

Initial Steps in Building the World People's Resistance Movement

As the US imperialists erect their juggernaut of war and global domination, they are mobilising more and more of the resources under their control, not least of all the global media and the vast wealth they have plundered from the world's oppressed. The masses face an unrelenting onslaught of lies, distortion and manipulation from every organ of bourgeois power. To meet this, new forms of organisation are needed, organisation that brings together the strengths of the world's oppressed and mobilises them to concentrate their forces at key points so as to give maximum support to the rising shoots of people's resistance and deal the strongest blows possible to the enemy's weak points. The initial steps taken in building the World People's Resistance Movement show that it is such an organisation,

The WPRM, formed in April 2002, arose as the US imperialists lashed out in the wake of 11 September, and it has immediately faced the task of organising resistance on a number of different, vital fronts. Provisional Organising Committees have been formed in both Europe and South Asia to take the initial steps. Within the first couple of months of its existence, WPRM - Europe took part in a powerful protest against the imperialist chieftain himself in Berlin, and denounced the US war against Afghanistan; it organised a series of demonstrations around Europe in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance to the US-Israeli regime; it began to gear up against US imperialist aggression against Iraq; and it set in motion plans for a series of meetings in Europe to learn about and promote solidarity with the People's War in Nepal. An important meeting to build WPRM - South Asia has also

recently been held (see the accompanying statement). A WPRM branch has also been organised in Colombia.

The WPRM has no choice but to fight on these many battlegrounds if it is to be true to its calling: "to help the struggles all over the globe flow together into a mighty torrent" and "to provide an international vehicle to promote and facilitate the world-wide unity against our common foe". This is a tall order. But the feeling of the core of WPRM activists who have taken responsibility for these initial actions is not only that it must be done, but that it can be.

The WPRM has already accomplished a great deal. On the occasion of its creation tens of thousands of leaflets were distributed calling for people to step forward and join up. In Europe, following the demonstration in May in Berlin against Bush, the WPRM held co-ordinated demonstrations in support of the Palestinian people's just struggle in London, Berlin, Hamburg and Frankfurt in Germany, and Dhaka, Bangladesh. Though these initial demonstrations were not large in number, they did mobilise hundreds, and many thousands of other people were reached in the course of preparing for and holding the demonstrations. This activity put WPRM activists in contact with Palestinian resisters and gave them a greater sense of the need to establish a clear pole targeting the role of the US imperialists in Palestine, but also pointed to the need to get a better understanding of the complex issues involved in that struggle.

WPRM activists in Europe then launched into a campaign of opposition to the mounting US threats against Iraq. Tens of thousands of leaflets were distributed calling on

people to step forward against "the global war for empire", and concluding that, "We cannot wait for the bombs to begin to fall. Resistance is needed now." This message was especially vital in continental Europe, where the governments have created the deceptive appearance of distancing themselves from the US war machine while maintaining a web of economic, political and military alliances which will pull them into the US-led aggression in one form or another. WPRM contingents have made their presence felt through banners and through distributing tens of thousands of leaflets that not only target US imperialism but also expose the more hidden hand of the old-line European colonialists for their complicity in the US-led aggression.

Even while this activity was being carried on, activists were preparing for a major speaking tour of Europe in autumn 2002 to give revolutionary-minded and progressive people a clear picture of the great advances and real story of the People's War in Nepal and to promote solidarity with it. Sometimes it was necessary to have more than one focus at once. This presented a challenge of drawing links between the necessity of fighting imperialist control and aggression in "our own countries" and the necessity of supporting people's resistance to imperialism in a distant part of the globe. Indeed, this is a major challenge for the revolutionary movement in all countries - for the communists and other progressive activists, to make internationalism more than just a phrase but a real pillar of the opposition to imperialism and reaction and a defining feature of the most enlightened and revolutionary sections of the movement as opposed

to the narrow-minded nationalism (or worse) among other sections of the people.

A programme of meetings was scheduled for the major cities of Europe - an ambitious agenda for a newly formed organisation. The problems that immediately confronted activists were frustrating and sometimes costly - but they were problems that were rooted in the nature of this organisation, what it was trying to do, and what it was trying to become. More than one logistics arrangement in the course of organising the tour fell into disarray because of a simple misunderstanding of language. But what else could be expected when any time a dozen people got together there were almost as many nationalities represented! The flyer simply for the programme in London was issued in English, Spanish, Farsi, Baluchi, Nepalese and Turkish - not to speak of the half a dozen other languages used for programmes on the continent. This was something new, something

precious, an organisation fighting imperialism in which people from every corner of the world stood shoulder to shoulder in their everyday battles. And what people found out very quickly was that, however difficult it might be to organise a meeting place when one person spoke Turkish and another Spanish, what these people shared was far more profound than what held them apart.

The determination to embrace all struggles against imperialism and to fight every division imposed by imperialism - and the internationalist character of the organisation that flows from this stand - is one of the features that distinguishes the WPRM. Another characteristic of the WPRM is that it is being built through the course of its militant actions and programs and not mainly through internal conferences and discussion. It is establishing simple rules for functioning in the course of waging struggle as opposed to spending months or years debating rules and guidelines before joining battle with

the enemy. As this initial experience is accumulated, the stage is being set for further internal consolidation on a solid basis, grounded in the understanding and mutual respect that grows out of standing shoulder to shoulder in fighting the common enemy. We should mention that it has Provisional Organising Committees, one in Europe and the other in SA.

SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN NEPAL

The meetings in solidarity with the Nepal revolution featured a slide show and presentation by Li Onesto, a revolutionary journalist from the US who spent several months in the base areas of the People's War. Her show vividly depicted the conditions in the countryside of Nepal; her voice gave voice to their hopes, their fears, their struggles. Programmes were held in Hamburg and Berlin in Germany; Antwerp, Belgium; Paris, France; London, England; Geneva, Switzerland; Milan, Italy; and

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Rotterdam, in the Netherlands. Attendance was in the range of 50-80 in the smaller meetings, 100 in Paris and 150-200 in London, Berlin and Antwerp.

The talk and discussion covered many issues: did the revolutionary Maoists have any choice but to carry out armed struggle, or were they too getting caught up in a cycle of violence? How far could they get in improving the people's lives in a country as poor as Nepal? How were people changing their lives in the liberated areas? What would India - and the US - do? How would the Nepalese communists prevent the kind of reversal of the revolution that took place in China and the USSR? In most cases the enthusiastic discussion went on for several hours, despite an already lengthy program.

In most places the WPRM activists include people from many different nationalities. The meetings too brought together a great variety of people. There was a large turnout from Nepalese living in Europe, reflecting the fact that no one from that country can remain indifferent to the events taking place there today. There was strong support for the PW among many, and also many questions about the policies of the revolutionary forces. There were also large numbers of Turkish, Iranians, Kurds, and other political refugees and foreign residents in addition to the people of the different countries in which the programs were held. People from countries suffering under the yoke of imperialism were hungry to hear how the masses of Nepal had taken such powerful strides forward in such a short time.

The WPRM also had some initial success in bringing together a variety of political forces - progressive organisations of immigrants, and different trends among the left-wing forces in the respective countries. Some were mobilised to carry support for the struggle in Nepal into their own organisations - in the UK the Socialist Labour Party, associated with former mineworkers leader Arthur Scargill, who became an object of vicious attack by then UK PM Maggie Thatcher, passed a

resolution defending the People's War against imperialist attack. In Antwerp and Rotterdam representatives of the International League of People's Struggle spoke out in favour of the People's War in Nepal, and representatives of the communist movement in the Philippines spoke about the attacks on José Maria Sison (see p. 33).

One of the particular challenges the WPRM will face is co-ordinating the struggles of the masses in such diverse areas as Europe and South Asia, the two main regions in which WPRM branches have already been formed. Yet this international scope is also one of the organisation's great strengths. Imagine the strength that is infused into the efforts of an activist in Milan or Frankfurt building for a meeting against US aggression when she or he considers the fact that halfway around the world there are people taking out the same uncompromising anti-imperialist politics to the masses there, on the streets of Delhi or Dhaka, or the villages of Sri Lanka or Jarkhand in India, in languages he or she might not even have heard of. Similarly, the enthusiasm of the masses in South Asia will be unleashed when they learn that in the imperialist citadels of Europe serious efforts are underway to unite in a common battlefield.

The WPRM in Europe has scheduled important events in the months to come. It is taking part in the mass protest planned on the occasion of the next European Summit in Copenhagen on 12-14 December 2002. It is also calling for a mass demonstration in Brussels to mark the 7th anniversary of the People's War in Nepal, to be held on 15 February 2003. All its activities will be planned to take full account of the need to link its actions with the crucial battle to oppose US aggression against Iraq.

There is still a great deal to be done before the WPRM can fulfil its goals and meet the growing and urgent needs of the revolutionary movement in different countries around the world. Nevertheless, it can be confidently stated that the WPRM has got off to an important start. ■

Statement of Movement - Committee

Under the pretext of waging a "War Against International Terrorism", the imperialist powers led by the US have unleashed a permanent war of genocidal terror against the peoples of the world. The attacks on key targets in the US on 11 September 2001 have been exploited by the US ruling class as a justification for unleashing a global war of aggression and conquest. US imperialism has declared a permanent state of war against all states, regimes, nations, movements and struggles that stand in the way of defending and expanding its empire. This is as a way of resolving a spiral of deepening recession and intensifying crisis. The only way out of this crisis for the US is to re-establish undisputed global hegemony in order to exercise decisive control over the resources, labour power and markets of the world. In essence and in effect, the US has declared a permanent state of war against the peoples of the world. The policy of US imperialism is to redraw the political map and restructure the international order, where it alone can exercise unipolar global hegemony. These developments are an explosive expression of the confrontation between imperialism and the oppressed nations and the people of the world.

US imperialism has announced its intention to deploy weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, against any force it considers its enemy any time and any where. It has already demonstrated this intention and capability against the people of Afghanistan, and it is now preparing to attack Iraq with ever more destructive violence and

the World People's Resistance

South Asia Provisional Organising

terror than before. It is also supporting Israel in waging a sustained genocidal offensive aimed at crushing the heroic national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people. The immediate aim of US imperialism is to crush all resistance and opposition, entrench puppet regimes and establish military-strategic supremacy in the Middle East and the Caspian region in order to gain decisive access and control over the vast oil resources of the area and to drive out all its rivals. The rivalry and contention among the various imperialist powers, all of whom face recession and crisis simultaneously, is bound to intensify and propel the imperialist system towards ever more destructive crisis and violent upheaval on a global scale. This logic of destruction of imperialism stands in direct opposition to the very real possibility of the people of the world rising up to claim the earth and a bright new world without domination, exploitation, oppression and WAR.

Already, across the world, there is mounting opposition and resistance to imperialist globalisation and to the US-led crusade. Sustained people's struggles against mounting repression in Peru, the Philippines, Palestine, Turkey, Nepal, India and elsewhere provide living testimony to a rising tide of anti-imperialist revolutionary struggle on a world scale that is bound to develop in waves.

South Asia is a concentration of imperialist domination, exploitation and oppression and a focal point of revolutionary struggle and people's resistance. This struggle and resistance is directed against the most brutal and intensifying imperialist domination, neo-colonial exploitation and plunder, feudal oppression and national subjugation. The vast

majority of the people of South Asia have been thrown into desperate poverty and intolerable misery and have waged the most sustained struggle for liberation, independence and freedom from this system of domination, exploitation, oppression and state terrorist repression. The People's War in Nepal against the autocratic-feudal-monarchical regime backed by imperialism, particularly US imperialism, which has advanced in leaps and waves against intensifying state terrorist repression, is a concentrated expression of this struggle and resistance and provides a beacon of hope and inspiration to the people of the world. We shall resist with our all combined strength against the efforts of the US and India to intervene to crush the People's War in Nepal. In the same manner we shall defend the people's wars being prepared, initiated and waged in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, particularly the people's war waged in Dandakaranya, Bihar, West Bengal and elsewhere in India.

All the states of the region function as junior partners in this domination, exploitation, subjugation and plunder, with India occupying a hegemonic position and playing an expansionist role. The US is moving into a strategic partnership with the Indian State in order to exercise joint regional hegemony in South Asia with the aim of crushing all revolutionary struggles and resistance. The US has penetrated the region politically, economically, culturally and militarily in order to advance its agenda of waging a permanent global war and intensifying exploitation and plunder in the region. US strategic penetration in Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka has endangered

independence and fatally threatened the life and livelihood of the people of South Asia.

In the face of this grave challenge posed by the US-led crusade, anti-imperialist forces from India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have united to form the World People's Resistance Movement - South Asia (WPRM-SA). Our aim is to unite, mobilise and lead the masses to oppose the US-led global terrorist crusade and to support all just struggles, including revolutionary struggle and people's wars led by Maoist forces, as part of building and advancing the world-wide anti-imperialist resistance movement.

Only such a world people's resistance movement can oppose and defeat the US-led crusade. Through this it can contribute in building the political foundations for achieving a world without domination, exploitation, oppression and war. We call upon all anti-imperialist, democratic, progressive organisations, forces, and individuals of South Asia who see the need to oppose the US-led global terrorist war and to uphold all people's struggle against imperialism to join and build the WPRM-SA. This way together we shall build up a tidal wave of resistance, to imperialism that will shake the system to its foundations and pave the way for a world without domination and war.

October 2002 ■