especially the lessons of the last five years of the People's War. Your Conference correctly summed up the central role played by Comrade Prachanda in the process of forging a correct ideological and political line for the revolution in your country, and has formally adopted this as Prachanda Path. Our Committee salutes the recognition of Comrade Prachanda's outstanding role, which has made contributions to the whole Movement, as well as to the proletariat in Nepal, and we hail his election as Chairman of the Party.

Comrades, we all know you face great hardships and that the course of the revolution will be marked by twists and turns and unexpected developments before final victory. You know that the genuine communists the world over, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, will share your grief for the comrades who sacrifice their lives, as well as the joy of the victories wrenched from the enemy through bitter struggle. Our unity is a precious achievement of the international proletariat, and no enemy, open or disguised, can ever rupture it.

Your important achievements mean that your Party will be called upon by the communist movement in the world to carry an even heavier burden for advancing the revolution on every front, in Nepal, South Asia and on a world scale. We are fully confident that you will meet every challenge and overcome every obstacle and that, together, we will ultimately achieve our lofty goal of a world free of classes and exploitation – communism. ■

# Glory and Victory to the Foundation of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)!

Announcement by the Founding Congress of the  
Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)  
1 May 2001

On red May First, with pride and honour we declare the foundation of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) to the workers and peasants, revolutionary women and men of Iran, and to the proletariat and oppressed masses of the world. Now with the formation of a genuine Communist Party in Iran, the oppressed and in their forefront, the workers, peasants and women, can look to the future with more hope. In order for the heroic struggles of the masses not to be led astray, and their great sacrifices not to be in vain, the existence of a Maoist party is absolutely necessary. The foundation of this Party is a great achievement for the international communist movement. In 1979, the revolutionary communists around the world watched the Iranian revolution with affection and expectation, and followed its defeat with sorrow and anger. But then, shoulder to shoulder with them, the communists of Iran drew lessons from that defeat and wholeheartedly assisted the reconstruction of the communist movement in Iran so that it shall rise from its ashes like a phoenix.

The Communist Party of Iran (MLM) belongs to the new communist movement in Iran, which rose out of

the earthshaking struggles of the international communist movement against phoney Russian communism during the 1960s and 1970s. Those great struggles reached their summit with the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, led by Mao Tsetung. In fact, our Party is a product of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which developed the science of communism to its third stage of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Through those great world-wide battles, a new generation of genuine communists was born in Iran, who denounced the phoney communism of the Soviet social-imperialists and trashed the reformist and rotten path and programme of the Tudeh Party of Iran. Thus, a new era of the struggle of the working class and oppressed masses of Iran began.

Our Party is the product of the battles of two generations of revolutionary communists against the reactionary imperialist client regimes of the Shah and the Islamic Republic. This Party is the concentration of the most revolutionary experience of all the genuine communists of Iran, from the Union of Communists of Iran (Sarbedaran), which played the main role in concluding the process of the

formation of the communist party in Iran, to the experience of other communists, who, within other organisations, fought for the emancipation of the working class, built organisations for the toilers, and were fighters and guerrillas of the revolutionary struggles. Our Party declares with pride that it is the heir of the best revolutionary traditions and of the rebellions against tradition's chains by the sons and daughters of the working class and the oppressed masses of Iran.

The Communist Party of Iran (MLM) is a class party. It is the party of the working class of Iran, regardless of nationality, gender and language. This Party is the vanguard of the proletariat of Iran but belongs to all the toilers and oppressed peoples of Iran and unites and leads them in their common fight against all their suffering.

This Party is an internationalist party; it is a contingent of the world proletariat and its goal is to advance and strengthen the world revolution.

Our Party is a revolutionary party. It is the most thorough fighter against all kinds of class, national and gender oppression, but its central task is to eliminate the source of all such oppres-

sion, by means of the violent overthrow of the ruling state and the establishment of a new-democratic and socialist state.

This Party is not a male party; women along with men lead it and under no circumstances tolerate any anti-woman values or behaviour.

This Party brings together the experience and determination of communists of the old generation with the courage and aspirations of the new.

This Party is armed with the most revolutionary ideology and science of our era, that is, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism; by applying it to the particular conditions of Iran, the Party has brought about the line for victory of the proletarian revolution in Iran.

This Party does not make promises. It puts forward a plan for liberation from the dominant conditions. The Programme of the Party demonstrates how we can defeat the reactionary powers, such as the Islamic Republic and imperialists, smash these monsters and seize political power. The Programme of the Party shows how we can sweep away the old class society and build a liberating society instead, a society in which no individual enjoys any class, national or gender privilege over others.

Today, in all corners of Iran, the revolutionary masses have risen to punish the Islamic Republic regime. The Party tells the revolutionary masses that whilst all revolutionary political struggles against the Islamic Republic strike blows to it, the truth of the matter is that only the armed power of the masses (People's War) can really smash it. Thus, our Party prepares its forces and overcomes its weaknesses with the perspective of launching People's War in Iran. In all of the struggles of today, the Party trains the revolutionary masses with this objective and spirit.

As the foundation of the Communist Party is the beginning of a new era in our great struggles, the launching of the People's War in Iran ushers in a new era in our struggle to smash the old society and build a new one. Under the leadership of this Party, the working class and the oppressed masses of Iran will not only bury the greedy and oppressive clergy and their fat rich juniors, their Pasdars and generals, but will also bury their system. It will have no pity towards any of their political, economic or cultural vestiges.

We will not only overthrow the Islamic Republic, but will also not let any other reactionary clique replace it. This Party will never enter into the game of choosing between bad and worse. This Party will remind people of the bitter experience of the 1979 Revolution, that we should never forget how Khomeini and his clan replaced the Shah's regime. At that time, the working class of Iran lacked a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist vanguard party and did not have its own Programme and plan for revolution to wield against the plan and programme of the reactionary religious forces and to stand up to them with full force. As a result, the working class, lacking its vanguard, was not able to lead the struggles and social upheavals towards victory and real emancipation. Instead, a reactionary clique rode on the waves of the struggles of the masses, grabbed political power and reinforced the same political suppression and economic exploitation in even more intense ways. Having learnt our lesson, the Communist Party of Iran (MLM) will strive fearlessly and with full force to put the flag of its path and Programme into the hands of the workers, peasants, women and militant youth, so that oppressive and exploiting forces in new guise cannot once again steal the leadership of the revolutionary masses and divert the immense sacrifices of the masses into their personal accounts. If the best place for the most backward and perverse elements of society is in the state institutions for guarding the system of slavery and oppression that is the Islamic Republic, the place for the most advanced and justice-aspiring women and men of society is in the ranks of the Communist Party of Iran (MLM) and in the forefront of the battle against the old world. This Party clearly declares that yes, there is indeed a Programme and path that guarantees victory. If this Programme and path is carried through, with the courage and sacrifice of thousands and thousands of revolutionary women and men in the midst of blood and fire, victory will undoubtedly belong to the working class and the oppressed masses of Iran.

Today, not only in Iran, but throughout the world, the signs of a new wave of resistance and struggle against the imperialists and reactionaries have emerged. The oppressed masses around the world are rising up

against the boundless crimes of the world capitalist system and pounding furiously at the gates of greed and oppression. Today in Turkey, tomorrow in Palestine, in Los Angeles and Brazil. But the revolutionary masses of the world urgently need Maoist theory and Maoist parties to lead their struggle towards triumph. Our Communist Party, along with Maoist parties and organisations from around the world (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Colombia, India, Italy, Nepal, Peru, Sri Lanka, Turkey, USA, etc.) have founded an international communist centre called the "Revolutionary Internationalist Movement" to spread the influence of communist theory (that is, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism) throughout the world and to assist revolutionaries from different countries in their efforts to form revolutionary communist parties.

On this red May First we declare the foundation of the vanguard party of the multi-national proletariat of Iran and proclaim that, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Iran (MLM), the revolution in Iran will advance in the service of the world-wide march towards communism. This Party will never turn its back on the proletariat and people. In the face of the most vicious attacks of the Islamic and non-Islamic stooges of world capitalism, in the face of its anti-communist hues and cries, and the glittering of its technological and military arsenal, this Party will never abandon communism and will not take a single step back from the cause of the international proletariat.

**Glory to the Red Memory of the Comrades who Watered the Tree of Communism in Iran with their Blood!**

**Down with the Islamic Republic and its Imperialist Masters!**

**Long Live the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)!**

**Forward in the Preparation and Initiation of the People's War in Iran!**

**Towards New-democratic Revolution!**

**Long Live Revolution, Long Live Communism!**

**Long Live Proletarian Revolution!**

**Long Live the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement!**

**Long Live Red First of May!**

What follows is excerpted from the opening speech of the Founding Congress of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) (CPI(MLM)), which was printed in *Haghighat*, the central organ of the CPI(MLM), Number 1, June 2001.

...This Party has 30 years of history behind it; a 30-year period that was one of the most tumultuous periods in the history of Iran and the world. The generation that came out of this period has seen the [Chinese] Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR), liberation movements around the globe, revolution in Iran, the initiation of the People's Wars in Peru and Nepal, dozens of wars, mass struggle and resistance around the world, and the collapse of a social-imperialist superpower.

The starting layers of our leaders and cadres came from the universities (from Tehran to Berkeley); they came from the schools of Kurdistan and from the oil fields of Khoozestan. In opposition to the suffocating claws of goulash communism, Khrush-

chevite revisionism and Tudeh Party reformism, they chose the new, revolutionary path that Mao Tsetung's Red China opened up to the communists of the world. The shining rays of the GPCR gave this generation a new outlook on the future and on the kind of world it must fight for. In this context, our first leaders formed the Organisation of Revolutionary Communists and then the Union of Communists of Iran (Sarbedaran) (UIC(S)). Many of those comrades lost their lives in battles against the Islamic

Republic of Iran. But the red path that they chose, the foundations that they laid and the orientation that they chalked up for us is a great heritage. Eternal glory to them!

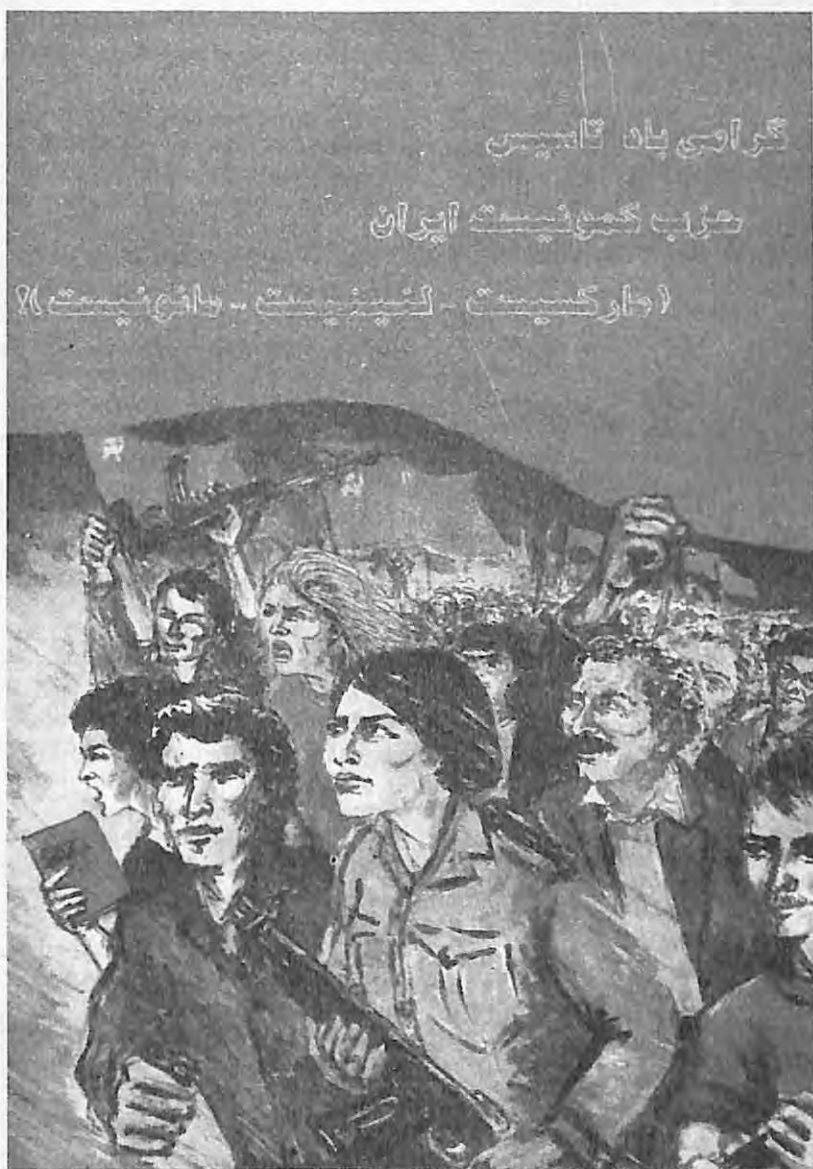
When the UIC(S) stepped onto the field of a big, mass revolution [Iran, 1979], its strengths and qualities fused with the strengths, perseverance and experience of other communist leaders and comrades from different corners of the country, from Kurdistan to Khoozestan; it fused with the leaders and activists of mass movements, workers' movements and student movements; all this added to its communist qualities. We faced the great test of revolution and with all our power we tried to prevent the revolution of the masses from being defeated. Old and new comrades engaged in revolutionary work, in factories, the countryside, universities, the women's movement, and the armed struggle in Kurdistan, in order to sow the seeds of revolutionary consciousness and mobilise and organise the masses in the fight against the reactionaries who had seized power. And when the enemy launched its country-wide, uninterrupted attack on the revolution, we initiated armed struggle and launched the Amol insurrection. In this way, we raised the flag of independent communist struggle and nurtured it with our precious lives. In this struggle and in the enemy's subsequent security operations, we lost the main body of our leadership and a large section of our cadres and members. The enemy carried out constant search-and-destroy operations. Many fellow travellers pulled out. Those who remained had the heavy, difficult task of preserving the UIC(S) and continuing on the path, so that the next generation would not be deprived of revolutionary politics and organisation.

# Speech at the CPI(MLM) Founding Congress

Three Sarbedaran leaders, killed in or shortly after the Amol uprising.



## Celebrar la Formacion del Partido Comunista de Iran (marxist-leninist-maoist)!



## Celebrate the Founding of the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)!

Above: Poster of the Founding Congress of CPI (MLM).

Below: A group of Sarbedaran fighters in the forests near Amol in 1981.



The attacks of the enemy in 1983 and again in 1985 broke up another attempt to initiate armed struggle. After that, the need for a more thorough rupture was felt and a new chapter was opened in the life of the UIC(S). The first rupture was to deal with centrism on the question of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and firmly grasp Maoism. The formation of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, and its *Declaration*, played a vital role in overcoming the crisis within the international communist movement in the aftermath of the coup in China. The existence of this Movement and its *Declaration* was of decisive service in our rupture from centrism and in the consolidation of Maoism in the UIC(S). On the basis of this ideological leap we were able to rectify the eclecticism in our political line. We carried out intense internal struggles to rectify our line and strategy. In this process, the assistance of our international comrades and the shining example of the People's War in Peru were factors that gave us tremendous help in arriving at a correct ideological and political line. The great and victorious product of this period was the adoption of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as our guiding ideology and the establishment of people's war as the strategy for seizing power in Iran.

The red line that links up these different periods in our 30-year history is perseverance in the interests of the people and in the cause of communism. Falling down, rising up again, committing errors, making breakthroughs... ours was a trajectory full of ups and downs, sometimes harsh ones. When we raised the flag of proletarian revolution in Iran, staying on a revolutionary path was no easy, smooth affair. When we were reduced from a large, nation-wide organisation linked to the masses to a small one hunted by the enemy, and then reduced to an organisation in exile with our links to the masses broken, many thought we were finished. But in front of the amazed eyes of those who, after the annihilation of several layers of our leadership, preached liquidation to us, we stayed organised and reconstructed the UIC(S) on a communist basis. At a time when the big so-called left organisations broke apart under the rubble of the collapse of the East and anti-communist propaganda, the UIC(S) deepened its communist line.

This organisation and its people have emerged from a big test. Perseverance and firmness has been one of our characteristics. This is a Party that defeats never demoralised and that endured hardship because it is well aware that the main purpose of Marxism is to change the world.... ■

# On the Present Situation in Iran and the Tasks of the Party

Adopted by the Founding Congress of the CPI (MLM)

1. The question of political power and how to settle accounts with that has now become the central question and focal point of the attention of society. This situation is unprecedented since the crisis period of 1981-1982. Different classes and strata in one way or another and to different degrees are challenging the present miserable and intolerable situation. The ruling reaction and its monstrous Islamic system is hated and condemned by the masses. Religion has lost its legitimacy among the masses.

2. The Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) (CPI(MLM)) has been born under these conditions and has established that the central task of the revolution is the seizure of political power through the strategy of people's war, and it is preparing for this.

3. During the present period, the intensification of the contradictions the different classes and strata have with the regime has given rise to different forms of struggle and resistance. At the same time, splits and in-fighting within the ruling class have intensified.

4. The present period is characterised by mass movements of different classes and strata. The masses have used various forms of struggle and resistance spontaneously and have dealt blows to the regime. The righteous movement of the workers against poverty, misery and exploitation continues without interruption. In the past several months this movement has intensified and become more organised; it has adopted more militant forms of struggle, and in some cases it has rebuffed the bosses and the state. The student movement and the resistance and opposition of the women and youth to oppression and political, social and cultural discrimination have developed. In the countryside, the peasants are protesting against the economic policies of the regime; in the shanty towns, the struggle of the impoverished masses is growing; and finally the oppressed nations are fighting for their just de-

mands, especially in Kurdistan.

5. In recent years, cracks and fissures within the ranks of the Islamic Republic have been developing around which policy to adopt against the intensifying struggles of the masses, especially how to suppress and contain them. The campaign of the "Second Khordad" [the date of the presidential elections when the so-called reformer Khatami became president, in May 1997] was put forward by the ruling class in order to contain and divert the struggles of the people and in this way save the Islamic Republic from its death.

The architects of the "Second Khordad" or "national reconciliation" campaign have tried to forge an alliance with the vacillating forces outside the regime - those who are called "national-religious" forces as well as reformist intellectuals who are discontent with the regime. By forging such an alliance the regime has attempted to gain the support of the masses and divert their struggles. This alliance is in fact a class alliance between the political representatives of the middle bourgeoisie on the one hand and the regime as representative of the bourgeois-landlord classes dependent on imperialism, on the other hand. This strategy calls upon the angry and hate-filled masses to calm down and reconcile; it spreads the policy of non-violence and pacification among the masses. This strategy tries to waste the fighting energy of the masses by holding "election campaigns" and uses the masses as an ignorant army of one or the other faction of the regime. They try to propagate the paralysing view that the masses should choose between "bad and worse" and hinge their hopes on promises of reform and improvement under the Islamic Republic. The lynchpin of the strategy of "national reconciliation" is that the people, hoping for salvation from their miserable situation, have no choice but to extend their hands to the lords of this regime.

6. The strategy of "national reconciliation" is the application of a global policy which the imperialists are imple-

menting in the different parts of the world in order to contain and control the ever-intensifying mass movements. The deepening poverty and misery of the masses around the world has given rise to these movements. Even though the internal contradictions among the different factions of the Islamic Republic have their roots in different rival economic, political and military groupings, each with different international connections, nevertheless the regime as a whole is supported by the imperialist powers. The imperialists try to establish a kind of stability and calm favourable to themselves and reduce political and social tensions that could lead to the weakening and disintegration of the Islamic Republic. They are afraid of the development and intensification of the mass struggle, which could wrench control of society from the hands of the Islamic regime. Under the present conditions, the imperialists pursue these aims by supporting the "Second Khordad" campaign and the rectification, but not elimination, of the present regime. It is true that there is open rivalry among the US, European and Russian imperialist powers over the scope and depth of their domination over this region, but given the balance of power and the mitigation of the competition between them in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet bloc, today they are more able to follow common policies in Iran.

7. Splits and cracks within the Islamic Republic regime has weakened the ruling class. This has in turn opened some avenues for the masses to enter the field of struggle. The cracks among the different factions of the regime are real, but they all have one common aim and that is to save the ruling system. These two factions of the Islamic Republic are "two wings of one bird". One faction's moderateness complements the other faction's extremism. The conservatives create credit for the "reformers" through their untamed terror and suppression. The "reformers" calm and dope the masses and open the way for the suppressive measures of the conservatives.

When the existence and interests of the system are seriously challenged, they both join hands in suppressing the struggle of the masses.

8. Through the presidential election of the "Second Khordad" in [May] 1997 the regime succeeded in spreading illusions [about the possibility of the system reforming itself] among the masses and bought some time and opportunity for itself. But in recent years, with the exposure of the empty promises of the new president and his ilk and with the intensification of the suppression of the masses, in which the new president's faction joined hands with the conservative faction, important blows have been dealt to the "Second Khordad" campaign. During this period the mass movements of the different popular classes and strata have increased, and a new round of struggle of the masses against the regime has started. This new round is irreversible and the country is pregnant with upheavals and explosive events.

9. Under such conditions the struggle of the masses against the ruling class sometimes intertwines with in-fighting within the ruling class. On the one hand, the "Second Khordad" faction tries to employ tricks in order to infiltrate the mass movements and blur the line of demarcation between the people and the regime. And on the other hand, sometimes the in-fighting within the ruling class fans the flames of upheaval, which gets out of their control. It is important to adopt policies and revolutionary methods that prevent the enemy from mixing with the ranks of the people.

#### POLITICAL LINE AND TENDENCIES

The heightened activity of the different class forces gives rise to contradictory political tendencies. These tendencies are reflected in all the social movements and influence them positively or negatively. Under the present conditions, we can mainly observe the following political lines and tendencies:

1. The reformist line propagates "electoral stupidity" and legalism (i.e. containing the struggle within the framework of the constitution of the Islamic Republic) and opposes violent struggle against the regime. Middle bourgeoisie and well-off petite bourgeoisie, who are active under the name of

"national-religious forces", spread this line. This line provides the main base for the "Second Khordad" campaign; the regime makes use of these forces to carry out its "Second Khordad" campaign to save its system.

2. The line of supporting conciliation with imperialism (the pro-imperialist line) is propagated by a broad alliance, which extends from the ruling class itself to those outside the regime, including the overthrown [in February 1979] reactionary monarchist forces. These forces try to shove down the throat of the masses the view that the only solution to the economic problems and difficulties is to establish more open and deeper relations with imperialism. In this way they want to weaken the spirit of self-reliance and self-belief among the masses and keep them waiting for the mercies of the imperialists, thus paralysing the people.

3. The chauvinist line, under the slogan of "Iran for Iranians", is a common point that unites the "Second Khordad" alliance. This slogan is now raised by a section of the ruling class and is supported by the "national-religious" forces. The middle bourgeoisie, frightened by the spectre of the disintegration of the status quo and the economy and the dangers to the country's sovereignty, increasingly clings to nationalism. This line tries to develop a harmful tendency among the working people of the different nations of Iran, as well as between the oppressed masses of Iran and Afghanistan. This kind of tendency sows the seeds of disunity among the working people and undermines the united struggle of the people against the Islamic regime.

4. In recent years the nationalism of the oppressed nations has become stronger. It is true that this nationalism is just. But unlike the period of the 1979 revolution, when the communists and revolutionaries had an important role to play in the movements of the oppressed nations, today it is the reformist current that has more influence. For example, today a strong current within the Kurdish bourgeois class (outside the organisations of the Kurdish movement) has united with the strategy of the "Second Khordad" and spread a reformist line within the Kurdish movement. Under the influence of this cur-

rent, the line of the leading organisations of the national struggle in Kurdistan has increasingly become reformist in relation to the ruling power. This nationalist tendency has a negative influence on the development of a nation-wide general movement for the overthrow of the reactionary regime.

5. In opposition to the above-mentioned lines and tendencies, which hamper the advance of the mass movements against the regime, a different tendency has risen from the womb of the mass outbreaks and struggles: radicalism, a militant and violent approach towards the ruling political power. This tendency is an expression of the class steadfastness of the basic masses of society; it is a reflection of the intense oppression and exploitation they suffer and of the violent conditions of their life and labour. One remarkable way this tendency is expressed is identifying and punishing the mercenaries and spies of the Islamic Republic in the midst of the mass upheavals and ambushing them in popular neighbourhoods. Another example is the attacking and burning of military patrols, police posts, banks and government buildings. As the uselessness of the reformist lines is exposed, radicalism grows and develops more and more among the masses. Along with the development of this favourable tendency, which provides more possibilities for developing revolutionary thinking among the masses, there is also a strong current, especially among the youth, to rupture with religion and to develop hatred towards the Sharia [Islamic rules and regulations] and superstition.

6. Given the above-mentioned objective and subjective factors, the instability and the ever-deepening crisis and frictions, there will continue to be mass rebellions and ever-growing struggle. The intensification of the poverty, lack of rights, futurelessness and insecurity experienced by the masses; the inability of the regime and its imperialist supporters to deal with the increasing problems within the society; the ineffectiveness of relying only on methods of continuous and naked suppression; and the coming to the political field of a new generation free from a defeatist and capitulationist spirit – these are all factors ensuring that the intensification of crisis and social upheaval is the most probable trend.

7. Under these conditions, as a result

of the social upheaval, some changes in the form and structure of the regime and some shifts in the reactionary political power might occur. But even in that case, the central task of the communists, the seizure of political power through people's war, will not change.

#### REVOLUTIONARY OPPORTUNITIES

1. A mentality of changing the present order has penetrated the different layers of society, and large sections of the masses feel not only the necessity for, but also the possibility of, change. The masses have set foot in the field of struggle in great numbers. Their struggle is continuous and developing. The masses are developing radical forms of struggle that seize the offensive. Today, the masses feel the absence of a leading revolutionary force; they search for a philosophy, a path, which can deal with the fundamental problems of society and carry them towards their dreams and desires. They need a leading revolutionary party and they have asked for it in a thousand ways.

2. The position of the regime in the regions of the oppressed nations has become weaker and more brittle. Specifically in Kurdistan, where there has been two decades of experience in armed struggle, today the desire to resort to arms and violent struggle against the enemy is strong among the masses. Moreover, splits amongst the different factions of the regime have, in some cases, even led to the violent resolution of their disputes. Police authority has weakened.

3. Under these circumstances, in order to develop and extend its influence in society, the Party has a fundamental strength that other class forces lack: the ideology, political line, Programme and strategy of the Communist Party, which corresponds to the short-term and long-term interests of the oppressed masses and to their radicalism. The communists, in competition with other class forces, and in the struggle to overcome their lagging behind and to win over the masses, can be victorious only by persisting with revolutionary ideology and extremely hard work in order to advance and spread the Party's Programme and path.

#### THE PRESENT POLITICAL TASK OF THE PARTY FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE'S WAR

1. In order to accumulate and develop its forces as a step towards the initiation of people's war, the Communist Party must clarify its political tasks in the present situation. By carrying out its tasks with perseverance and resoluteness, the Party will be able to overcome its lagging behind in a decisive way and come to the fore of the class struggle. With clear political mind and courage, in practice it will be able to specify and chart its tasks and carry them out as necessary steps towards the initiation of people's war. This will play a decisive role in coming from behind to the fore.

2. The Party must be part of the mass movements and put forward its revolutionary policies and struggle to give them a revolutionary direction; it should win over, mobilise and organise forces from amongst the mass movements. The arena of activity of the Party should be those movements that provide more potential for strengthening our vanguard Party, provide more material for the initiation of the people's war and create favourable conditions for the development of the revolution. In the service of carrying out these tasks, the Party should expose and render ineffective every strategy that the enemy employs to contain the movements of the masses and its own crisis. At every step, the Party must expose the aims of the suppressive measures and the deceptive plans of the Islamic reactionaries. The Party should use the present opportunity for organising the struggles of the masses against these plans – today specifically against the electoral campaigns of the regime.

3. The Party should fight against the reactionary and conciliatory lines and tendencies that are put forward by the ruling and bourgeois classes and that influence the ranks of the people. Against the reformist line, the Party should uphold the line of violent overthrow; against the pro-imperialist line, the line of independence and self-reliance; against religious and superstitious thought, scientific and advanced dialectical materialist thought; against chauvinism and nationalism, the line of internationalism, as well as the right to self-determination of nations, up to

secession; and it must expose, and fight against, patriarchal and male-dominating views.

4. The Communist Party of Iran (MLM) should propagate its Programme and Constitution among the broad masses. It should determine the disunities and unities that exist between the programme, line and aims of the different parties of the popular classes with that of the working class and new-democratic revolution. It should continuously clarify and propagate the line of demarcation with these other parties. This should serve to forge a popular united front under the leadership of the Party.

5. The Party should determine strategic and tactical, general and particular slogans for each period and popularise these amongst the masses. Slogans such as:

Long Live Revolution, Long Live Communism!

Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

Raise High the Victorious Flag of People's War!

Long Live the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement! Long Live Proletarian Internationalism!

Long Live the New-democratic Revolution towards Socialism! Down with the Islamic Republic and Its Imperialists Masters!

Break the Chains and Unleash the Fury of Women as a Mighty Force for Revolution!

Join the Ranks of the Communist Party of Iran (MLM)!

Join the Preparation for the People's War!

The Right to Self-determination to the Point of Secession!

Down with the Theocratic Regime! Down with the Islamic Republic!

Political Prisoners must be Freed! Down with the Enemy of the Youth!

Smash Electoral Deception! Burn the Compulsory Hejab [the Islamic covering]!

Freedom of Thought is Impossible under this Regime!

Make Kurdistan the Cemetery of the Fascists!

Land to the Peasants!

The Right to Organise, the Right to Strike!

Imprisoned Workers must be Freed!

Condemn the Expulsion of Afghanistani Immigrants!

## Appendix to the Political Resolution:

(The complete Appendix is available from AWTW upon request.)

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### ANALYSIS OF THE MASS MOVEMENT AND TASKS OF THE PARTY

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The repeated mass outbreaks and the more ongoing movements of the different classes and strata increasingly draw the masses into political life. The scope of these struggles differ and they encompass various forces....

The mass movements are an important arena for accumulating our primary forces for initiating the people's war. This activity should be carried out in such a way that it does not become a stage in and of itself, because the people's war will not grow out of these movements spontaneously. In the same way that the people's war will not grow out of the reformist mass movements, it will also not grow spontaneously out of revolutionary political struggles. Even though during the present period it is necessary to carry out various activities amongst the masses, the initiation of the people's war will not be a continuation of the current mass struggle. To initiate the highest form of struggle, which is the armed struggle, active and specific preparation will be required.

Mao said that before the initiation of people's war everything should serve its initiation. This must be done in close and active connection with the class struggle and revolutionary practice. The Party must deal with the important political questions and struggles of the day that concern the masses; it should analyse them and clarify its position regarding them and carry this out with maximum effort in both words and deeds.

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#### MASS OUTBREAKS

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Spontaneous and militant mass outbreaks mainly happen in working class and poor neighbourhoods of the cities around economic demands and oppression by the state apparatus....

From an ideological point of view, despite the general hatred that these basic masses have for the Islamic regime, religious and superstitious views are influential among them. Belief in a god-given destiny is still an important

fetter on the fighting energy of the masses. The ruling reaction on the one hand spreads the opium of religion, and on the other hand spreads the real drug opium among the youth in order to kill their rebellious spirit. Moreover, the Islamic ideology and culture that is dominant in the society spreads male chauvinist oppressive and misogynist anti-women views and behaviour amongst these masses. This is an important factor that divides the ranks of the people. National chauvinism (the ugliest of which is aimed at the Afghanistani masses) and religious discrimination (Shiat against Sunni and Islam against other religions) are two other factors consciously employed by the regime to divide the masses. In order to develop a revolutionary influence on the movements of the toiling masses, the Party must propagate and agitate for the unity and solidarity of the toilers of all nations; it must encourage and support the participation of women in these movements; and it must ruthlessly criticise national and gender-based discrimination and degradation. The Party must not only take hope and optimism among the poor masses, but also put forward a clear vision of the possibility of change and the real path of liberation. The Party must also propagate the necessity of revolutionary unity amongst them and with the other sections of the masses.

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#### THE WORKERS' STRUGGLE

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The workers' movement ... continues without interruption. In recent years these movements have become more militant. The workers occupy factories, take officials hostage, shut down the roads and highways around the factories and engage the suppressive forces of the state. The workers' movement is spontaneous and unorganised....

One relatively old tendency in the workers' movement is independent syndicalism and economism. This trend exists in the form of scattered circles, some of whose members belonged to left organisations during the period of the 1979 revolution. From an ideological point of view, some of these circles are against having a revolutionary party and oppose the need to arm the advanced forces of the workers' movement, and the working class in

general, with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.... Politically this trend moves the masses away from revolutionary struggle against the regime; it reduces the horizons of the struggle and instead organises the workers to struggle for economic demands. In this way, they not only undermine the role and influence of the workers in the general mass movements, but they also undermine the ability of the workers' movement to impose its demands on the enemy and rebuff its attacks....

But the most important problem with the economist and syndicalist line is that they deny the duty of the working class to lead the armed revolution with the aim of overthrowing the oppressive and exploitative order and move to socialism and world communism. This line merely calls on the workers to struggle for their economic demands and recognises the economic organisations of the workers as the main tool and the strike as the most important method of struggle. So the communist vanguard must fight this line essentially around the issue of the basic aims and organisation of the working class and its strategy for seizing political power.

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#### PEASANTS' STRUGGLE

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During the past few years, different strata of the peasants have carried out struggles around different issues. But these struggles have been overlooked or forgotten due to their scattered, limited nature and their low political influence, compared to the struggles in the cities. Some of the issues of the peasants' struggle have included struggle against the return of the big landlords to the countryside because the state has given them back their land; struggle against the state's method of pricing [the state buys their produce and sells them materials such as fertiliser and seeds]; and struggle over public services such as education and health in the countryside. These struggles have been carried out in the form of demonstrations in front of state offices, attacking returnee landlords with the aim of repossessing land, closing roads and engaging the state police force. In some regions, such as Kurdistan, where national oppression is merged with other class and social oppression, the peasant struggle has continued under the umbrella of the

national movement....

The countryside and peasant strata continue to carry the heavy burden of semi-feudal relations, tradition and religious superstition. Patriarchal and religious male chauvinist views have deep roots in the countryside. Therefore, it is necessary to spread revolutionary ideology and to fight against the different aspects of reactionary ideology and tradition in order to unleash the energy of the masses in the countryside and to bring forward the advanced men and women.

In order for the Party to carry out the strategy of people's war, with the poor peasant masses its main force and the countryside its main battleground, it has to unleash the hidden revolutionary forces in the countryside. The village youth are extremely deprived of the possibility of work and pastimes, are searching for work or education, and have to commute between the city and countryside; they engage in poli-

tics more than others and have the greatest potential to absorb revolutionary consciousness and join the anti-regime organisations and struggles. It is also important to support the peasant movement and popularise the peasants' demands in other mass movements and struggles.

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#### THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

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...The Communist Party can and must mobilise and organise fresh, persistent and militant forces from amongst the oppressed masses, the toiling women and the revolutionary fighters of the women's emancipation movement. This is necessary for carrying out proletarian revolution and training leaders and fighters for the Party and the people's war. The Party must encourage the women to break the chains of tradition, which have been imposed on them by family and society. The Party must expose the tricks that the reactionary Is-

lamic Republic employs against women, such as "Islamic feminism"....

...Moreover, the Party must fight against the revisionist and reductionist line that denies the necessity of struggling against the oppression of women as one of the vital fronts of struggle against the reactionary system. These lines negate this necessity under the guise of upholding "class struggle". The Party should also criticise reformist thinking and policies within the women's movement.

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#### THE YOUTH MOVEMENT

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The youth movement is expressed mainly in movements in the neighbourhoods and the student movement.... The resistance of the neighbourhood youth has intensified in recent years to the point that they organise and plan to beat and even kill the para-military youth forces of the regime. The Islamic Republic, frightened that these violent

## Message to the Founding Congress of the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement 1 May 2001

Dear Comrades,

Rarely has a vanguard party of the proletariat been so sorely needed or so thoroughly prepared as the newly founded Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist) (CPI(MLM)). Since even before the formation of the Union of Communists of Iran (Sarbedaran) in 1976, revolutionaries of your country, armed with the liberating ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, struggled mightily for this ideology to take root in the soil of the struggles of the peoples of Iran and to build a proletarian party, which alone can lead the people out of the hell in which they are now trapped by imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

We know only too well the history of the last several decades: the protracted struggles carried out against the US-backed regime of the Shah; the struggles within the Iranian revolutionary movement itself, between those who sought an easy ride to power by hitching themselves to the Soviet superpower and the Maoists who upheld the road of people's war; and the exuberance of the whole Iranian people when the hated despot was finally

chased from his throne.

In that great revolutionary movement the young forces of the Iranian Maoist movement played a vigorous role and their ranks and influence grew by leaps and bounds. But the communist movement of your country had not yet achieved the crucial step of forming a vanguard proletarian party. As a result of this and other factors, the proletariat, whilst fighting heroically, was not able to take its necessary place at the head of the whole people.

Instead, a filthy band of mullahs, representing a reactionary feudal ideology, was able to hoodwink a large section of the people fed up with the Shah's imperialist-sponsored "modernisation". The weakness of the communists, including some ideological and political errors on their part, made it difficult to "go against the tide" that was sweeping the country at that time, and the leadership of Khomeini was not sufficiently challenged.

We all know the tragic results of Khomeini's betrayal: the thousands of executions, the abolition of any democratic rights, the trampling of minority nationalities, the barbaric efforts to repress the Iranian women whose revolu-

tionary spirit had so flourished in the revolution against the Shah, and the terror imposed throughout the whole society, which made the repression of the Shah look pale by comparison. Yet, at the very height of this fascist, obscurantist assault on the people and on the revolution, comrades of the Union of Communists of Iran (Sarbedaran) raised high the red flag of armed revolution in the city and forests of Amol. Although this uprising was defeated, Sarbedaran wrote a glorious page in the history of the people's struggle, which even wholesale massacre and torture and long, bitter years of exile could not wipe out.

Throughout the twists and turns of the revolutionary struggle in Iran, in the cruellest moments, as well as in times of a revolutionary tidal wave, it has been the Maoists, and only the Maoists, who have represented the long-term interests of the proletariat and the people. And it has been only the genuine communists that have been able to learn from the experience of the people and from their own mistakes to provide clearer and more correct leadership, whilst never renouncing the vision and orientation of fight-

struggles might grow, arrest and execute these militant youth....

The youth increasingly hate the yoke of religion and the chain of tradition. This provides favourable ground to spread new and advanced proletarian thinking among the young people. In order to utilise this favourable ground, the Communist Party must fight against superstitious, religious and traditionalist beliefs, habits and behaviours, as well as against male chauvinist and national chauvinist values and views among the youth. The Party must find ways to arm the new generation of fighters with the political experience of the previous revolutionary generation....

#### THE KURDISH MOVEMENT

The Kurdish movement has strategic importance from the point of view of some of the goals of the proletarian revolution (solving the land and the

national question) as well as from the point of view of the strategy of people's war and the establishment of base areas. We have direct and close experience of the role played by the Kurdish movement in the course of the 1979 revolution and its aftermath. The Kurdish movement demonstrated its revolutionary potential even after the bloody suppression, retreat and setback of the political-military forces of this region and even during the deceptive campaign of the "Second Khordad". In the last three years there have been several mass outbreaks in Kurdistan, mainly launched by young women and men....

During the present period, the nationalist trend within the Kurdish movement has become stronger. At the same time, the forces of this movement have come to a dead-end in carrying out their armed struggle, and this has led them to undermine or even negate the armed struggle in the theoretical

sphere....

[Changes] could result in the loosening or even collapse of central government rule in this region and the formation of power by regional parties. It is also possible that a new round of armed struggle and military engagement will start in the region. This would open up a favourable opportunity for the Party to develop its influence. In order for the Party to be in a position to influence the situation, the Party from today must deal with the key questions of the Kurdish movement: it has to propagate the necessity and possibility of developing armed struggle in Kurdistan; it has to expose all the tricks and manoeuvres of the regime and the imperialists regarding Kurdistan; and it has to struggle with harmful reformist tendencies and truncated nationalist solutions for class and national questions in Kurdistan. ■

## Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)

ing to rid the whole world of class exploitation.

The formation of the vanguard communist party in Iran represents a truly great step in the history of class struggle in your country, which will no doubt have profound ramifications in the whole region and beyond. While the formation of the party alone will not automatically solve all the problems of leading the revolution forward, its formation is the necessary and indispensable precondition for advance.

Mao Tsetung taught: "The correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything." The history of the Iranian communist movement also underscores both aspects of this profound truth. Where are the large opportunist organisations of the past? Their right and "left"-in-form errors have led them into political, ideological and organisational bankruptcy. The future belongs to the vanguard proletarian party built on a solid Marxist-Leninist-Maoist foundation, with a core of tested, trained and tempered cadres wholly devoted to the cause of the people. With such a party, great deeds will be accomplished.

From the very formation of the

Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, the comrades from Iran have played a central role. Despite being severely weakened by the attacks of the enemy, you took upon your shoulders a heavy burden in the fight for the Maoist line internationally, and your class determination and revolutionary optimism added considerable strength to our fledgling efforts to regroup the genuine Maoist forces. We have grown stronger together and learnt from each other, and our unity is unbreakable.

Today the masses in Iran are again awakening to political life. The terror of the enemy, whilst in no way diminishing, is less able to intimidate the people. The illusion of "reform" by a so-called democratic section of the ruling class is badly tattered, despite the efforts of many opportunists to patch up these illusions. The conditions of the masses are intolerable, and they yearn for revolution.

But history has shown, in Iran and everywhere, that however heroically the people struggle, it is only under the leadership of the proletarian party that real liberation can be achieved. Only by waging a protracted people's

war will it be possible to rip Iran free from the clutches of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism and cleanse the society of the ugly and vicious sores that reactionary rule has produced. We know that the CPI(MLM) has set itself the extremely difficult task of organising, initiating and leading such a people's war to victory. We are confident that with this Marxist-Leninist-Maoist line in command, the genuine revolutionary elements of your country, and most especially the workers and the poor peasants, will increasingly come to see that this line and no other, that this Party and no other, can pioneer the way forward.

Comrades, however difficult and tortuous the road ahead remains, the formation of your Party makes the future that much brighter for the people of Iran and for the whole international proletariat.

**Long Live the Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)!**  
**Glory to the Martyrs of the Iranian Communist Movement!**  
**Forward to People's War!**

# Joint Statement of the Organisations

June 2001

Beside the signatories to this call, other parties were also invited to the founding meeting and who could not attend, among them so far Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) Naxalbari, CPI (ML) Naxalbari, has joined the initiative. Other signatories will be forthcoming. — AWTW

We, the undersigned Maoist parties and organisations of South Asia, proclaim the formation of the Co-ordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA) and issue this joint statement:

Under the signboard of “globalisation”, “structural adjustment” and “open market economy”, world imperialism has announced its global agenda to further intensify the domination, exploitation and oppression of the people. This agenda reflects a new spiral of crisis of world imperialism, bringing about the inevitability of even more misery, horror, devastation and war, on a world scale.

The proletariat and the oppressed people of the world continue to resist this agenda by raising revolutionary struggles, targeting imperialism and the subservient reactionary ruling classes of different countries and generating a new wave of people’s struggles all over the world, particularly in the oppressed countries.

As Mao formulated, the oppressed countries constitute the storm centres of world revolution, and revolution is the main trend in the world today. The region of South Asia continues to pro-

vide a concentrated expression of this truth.

South Asia, with more than one-fifth of the world’s population, is a simmering volcano, as recognised by the imperialists themselves. All the major contradictions in the region are intensifying and call for revolutionary solutions.

Inspired by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, the historic Naxalbari armed uprising under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar served to ignite sparks of protracted people’s war in different parts of South Asia. The drums of Naxalbari continue to reverberate throughout South Asia and beyond. The protracted people’s wars, which are advancing in Nepal and India (Andhra, Dandakaranya, Bihar, etc.), and the preparations for initiating protracted people’s war in the region basically derive their origins from the “Spring Thunder” of Naxalbari.

National liberation movements are also continuing in Kashmir, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and other north-eastern areas [of India], and in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Various people’s struggles against imperialism and the reactionary ruling classes are also surging forward.

The irresistible advance of the new-democratic revolution and the protracted People’s War in Nepal under the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) [CPN(M)], along with the protracted People’s Wars in India led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (People’s War) [CPI(ML)(PW)] and the Maoist Communist Centre [MCC], are changing the

political geography and revolutionary dynamics of South Asia. The emerging new wave of protracted people’s war is clearly visible in the South Asian region. The Indian ruling classes, under the leadership of the Bharat People’s Party (BJP), are sharpening their offensive against the on-going protracted people’s wars and the various national-ity movements in India. Various operational command units have been formed to suppress these struggles, and the central government is directly co-ordinating all the various operations. The BJP, a Hindu chauvinist force, is rapidly transforming the state into a fascist apparatus and is adopting newer and newer black laws to crush all types of democratic movements in India, surpassing all its predecessors. It has also started functioning as the gendarme of US imperialism in order to fulfil its expansionist ambitions, suppressing people’s movements in the sub-continent, particularly threatening armed intervention in Nepal.

The reactionary ruling classes in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bhutan are intensifying their fascist repression of the masses and of the democratic, progressive and Maoist revolutionary forces.

In spite of vicious fascist repression, the masses continue to resist and are struggling forward in the region. The Indian expansionist state, backed by world imperialism, particularly US imperialism, constitute the common enemy of the people of South Asia. This provides a concrete political basis for building the unity of the South Asian revolutionary forces. The in-

# Maoist Parties and of South Asia

creasing collusion between US imperialism and Indian expansionism can be clearly seen in the politics of the region in recent years.

This can be seen clearly in the recent developments in Nepal. However much the imperialists and their lackeys try to cover up the real politics behind the brutal massacre of the royal family of Nepal, the people know the truth. The crisis that led to the massacre is directly related to the development of the new-democratic revolution and protracted People's War in Nepal. King Birendra and the royal family were annihilated in order to ensure that state power would be in the hands of a more reliable, fascist and die-hard section of the ruling class that would be interested in the task of deploying the armed forces in an all-out, total counter-revolutionary war against the CPN(M), the People's War and the oppressed masses of Nepal. This crisis was deliberately designed to create the conditions for external intervention by Indian expansionism in the hope of extinguishing the flames of Maoist protracted people's war in Nepal. This massacre was clearly planned and executed as a conspiracy between US imperialism, the Indian expansionist state and the most die-hard fascist sections of the Nepalese ruling classes.

The CPN(M) and the masses recognise that this massacre has effectively liquidated the traditional monarchy, placing the establishment of the People's Democratic Republic of Nepal on the people's immediate agenda.

The Co-ordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organisations of

South Asia (CCOMPOSA) has been formed in order to unify and co-ordinate the activities of the Maoist parties and organisations in South Asia to confront this developing situation by spreading protracted people's war in the region, in the context of hastening and advancing the world proletarian socialist revolution. This is a historic step of far-reaching significance.

This initiative is the result of ideas and suggestions put forward by the CPN(M) and CPI(ML)(PW). The Committee of RIM played a positive role in this process.

The Co-ordination Committee resolves to combine their efforts and raise their revolutionary struggles, with the aim of fanning the flames of protracted people's war throughout the region and beyond, in conjunction with the protracted People's Wars in Peru, the Philippines and Turkey. We resolve to combat and defeat revisionism – both parliamentary and armed – as the main danger to developing protracted people's war. We declare our principled unity and conscious determination to hoist the red flag of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and communism in all its splendour on the silver summits of the Himalayas and throughout the region. We undertake this responsibility as our internationalist duty and contribution towards destroying the system of imperialism and achieving our final goal of socialism and communism by accomplishing the new-democratic revolution through the path of protracted people's war.

We appeal to all the Maoist forces of South Asia to join CCOMPOSA to defend and advance the on-going pro-

tracted People's Wars in Nepal and India and to achieve the victory of new-democratic revolution in the countries of South Asia.

We appeal to all anti-imperialist democratic forces to support us in strengthening the rising mass struggles against imperialism and Indian expansionism.

## Signed:

Purba Bangla Sarbohara Party,  
PBSP CC, Bangladesh

Maobadi Punorgathan Kendro,  
MPK of PBSP, Bangladesh

Bangladesh Samyabadi Dal (Marxist-Leninist), BSD (ML), Bangladesh

Communist Party of India  
(Marxist-Leninist) (People's War),  
CPI(ML)(PW), India

Maoist Communist Centre, MCC,  
India

Revolutionary Communist Centre  
(Maoist), RCCI(M), India

Revolutionary Communist Centre  
(Marxist-Leninist-Maoist),  
RCCI(MLM), India

Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist),  
CPN(M), Nepal

Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist),  
CCP(M), Sri Lanka

Stalingrad:

# The Battlefield of History ...

## The History of a Battlefield




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**Stalingrad:  
The Fateful Siege 1942-1943**  
by Antony Beevor  
Penguin, London, 1998

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**Enemy at the Gates**  
A Film directed by  
Jean-Jacques Annaud  
2001

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The Battle of Stalingrad, a titanic collision in the Second World War between Nazi Germany and the then socialist Soviet Union, has been the subject of countless studies, books, films and memoirs. However, two recent works, one a history by Antony Beevor, one of Britain's most important writers on military affairs, the other a major film from the French director Jean-Jacques Annaud, have helped acquaint a new generation with what is widely held to be the greatest battle in history. Not only was it a military clash on a giant scale, pitting millions of soldiers against each other, it was even more the key act in an unfolding drama in which two social systems – the capitalist-imperialist system in the form of German Nazis, and the system that had been born of the October Revolution and built up in two decades of socialist construction under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin – confronted each other in life-or-death combat. It was the turning point in the Second World War and the beginning of the end of Hitler's Germany, which,

Left: Red Army soldiers in the "Stalingrad Academy of Street-fighting".

Right: Red Army Divisional Commander at the front with his troops.

until taking on the USSR, had easily swept through almost all of Western and Eastern Europe.

In relation to the grandeur of their subject, both Beevor's book and Annaud's film fall far short indeed. The courage of the people in defending the USSR and the heroism of the Red Army in withstanding and eventually overcoming a much better equipped enemy is too towering an historical fact to be easily dismissed. However unfair it may seem to equate the scholarship of Beevor with the crude Hollywood-style fiction of Annaud, both works, though in different spheres and with different audiences, are efforts to explain the heroism of the proletariat from the world-view of the bourgeoisie. While both works are faithful to the "facts" (and one can learn a great deal from them once filtered through a revolutionary viewpoint), they swallow whole a gigantic lie – that the greatest military victory of all time somehow took place in spite of, or even in opposition to, the socialist system and the dicta-

torship of the proletariat. Ultimately, theirs is a hopeless mission. No matter how talented or well funded (Annaud's film had the biggest budget ever for a European film), the ultimate result of their work may boomerang and encourage a new generation to discover for themselves the real meaning of the word Stalingrad.

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#### BACKGROUND TO THE SHOWDOWN

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Having been defeated in the First World War and punished through the Versailles Treaty, the German imperialist ruling class had been increasingly intent on forcing a new imperialist division of the world. The vehicle they used for this was to be the National Socialist ("Nazi") Party led by Hitler. Coupled closely with their drive for world domination was a determination to wipe out the Soviet Union, the world's first socialist state.

The goal of destroying the USSR was shared by all of the world's imperialists. Britain, France and the United States had no less a hatred for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Indeed, one of the main "war aims" of Britain and the US throughout the Second World War was to point the Nazi juggernaut eastwards, hoping that it would destroy the USSR and weaken itself considerably in the process. Mao Tsetung called this policy "sitting on the mountain-top and watching the tigers fight".

In an effort to defuse this strategy, the Soviet Union had made efforts to reach an agreement with the Anglo-French imperialists for a collec-

tive defence against Hitler. After this failed, in 1939 the USSR entered into a non-aggression pact with Nazi Germany. During the next two years the German military machine won one victory after another – Poland, Denmark, Holland and Belgium. France was invaded and quickly capitulated (the large majority of its ruling class basically aligned with Germany for the duration of the war), whilst the British army in Europe quickly retreated across the English Channel.

The British then sat back with folded arms as Hitler consolidated his grip on continental Europe and prepared a mighty offensive against the USSR. On 22 June 1941 the German attack began. Amassing an invasion force of 5,500,000 soldiers (including forces from the satellite states of Romania, Bulgaria, etc.), 3,350 tanks and 2,000 aircraft, it was able to rely on the combined resources of occupied Europe. Germany attacked in three major directions: in the north towards Leningrad, in the centre in the general direction of Moscow and in the south towards Kiev and, beyond, Stalingrad and the Caucasus region. The Red Army was forced to defend a western front of 4,500 kilometres, including 1,100 kilometres of coastline. Furthermore, whilst, in a general sense, the USSR had been preparing for the inevitable military conflict, the move to consolidate its defences had not been completed and, in some important ways, the USSR was caught off-guard by the timing, magnitude and direction of the German onslaught. In the areas of its main attack, Germany was able to amass a superiority in the balance of forces of four or five to one. Furthermore, Germany had air superiority and its commanders more combat experience, especially with tanks. Germany was imposing its *blitzkrieg*, a lightning attack that had worked so well against its enemies up until now.

The results of the initial days and weeks of the war were nearly disastrous for the USSR. On every front the Red Army was pushed back and its disorganised and cut-off units were heavily mauled by the Germans. In the first three weeks of fighting, according to Beevor the Red Army lost 2,000,000 soldiers, 3,500 tanks, 6,000 aeroplanes and a good percentage of the officer corps. By September, German forces were already in the outskirts of Leningrad. In the south, Kiev, the



capital of Ukraine, the second largest Republic in the USSR, was in danger of being surrounded by overwhelming enemy forces. Stalin and the Soviet leadership, in what may have been their biggest military mistake of the war, called on the Red Army to defend Kiev at any cost. The Red Army put up a stubborn and heroic defence of the city, but, against such overwhelming force, defeat was inevitable, and as many as 500,000 Red Army soldiers were captured.

According to the scenario that had been played and replayed by the German war machine throughout Europe, the collapse of the USSR should have been imminent. In late September, a confident and arrogant Hitler gave orders to raze Leningrad after its capture and to replace Moscow with a large artificial lake. Indeed, the Allied powers also fully expected the imminent fall of Leningrad and Moscow. US Secretary of War Henry Stimson reflected the near unanimous view of US military chiefs when he wrote that German victory would require "...a possible maximum of three months".

Instead, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union led and organised an unprecedented military mobilisation of the whole country and waged what we would today call a people's war. The working class and general masses in Leningrad were able to keep the militarily superior forces of the Germans out of the city, including by mobilising 250,000 people, mainly women, to dig miles of anti-tank defences. The city's people then held out heroically in a siege that was to last 900 days, during which as many as a million citizens, again mostly women, perished. As for Moscow, the Soviet leadership seriously considered abandoning the city; Lenin's body was removed from its tomb to a more secure location. But instead of leaving, Stalin decided, against the advice of others, to hold a defiant military march in Moscow on the anniversary of the October Revolution, during which Red Army reinforcements marched directly from Red Square to the front to face the German fascist invaders.

Everywhere people mobilised. Communists were sent in huge numbers to the front to boost the fighting capacity and morale of the troops. Far and wide behind enemy lines communists organised partisan units to wage guerrilla warfare against the invaders.

The partisans survived in harsh conditions in the forests by relying on the masses, who gave vital support despite the genocidal policies of the Nazis to massacre the civilian population for every act of resistance. In the rear areas people worked night and day to transport whole factories out of the reach of the German invaders and to dramatically increase production of desperately needed war material.

By December 1941, as the severe Russian winter set in (with temperatures as low as -20°C), the German army had advanced to the gates of Leningrad and Moscow and all along a north-south line down to the Crimean Sea. But the offensive had been stopped, and some counter-attacks had even begun to take their toll on the German forces.

The German fascists had greatly underestimated the resilience of the Soviet Army and people. The arrogance born of their class viewpoint had let them feel they could attack in more or less equal strength in three directions at once. By the time the spring thaw had begun the German general staff re-adjusted their plans. They decided to focus the bulk of their forces on a massive assault towards the south-east, in the direction of the city named after the Soviet leader.

Stalingrad (now called Volgograd) is located on the Volga river, one of the principal rivers in Russia and a major transportation artery at the frontier between Europe and Asia. It is the gateway to the Caucasus, where many non-Russian nationalities lived in different socialist Republics united in the USSR. The German high command was hoping to make use of contradictions between the peoples of the Soviet Union to undermine their fighting capacity. For example, the Cossacks, many of whom had been fooled or press-ganged during the time of the Tsars into being a shock force against revolutionaries, were concentrated in the region between the Don and Volga rivers.

The oil fields of Baku in Soviet Azerbaijan, near the border with Iran, were a particularly important target for fuelling the German war machine. Capturing them would also deprive the Soviet forces of petroleum resources. In addition, the German army felt that by capturing Stalingrad and crossing the Volga they could at some later point move back north and encircle Moscow, which was still under attack

from the west. In short, the whole German war plan now hinged on conquering Stalingrad.

Whilst the communists, the class-conscious workers and the most advanced sections of the Soviet people were determined not to spare any sacrifice to defeat the fascist aggressors, there was a small section of counter-revolutionaries who welcomed the fascists as rescuers from the Bolsheviks. There were also significant numbers of people who were stunned by the early successes of the German army and had lost confidence in the possibility of victory. (The Soviets were later to sum up that this defeatism had been partly fed by overly simplified pre-war propaganda that tended to belittle the strength of the enemy, leading to shock and disbelief when the enemy proved a formidable foe. Mao summed up the correct orientation when he wrote that the imperialists and all reactionaries are "paper tigers, with real teeth", and that the people need to despise them strategically while taking them seriously tactically.) Within the Army and the Soviet Party itself, including at the highest levels, there were strong manifestations of defeatism and flightism.

In the early months of the southern campaign, the reconcentrated and focused German army again inflicted sharp defeats on the Red Army. Stalin and the Soviet leadership correctly understood the stakes of the upcoming campaign. On 27 July 1942 Stalin, in his capacity as the head of the Army, issued a key order, number 227, which said in part:

"The fighting goes on in the Voronezh area, on the Don, in Southern Russia, at the gates of the North Caucasus. The German invaders are driving towards Stalingrad, towards the Volga, and want to capture Kuban and the North Caucasus with their oil and bread riches, at any price. The enemy has already captured Voroshilovgrad, Starobelsk, Rossosh', Kupyansk, Valuiki, Novocherkassk, Rostov-on-Don and half of Voronezh. Some units of the South front, following the panic-mongers, have abandoned Rostov and Novocherkassk without serious resistance and without orders from Moscow, thus covering their banners with shame. The people of our country, who treat the Red Army with love and respect, are now starting to be disappointed with it, and lose faith in the Red Army, and many

of them curse the Army for its fleeing to the east and leaving the population under the German yoke. Some unwise people at the front comfort themselves with arguments that we can continue the retreat to the east, as we have vast territories, a lot of soil, and many people, and that we will always have abundance of bread. By these arguments they try to justify their shameful behaviour at the front. But all these arguments are utterly false and wrong, and work for our enemies. Every commander, soldier and political officer has to realise that our resources are not infinite. The territory of the Soviet Union is not a wilderness, but peopled with workers, peasants, intelligentsia, our fathers and mothers, wives, brothers, and children. The territory of the USSR that has been captured by the enemy and which the enemy is longing to capture represents bread and other resources for the Army and the civilians, iron and fuel for the industries, factories and plants that supply the military with hardware and ammo; it also contains our railroads. With the loss of Ukraine, Byelorussia, the Baltic Republics, the Donetsk basin and other areas, we have lost vast territories. This means that we have lost much in the way of people, bread, metals, factories and plants. We no longer have superiority over the enemy in human resources and in the supply of bread. Continuing to retreat means destroying ourselves and our Motherland. Every new piece of territory that we leave to the enemy will strengthen our enemy and weaken us, our defences, our Motherland. This is why we have to put a stop to talk that we can retreat endlessly, that we have a lot of territory, that our country is great and rich, that we have a large population and we will always have enough bread. Such talk is false and harmful, as it weakens us and strengthens the enemy. If we do not stop retreating, we will be left without bread, without fuel, without metal, without raw materials, without factories and plants, without railways. The conclusion is that it is time to stop retreating. Not one step backwards! This should be our slogan from now on. We need to protect every strongpoint, every metre of Soviet soil, stubbornly, till the last droplet of

blood. We must grab hold of every inch of our land and defend it as long as possible. Our Motherland is going through hard times. We have to stop, and face and destroy the enemy, whatever it might cost us. The Germans are not as strong as the panic-mongers claim. They are stretching their strength to the limit. To withstand their blows now means to ensure victory in the future...."<sup>1</sup>

This combination of iron will and a remarkable perception of the basic situation reflects the kind of leadership Stalin gave to the Soviet people during the war. It is this that won him the lasting love and admiration not only of the masses of the land of socialism but also of the masses all over the world who, as Mao said, were watching every report of the unfolding drama with bated breath. The slogan "Not one step backwards!" became the rallying cry of the Red Army and a guiding principle for the Battle of Stalingrad.

Mao wrote that, "revolutionary war can only be waged by mobilising the people and relying on them." This is true not only for the front-line soldiers but also for every aspect of the war effort. Indeed, the entire Soviet population was mobilised and everything was subordinated to the war effort. Whereas about 6,000 tanks had been produced in 1941, 25,000 were produced in 1942, despite huge Soviet losses in territory and productive capacity.

The defence of the Soviet Union was indeed a people's war, but unlike most phases of the People's War in China or the people's wars we have seen in the last few decades, it was not, in the main, a guerrilla war. It was mobile and positional warfare involving huge numbers of troops and munitions and requiring the co-ordinated action of all the branches of the armed forces (infantry, tanks, aviation, artillery, navy, etc.). And this kind of war also has its own particularities, its own laws, which the political and military leaders needed to understand.

Mao stresses the "conscious dynamic factor of man" in warfare. While this may seem easier to see in the context of guerrilla war, in which so much depends on the daring, initiative, willingness to sacrifice and tenacity of relatively small units of soldiers, it is just as true in the kind of massive, highly co-ordinated fighting that was taking

place in the Soviet Union. And if ever proof of this were needed, it was the Battle of Stalingrad that provided it.

From the beginning of the war the German army had been astounded by the fighting spirit of the Soviet soldier. The German General Halder wrote in his diary, "Everywhere the Russians fight to the last man, they capitulate only occasionally." Beevor observes that, "the biggest mistake by the German commanders was to have underestimated 'Ivan', the ordinary Red Army soldier." Clearly the Soviets fought as no others had against the German juggernaut. But as the first year of the war showed, courage and morale alone is not enough. To fully unleash "man's conscious dynamic role", correct strategy and tactics also need to be applied.

### STALINGRAD

The actual Battle of Stalingrad as such can be said to have started on 21 August 1942, when the German army crossed the Don River, which in that part of southern Russia is only a few dozen kilometres from the Volga. Two days later intense aerial carpet-bombing unleashed savage destruction on the city of Stalingrad. Motorised Panzer tank divisions broke into the city and reached the banks of the Volga. Beevor claims that out of a population of 600,000, 40,000 men, women and children died in the first week of bombing. By 25 August 1942, most non-combatants had been evacuated from the city in launches across the Volga, whilst German aviation rained bombs down mercilessly.

Those who remained in the neighbourhoods and factories of Stalingrad were completely integrated into the defence effort. North of the city lay an industrial zone with a number of very large plants that had been converted to military production. The Dzerzhinsky Tractor Works, the Barrikady factory and the Red October plant now produced tanks that rolled off the lines right to the front, which by 30 September was only minutes from the edge of the factories. The main Soviet command was shifted to the Asian side of the Volga, to the east, which still remained firmly in Soviet hands. The Soviet Sixty-second Army dug in to their positions in a narrow stretch of the city centre, with only a few hundred metres separating the

<sup>1</sup> Stalin's order was read to every officer and political commissar in the Red Army. It was not published until the 1980s.

Volga from the front lines of the German Sixth Army. German forces stood between the Sixty-second Army and the Sixty-fourth Army, which had taken up defences in the southern part of the city. The previous commander of the Sixty-second Army had proven unequal to the task, having begun to withdraw across the Volga. General Vasili Chuikov was given the command and told to hold Stalingrad at all costs. At that time the Sixty-second Army had been reduced to the 20,000 men who bore the brunt of the German Sixth Army, which was under orders from Hitler to take Stalingrad at any cost.

In September, Stalin and General Zhukov, second in command of the Soviet armed forces, put together a grand plan that called for bogging down the German Sixth Army in the city of Stalingrad, whilst Soviet forces prepared a giant counter-offensive designed to encircle and trap the entire Sixth Army. The operation, which was given the code name Uranus, was kept a closely held secret. Stalin and Zhukov did not discuss it over radio or telephone conversations, even in code.

The Soviet forces put up a ferocious fight. It is said that not a single building was intact after the bombing, but the Soviets turned the rubble itself into a killing ground for the Nazi troops. Chuikov formed small units of six to nine soldiers to carry out street fighting. The central train station changed hands five times in the course of the battle. At one point, a key part of the battlefield was a single grain elevator, in which German soldiers held one floor while Soviet soldiers held the floor just above or below them. Chuikov ordered the Soviet forces to stay no more than fifty metres, the distance of a hand grenade throw, from the enemy front lines at all times.

By engaging in this kind of tenacious hand-to-hand fighting, the Soviet forces were using tactics that gave full play to the strengths of the soldiers — their courage, daring and self-sacrifice — and minimised the advantages of the Germans, especially their superiority in weapons and manpower. Keeping Soviet lines so close and intermingled with the enemy made it difficult for the Germans to call in artillery or air strikes without risking their own soldiers as well. Chuikov wrote that the German soldiers hated fighting at close quarters: “their morale did not stand it. They did not have the spirit to look an

armed Soviet soldier in the eye. You could locate an enemy soldier in a forward post from a long way off, especially by night; he would constantly, every five to ten minutes, give a burst on his machine gun, obviously to boost his own morale. Our soldiers could find such ‘warriors’ and finish them off with a bullet or bayonet.” (cited in the *Revolutionary Worker*, 15 April 2001) The imperialist war method of firing at everything, real or imagined, contributed to the German expenditure of 25 million rounds of ammunition in September alone, thus aggravating their supply problems. (It is no surprise that, after the Soviet Union was transformed into an imperialist country, its reactionary armed forces invaded and occupied Afghanistan with a massive expenditure of bombs and bullets, just as the US had done previously in Vietnam. It is the class nature of the reactionary beast that leads it to fight this way.)

The Soviet sniper movement, which popularised snipers such as Zeitov (“the hare”), who is featured in *Enemy at the Gates*, dealt sharp blows to the German fighting machine. Not only did snipers hiding in drainpipes and rubble knock out large numbers of German soldiers (Zeitov is credited with killing over 200 himself), they had the overall effect of, in Chuikov’s words, “making the Germans crawl, not walk”.

Although the battle ultimately involved two million soldiers, a tremendous amount depended on skirmishes, small units and even individuals. For example, the commanding heights of Stalingrad, called the Mamaev Kurgan, were defended during the siege by as few as a couple of hundred troops. These soldiers’ understanding of the importance of holding this position for the final outcome of the battle fired them with a determination to defend the heights, at any cost, despite a situation that often seemed impossible.

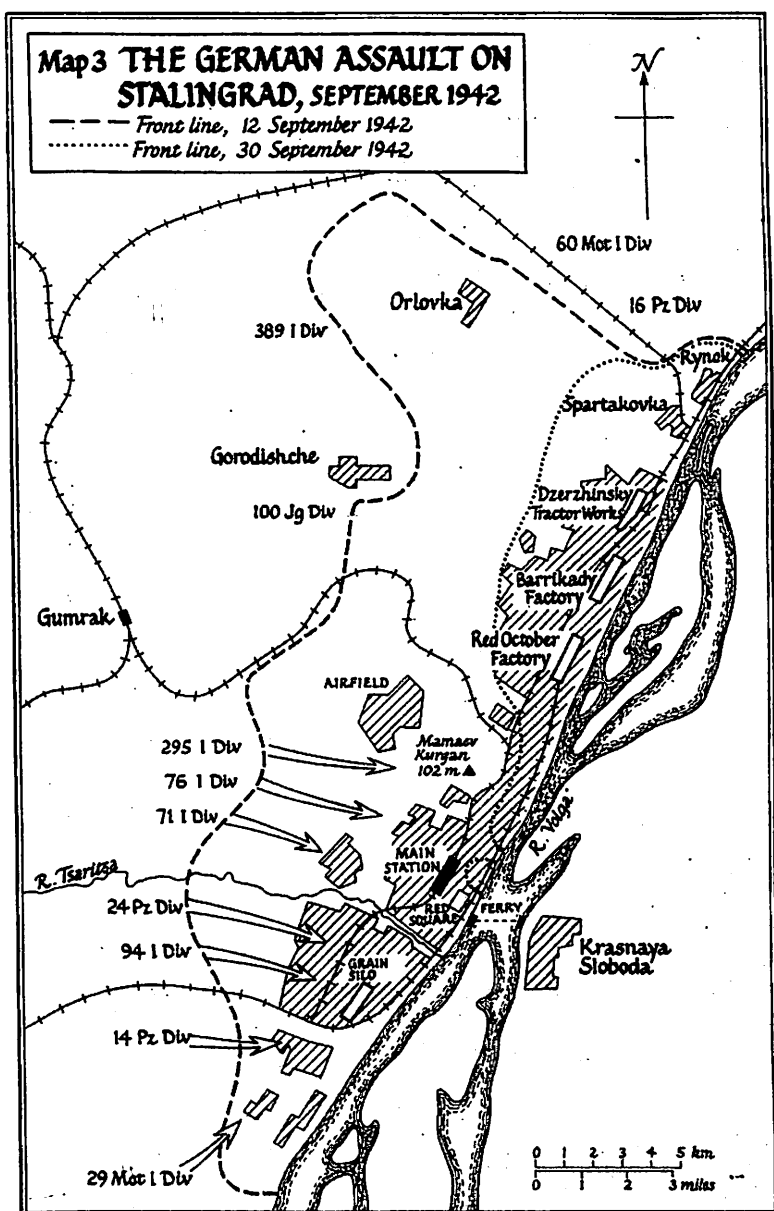
One of the celebrated feats of Stalingrad was the defence of Pavlov House. It is named after Sergeant Iakov Pavlov, who led a handful of soldiers in defending a building at a strategic position on the corner of a major avenue. For fifty days and nights, without rest, the soldiers beat off attack after attack by the Germans, including artillery, tank and air bombardments. It is noteworthy that the defenders of Pavlov House were a mosaic of the different nationalities of the Soviet peo-

ples: Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tadjiks, Tartars and others. While Beevor arrogantly dismisses the role of the “uncultured” Asian fighters in Stalingrad, in fact non-Russian nationalities played a vital part in the defence and supply of the city, and in the subsequent counter-attack.

The Stalingrad defenders became expert at destroying or crippling German tanks, which had been so central to the Nazi success in the first phases of the Second World War. Their tactics often involved attacking tanks that were only a few metres away. Needless to say, this kind of heroism involved tremendous sacrifices: official Soviet sources record that 84 per cent of all mobilised men and women in Stalingrad were killed, wounded or captured.

Another feature of the defence of Stalingrad was the extremely close unity between the officers and rank-and-file, a fact that makes the portrayal in *Enemy at the Gates* of the Soviet commanders that much more infuriating. Chuikov described his decision not to move his command post to a relatively more secure area on a nearby island in the Volga River: “It would have had an immediate effect on the morale of the leaders of units, their staff and all of the combatants. We understood... the importance of not staying all the time at our headquarters and we would frequently go to the observation posts of the divisions and the regiments and even into the trenches themselves so that the fighters would see with their own eyes that the generals — members of the Military Council — were always with them.”

One of the most reactionary scenes in *Enemy at the Gates* shows Soviet soldiers being gunned down by their own commanders for retreating. Like most disinformation, an ounce of truth — an over-emphasis on the use of compulsion — is used to pass a mountainous lie. In fact, one law of war is that no army, of any class, can tolerate desertion under fire. Self-serving cowardice can never be allowed to jeopardise the lives of the other soldiers and the final outcome of a battle. War is the ultimate “compulsion”, and the interests of any individual are and must be subordinated to the whole. It is true that the Soviet Red Army, like armies generally, had standing orders to shoot anyone deserting under fire. But to imply from this that the great exploits of the Red Army could in any way be



Map from Antony Beevor's *Stalingrad*.

explained by some kind of fear or "terror" is quite patently ridiculous. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses in Stalin's understanding of this question of dealing with deserters and cowardice, which reflected errors Mao was later to criticise Stalin for.

In a later part of the above-mentioned "Not One Step Backwards!" order, Stalin gives undue emphasis to enforcing discipline through military means. He even openly lauds the German system of forming penal battalions, in which those who had deserted would be given a chance to "redeem themselves" by fighting on the most difficult parts of the front, and calls for

a similar system to be set up in the Soviet Army. Here Stalin overemphasises the similarity between the two armies and their need to enforce discipline and thus blurs their fundamentally different character. While every army requires iron military discipline, how that discipline will be obtained and secured has everything to do with which class rules and which social system is reflected within the army. This is part of the meaning of Mao's concise summation of military strategy, "You fight your way, we'll fight ours."

In fact, armies led by the proletariat can and do have a basically different approach to assuring discipline than

do reactionary armies. Whilst a socialist state can and must use different forms of compulsion at times (for example, conscription), ultimately it must rely on the justness of its cause, the consciousness of its soldiers and the solidarity between the leaders and led as the sources of its discipline. Mao stressed that, "political work is the life-blood of the army". In the main and overwhelmingly this is what Stalin practised, by arousing the masses and ensuring their unity and discipline. In sending the most resolute communists at all levels to handle the most important and dangerous tasks at the front, the Party set a resounding example that was far more powerful than the fear of court martial could ever be.

It is also true that the Army itself is composed of advanced, intermediate and backward forces. Whilst proletarian ideology is a powerful motivating factor for the advanced, it would be naïve to think that appeals to a higher consciousness will alone overcome the backwardness of other sections of the soldiers who are frightened for their lives. Clearly, compulsion or force will play a role in any military organisation, and all the more so in battle, but even here what kind of compulsion and what policies are adopted will vary greatly depending on which class is in the leading position. In this respect, it is interesting to note the policy on desertion carried out by the Vietnamese revolutionary armed forces during the war against US imperialism. Deserters, even repeat offenders, were reintegrated into their original units after being subjected to sharp criticism by the masses in their home villages. The Soviet policy of emphasising execution of deserters and cowards seems to give stress to the wrong aspect (and declaring that the families of deserters would be punished is utterly wrong). Furthermore, Stalin's suggestion of initiating penal battalions on the model of the German army makes no sense — concentrating the backward together and having them led by even more backward officers cannot possibly create the most favourable conditions for genuine remoulding to take place.

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**ON THE  
"GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR"**

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Both Beevor and Annaud have the same basic explanation for the undeniable heroism of the Soviet fighters that

shines through despite the slanders and distortions in the book and film. And that explanation is *patriotism*. In other words, the Soviet soldier is supposed to have accomplished that which no other army in Europe could simply out of hatred of the foreign aggressor and instinctive love of the "homeland". In fact, every state in Europe tried to rally its troops with appeals to patriotism. Is there any nation more "patriotic", or, for that matter, any army more chauvinistic, than that of French imperialism? Yet the soldiers and army of France covered themselves in disgrace during the Second World War.

Or is it to be understood that there was something particular about *Russian patriotism* that had some magical quality that made it more powerful than that of other nations? It should be enough to recall the course of the First World War, when Russia was also invaded by German imperialist troops, to show just how hollow such an argument is. It is certainly true that the Tsar and the Russian bourgeoisie tried to rally the Russian masses, especially the peasants, with appeals to "defend the Fatherland". But as we know, the Russian army suffered defeat after defeat at the front and was extremely demoralised. Lenin's call to *oppose* the defence of the then-imperialist "Fatherland" and to turn the imperialist war into a revolutionary civil war played a decisive role in rallying the soldiers to the banner of the Bolsheviks. His call for an immediate end to Russia's involvement in the First World War was part of the famous "land, bread and peace" slogan of the October Revolution.

So what was the difference between Tsarist Russia during the First World War and the Soviet Union during the Second World War? A world of difference. During the latter, the Soviet Union was a dictatorship of the proletariat, a state in which the working class, in alliance with the peasantry and other labouring people, ruled society. The old exploiters had been overthrown and were kept down by force. Giant steps had been made in building a new socialist economy, not based on exploitation. Freed of capitalist wage slavery, the productive power of the labouring masses was unleashed as never before and was producing miracles that never ceased to amaze any outside observers of the time. (Note: It was only much later, after the revision-

ist betrayal of the Soviet Union, following the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, that the bourgeoisie dared to broadly propagate the lie of a society "terrorised" by Communist rule. During the period of socialist construction before the Second World War, the vibrancy of society, the revolutionary enthusiasm of the people and the vast support the USSR had from the world's oppressed was too strong and too evident to allow such propaganda. We can note a similar "historiography of slander" of socialist China as well — it was only after the defeat of socialism there that it was really possible for the imperialists to paint night day and day night.)

So when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in 1941 the masses there, unlike everywhere else in Europe, did have something very precious to defend — the socialist state that they had wrested from the bourgeoisie through the October Revolution, and into which they had poured their energies and hopes for a generation. What a far cry from the nationalist jingoism of the other so-called Great Powers, who certainly opposed German imperialism, but only to protect (as in the case of the British Empire) or expand (as in the case of the up-and-coming US imperialism) their own blood-soaked exploitation and oppression of people all over the world.

At the same time, a number of measures taken by Stalin and the Soviet leadership did make it more possible for the enemies of socialism to hide the class character of the people's war waged by the Soviet Union. From the first hours of the conflict, the Soviets called it the "Great Patriotic War". This was a conscious recalling of what is known in Russian history as the "Patriotic War", when in 1812 Napoleon invaded Tsarist Russia at the head of France's armies and was eventually driven back from the gates of Moscow. The Internationale was replaced by a new anthem at state gatherings. Great effort was made to bring out and emphasise *Russian* patriotic sentiments. The world-renowned Soviet filmmaker Eisenstein made a powerful film glorifying Alexander Nevsky, a figure from medieval Russian history credited with uniting the nation against Teutonic invaders. Another interesting example is Order Number Four, signed by both General Yeremenko, the military leader of the whole south-west front, and Nikita Khrushchev, who was then serving as

the main political commissar of the South-west army. Applying Stalin's directive "Not one step backwards!", the order refers to "the Bolshevik party, our nation, and our great country". In other words, Khrushchev and Yeremenko are equally evoking the *nation*, i.e. Russia, as well as the country (USSR). This is particularly ironic given the strategic location of Stalingrad, linking Russia with much of the non-Russian Republics, and the large number of non-Russian soldiers and civilians directly involved in the fight.

In general, in the Soviet political line of that time there was an effort to combine the understanding of the need to defend the socialist state with appeals to Russian nationalism. No doubt the Soviet leadership was facing a serious compulsion to unite the broadest possible section of the population. One can hardly fault them if they were able to make use of some patriotic sentiments, even of sections of the population whose attitude toward socialism ranged from lukewarm to outright hostile. Some characters in *Enemy at the Gates* represent these kind of backward forces, taking part in a united front-type of effort with the Soviet regime against the fascist invaders.

But there can be no denying that the heart and soul of the Soviet war effort were the communists, and the class-conscious proletariat. It was they who leapt into every breach and, through their example, led others forward. Beevor reports, for example, that during the Battle of Stalingrad a factory safely located to the East in the Urals was producing the renowned T-34 tanks. It was decided to ask for volunteers among the workers in the plant to accompany the tanks to the front as part of the Soviet army. Although the extreme dangers were known to all, within 36 hours 4,363 had signed up, of whom 1,253 were women.

During the war a number of changes were made in the army itself that tended to strengthen bourgeois forces and methods. Ranks had already been restored, and Red Army commanders hitherto addressed as "comrades" were now to be addressed by the pre-Revolutionary term "officer". The system of dual command between military commander and political commissars was abolished (apparently to the delight of old-school officers who resented "meddling" by the communist commissars). Beevor writes:

“Red Army generals were conspicuously rewarded. Shoulder boards, symbols of privilege that some Bolshevik lynch mobs [sic] in 1917 had nailed to the bodies of their tsarist wearers, were reinstated... One soldier in a Guards division heard news about shoulder boards from an old man polishing boots in a railway station. ‘They’re starting those gold shoulder boards once more,’ the man told him in angry disbelief. ‘Just like in the White Army.’ His fellow soldiers too were amazed when he told them on returning to the train. ‘Why in the Red Army?’”

It is beyond the scope of this review to try to discuss which concessions made by Stalin to bourgeois strata and methods were required by the realities of the war. Certainly some adjustment of past policies was both necessary and possible. But it is important to see that such adjustments, both those that were probably correct and others that seem questionable, were not free of consequence. They had concrete and serious negative effects. The advanced were left confused and disoriented, whilst greater rein was given to backward tendencies. It is very difficult, for example, to see how appeals to Russian nationalism could possibly have helped strengthen the solidarity of the different nationalities of the USSR, which had proven to be such a bedrock of strength for the war effort.

Furthermore, some of Stalin’s own incorrect understanding of the contradictory nature of socialism made it easy for him to fall into certain errors. The bourgeois methods that were being introduced greatly strengthened the bourgeoisie in the Party and undermined the strength of the proletariat at the very time it was winning its greatest military victories. A good percentage of those who were subsequently to seize power and restore capitalism in the USSR were involved in the war effort, including Khrushchev himself. As Soviet Defence Minister in the mid-1950s, Marshall Zhukov played a key role in supporting Khrushchev’s coup. For this bourgeoisie in the party, it is true, it was Russia that was being defended and not the accomplishments of socialism, which they themselves were itching to overthrow. Later, the revisionists in the USSR worked overtime to wrap themselves in the uniforms of the Great Patriotic War in an effort to legitimise their rule.

## WOMEN

One common feature of people’s wars is the massive participation of women. This was stirringly true of the Battle of Stalingrad as well. *Enemy at the Gates* shows one heroine of the Red Army, a young Jewish woman whose family had been the victim of early Nazi extermination raids. But she is portrayed as an intermediate element and not an advanced communist fighter. Yet the Soviet Red Army was distinguished for the heroic front-line role that thousands of class-conscious women played.

It is true that even the Allied imperialist powers, such as Britain and the US, were forced, by the necessity of the war effort, to mobilise women in various war-related activities, just as the US army is doing today. But a reactionary army reflecting a bourgeois, patriarchal society can never unleash the potential of women. On the other hand, a people’s army, as the Red Army most certainly was, cannot exist *without* releasing the revolutionary energy of the female half of the population. A people’s war defeats the enemy by mobilising the masses and relying on them, by knocking aside the obstacles of oppression, tradition and habit that prevent the people from mastering society. Even if the Soviet leadership was making concessions to traditional Russian values, the women of the USSR were mobilised in the spirit of the Paris Commune, and not that of Catherine the Great.<sup>2</sup> By the war’s end, there were over 246,000 women in uniform at the front, including the 467th Guards Women’s Night Light Bomber regiment, which was run entirely by women, from the pilots to the armourers and mechanics.

Not only did the women of Stalingrad wipe out many of the fascist soldiers by fighting in the front ranks, but their very presence was also very disconcerting to the Germans. Beever quotes one letter from a German soldier to his father: “You kept telling me, ‘be faithful to your standard and you’ll win.’ You will not forget these words because the time has come for every sensible man in Germany to curse the madness of this war. It’s impossible to describe what is happen-

ing here. Everyone in Stalingrad who still possesses a head and hands, women as well as men, carries on fighting.”

The staunch defence of the city of Stalingrad succeeded. The German Army took enormous casualties and was beginning to suffer seriously from a lack of supplies as winter drew closer. Widespread demoralisation was reported among the troops, who had been expecting an easy victory.

On 10 November 1942, after careful but urgent preparation, the Uranus counter-attack was launched. The entire German Sixth Army was encircled. According to Beever, many Soviet soldiers remember the start of the counter-attack as the greatest day of the war. The Red Army was able to deal powerful blows to the German forces and their allies. The trap was sprung. For more two months, reinforced by air-drops, the German Sixth Army held out. Its commander, Paulus, rejected an ultimatum by the Soviet government to surrender his hopeless position. Final surrender only took place on 31 January 1943, when Paulus, recently promoted Field Marshal by Hitler, and the main officers were captured. Some 80,000 survivors were taken prisoner. All over the world, people rejoiced. Although the German war machine remained a vicious foe for several more years, the tide had shifted. As Mao wrote, Stalingrad was “the turning point of the Second World War”.<sup>3</sup>

Stalingrad remains one of the greatest experiences of revolutionary warfare. The proletariat of the whole world has good reason to be proud of what our predecessors accomplished on the banks of the Volga. We must never let our enemies denigrate or distort what was achieved during those fateful months when the course of world history was being decided. And certainly we must not fail to absorb all of the lessons of earlier battles, so that we will be able to fight more resolutely and effectively in the battles looming on the horizon. ■

<sup>3</sup> US imperialism along with Britain has worked overtime to cover over the role of the USSR in defeating Hitler’s Germany. In fact, by the time of the US-British invasion of continental Europe in May 1944 the fate of the Nazi regime had already been decided on the Eastern front. At that point the main concern of the US and Britain was to rush their soldiers toward Berlin before the Red Army arrived, to better position themselves for the post-war situation.

<sup>2</sup> Catherine the Great was the 18th century Tsarina of Russia, who expanded Russia and sponsored a kind of “enlightenment”.



# The Inexhaustible Source of Ahmad Shamloo's Art - The Life & Struggle of the People

Different class ideologies contend sharply in the sphere of art and politics, which has an important influence on how people look at the world. We encourage you to submit reviews or suggestions for them covering any genre - theatre, literature, film, music, the fine arts or others. We are looking for art and literature that, like the poetry of Shamloo, unmask the intolerable burden of the existing order and stirs the imagination of people struggling to create a different one. We also count on you to help make known the rich material covering all the regions of the world and reflecting the conditions of our class and its revolutionary ambition, which is often ignored or suppressed by the imperialist culture industry.

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The death of Ahmad Shamloo caused a wave of sorrow and grief, not only among literature and art lovers, but also among a broad spectrum of progressive intellectuals, political activists and conscious masses. He was at the forefront of an unwavering battle against the old backward culture, and his death marked the loss of one of the most steadfast figures of the progressive and new culture. The masses lost an intellectual of the people, one who expressed their life, work, struggle and interests. One who served them in the battle against ignorance, superstition and religion. Shamloo was one of those intellectuals whom the workers, peasants and other toiling masses need to overcome the deep divide that class society has created between labour and thought.

The Maoists did not always share his political and ideological positions, but he was one of the handful of living masters in the intellectual and cultural fields that the proletarian revolution in Iran acutely needs. Because pushing back the dominant reactionary culture and introducing the masses to new

thinking and beliefs is an essential part of organising and preparing for the overthrow of the ruling classes and the establishment of the new power. And because the long road to the elimination of exploitation and oppression cannot be travelled without ceaseless and intense struggle on the art and cultural front. All this Shamloo took up consciously and lovingly.

In order to achieve its historical mission, the emancipation of humanity, the revolutionary proletariat needs to advance on this front, to unite, to discuss and to struggle in a comradely way with people like Shamloo.

In training ever more workers and leaders in the realm of culture and art, we can learn a great deal from his resoluteness in the face of the oppressive rulers, and his fight against reaction in the areas of cultural and historical investigation, as well as artistic creation.

Those youth that turn to art and literature, with revolutionary fervour and political and social commitment, need a torch to light the dark nights and tortuous paths. In the arena in which a new culture is fighting the old one, in the midst of the battle against anti-people, reactionary and stupefying art and culture, they need a flag hoisted to instil courage in their hearts and to infuse the hope of victory in their souls. In the last several decades Shamloo consciously tried to light this torch and be this flag. Without a

shadow of a doubt, he succeeded in playing this role.

This high standing was not bestowed on Shamloo by an invisible, supernatural hand. It was neither luck nor "innate genius" – something he himself never believed in. The secret was that in the process of his ceaseless, tireless and multi-dimensional activities, Shamloo found an inexhaustible source of art: the life and struggle of the people. He made a basic decision about the social role of his art and the goal of his artistic creation, and he committed himself to the awakening, liberation and interests of his audience. He considered that "being born a human means becoming a mission personified". He tried to personify commitment to the oppressed masses and to revolutionary ideals and values: "Since art can present a useful thing with more beauty and give it more power of penetration, it should be ashamed to be neutral. My point is in no way to impose my will on others with do's and don'ts. The wisdom of the artist in this ailing world is to seek to cure the disease, not to alleviate the pain; to seek understanding, not adornment; to be a caring doctor, not an uncaring clown."<sup>1</sup>

This viewpoint made his poetry into a finger pointed at the enemy. His poetry was not a shield of pity to guard the weak and oppressed. It was a sword that tore apart masks of hypocrisy, an arrow targeting the ideas and actions of the powers that be, and its twang was the raging cry of the slaves. The rage of the poor, who bind the poetry book of their life with blood, who kill their lives of slavery so that they can be reborn as masters of history.<sup>2</sup> In life a poet who writes like this, could never conciliate with or surrender to the reactionary powers. Shamloo never gave in to lures and inducements. Whilst in prison after the coup in the summer of 1953 [the CIA coup against Dr Mossadeq, that brought the Shah back to power], with his poetry he excoriated the weaklings who had knelt down to the monarchist executioners and repented. In prison he felt deeply the heroism and sacrifice of Tudeh party members, such as Varthan Salakhanian and Morteza Keyvan, on the one hand, and the opportunism and betrayal of the Central Committee of that party on the other. He understood that the blood shed by these heroes did not flow down the

latter's path. So once and for all he demarcated himself from the "party of wind", as he called it.<sup>3</sup> Years later, after the 1979 revolution [the revolution that swept away the US-backed Shah's regime and brought Khomeini to power], when Tudeh party forces within the Circle of Writers of Iran tried to turn the Circle into a conciliatory institution and justify the repressive policies of the reactionary Islamic Republic, Shamloo, along with other unrepentant friends like Comrade Saeed Soltanpoor (who was later martyred), insisted on maintaining the progressive and pro-people positions of the Circle. They exposed these shameless accomplices of Islamic reaction and expelled them from the writers' group. It is despicable that this treacherous bunch paid hypocritical "homage" to Shamloo, who clearly, and on every occasion, opposed them.

Over half a century, Shamloo experienced the defeat of a vast political movement (1941-53) [which included moves to nationalise Iranian oil, and ended with the CIA-backed coup] and a big mass revolution (1979). He saw the masses in their millions taking to the streets for liberation. He witnessed the decades following the 1953 coup, marked by suppression and silence, and then again the masses pouring into the streets. And, with rage and frustration, he experienced the coming to power of the duplicitous Islamic reactionaries and the ensuing bloody repression. Unlike those intellectuals whose hope for victory was smashed with the defeat of the 1979 revolution and who ended up in the abyss of conciliation and surrender to the enemies of the people, Shamloo did not abandon the struggle. He remained disobedient and undaunted. He had learnt much from the coup d'etat [1953] and the first defeat, and from the crystallisation of a new revolutionary movement and the masses rising up again: "We suffered years of repression, terror and humiliation. Our bodies and souls wore out through those dark years but our belief in the high ideals of humanity prevented us from breaking. We aged, we weakened, but we did not kneel down, we did not bow our head in surrender. We went through the darkest hours of hopelessness and misery, but we did not say yes to the devil, because we did not want anything for ourselves, and we did not hope to see the sun again. Our

sun was shining from within; we were warmed by the proud certainty that even if we died in loneliness and despair, what had been entrusted to us would not be thrown away, we would not throw it away. Such was yesterday, and no doubt, such will be today." "The world has not come to an end and the oppressive rule of the devil on earth will not last for ever."<sup>4</sup> And he never doubted his responsibility and mission as a committed artist and awaited the people's conspiracy to break the chains.

Shamloo endured the eternal wrath and curses of the reactionary rulers. Because he stood on the same side of the barricades as the masses in opposition to the Islamic Republic, because he confronted reaction and superstition both politically and culturally, he was subjected to much pressure and faced many accusations, but he did not pull back. In the early 1990s, when word spread that some literary figures were conciliating with the regime in the hope of getting permission to re-establish the Writer's Circle, Shamloo warned them, as well as the masses, against the trap the Islamic regime had set to lure in the intellectuals and lull them into a stupor. He said that the stench of this plan could be smelt already. "The government is giving us the green light so that we will remain quiet while the people continue to be kept behind the red light. But our freedom as writers and artists cannot and must not be separated from the basic freedom the masses are deprived of."

His commitment to the interests of the people, his far-sightedness and clarity of vision enabled Shamloo to see through the ruse of "national compromise" and the vacillations in the wake of the "Second Khoradad" [the date of the presidential elections when Khatami became president, in May 1997]. Despite great pressure, he refused to take sides in inter-ruling class quarrels and to play the games of the different ruling factions, which would have only resulted in the deception of the masses. He refused to bow to the ruling apparatus by putting the freedom-killing and superstitious phrase "in the name of the God of soul and wisdom" on the masthead of the declaration of the Writer's Circle. He refused to support, much less admire, Mohajerani, the Guidance Minister of this censorship regime (who had devised cultural-literary justifications for

the death warrant issued against Salman Rushdie).<sup>5</sup>

The conciliating "Second Khordad" intellectuals considered Shamloo's resolute stand against the ruling Islamic reactionaries and his refusal to shake hands with Khatami and company a thorn in their side. They not only tried to ignore and hide this bright and lofty aspect of his political life, but also were intolerant of his poetic language. They strove in vain to keep the new generation away from the "mis-teachings" of Shamloo's language! They called his language "power-seeking and anti-people" because it did not correspond to the "tolerance and forgiveness" they preached,<sup>6</sup> because it was not the language of compromise and kow-towing to the ruling powers, because it was proud, defiant and rebellious. He ridiculed and humiliated the enemies of the people, he instilled hope and courage in his listeners, and, with a violent torrent of words in prideful rhythms, he aroused them against despair, oppression and tyranny. Even after his death, Shamloo's living poetry and language creates a problem for the pioneers of compromise and the foes of advanced art and culture. So today they are forced to try to render him harmless, to put him safely behind museum walls using much false fanfare, and at the same time keep the youth away from studying his works and halt the regeneration of the values he left behind.

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**THE ESSENCE OF  
SHAMLOO'S POETRY**

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Shamloo's poetry, as a reference and clear example of the new poetry in Iran, is the product and reflection of the movements and revolutions, defeats and victories that the workers and oppressed masses lived through in the twentieth century, both in Iran and internationally; he kept his eye on new horizons and conveyed new class interests and inspirations.

Shamloo's poetry, with its new content and its own new rhythms and wording, became worthy of the great and daily struggle for liberation of hundreds of millions of "nobodies" throughout the world. It reflected the revolutionary epics created on this road. His commitment to the high ideal of the emancipation of humanity made his poetry socially conscious and pro-

people. It was a poetry of life that wanted to fight shoulder to shoulder with its unknown comrades in China, Korea or France, that wanted to hang the false gods of literature on his gallows [a reference to a Shamloo poem that says "I will hang them - leave them to dangle, like dead men - on the 'gallows' of my poetry"]. Thus, his poetry could not be gentle and delicate, so as

to avoid muddying the waters<sup>7</sup> or disturbing the sleep of butterflies. Shamloo wanted his poetry to be "a bugle and not a lullaby".<sup>8</sup>

The mirror of Shamloo's experience of political activity and political parties, was darkened by the dust of reformism, opportunism and the betrayal of false leaders. But even though Shamloo called politics "a dirty word"

### The Beginning\*

Untimely  
in a land unknown  
at a time yet not arrived.  
Thus, I was born  
within the forest of beast and rock.

My heart  
in void  
started beating.  
I abandoned the cradle of reiteration  
in a land with no bird, no spring.

My first journey was a return  
from the hope-abrading vistas of thorn and sand,  
without having gone far  
on the inexperienced feet of the fledgeling that  
was I.

My first journey was a return.  
The vast distance  
taught no hope.  
Trembling,  
I stood on the feet of the novice that was I  
facing the horizon ablaze.

I realized that there was no tidings  
for in between stood a mirage.  
The vast distance taught no hope.  
I learnt that there was no tidings:  
This boundless  
was a prison so huge  
that the soul  
hid in tears  
from shame of impotence.

*A poem written on returning to the newly-established Islamic Republic after a trip abroad, describing his feelings about the Khomeini regime.*

and considered "politicking and power games" to be inextricably associated with those "who have no respect for the life of anyone", politics was ever-present in his poetry. He believed that artists should be "free from the chains of sectarianism and party partisanship, a commitment free from politics",<sup>9</sup> but his poems were inevitably closely tied to political developments in society and the world. Even when his poetry depicted the abstract individual, outside the boundaries of class, the footsteps of politics were still visible. It could not have been otherwise, because in his poetry general concepts such as: love, beauty, justice, deliverance and humanity passed through this world of classes and politics, thus finding a class and political nature.

Shamloo was always moved by the struggle and sacrifice of the revolutionary vanguard of the people. In his poetry he recorded great social and political upheavals and the role of "those who know why they die", those who in times of darkness stand up to the thunder to bring light to the house. Through the torrent of events and historical turning points, Shamloo's vocabulary was polished and his poetry developed. In the years prior to the 1953 coup, the singing children of the sea, the great sacrificed stars and the red blossoms from Granada and Athens to Abadan [in Iran] pulsed in the veins of his poetry, and in the mid- to late-1960s, when gunfire announced the birth of a new generation of revolutionaries, his poetry took on a different beat. This poetry, in turn, influenced, above all, the young revolutionaries and the advanced fighters to see their role and mission more clearly, more decisively and more victoriously in Shamloo's mirror – to blossom and to be the harbingers of the end of winter, even if they themselves would not live to see the victory of springtime.<sup>10</sup> Shamloo's poetry brought warmth to the souls of political prisoners, who carved it on prison walls so as to point to a horizon beyond the bulwarks of captivity.

Many of Shamloo's poems speak to, and are needed by, the revolutionary cadres and the advanced among the masses. Like any committed artist of the people he faced two tasks: [firstly] to practice criticism and popularise other people's artistic works, encouraging the masses to make art, and discovering the work they have

already done; and [secondly] to raise artistic standards and the quality of the work produced. His poetry mainly involved the second task. In his valuable and unambiguous work, he consistently sought to find windows through which he could enter the souls of the broad masses.

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### BREAKING THE MOULDS

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Shamloo's poetry was a deluge of great and stormy thinking, an expression of the rebellion of the new against the old. This poetry was not to be chained, tamed or turned into a bed for capitulationist and collaborationist whining. Shamloo's poetry sought its own forms, a structure that could not, and would not, become a cage for this rebellious soul, forms that would not become moulds. Even the most colourful, most open framework, would, in the end, confine and restrict his varied and ever-changing subjects, feelings and passions, thwarting the constant innovation and creativity of his poetry. This idea was at first mostly a question of feeling, and inevitably his work initially suffered from imperfections. Later, after delving deeply into his own writing and comparing it critically to that of others, this understanding and belief took wing in his poetry. Shamloo, correctly, considered himself a student of the pathbreaker Neema, who found the old poetic rules insufficient to express the emotions and thinking of today's world. Shamloo understood the essence of Neema's message, which was a revolution in the internal structure of poetry; and he did what Neema could not, or would not, do.<sup>11</sup> He totally broke the old moulds, the established metres and rhythm schemes and the rigid understanding of their interrelationship, opening the way for the innovative and restless flow of his poetry. In this way each poem, with its own pace and pauses, its own beat and melody, and a form that matches its content and thought, would be born, live and end. Thus, with unique daring and courage, Shamloo stood on Neema's shoulders. From atop the high poetic tower that Neema had built, he discovered new horizons and marched to their conquest.

Shamloo's ability to see differently and change the meaning and form of poetry arose from his new and advanced vision of human society and nature. In Iran, it has become a habit

to present innovation in poetry, literature, journalism and song as a result of the influence of the [1905] Constitutional Revolution, but in fact this development was only one branch of the variety of movements in thought, literature and art that flourished in the aftermath of the 1917 victory of the October Revolution in Russia. In Shamloo's words: "To a considerable degree, after so much fruitless repetition, this poetry owes its awakening and awareness to the great poets of other countries and other languages.... Masters who taught us pure poetry and mapped out for us the paths of commitment."<sup>12</sup>

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### LANGUAGE AND CULTURE OF THE MASSES

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Another of Shamloo's brilliant achievements and outstanding contributions was the collection and transcription of the language and culture of the masses. The social and cultural yield of this work cannot yet be fully appreciated, and it will take time to harvest. This work was derived from Shamloo's overall stance toward the basic masses and their role in creating history, culture and language. In his eyes, the masses were not insignificant, identical peons worthy only to cheer the elite and carry their burdens. He encouraged mistrust of official history, which reflects the interests of the oppressive states and ruling exploiting classes throughout history. This history is full of distortions and lies. Its first goal is to implant the concept of a "God-King" and the idea that "the ordinary people do not deserve to lead society". Thus, this kind of history slandered countless revolutionary undertakings of the masses and turned their meaning upside down.<sup>13</sup>

Starting as a youth, Shamloo took an interest in the language and culture of the masses, and this later inspired him to take up compiling and writing *The Dictionary of the Street*. He worked on this project with such perseverance that even though twice he lost all the notes he had gathered during years of investigation, he was not discouraged, but continued with even more determination. His awareness of the role of the lives, work and struggle of the masses in the creation and constant development of language and culture committed him to put this into writing and popularise its strength and

positive values. He saw the life and struggle of the people as a never-ending source of raw material for literature and art – raw, untreated material, but the most lively, rich and basic raw material there is.

The most important and far-reaching fruit of Shamloo's efforts in putting together *The Dictionary of the Street*, as a continuation of Dehkhoda's contributions in this domain, was to overthrow the restrictive reign of the dry and arid, old and religious, unclear and overly sophisticated language of the privileged and high-ranking strata of society in cultural, scientific and political works. Thus, he made these works and ideas more understandable and accessible to the broad masses. By recording the language of the people and following its changes and development, intellectuals can find a common language with the masses.<sup>14</sup> They can become more familiar with the life, work and struggle of the masses, get a better understanding of their values and creativity and come to believe in them. They can more consciously try to close the chasm class society has opened up between the intellectuals and the makers of history.

Shamloo understood that in order to develop a relationship with a broad readership and to touch them deeply, a mastery of the language and culture of the masses is essential. At the same time, in order to revolutionise and develop the culture and language (or, better said, the cultures and languages) of society and write rich and accessible work from short stories and poetry to articles and reportage, one must take up and rely on the inexhaustible resource that is the language of the masses of people. He knew that "the stern official language can in no way match the subtlety of the playful and lively language of the masses". And he asked: "I don't know why one should not take advantage of the achievements of this developing language, since it contains a great treasure of the newest, beautifully-structured and rich words, and at the same has its own recordable grammar. Why should it not be allowed in the dull hall of the languages of the 'cultured'?"<sup>15</sup>

But Shamloo's reference and attention to popular culture was not a matter of populism and tailing the old. He had a critical approach to this culture, and he never took up the wor-

## The Gap

To be born  
on the dark spear  
like the open birth of a wound.

To travel the unique exodus of opportunity  
always  
In chains  
to burn on one's flame  
to the very last spark  
consuming a reverence  
found by the slaves  
in the dust of the way,  
thus red and coquettish  
to bloom on the thorn-bush of blood  
and thus tall and proud  
to pass through the scourge-field of degradation  
and to travel through to the extreme of hatred....  
Oh, who am I speaking of?  
We are the living with no reason.  
They are conscious of the reason for their death.

*This poem was written in memory of Khosrow Golesorkhi, a revolutionary communist, who was executed by the US-backed Shah regime in the early 1970s. His trial was broadcast on nation-wide television. Though on trial for his life, Golesorkhi defiantly upheld his revolutionary convictions and declared that the real reason he was on trial was for being a communist. In his final statement, facing imminent death, he concluded that, I am not defending myself, I am defending my people. His name, Golesorkhi, means "red rose".*

ship of the negative, superstitious and oppressive values that have penetrated it through the centuries. He ruthlessly criticised and exposed the chauvinist and oppressive attitude prevalent among the Fars nation [Iran's dominant nationality] and Shiite Moslems [Iran's dominant Muslim sect] against the oppressed national and religious minorities in Iran. He believed that all these negative aspects should be put before the masses clearly and openly, so that in this mirror they could see their cultural weak points and the harmful result on their own thought and action. He called for the breaking of taboos

and for the masses to dust their minds. He said the age-old ideas should be put in museums and there must be a cultural revolution or at least a serious re-evaluation of those beliefs, writings and spoken ideas that for a long time have been held to be unchangeable in books.<sup>16</sup>

## JOURNALISM

At different periods, Shamloo took up editing journals and weeklies. This was part of his constant effort to propagate popular culture, art and thought. Even at the height of the repression under the Shah, he tried to pierce the

dark curtain of tyranny and reach the people. With much effort he would put out independent journals and anthologies, and when half-hearted friends left him or when poverty and censorship and finally the security apparatus closed his publications down, he would seek another outlet. With commitment and perseverance, he would find even the smallest opening allowing the legal publication of progressive work, even in big publications belonging to the Shah's stooges. He provided advanced thinking for parched throats, even if only a few drops. What made this effort truly valuable and deserves the most credit was that he walked on the sharp side of the blade but did not fall into self-censorship or distort the content of his own or others' work in the guise of "realistic tactics". In fact, he didn't fall into capitulation in any way at all. He was not one of those intellectuals that turn their back on the people's aspirations and, in return for petty privileges, never dare to cross the line, nor was he one of those who, out of fear of "contamination", remain passive and sit outside the ring with an "unsullied conscience".

In his several periods of rich journalistic activity, Shamloo recognised young people with talent and ability, helped them flourish, and established new and positive criteria for collective work, including serious and deep investigation, attractive and new forms and styles, and penetrating language in journalism. *The Book of the Week* (Keyhan Publications), which came to life in the early 1960s thanks to his efforts, is a lasting and brilliant model for cultural and social journals even today. Later, this journal was taken away from Shamloo by the managers of Keyhan, to be put into the hands of Behazin and other Tudeh Party stooges who collaborated with the Shah's regime. In 1979-80, he took up the publication of *The Book of Friday*. Influenced by the convulsive political atmosphere of that period of revolution and its urgent needs, this journal sought to intervene in relation to the burning questions of the day. It dealt with: the question of Kurdistan, Turkeman Sahra and other oppressed regions; the oppression of women; the life and work of the oppressed masses; and the situation of the workers and shanty town dwellers. It criticised the rotten beliefs and murderous deeds of

the reactionary religious forces that took power under the leadership of Khomeini, and looked at the revolutionary experience and struggles in other countries. *The Book of Friday* did its best to meet the needs of different strata of the people and at the same time exposed the repressive acts and tricks of the newly-installed reactionaries. This journal soon stopped publication due to the pressure and threats of the Khomeini regime.

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#### HORIZONS AND HERITAGE

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Shamloo was the product of the masses, not only in Iran but around the world. He considered himself to be fate- and blood-bound with the deprived and chained inhabitants of the earth, not only through poetry and literature, but on the basis of his overall thinking and world outlook. He stood against the devaluing of the oppressed nations by the dominant imperialist culture and, at the same time, wholeheartedly assimilated the revolutionary and advanced culture of the masses from all the corners of the world. He considered himself to be related to all human beings who do not hide a back-stabbing knife up their sleeve, who do not frown, whose smile is not a trick meant to deprive others of their rights, bread and shelter. He said "I am a Lor-Balutch-Kurd-Persian, a Farsi-speaking Turk, an African-European-Australian-American-Asian, a Black-Yellow-Red-White-skin who does not have the slightest problem with myself and others, but without the presence of others I feel the horror of solitude and death under my skin. I am a human being among others on this sacred planet Earth and have no meaning without others."<sup>17</sup> His love for the dispossessed and oppressed was, of course, paired and tied with hatred for the oppressors and exploiters who bottle the blood of African-Americans in Harlem and the Bronx, set up crematoriums in Auschwitz, come to kill the light in the night, and start bonfires by burning songs and poetry. Shamloo clearly declared himself and his work to be uncompromising towards the imperialist system that dominates the world: "We consider the existing system in the world an extremely strong motivation for making art, expanding human knowledge and broadening our outlook, even if only for the elimination of this system! That

is the only goal that can justify poetry and literature in this era of horror and hunger."<sup>18</sup>

He knew that this perspective could only be realised through humanity's long march and that his own lifetime would not suffice. But the belief that, one day, the oppressed would build a just world and free their dreams from the nightmare of poverty, injustice and ignorance motivated Shamloo to continue his effort and struggle. He was kept alive by the hope that he was helping to plant seeds that would flower on that blessed day when humanity realises that it is trapped by unnecessary fear, the first result of which is total obedience. Shamloo considered the cultural contributions of committed intellectuals like himself to be an invitation to the celebration that will take place on the dawn of that day.<sup>19</sup>

It was with this hope that, despite all the limitations and barriers the reactionary rulers posed on the publication of his works in the last two decades, he did not withdraw from creation and investigation. His amazing hard work and persistence seemed to allow him to surpass the short time life grants us. His life was so fruitful that we who he left behind cannot help murmuring, as we thirst for more, "His time was short...."

His lasting works and the memory of his rebellion and path-breaking contributions cry out to the youth and coming generations, calling on them to break open the locks on the gates of the future with open eyes and hopeful hearts.

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#### FOOTNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Nasser Harriri, *On Art and Literature - A Discussion with Ahmad Shamloo*, Summer 1993, pp. 128-129.

<sup>2</sup> See the poem "Ode for the Human of Bahman" [Bahman is the month when Arrani, head of a Marxist group, was killed]. In the 1950 collection *Ghat-nameh* (Declaration), reprinted in the *Collected Poems of Ahmad Shamloo*, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> There is an expression that says, "he is like the winnowers of Lanjan, he works with the wind". The winnowers are peasants who clean wheat by throwing it into the air to separate the wheat from the chaff. Lanjan is a very windy area near Isfahan. The expression implies that the winnowers of Lanjan are so expert in their work that the change of direction of the wind does not hamper their work, and they can continue. Here Shamloo is referring to those who subordinate themselves to the pre-

vailing opportunism. Explanation by Shamloo in response to readers of *The Book of the Week*, No. 32, Spring 1981.

<sup>4</sup> The first quote is from the article, "The Sunrise Is Cancelled!", printed in *Teheran Mossavar*, No. 22, Summer 1980. The second quote is from *The Book of the Week*, No. 34, Summer 1981.

<sup>5</sup> See *A Critique of the Satanic Verses*, by Ayatollah Mohajerani. In this book Mohajerani tries to argue – as if it mattered – that the "problem" with Rushdie is that he is a "bastard" born from the rape of an Indian woman by an English man. Based on his sick mind, rotten values and religious misogyny, Mohajerani declares that only a "bastard" could even think of such ideas about Mohammed, let alone write them down! His book was supposed to be the cultural justification for Khomeini's *fatwa* (religious edict) that Rushdie be killed.

<sup>6</sup> From an interview with Abdollah Kossari by the editors of *Farhang-o-Tosee* [Culture and Development], Winter 1999, pp. 119-121.

<sup>7</sup> A reference to a poem by Sohrab Sepehri, a famous Zen Buddhist poet. [The Iranian film-maker Kiarostami's movie, *Where Is the House of My Friend*, inspired by another poem with the same title by this poet, was made in homage to Sepehri.]

<sup>8</sup> Harriri, *On Art & Literature*, p. 173.

<sup>9</sup> Harriri, *On Art & Literature*, pp. 125, 134.

<sup>10</sup> See the poem entitled "Twenty-Three" in *Resolution*, as well as "Death of Nasli" reprinted in *The Collected Poems of Shamloo*, Volume I.

<sup>11</sup> Paraphrased from the article "I was Born

in the Form of We" by Javad Mojabi, on poetry influenced by Shamloo, published in the collected works entitled: *Knowing Shamloo*.

<sup>12</sup> Introduction to *Like an Endless Alley*, a selection of poems from the world's great poets, translated by Ahmad Shamloo, 1995.

<sup>13</sup> "How Vulnerable the Truth Is", speech at the University of California at Berkeley in the US, from Mojabi, ed., pp. 508-9.

<sup>14</sup> Paraphrased from "I Was Born in the Form of We", from Mojabi, ed.

<sup>15</sup> Harriri, *On Art & Literature*, p. 145.

<sup>16</sup> Harriri, *On Art & Literature*, "Addendum: A Talk with Faraj Sarkouhi", pp. 193-194, first published in *Adineh* no. 72. In the same context see the article "Traditional Music: A Dark Trade", Shamloo's sharp and smashing critique of the backward, narcotising music that is called "traditional music" in Iran, where he responds to old-worshipping views of the well-known composer Mohamad-Reza Lotfi.

Another of Shamloo's efforts, aimed especially at the younger generation, is his critical approach to official history and the great heroes worshipped throughout history. This brought him many enemies. To clear society's mind of anti-values, false heroes and models and superstition that justify oppression and exploitation, he stepped forward to take the necessary first steps. As he would say, "What am I to do? Don't touch anything, don't criticise any opinion because the heart of the believer is thin and brittle, and they get cold before you say ice? ... Is there not enough mis-education in *Shahnameh* [a 14th-century epic written by Ferdousi]? Are there not

enough weak-minded people who, to attest to their backward ideas, refer to the deceased master [Ferdousi] who says: [the following sayings are from *Shahnameh*]: Woman and Dragon are both better buried The world is better purified of these two impurities Or If you admire women, admire dogs As a dog is better than a hundred devout women Or If woman and her name were good Her name would have been no-woman not woman. [The Farsi word for "woman" is *zan*, but *zan* also means "to beat", so here "no-woman" means "don't beat", and "woman" means "to beat".].... "You can say whatever you want. I say these are really shameful and must be erased from the mind of society. It is as if somebody became carved in the brains of these shameless and painless guardians of the culture of this land, and no one would ever dare to tell them that they have an eyebrow above their eyes [i.e. no one dared criticise them]...

"The truth, however, is not necessarily what has been whispered in our ears, and it can sometimes be the opposite of our inherited beliefs". (From the introduction to "The Meaning of Rend and Rendism" in Hafez's *Ghazal*, Spring 1991.)

<sup>17</sup> Hariri, *On Art and Literature*, p. 131.

<sup>18</sup> Speech at the International Writers' Forum, Germany.

<sup>19</sup> Paraphrased from Hariri. ■

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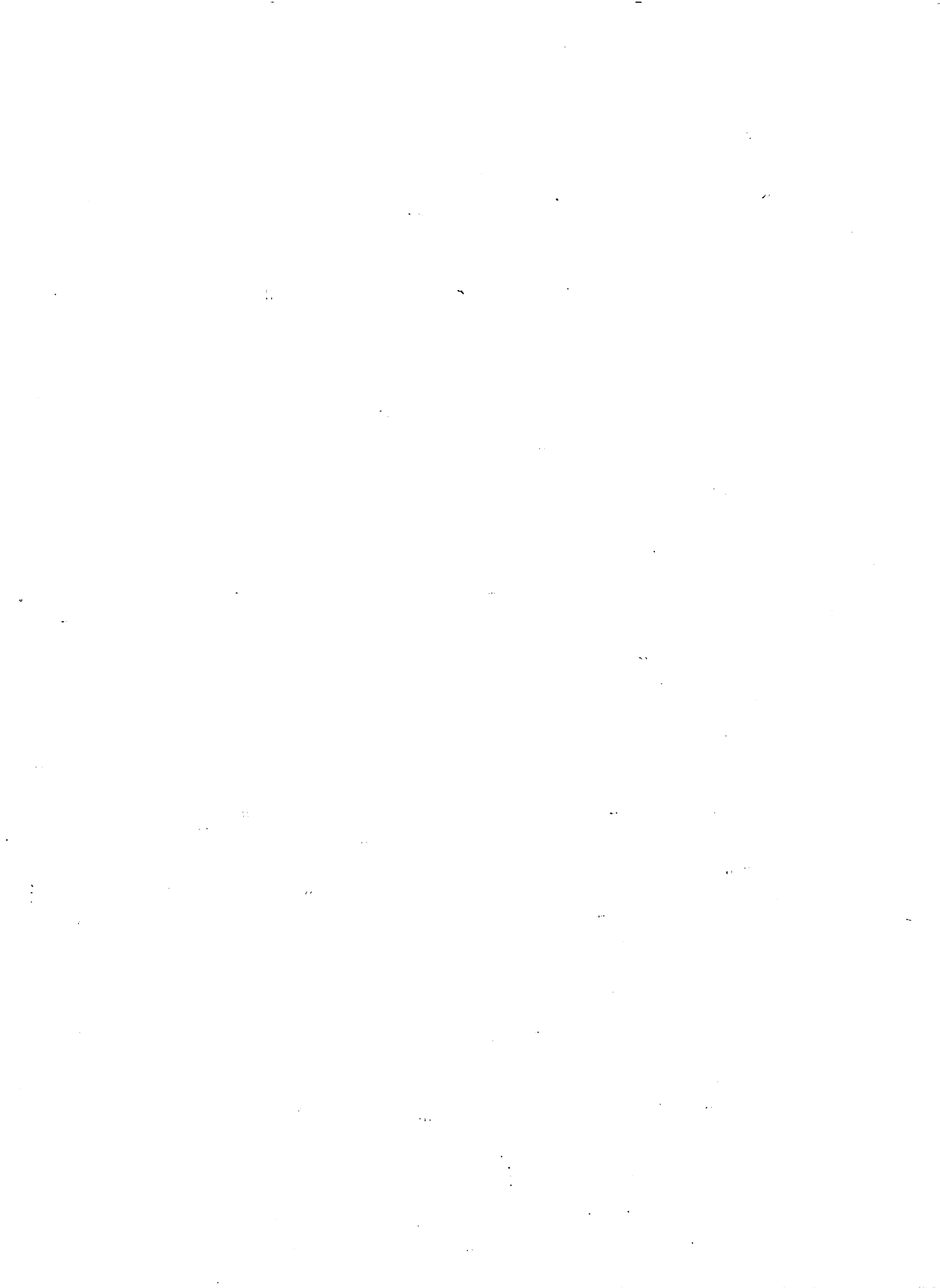
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