

Jose Maria Sison: From Marxist-Leninist to Revisionist

This article covers (1) The CPP and the Philippine Revolution from the early 1970s to the present; (2) How the Pro-Soviet Line of Sison and the CPP in the 1980s and the 1990s Reversed the Maoist Position of the Founding Congress in 1968; (3) Sison's Support for North Vietnam in the 1970s, Nicaragua, Cuba, North Korea and Angola—None of them Socialist; (4) Sison's evaluation of Stalin, the CPSU and the United Front Against Fascism; (5) Sison's attacks on the Cultural Revolution led by Mao and his Revolutionary Allies in the 1970s; (6) Deng's and Zhou's Counter-Revolutionary Three Worlds Theory; and (7) Sison's and the CPP's current view of the international situation and its international work, especially within the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS). (Written in 2014)

1. The CPP and the Philippine Revolution from the Early 1970s to the Present

In the early 1970s the first copies of *Philippine Society and Revolution, including Specific Characteristics of our People's War*, were published by the International Association of Filipino Patriots in the U.S. and Canada.

In 1970 the Revolutionary Union (RU), the leading Maoist organization in the U.S., was actively supporting anti-imperialist community struggles in Chinatown and Manilatown in San Francisco. The RU was also running articles in its monthly paper "Revolution" about the Philippine new democratic revolution, and its cadre were taking part in anti-martial law demonstrations that targeted U.S. imperialism's support for the puppet Marcos regime.

It appeared that the CPP and NPA were creatively applying Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and protracted people's war to the concrete situation of the Philippines. A number of points in *PSR*, written by Amado Guerrero (the nom de guerre of founding CPP Chairman Sison, seemed to be well taken: In the Philippines there is "the persistence of feudalism and the growth of a limited degree of capitalism" (p. 89); "There is no solution to the peasant problem but to wage armed struggle, conduct agrarian revolution and build revolutionary base areas" (p.159); and

"At all times, the revolutionary struggle in the city and countryside should be well-coordinated. But we should never miss the central fact that it is in the countryside where the weakest links of the political power of the enemy are to be found and where the people's armed forces have the widest area for maneuver in eating up the counterrevolutionary armed forces piece and piece and destroying them step by step." (p. 159)

Specific Characteristics of Our People's War

SCPW (1974), also written by Amado Guerrero/Sison, stated that "85% of the national population is in the countryside," but does not provide the research on which this figure is based. (p. 182) This high figure made the Philippines appear to be very similar to pre-revolutionary China. *SCPW* appeared to state correctly that "it is possible to wage a protracted people's war because we have a relatively wide backward countryside where the bulk of the population is. There are many parts which are relatively far from the enemy's center and main lines of communication and where the people live basically on the diversified agricultural produce. This situation is completely different from that obtaining in a capitalist country. (p. 184)

According to *SPCW*, "While it is our principal task to wage a protracted war in the countryside, it is our secondary task to develop the revolutionary underground and the broad anti-imperialist and democratic mass movement in the cities.... We should excel in combining legal, illegal and semi-legal activities through a widespread and stable underground. A revolutionary underground developing beneath democratic and legal or semi-legal activities should promote the well-rounded growth of the revolutionary forces, serve to link otherwise isolated parts of the Party and the people's army at every level and prepare the ground for popular uprisings in the future and for the advance of the people's army." (p. 185)

It is important to note that the relationship between "people's uprisings" in the cities and the three stages of protracted people's war (PPW) in which urban insurrections only take place after the successful liberation of vast areas of the countryside from enemy power as part of the final strategic revolutionary offensive, was left unclear. The adventurist line of preparing for "people's uprisings" that skipped these three stages of PPW came to the fore in the CPP-NPA in the late 1980s, and led to serious political and military reverses.

According to *SCPW*, five years of guerilla struggle led by the CPP-NPA created 20 guerilla fronts in seven regions outside Manila-Rizal, and the archipelagic nature of the country "shreds" the countryside into many islands. (p. 184) Thus, "while we have the widest possible space for the development of regular mobile forces in Luzon and Mindanao, these two islands are separated by hundreds of kilometers and by far smaller islands where the space immediately appears to be suitable only for guerilla forces throughout the course of people's war. The optimum condition for the emergence of regular mobile forces in the Visayan islands will be provided by the prior development of regular mobile forces in Luzon and Mindanao." (p. 186)

SPCW stated: "We have small guerilla forces, with absolutely no regular mobile forces yet to serve as main force on any occasion, then we have to have some relative concentration and some relative dispersal according to the scale of our present guerilla warfare. We have to have main guerilla units as well as secondary guerilla units, guerilla bases as well as guerilla zones." (p.194) "To graduate from guerilla warfare to regular mobile warfare as the main form of our warfare, we

have to exert a great deal of effort over a long period of time. We are still very much at the rudimentary and early sub-stage of the strategic defensive.” (p. 195)

SCPW also stated that “mountainous terrain with some population and with thick vegetation is an excellent condition for our people’s war.... The enemy cannot easily approach us because of the rough terrain and we have more opportunity than anywhere else to conduct political work among the people.” (p. 189) These same physical conditions have characterized the armed struggle that has been led by the CPI (Maoist) for the past 25 years in the densely forested areas of central and eastern India. (See pages 9-10 for more details on the Maoist revolution in India.)

The basic principles for protracted people’s war and legal and underground revolutionary work in *PSR* and *SCPW* seem to have been on the whole a correct and creative application of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought to the Philippines in the early 1970s. While Sison has degenerated from a revolutionary communist into a pro-Soviet and pseudo-Maoist revisionist as “Chairman Liwanag” over the years, particularly after his release from prison in 1987, his contributions to the founding and leadership of the CPP and NPA prior to his capture in 1977 should not be negated.

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) was formed in 1984. A than in strengthening an international formation based on Marxism, Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, and after 1993, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement was formed in 1984, based on Marxism-Leninism Mao Tsetung Thought. At that time, the CPP leadership was more interested in building ties with the Soviet imperialist bloc countries and obtaining military aid from them. Most importantly, the RIM never included the two most significant Maoist parties that were waging people’s wars in India, including after their merger into the CPI (Maoist) in 2004.

Among other problems, the RIM’s assertion of democratic centralist authority on a world scale and its claim that it was the “embryonic center” of a new Communist International precluded wide-ranging political investigation and discussion. Based on a partial understanding of conditions in particular countries and internationally, the RIM created an obstacle to the process of uniting all genuine Maoist and revolutionary forces on a higher level.

Serious political problems developed in the 1990s and 2000s in the leaderships of the three leading Maoist parties in the RIM, the Communist Party of Peru (PCP), the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA.

The Revolution in Peru under “Gonzalo Thought”

In Peru, Abimael Guzman (Gonzalo), the Chairman of the PCP, claimed to have made path breaking theoretical contributions to Maoism by “militarizing the party,” which

violated Mao's line that the communist party must lead the revolutionary army. In addition, Gonzalo imposed the concept of "jefatura" on the PCP, according to which Gonzalo was politically infallible and to whom the entire party had to pledge personal allegiance. These distortions of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism were concretized in the concept of "Gonzalo Thought" and the assertion that Gonzalo was the "Fourth Sword of MLM."

In a lengthy and generally Maoist interview with left-leaning El Diario newspaper in 1988, Gonzalo advocated the idea of a "worldwide people's war" without making distinctions between revolutionary strategy in the semi-feudal neo-colonies of the Third World and the imperialist countries. (p. 53) Some small "Maoist" organizations in Europe and Canada are promoting the concept of people's war in their imperialist countries, claiming that Mao developed the line of "the universality of people's war."

In both 1938 and 1964, Mao made a clear distinction between the line of people's war in the semi-feudal, semi-colonial countries in which the Communist Party and its armed forces surround the cities from the countryside, and the political line in the imperialist countries of "building up of revolutionary strength and the preparations for seizing victory when the conditions are ripe" with insurrections in the major cities following by nationwide civil war.¹

The Revolution in Nepal under "Prachanda Path"

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) developed out of splits with revisionist parties between 1970 and 1990, and consolidated itself under the leadership of Chairman Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai and a guiding ideology of "Prachanda Path." In 10 years of people's war, the CPN (Maoist) liberated 80% of the countryside—empowering millions of peasants, women and national minorities, and building schools and medical clinics. The CPN (Maoist) also instituted new democratic organs of political power and land reform in the vast areas it controlled by 2005.

However, Prachanda and Bhattarai adopted another path that didn't require overthrowing the old reactionary state and defeating its army. They claimed that national liberation and socialism could not be built in a single country in a world dominated by U.S. imperialism. In 2006, they negotiated a peace agreement with seven parliamentary parties that represent the interests of the landlord and bureaucratic capitalists in Nepal, setting up a Western-style parliamentary system based on elections to a Constituent Assembly in the summer of 2007. In order to reach this agreement, the CPN (Maoist) gave up its liberated areas, sequestered

¹ "Problems of War and Strategy" (Vol. 2 of Mao's Selected Works, pp. 219- 220, 1938) and the 8th Comment of *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchov's Revisionism," pp. 392-393, 1964
www.marx2mao.com/Other/ANC63.html

19,000 troops and arms under UN supervision, and agreed to merge the People's Liberation Army (PLA) with the reactionary Nepalese Army.²

In 2011, thousands of officers and members of the PLA were dissolved into the 90,000 strong U.S. and India-supported Nepalese Army. This total capitulation to Western imperialism and Indian expansionism by Chairman Prachanda of the renamed United CP of Nepal (Maoist) and Prime Minister Bhattarai was rejected by the newly formed Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist). The new CPN (Maoist) unites the left wing of the former CPN (Maoist), two of whose top leaders (Kiran and Gajurel) were imprisoned in India prior to the peace agreement in 2006. A considerable number of former members of the PLA joined the CPN (Maoist) and are providing the core of "People's Volunteer" paramilitary units.

The Revolutionary Communist Party, USA and Avakian's "New Synthesis"

The third important force in the RIM in the 1980s and 1990s was the RCP, USA and its Chairman, Bob Avakian. In 1978, the RCP leadership adopted a subjective idealist line in the name of "Create Public Opinion, Seize Power." This turned the RCP into a propaganda sect that rejected Maoist base-building, especially in the working class and the communities of the oppressed nationalities, immigrants and Native Americans.

In the 1980s, the RCP held the erroneous view that the inter-imperialist contention between the U.S. and the USSR would inevitably lead to world war unless it was prevented by revolution in the U.S. This line denied the increasing inability of the Soviet economy and military to keep up with the U.S. imperialists in the arms race of the 1970s and 1980s. The resulting implosion of the Soviet economy, together with the deterrence that developed between the nuclear arsenals of the imperialist superpowers, made a third world war between the U.S. and USSR highly unlikely.

² The June-July 2006 issue of *People's March* magazine contains an interview with the spokesperson of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), which makes a detailed criticism of the CPN (Maoist)'s political direction. (See the CPI Maoist section in www.bannedthought.net) The MLM Revolutionary Study Group also published a detailed analysis of the pro-imperialist actions of the Prachanda-Bhattarai clique from 2006-2009, "Which Way Forward for the UCPN (Maoist) and the Nepali People's Revolutionary Struggle" (2009). (www.mlmrsg.com)

In addition, "The Political, Military and Negotiating Strategies of the Chinese Communist Party (1937-1946) and Recent Developments in Nepal" by the MLMRSG, sets a political framework for assessing political relations with imperialist powers in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country like Nepal. A close look at the CCP's integrated political-military strategy and negotiating tactics from 1937-1946— which advanced China's protracted people's war to final victory—yields important lessons for the revolution in Nepal. (Also see www.mlmrsg.com 2007)

Even after the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989-1991, the RCP stubbornly fought within the RIM for the incorrect view that inter-imperialist contention was the primary contradiction and was more important internationally than revolutionary struggles in the Third World. The RCP's incorrect position on the international situation, and giving up its revolutionary work in the working class, lead to an exodus of half of its membership in the 1980s.

Particularly after 2000, the RCP focused its work around promoting the writings of Avakian. Around the time of George W. Bush's election in 2004, Avakian and the RCP argued that Bush and his allies in the Republican party were "Christian fascists" who were hell-bent on launching a civil war aimed at instituting a theocratic state in the U.S. The RCP's analysis opened the door to viewing the imperialist Democratic party as a lesser evil. In a remarkable flight from reality, the RCP claimed that the threat of Christian fascism posed only two choices: "George W. Bush or Bob Avakian." Around the same time, RCP leaders claimed that Avakian is of the "same caliber as Lenin and Mao."

Beginning in 2008, Avakian claimed to have produced a "new synthesis" that is an "advance beyond Marxism-Leninism-Maoism." Not only do Avakian and the RCP negate the rich revolutionary history of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on a world scale, they have to do so in order to implement a long history of subjective idealist work in the U.S. that is based principally on spreading Avakian's writings in a manner that is completely divorced from revolutionary work in mass struggles and setting down deep roots in oppressed communities.

The RCP's idealist political line is directly opposed to the position guiding revolutionary work in the imperialist-capitalist countries enunciated by Mao and the CCP in the polemics against the Soviet revisionists in 1963-1964:

"The fundamental and most important task for the proletarian party is to concentrate on the painstaking work of accumulating revolutionary strength. The active leadership given in day-to-day struggles must have as its central aim the building up of revolutionary strength and the preparations for seizing victory in the revolution when the conditions are ripe. The proletarian party should use the various forms of day-to-day struggle to raise the political consciousness of the proletariat and the masses of people, to train its own class force, to temper its fighting capacity and to prepare for revolution ideologically, politically, organizationally and militarily. It is only in this way that it will not miss the opportunity of seizing victory when the conditions for revolutionary are ripe."³

Further, the RCP does not support the work of revolutionary Maoist parties and organizations around the world, especially the Communist Party of India (Maoist),

³ *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, "The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchov's Revisionism," March 31, 1964, p. 393. The polemic can be accessed at www.marx2mao.com/Other/PGLtc.html

which leads the largest and most dynamic revolutionary movement in the world. This total abdication of proletarian internationalism by Avakian and the RCP is justified by the fact that these Maoist parties and organizations refuse to line up behind Avakian's "new synthesis."

The KDP and its Degeneration into a Pro-Soviet Sect

It is useful to review the history of Filipino and Filipino-American groups in the U.S. that supported, or claimed to support, the Communist Party of the Philippines and the national democratic movement. This began with the Kalayaan Collectives, followed by the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP) and BAYAN USA.

In 1971, revolutionary Kalayaan Collectives were formed in the San Francisco-Bay Area; similar groups were formed in New York City and Chicago. These collectives were made up of pro-Maoist Filipino-Americans and some recent arrivals from the Philippines, where they had worked with the recently formed CPP and its mass organizations. They threw themselves into struggles against discrimination against the growing Filipino communities in the U.S. and the anti-Vietnam War movement. They also built support for the national democratic movement and the anti-Marcos movement, particularly as they grew with the imposition of martial law by the U.S.-Marcos government in September 1972. The Kalayaan Collectives also promoted systematic study of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought and materials from the CPP.

After the Kalayaan Collectives led in forming the National Committee to Restore Civil Liberties in the Philippines (NCRCLP) in late 1972, the three collectives along with the majority of the NCRCLP founded the Union of Democratic Filipinos (Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Filipino) or KDP, to fight for national democratic revolution in the Philippines and socialism in the U.S. As late as 1974 and 1975, the KDP issued printings of the 57 page "People's War in the Philippines," which included "The Basic Rules of the NPA" and "The 10-Point Program of the National Democratic Front."

In 1976, influenced by the domination of Deng's Three Worlds Theory in China, the KDP leadership jettisoned its support for Maoism and socialist China. Top KDP leaders Bruce Occena and Melinda Paras united with Max Elbaum, the author of *Revolution in the Air*, to form the leadership of a "Rectification Network" ironically named after the First Great Rectification Movement of the late 1960s that preceded the formation of the Maoist CPP in 1968. This network, dominated by the KDP, led to the formation of a reformist pro-Soviet organization, Line of March.

In the 1980s, Line of March supported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet crackdown on Solidarity in Poland, and the Soviet and Cuban-backed Ethiopian regime's "red terror" against political opponents and the just Eritrean struggle for national independence. By 1984, Line of March withdrew its claim that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the CPUSA were revisionist. Noting the

changing line of the CPP leadership on the Soviet Union in 1983, Line of March tried to maintain its “solidarity work” with the CPP.

Ex-KDP and Line of March members threw themselves into reformist support work for Jesse Jackson’s runs in the Democratic Presidential primaries in 1984 and 1988, only to be discarded and demoralized when Jackson shut down the “Rainbow Coalition” to rejoin the mainstream of the imperialist Democratic Party. As the process of Gorbachev’s perestroika picked up steam, the surviving members of Line of March voted to disband the organization in 1989.⁴

The revisionist betrayal of KDP from 1975 to 1989 left a political vacuum for revolutionary work in the Filipino-American and Filipino immigrant communities in the U.S., which was not filled until Sison with apparent CPP support sent several ex-student leaders to the U.S. in 1998.

The Sectarian Work of BAYAN USA

In New York City, Philippine Forum, which later spearheaded the formation of BAYAN USA, was politically connected to Sison and his forces in the Netherlands and the Philippines. One of their main methods of working with and “consolidating” both Filipino and non-Filipino activists in the U.S. was to send them on “exposures” to the Philippines.

In the summer of 2002, the U.S. military was setting up a “temporary” base in Zamboanga, Mindanao with the alleged purpose of combating the Abu Sayyaf group. Several people from the U.S. joined an international fact-finding committee to document this renewed U.S. military intervention in the Philippines.

During this trip they were given the three major rectification documents from 1992, and *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader’s View*, published in 1989. “The Philippine Revolution” raised questions about Liwanag/Sison’s view of Soviet social-imperialism, international revisionism, the Cultural Revolution and the revisionist coup in China after Mao’s death in 1976.

BAYAN USA is under the direction of Sison, and demands that all progressive Filipino-American forces join it. BAYAN USA’s political ally in the U.S. is the Trotskyite-revisionist Workers World Party, which is headquartered in New York City. Workers World Party supports the reactionary, state capitalist and social-democratic countries in the Third World that are opposed to the U.S., particularly Iran, North Korea and Cuba. In the 1960s and 70s, Workers World claimed that the Soviet Union was socialist, and supported the Soviet army’s invasion of

⁴ See *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che*, by Max Elbaum (2002). See p. 78 on the Kalayaan Collectives and the formation of KDP, and pp. 242-243 and 298 on the formation, pro-Soviet apologetics and the demise of Line of March.

Czechoslovakia in 1968. In its work in the U.S., Workers World advocates a nebulous form of “people’s power” that will supposedly convince the bourgeoisie to give up state power.

The Maoist Revolution in India

Around this time the work of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) became more prominent internationally. It was formed in 2004 by the merger of the CP of India (ML) People’s War and the Maoist Communist Centre of India, the two most significant Maoist parties in India that had been waging armed struggle in mainly different regions for decades. The CPI (Maoist) has united the great majority of Indian Maoists, and the party’s People’s Liberation Guerilla Army (PLGA) and political organizers now operate both openly and underground in 15 states in India.

Of great importance to the world revolution, the CPI (Maoist) is leading a protracted people’s war based in the forested adivasi (indigenous) areas of eastern and central India that contain trillions of dollars worth of minerals coveted by both Indian and multinational mining firms. The CPI (Maoist), under the protection of the approximately 50,000 strong People’s Liberation Guerilla Army (the PLGA, which is composed of 40% women), has established two fluid guerilla zones, centered in the adivasi-dominated and poverty-stricken states of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand-Bihar in eastern India.

In these areas, the Maoists have established and lead an extensive network of Janatana Sarkars, or people’s governments. These revolutionary organs of power direct everything from agricultural production and irrigation works to mass organizations of working women and schools conducted in Gond and other adivasi languages.

The PLGA mainly undertakes large numbers of small-scale guerilla operations, but also assembles forces of hundred of fighters to hit more heavily defended targets. The CPI (Maoist) places an extremely high emphasis on extensive party-led village militias. The organizations of these militia fighters, who are usually armed with traditional weapons such as bows and arrows, are several times larger than the regular PLGA forces. The militias are a fertile source of recruitment into the PLGA as modern weapons are captured from the enemy, manufactured by the people’s forces or purchased by them, and as militia fighters gain valuable revolutionary political and military experience.

The CPI (Maoist) is also doing political work among dalits (formerly known as untouchables) and lower caste farmers in the plains areas, and among workers, urban poor, students and professionals in major cities.⁵

The Revolutionary Struggle in Mindanao

The reports of the NDFP-Mindanao's Ka Oris [Jorge Madlos] about the revolutionary struggle in Mindanao sound solid and promising. Mindanao is the second largest island in the Philippines, and has favorable terrain for guerilla warfare. Still it is not clear how much unity there is between the Ka Oris and the Mindanao CPP leadership; the national CPP-NPA leadership; and Sison's forces in the Netherlands and the legal organizations in the Philippines. (At the CPP's Second Congress in 2016, Ka Oris was selected to be the ~~of the~~ national commander of the New People's Army.)

Below is a statement from 2012 where Oris refers to "the founding of the Communist Party of the Philippines (MLM)" 44 years ago. While that unofficial addition of (MLM) to the name of the CPP has not been repeated, it may have some political significance. Oris' statement also describes the courses in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism that he states are underway at various levels of the party in Mindanao.

According to Oris: "The theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has been widely and deeply rooted like no other in the entire history of the Party in Mindanao. Almost all fulltime Party members have completed the basic course, and most committee sections have undergone the intermediate course. And some regional level cadres have finished the advanced course. We have programmed a study on this for all members of regional and sub-regional committees."

Oris continues, "This year, there has been a marked increase in the number of local Party branches who have completed the Basic Party Course (BPC). We should persevere in launching the mass movement in studying BPC in order for Marxism, Leninism and Maoism to be firmly rooted among the widest section of the masses and for this to be the material force in waging the people's war. There is also a need for us to further enrich the Intermediate Party Course with the more advanced practices that we have gained these past few years." There has been nothing similar about the study of MLM in any official CPP or NPA statements in recent years.

Oris also describes the important work of the MB and YDB, which I think translate roughly as People's Militia (Milisyang Bayan) and Village Self-Defense Forces (YDB),

⁵ For a comprehensive listing of the statements, interviews and press statements on the work of the CPI (Maoist), see www.bannedthought.net.

in coordinating political and military work with NPA units. ⁶ On the 43rd anniversary of the founding of the NPA, March 29, 2012, Oris stated that the five regional party committees in Mindanao have a mass base of one million, and calls for: "Getting new recruits, upgrading the organization of the NPA, and training and arming are a must. But this is not enough. We must be able to fully mobilize the masses by organizing more and more units of the Milisyang Bayan, Self Defense Units, and Self Defense Corps; training and arming them; and directly mobilizing the masses in tactical offensives, intelligence, recruitment, production, supplies and logistics, and other such tasks."⁷

In December 2010, an impressive public rally of 10,000 NPA fighters in Caraga, northeastern Mindanao, was covered by reporters.⁸ That same month, a "lightning rally" in Manila that called for youth to join the NPA appeared to be the work of underground red youth forces (KM). Their political affiliation was not clear, but their action appeared to break with the legal, electoral orientation of Kabataan and Anakbayan, the student and youth groups affiliated with Sison's BAYAN.⁹

Below is a statement by the CPI (Maoist) on the death of CPP Spokesperson Ka Roger.¹⁰ There are also statements by the CPP on the execution of Azad, a top leader of the CPI (Maoist) in the course of a trap set by the Indian military during "peace" negotiations, and in opposition to the Indian military's "Operation Green Hunt."¹¹

⁶ <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2012/12/30/philippines-revolutionary-forces-making-gains-in-mindanao/>

⁷ <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2012/03/31/philippines-peoples-war-in-mindanao-is-gaining-ground-in-spite-of-the-opb-brutal-suppression-campaign-of-the-us-aquino-regime/>

⁸ <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2010/12/26/philippines-caraga-communist-rebels-celebrate-cpp-anniversary/>

⁹ <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2010/12/04/philippines-underground-youth-group-holds-daring-lightning-rally-calls-on-youth-to-accelerate-the-revolutionary-upsurge-and-join-the-new-peoples-army/>

¹⁰ <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2012/03/06/internationalist-solidarity-indian-maoist-salute-to-the-memory-of-filipino-revolutionary-leader-ka-roger/>

¹¹ <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2010/07/07/communist-party-of-the-philippines-condemns-summary-execution-of-azad/#more-5253>

2. The Pro-Soviet International Line of Sison and the CPP in the 1980s and 90s Reversed the Maoist Position of the CPP Founding Congress in 1968

After a revolutionary Maoist rectification process under Sison's leadership, the CPP was founded on the basis of Marxism, Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought in 1968. The Founding Congress supported the Cultural Revolution that was being waged by Mao and his close allies in China, and opposed the reactionary nature of Soviet social-imperialism. ("PSR," pp. 166, 167)

The first of the CPP Rectification documents in 1992 was titled "Re-Affirm." The third was Armando Liwanag/Sison's *Stand for Socialism Against Modern Revisionism* ("Stand for Socialism"). They were followed in 1996 by Liwanag's *Long Live Lenin and Stalin, Condemn the Modern Revisionists, Resume the Proletarian Revolution* ("Long Live Lenin and Stalin"). This document was presented by Sison at a conference of the International Committee for Restoration of the Soviet Union and for the Formation of the Modern Communist Doctrine.

In 2004, *Jose Maria Sison At Home In the World: Portrait of a Revolutionary: Conversations with Ninotchka Rosca* appeared in which Sison defended and further developed his revisionist positions of the past. ("At Home in the World")

It is well documented, partly by Liwanag, who does not identify himself as CPP Chairman in "Stand for Socialism" in 1992, that between 1983 and 1991, the CPP leadership reversed the correct position at its Founding Congress in 1968 on the reactionary nature of Soviet social-imperialism and dropped its support for the Cultural Revolution in China.

Since 1992, Sison has continued, in somewhat more veiled forms, to claim that the "full capitalist restoration" in the Soviet Union took place in 1989-91, not 1957; justify the CPP's support for the Soviet Union and its revisionist allies from 1983-1991; gut the Maoist politics behind the Cultural Revolution; and deny political support to the heroic efforts of Mao and his closest allies in the CCP Politburo to defend the achievements of the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s. (See Section 5 for a discussion of the class struggle in socialist China.)

In 1984, the organ of the CPP in charge of international relations claimed that the CPSU under the Brezhnev clique was no longer a revisionist party, but a "Marxist-Leninist party," and that the CPSU "was proletarian internationalist rather than social-imperialist, having supported third world liberation movements." In 1986, the Executive Committee of the CPP commissioned a study that concluded that the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries were "socialist because their economies were still dominated by state-owned enterprises." ("Stand for Socialism," p. 6)

Based on well-worn apologetics for the Soviet social-imperialists, the CPP and NDFP leaders tried to develop friendly relations with the ruling revisionist parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the 1980s. In addition, the CPP-NPA actively (but unsuccessfully) sought to buy Soviet anti-tank weapons, laser-guided missiles and other heavy weapons to counter the more advanced U.S.-supplied arsenal of the AFP. ("Stand for Socialism," p. 7)

This line of seeking Soviet bloc military and financial assistance had an apparent "left" opportunist objective of accelerating the victory of the Philippine revolution through the importation of heavy military weapons. In fact it had a rightist content of seeking to shorten the protracted people's war, and rejecting self-reliant revolutionary struggle and the previous anti-revisionist line of the CPP.

The pro-U.S. Aquino regime released Sison and other leading CPP prisoners in March 1986 in an attempt to demonstrate how "democratic" it was. The photo gallery at the end of *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View* (1989) shows Sison meeting in 1986 with U.S. puppet president Cory Aquino, who was soon to unleash the Philippine Army against the NPA and its guerilla fronts from Mindanao to Northern Luzon.

Sison held a pro-Soviet line beginning with his public statements to the CPP press in July 1987, and possibly sooner in internal statements within the party. Sison embraced this pro-Soviet revisionist line up to at least 1991, when the Soviet Union and its imperialist bloc finally collapsed. At that point, political criticisms of the former USSR by Sison, the CPP leadership and similar forces internationally were not based on Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principle.

Instead the CPP leadership pragmatically placed as much political distance as possible between themselves and the discredited Soviet bloc, and excised their years of support for it from CPP publications and official histories. Thus, the Soviet Union and the other "revisionist-ruled countries" were criticized by Sison and the CPP leadership because they were "in turmoil" or had "collapsed," not because of their reactionary and imperialist nature.

Sison's Revealing Interview with Ang Bayan in July 1987

In an interview with Ang Bayan in July 1987, CPP Chairman Armando Liwanag (Sison) explained why the CPP had reversed its prior criticisms of Soviet social-imperialism in 1983, and had instead been seeking relations with the CPSU and the revisionist parties in Eastern Europe.¹² In this interview, Sison reported that "we are now in the process of seeking and establishing relations with the ruling parties in Eastern Europe and elsewhere." Sison asserted that the Filipino people need "moral

¹² The interview and a response are reprinted in Issue 12 in 1988 of *A World to Win* magazine in the section on the "Revolutionary Internationalist Movement" in www.bannedthought.net.

and material assistance more than ever” from these revisionist parties in and out of power in order to counter escalating U.S. intervention in the Philippines.

Sison saw “no direct bones of contention” between the CPP and any of the revisionist parties. Clearly referring to the Maoist position of the CPP between 1968 and 1983 in opposition to Soviet social-imperialism, Sison stated that “The CPP considers as matters belonging to history those differences in the past arising from disputes between certain parties. We cannot afford to engage in endless open ideological disputes which can only benefit U.S. imperialism, our common enemy.” When asked about “previous CPP declarations that certain parties are revisionist and that certain countries are social-imperialist rather than socialist,” Sison answered that “Those previous declarations belong to history... Since a few years ago, the CPP has voluntarily ceased to apply certain terms or labels to other parties.”

While Sison considered the CPSU and other revisionist parties in Eastern Europe as fraternal parties (and probably North Vietnam, Cuba and North Korea as well), he derided “the parties or small groups that have arisen for the first time in the sixties and proclaimed themselves as adherents of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought” and had criticized the pro-Soviet positions of the CPP in the 1980s as “dogmatists who keep on debating, splitting and liquidating their parties or groups over theoretical and international questions, divorced from revolutionary practice in their respective countries.”

Sison even stated that “after total victory is won, cooperative relations with other communist and workers parties shall be needed for consolidation, national reconstruction, socialist revolution and construction.” This raised a serious question as to what kind of “socialism” (part of COMECON?) he envisioned for the Philippines.

Finally, after giving a “socialist” bill of health to the Soviet social-imperialists and their bloc, Sison had the gall to claim that the “CPP owes a lot to Mao Tsetung” without mentioning Mao’s firm anti-Soviet revisionist stand in the 1960s and 1970s, and Mao’s greatest theoretical and practical contribution to the science of Marxist-Leninism, the continuation of the revolution under socialism through waging Cultural Revolutions.

In an indirect attack on the theory of protracted people’s war pioneered by Mao and the Chinese Communist Party in the 1930s and 1940s that is generally applicable in mainly rural countries such as the Philippines, Sison claimed that “no single party or revolution in one country can be regarded as the exclusive model or centre for the proletariat and people all over the world.”

“Stand for Socialism” Defends Establishing Ties with the Soviet Bloc

The only time that Sison has referred to this noxious 1987 interview has been to defend it, not repudiate it. In “Stand for Socialism” in 1992, Sison claimed that

“the motivation is good...to seek greater material and moral support for the Filipino people’s revolutionary struggle,” clearly referring to the CPP’s history of seeking military and political support from the Soviet social-imperialists. Sison continued to insist that “It is correct for the Party to seek friendly relations with any foreign party or movement on the basis of anti-imperialism.” (p. 9) This is far from a correct Maoist criticism of Soviet social-imperialism and of the CPP’s pro-Soviet history since 1983, but rather an attempt to coverup and run political interference for both Sison and the CPP.

Sison’s Continued Support for Soviet Social-Imperialism in 1989 and 2004

In “Philippine Revolution” (1989), Sison stated that “It is obvious that the CCP central committee is already taking steps to revive and improve relations with all the Eastern European parties,” which he claimed without proof “adhere to the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism.” (p. 186) In reference to articles before 1983 by the CPP that the Soviet Union was social-imperialist, Sison made the claim that “These articles were not the result of any direct investigation of the Soviet economy and society by Filipino revolutionaries and social researchers, but were based on secondary sources since 1963—when the great ideological debate was raging—from parties with which we had been aligned.” (p. 183) So it’s bad “secondary research” that led the CPP at its founding congress in 1968 to denounce Soviet social-imperialism!

Sison opportunistically did not mention that this “great ideological debate” was actually *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* against the Soviet revisionists from 1963-64 that was written by and/or produced under the direction of Mao.¹³ Sison thereby dismissed this historic polemic, which was based on the knowledge, research and political summation made by Mao and other CCP leaders and intellectuals who spent time in the Soviet Union in the 1950s. It was the Chinese Communist Party and other revolutionary Maoist parties and organizations that Sison was referring to when he tried to distance himself “from parties with which we had been aligned.”

Sison’s solution to the problem of having improperly used “secondary sources” in the 1960s was to state that the CPP is “now desirous of sending study and research groups to the Soviet Union.” (p. 183) Before the results of this new “study and research” on the Soviet Union had been received, Sison concluded that “the CPP has ceased to call the CPSU revisionist.” He also renewed his call for the CPP and NDFP to seek material aid from the Soviet bloc countries. (pp. 184, 195)

This political about-face in “Philippine Revolution” on the reactionary nature of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies, and Sison’s continuing to beg for Soviet aid as a way to shorten the protracted people’s war, are a slap in the face

¹³ The full polemic can be accessed at www.marx2mao.com/Other/PGLtc.html

to these leaders and cadre in the CPP who upheld a correct Maoist position on the imperialist nature of the Soviet Union up to its collapse in 1991.

As late as 2004 in "At Home in the World," Sison stated that "my political writings from 1986 to 1988... reflected an optimism that there could be broad anti-imperialist solidarity between the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the forces in China and the Soviet-bloc countries." (p. 150) This call for "anti-imperialist solidarity" with the Soviet social-imperialists and the Chinese state capitalists--who were beginning to develop into a state monopoly capitalist-imperialist country that exported billions of dollars in capital--was very revealing.

Sison also stated in "At Home in the World" that "The CPP was willing to have bilateral relations with the Soviet party on the basis of broad anti-imperialist solidarity," and that "I was aware that the representatives of the CPP occasionally met with representatives of the Soviet CP." The only obstacle to this rapprochement and the desired flow of Soviet military aid was the "Soviet demand for a merger of the CPP with the revisionist group (led by the Lavas) in the Philippines," and that the CPSU was supporting the pro-U.S. Marcos regime! (p. 153)

Thus, Sison was not only pragmatically wedded to seeking material aid from the Soviet social-imperialists and their bloc, but was unable to criticize himself for the blatantly pro-Soviet positions he had taken in the past.

On p. 18 of "Stand for Socialism," Sison argued that the Soviet Union went through "stages of camouflaged counterrevolution in a period of 38 years, 1953 to 1991." Then he stated more plainly that "[Gorbachev] completed the process of capitalist restoration started by Khrushchev and presided over the destruction of the Soviet Union." (p. 37) Thus, Sison's position is that beginning in 1953, the Soviet Union became less and less socialist under Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Gorbachev, until it became fully capitalist only with the complete collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Sison continues to hold and spread this position of providing political cover for the state capitalist (1957-1968) and social-imperialist (1968-1991) Soviet Union. As recently as September 2012 in Part 1 of "Prospects for Maoism in the Philippines,"¹⁴ Sison claimed that "The disintegration of the Soviet Union and the full capitalist restoration in revisionist-ruled countries in the period of 1989-1991 have vindicated Mao's position on the crucial importance and necessity of the struggle against revisionism..."

The only thing new here is that Sison has the political nerve to rewrite the well known position of Mao and Chinese Communist Party, which was that state

¹⁴ www.ndfp.net/joom15/index.php/readings-mainmenu-73/1515-deve...nd-prospects-of-maoist-theory-and-practice-in-the-philippines.html.

capitalism was restored in the Soviet Union in 1957 under Khrushchev and developed into Soviet social-imperialism in 1968 under Brezhnev. Sison holds the classic revisionist position that a country can be part socialist and part capitalist. It also demonstrates that Sison does not understand the fundamental differences between the two systems.

The stubbornness with which Sison has argued that a full restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and other revisionist-ruled countries did not take place until 1991 helps to justify the efforts of Sison and the CPP-NPA to obtain military and political support from the Soviet imperialist bloc countries in the 1980s. When these efforts proved to be unsuccessful, they still had to be justified by Sison and other leaders of the CPP. These efforts call into question the political line of the CPP leadership, including their "Maoist" credentials, from the 1980s and onward through the Second Rectification Movement.

(3) Sison's Support for North Vietnam in the 1970s, Nicaragua, Cuba, North Korea and Angola—None of them Socialist

In "Stand for Socialism," Liwanag/Sison stated that "among the Soviet Union's good commitments was the assistance to the Vietnamese people in the Vietnam war, Cuba, Angola and Nicaragua," without providing any factual argumentation or political basis. (p. 24)

For 30 years Vietnam was a storm center of revolutionary struggle against U.S. and French imperialism. It brought the U.S. and French ruling classes to their knees and rallied the support and sympathy of many millions the world over. Yet the anti-imperialist revolution of the Vietnamese people was aborted by the leaders of the Vietnam Workers' Party in the late 1960s and 1970s. The goal of national independence for the Vietnamese people was betrayed from within and the Vietnamese people delivered into the hands of the Soviet social-imperialists.

A clear indication of vacillation by the Vietnam Workers' Party (VWP) on the revolutionary goal of the South Vietnamese people took place in 1957, when it decided to place top priority on the reconstruction of North Vietnam, in opposition to the revolutionary struggle to liberate the South. When the political struggle between the revolutionary forces led by Mao and the CCP against Khrushchev and the Soviet revisionists broke out in 1960, Ho Chi Minh called for unity in the so-called "socialist camp," and offered to play the role of arbiter of the struggle between socialist China and state capitalist Soviet Union. When the leaders of the VWP did

take a position in 1960, they sided with the Soviet line which argued for cooling out the national liberation struggle in the south.¹⁵

In 1960, Le Duan, the Secretary General of the VWP, stated: "In the world, the socialist forces are becoming stronger than the imperialist forces. In our country, the socialist forces in the North are also being developed strongly. Though this situation has created a number of complications for the revolution in the South, the advantages are fundamental."¹⁶ That same year, the National Liberation Front was formed in the South, which intensified the armed struggle against the U.S.-puppet regime in South Vietnam. Due to the minimal aid it was receiving from North Vietnam, the NLF's struggle took the form of a people's war at that stage.

The leaders of the VWP took a negative view of Mao and the Chinese Cultural Revolution that was in line with the Soviet revisionists: "After 1967-1968 and the Cultural Revolution, we no longer looked on the Chinese leaders who succeeded one another in the long power struggle as socialists. ...Non-socialists have eliminated the outstanding militants. Those who fought against Mao after 1966 were in general the best of the lot."¹⁷ "Those who fought against Mao" could only mean the pro-Soviet capitalist roaders in the CCP, Liu Shiaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.¹⁸

In 1966, the leaders of the VWP resumed their talk about the necessity for "uniting the socialist camp," and claimed that revisionism was no longer a problem in the Soviet Union. The motivation for these statements by the VWP was the Soviet Union's offer of advanced weapons for the kind of conventional war that the North Vietnamese leaders wanted to wage against the U.S.

Soviet military aid to North Vietnam in the late 1960s and 1970s was hi-tech surface-to-air missiles, artillery, planes and tanks that required large numbers of Soviet technicians. This military aid supported fixed positional warfare and the Soviet line of fighting geared to negotiations and to the U.S. presidential elections in 1968 and 1972. This kind of aid created North Vietnamese dependence on Soviet military assistance, and strengthened the position of the leaders of the VWP, who adopted a revisionist line of conventional warfare relying on advanced Soviet weapons. This was opposed to the Maoist line of protracted people's war that had largely characterized the armed struggle in South Vietnam in the early 1960s.

¹⁵ "Vietnam: The Miscarriage of the Revolution," (1979), at www.bannedthought.net. This article contains an analysis of the triumph of revisionism in the Vietnam Workers' Party and the integration of the reunited Vietnam into the Soviet imperialist bloc.

¹⁶ "On the Socialist Revolution in Vietnam," Vol. 1, by Le Duan, 1965, quoted in *Vietnam Triangle*, by Donald Zagoria (1967), p. 105.

¹⁷ Le Duan quoted in *The Manchester Guardian*, October 29, 1978.

¹⁸ Deng not only led the CCP in restoring capitalism in 1978, he presided over the development of a powerful capitalist economy that would grow into a monopoly capitalist-imperialist economy shortly after his death in the 1990s.

In line with the renunciation of people's war in Vietnam by the VWP, public radio broadcasts from Hanoi in 1977 attacked the New People's Army in the Philippines, calling it an "outlawed extremist organization" and characterizing its revolutionary work as "subversive activities in the Philippines."¹⁹

It was a great disappointment and politically disorienting to people around the world who supported the struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. imperialism and its puppet regimes in Saigon to see the leaders of the reunited Vietnam after 1975 build state capitalism and join COMECON, the instrument of Soviet economic domination of its Eastern European satellites and Cuba. In 1977, as part of the Soviet Union's "international division of labor," Vietnam rapidly expanded imports of heavy machinery and technology from the Soviet bloc. In order to pay for these industrial imports, the Vietnamese government oriented its economy toward cash crops like coal, cotton, coffee, rubber and fruit and vegetables as part of COMECON's "socialist" division of labor.²⁰

In 1976, in his Political Report to the Fourth Congress of the renamed Communist Party of Vietnam, Le Duan stated: "The decisive factor for the success of the process of advancing to large-scale socialist productivity is the constant increase of social labour productivity and economic efficiency." This statement can be found in any manual of the National Association of Manufacturers in the U.S. on increasing labor productivity. It is a hallmark of state capitalism.

The Vietnamese revisionists also signed a 20 year military alliance of "Friendship and Cooperation" with the Soviet Union in 1978. The Vietnamese government provided the Soviet Union with a naval base at the U.S.-built base at Danang in order to maintain and refuel long-range Soviet reconnaissance aircraft. In 1979 several hundred Soviet naval experts arrived at the former multi-billion dollar U.S. naval port of Cam Ranh Bay, which they transformed into a major Soviet naval installation.²¹

With the final collapse of the Soviet imperialist empire in 1991, the leaders of the Communist Party of Vietnam changed their course to seek economic integration into the Western imperialist bloc and political rapprochement with the U.S. imperialists, who killed at least two million Vietnamese people between 1960 and 1975. As wages in China have increased due to a wave of strikes, many Chinese factories have relocated to Vietnam, where the minimum wage is less than half that of China. Vietnamese workers, who fought for decades against French and U.S. imperialism, are now super-exploited by Chinese, Western and their own capitalists.

¹⁹ "A Battle for Loyalty in the Jungles" by John McBeth, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 8, 1977, p. 19ff, Vietnam: Miscarriage of the Revolution, p. 4

²⁰ "Vietnam on the Aid Trial," by Francois Nivolon, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 9, 1977.

²¹ "Vietnam: The Miscarriage of the Revolution," at www.bannedthought.net.

The Evaporation of a Myth in Cuba: How an Anti-Imperialist Revolution Developed into State Capitalism and Soviet Neo-Colonialism

Other than asserting in "Stand for Socialism" (1992) that the "Cuban revolution exerted a powerful influence on the CPP," Sison provided no analysis of the "Cuban revolution" from the mid-1950s up to the early 1990s.

In 1956, the "Program Manifesto" of Fidel Castro's 26th of July 26th Revolutionary Movement defined itself as bourgeois democratic. The Cuban revolution would be "guided by the ideas of nationalism, social justice ... Jeffersonian democracy [which] must be a government of all the people."

The July 26th Movement's armed struggle involved a few hundred rebels in the Sierra Maestra Mountains. The revolution had its greatest support in Oriente Province, which contained Cuba's largest sugar cane plantations. There had been over 20 significant peasant uprisings in the Oriente between 1902 and 1958. One historian noted that peasant bands in the Oriente immediately joined Castro's guerilla forces when they appeared in the area.²² Batista's weak and corrupt armed forces disintegrated over the course of three years of economic crisis and military combat from 1956 to 1959.

After taking power in 1959, Castro went to the U.S. on a "goodwill tour." In New York City, he declared that "I have clearly and definitely stated that we are not communists The gates are open for private investment that contributes to the development of Cuba." ²³

In the course of the guerrilla struggle, Castro and Che set up solely military encampments in the Sierra that lacked revolutionary political tasks.²⁴ This meant that the Cuban people were not prepared to wield anti-imperialist political power when they marched into Havana in 1959. Most importantly, they had not developed a revolutionary understanding of the nature of the Soviet revisionists.

In 1961, Castro announced that he had always been a "Marxist-Leninist," and that henceforth Cuba would be a "socialist" country. Later in 1961, Castro explained that "Naturally if we had stood on the top of Pico Turquino [in the Sierras] when we were a handful of men, and said we were Marxist-Leninists, we might never have gotten down to the plain."²⁵ Castro's sudden announcement that he had been a secret "Marxist-Leninist" all along was used by the U.S. ruling class to argue that

²² *Cuba: Order and Revolution*, Jorge Domínguez (1978), pp. 436-437; "Guevara, Debray and Armed Revisionism," *Revolution* magazine, 1985, p. 92.

²³ *Hispanic-American Report*, May 1959.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Revolution*, organ of the 26th of July Revolutionary Movement, December 22, 1961.

this is how communists operate by hiding their political program without telling the masses of people what they really plan to do.

The U.S. imperialists were late to understand the political implications of the Cuban Revolution, and then imposed an economic blockade of the island. In 1961, the CIA attempted to set off an uprising led by right-wing Cuban exiles at the Bay of Pigs. This invasion was decisively crushed by the Cuban military before the exiles could move off the beaches.

The underlying revisionist politics of Castro's July 26th Revolutionary Movement was demonstrated when it merged with the overtly pro-Soviet and reformist Popular Socialist Party (PSP) in 1965 to form the revisionist Communist Party of Cuba. In the 1940s, carrying out the international united front against the fascist powers, the PSP accepted cabinet positions in the government of the Batista dictatorship.

After a trip to the Soviet Union in 1963, Castro returned with a new economic plan. Instead of diversifying agriculture, Cuba would produce millions of tons more sugar for sale to the Soviet Union. Instead of producing more food staples and beginning to industrialize the country, Cuba would import machinery, oil and food crops. These neo-colonial economic relations between Cuba and the Soviet state capitalists were essentially the same as the relations between the U.S. imperialists and Cuba.

Beginning in the 1960s, the Soviet Union began to buy Cuban sugar at higher than the world price²⁶, while the Soviet Union and the revisionist countries in Eastern Europe sold outdated industrial goods to Cuba at higher than world prices. Based on the Soviets' "socialist" international division of labor, in 1972 Cuba joined COMECON, which was the Soviet Union's vehicle for the economic domination of Eastern Europe.

According to the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization, Cuba's agricultural performance was tied for last place in Latin America from 1962-1976.²⁷ The reason behind Cuba's dismal agricultural performance was the dominance of sugar cane in large bureaucratically-run state farms to the exclusion of the production of food staples and the all-round agricultural-industrial development of Cuba's economy.

More importantly, the Soviet imperialists tied Cuba into their economic orbit to enable Cuba to function as a political and military tool for the Soviets' global contention with the U.S. In 1968, Castro supported the Soviet Union's military invasion of Czechoslovakia to crush a reformist government in Prague.

²⁶ These Soviet prices for Cuban sugar are misleading. During these years, less than 20% of the world's sugar was sold at market price. The rest was purchased on a long-term contract, a quota basis, or on some other preferential terms. "Notes on the Political Economy of Cuba," in Issue 15 (1990) of *A World to Win* magazine, p. 79, www.bannedthought.net.

²⁷ *The Economy of Socialist Cuba*, by Carmelo Mesa-Lago (1981), p. 38.

In 1968, Castro was silent during the Mexican government's massacre of several hundred students in Mexico City. At the time, the reactionary Mexican government of the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) was the only Latin American government with ties with Cuba.

From 1975-1991, the Cuban government sent 55,000 troops to Angola supplied with Soviet heavy weapons in order to install a government in Luanda that had weak popular support (see pp. 64-67).²⁸ In 1977, more than 20,000 Cuban troops were dispatched to Ethiopia to support a "socialist" military dictatorship and to fight against the just Eritrean independence movement.

From 1979-1989, Castro supported the Soviet imperialists' invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. After the Iranian revolution in 1978-1979, Castro supported the reactionary Iranian Islamic theocracy.²⁹ Finally, in 1981 Castro supported Soviet-backed martial law in Poland that suppressed the Solidarity trade union movement.

The political and military role of the Cuban leadership in supporting Soviet imperialist policies around the world is the only way to understand the purpose of the rapidly growing Soviet subsidies for the Cuban economy and government. In 1975, it was estimated that the Soviet Union subsidized the Cuban economy at a rate of \$1.5 million per day. By 1977, a year in which the Cuban government had tens of thousands of troops fighting expensive Soviet proxy wars in Angola and Ethiopia, that figure had risen to \$3 million a day.³⁰ In 1984, the figure of Soviet military and economic aid to Cuba rose to \$4 billion a year.³¹

When the Cuban economy was under siege from the U.S. imperialists in the early 1960s, socialist China doubled its shipment of rice to Cuba for the year of 1965. However, China stated that it could not continue to supply Cuba with rice at that level.³² China needed rice to feed its own people, and it was supplying large amounts of rice to North Vietnam to support its revolutionary struggle against U.S. imperialism. China also pointed out that the Cuban people's rice ration had stayed the same even while China's rice shipments had doubled because the Cuban government was ripping up its rice fields to plant sugar cane.

²⁸ With the exception of an automatic rifle production facility opened in the late 1980s, Cuba did not manufacture its own weapons. Cuba was fighting Soviet proxy wars with Soviet bloc weapons. "Notes on the Political Economy of Cuba," in Issue 15 (1990) of *A World to Win* magazine, p. 82

²⁹ *Cuba Since the Revolution of 1959: A Critical Assessment*, by Samuel Farber (2011), p. 117.
⁴⁸ For an accounting of Cuba's neo-colonial dependence on the Soviet Union in the 1970s, see "Paying for the Cuban Connection" in *Soviet Analyst*, April 21, 1977. Also see "Notes on the Political Economy of Cuba," in Issues 14 (1989) and 15 (1990) of *A World to Win* magazine.

³¹ *Forbes* magazine, "What Price Socialist Glory," Howard Banks, February 27, 1984.

³² *Peking Review*, January 14, 1966.

At a Havana conference in 1966, Castro defended replacing rice with sugar production. He also renounced a Chinese aid agreement meant to help Cuba become self-sufficient in rice. Instead Castro publicly lashed out at China's internationalist aid as "economic aggression." Castro continued to act as an errand boy for the Soviet imperialists by calling for Mao's removal from office.³³

The first Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba was held in December 1975. At this Congress, Fidel Castro slavishly thanked Brezhnev and Co. for their "support." According to Castro, "no true revolutionary, in any part of the world, will ever regret that the USSR is powerful, because if that power did not exist ... the people who fought for liberation in the last 30 years would have had no place from which to receive decisive help." Castro's message was clear: National liberation struggles cannot win victory without depending on the Soviet imperialists.

This Congress explicitly adopted the Soviet Union's "profitability criterion" and the use of material incentives as the leading principles in the Cuban economy. Workers would now be paid according to the profitability of their work as measured by their managers. There was extensive resistance to this system among Cuban workers. According to the Cuban Minister of Labor, absenteeism from work was 20% on an average day in 1970. He described this as "widespread passive resistance."³⁴ In 1969, Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman from *Monthly Review* made a possibly more accurate estimate that Cuba's agricultural labor force was being utilized at "50 per cent of practical capacity."

³³ Castro's speech of March 13, 1966, quoted in *Cuba: Es Socialista?*, by Rene Dumont (1970), p. 119; also *Cuba*, by Hugh Thomas (1971). As Castro looked for solutions to the stagnation in the Cuban economy in the mid-1980s, he launched an attack on China when it was socialist by rejecting the desirability of a "cultural revolution" that would "throw the people against those responsible." Echoing Deng Xiaoping's repudiation of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Castro called on Cuban workers to help the Cuban CP to find solutions in an "organized and disciplined way."

As the Soviet bloc began to implode in the late 1980s, the Cuban CP press strongly defended the 1989 Tienanmen Massacre carried out by their repressive counterparts in China in the hopes of stimulating closer economic ties between their state capitalist regimes. See *The Independent* (London), August 17, 1989.

³⁴ Labor Minister Jorge Risquet, Granma, September 1970; *Cuba from Columbus to Castro*, by Jaime Suchlicki (1974). For Castro, the lack of capitalist labor discipline was the key to uncovering why so many enterprises were failing to realize a profit. *The Cuban Revolution in Crisis*, by Frank Fitzgerald (1994), pp. 60, 161.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the U.S.-sugar latifundia of the 1940s and 1950s were replaced by state-owned sugar farms, creating a form of state capitalism administered by 20 or 30 government bureaucrats per “nationalized” state farm. According to the Cuban government, these state-owned sugar farms producing for the Soviet bloc enabled the Cuban economy to jump over the stages of agricultural collectivization and proceed directly to “socialism.”

In another profit-driven sector of the economy, in the mid-1970s the Cuban government started building a network of tourist hotels. These tourist developments are more profitable than building the housing that the Cuban working people need. (See pp. 77-80 for a description of the Cuban state/private capitalist economy that was created after the implosion of the Soviet bloc in 1991.)

Blacks and mulattos make up 35% of Cuba’s population, and are concentrated in low-income housing projects and shantytowns.³⁵ In a speech in March 1959, Castro explicitly assured whites that they would not be forced to socialize with blacks, creating de facto segregated housing on the island.³⁶ Due to its position that the “revolution” has eliminated racism on the island, the Cuban government has blocked the formation of independent organizations for Black and mulatto Cubans.³⁷

Proponents of Black Power, who have been seen by the government as divisive elements undermining national unity, have faced persecution and prison sentences.³⁸ This same opposition to Black nationalism applied to U.S. revolutionary nationalists who sought exile in Cuba in the early 1960s. Robert Williams, who had advocated armed self-defense in North Carolina, initially supported the Cuban revolution. However, he began to criticize the Cuban government for refusing to permit Cuban blacks to develop their own political associations.³⁹

As Williams departed for socialist China several years later, he stated that “power in Cuba is in the hands of a white petite bourgeoisie.” After trips to Cuba in 1967 in which they criticized the lack of a struggle against racism in Cuba, SNCC leaders Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown were declared persona non grata by the Cuban government.⁴⁰

35 Farber, p. 174.

36 Ibid., pp. 170-171.

37 *Castro, the Blacks and Africa*, by Carlos Moore (1988) p. 309.

38 Ibid., pp. 312-315.

39 Ibid, p. 255.

40 Ibid. p. 261.

The Contradictory Role of Che Guevara

Ernesto “Che” Guevara and Fidel Castro shared three years of guerilla struggle in the Sierra Maestra, but the military strategy and economic policies that Che and Fidel developed were far from revolutionary.

As Minister of Banking and Industries from 1959-1965, Che’s economic policies were contradictory. First and foremost, Guevara was a strong proponent of developing economic ties with the “socialist bloc.” Though Che made a side trip to China, he made a number of trips in 1959 and 1960 to negotiate the terms of trading Cuban sugar and nickel for machinery and other industrial products from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.⁴¹

In 1963, Guevara put forward the official view that the Cuban economy had to be subordinated to the neo-colonial production of sugar and its export: “The entire economic history of Cuba has demonstrated that no other agricultural activity would give such returns as those yielded by the cultivation of the sugar cane.”⁴²

On the other hand, Che opposed many of the applications of Soviet capitalist techniques to the Cuban economy. By 1965, he had replaced material incentives with moral incentives to guide most Cuban enterprises. Che did not think there was capitalism in the Soviet Union, but believed there was a hybrid form of socialism and capitalism that could develop into socialism.⁴³

By 1965, Guevara was clashing with Fidel and Raul Castro around several economic and political policies that required Cuba to follow Soviet dictates. In Prague, Che began work on a manuscript that was critical of Soviet international and economic policies. In the manuscript, Che criticized the Soviet Union’s thesis of “peaceful coexistence” with the imperialist countries: “This is one of the most dangerous theses of the USSR. ... It cannot become the *leit motiv* of policy. ... It is the heroism of the Vietnamese people’s struggle that imposes the solution; the policy of appeasement, on the other hand, has reinforced Yankee aggression.”⁴⁴

However, Che decided to not make the manuscript public because it would undermine Cuba’s alliance with the Soviet Union, which he believed was more important than the Soviet Union’s incorrect policies. Thus, Che’s manuscript was

⁴¹ *Che Guevara: The Economics of Revolution*, by Helen Yaffe (2009) p. 2.

⁴² “Manual Para Administradores de Fabricas,” Section 9, Asunto 3; Yaffe, p. 173

⁴³ “Reuniones Bimestrales,” December 5, 1964, in *El Che en la Revoluciion Cubana*, (1966) p. 570; Yaffe p. 234.

⁴⁴ “Apuntes (Points) Criticos a la Economia Politica,” pp. 91-92 (published in 2006); Yaffe, p. 253.

not published in Cuba until 40 years after his death.⁴⁵

In a speech to industrial ministry workers in 1961, Che reminded them of the sacrifices made by Chinese workers in order to demonstrate their internationalist solidarity with the Cuban people. Che stated that “We don’t have the right to squander a moment of production when there are 650 million people, each one of who has given a bit of their share of fabric, or even a grain of rice, things they need to satisfy the main needs in life, and that they give away so the Cuban people have non-essential goods.”⁴⁶ In 1966, a year after Che left Cuba for the Congo, Castro publically denounced Mao and socialist China.

In “The Philippine Revolution,” Sison called Che a “great internationalist.” (p. 182) However, Sison did not distinguish good intentions from Che’s actual political and military line. Sison was silent on Che’s “focoist” theory that opposed people’s war, which insists on the necessity for revolutionary political work in the peasantry and other sections of the people both prior to and during people’s war. People’s war also required a political rupture with the pro-Soviet revisionist parties in Latin America that wanted to maintain influence over the “Guevarist” forces.

Guevara’s call for “two, three, many Vietnams” in 1967 is understood by some as a statement of revolutionary internationalism. However, Che did not advocate and did not practice the people’s war that was being waged by the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam--and supported militarily, economically and politically--by the People’s Republic of China—in the 1960s.

In Regis Debray’s 1967 book, *Revolution in the Revolution* (written with Che while he was still in Cuba), Debray and Guevara put forward the model of a *foco* that conducts armed struggle divorced from the peasantry. They rejected the revolutionary experiences in China and Vietnam, arguing that the Latin American countryside was different because it did not have a “high density of the peasant population [in which] the marked predominance of the peasantry over the urban population permit revolutionary propagandists to mingle easily with the people, ‘like fish in the water.’”⁴⁷

According to Debray and Guevara, the revolutionary army should not undertake political work among the peasantry and build base areas, instead concentrating on decisive military engagements with the enemy’s armed forces. This rejected the Maoist line of carrying out military action and political mobilization in close conjunction.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

⁴⁶ “Charla (Talk) a Los Trabajadores del Ministerio de Industrias” (October 1961), p. 158.

⁴⁷ “Guevara, Debray and Armed Revisionism,” *Revolution magazine*, 1985, p. 86. Available at www.bannedthought.net.

⁴⁸ “Guevara, Debray and Armed Revisionism,” p. 90.

Without a political base of support among the Indian peasantry, Guevara envisioned his *foco* marching at the head of a coalition of urban pro-Soviet forces and radical democrats. As soon as he arrived in Bolivia in 1967, Che met with the leader of the Communist Party of Bolivia in order to set up an urban support network. A member of this network betrayed the presence of Che's guerrilla force to the Bolivian military.⁴⁹

The Quechuan language that the guerrillas had studied was useless since a distinct non-Quechuan language was spoken by the Indians in the *foco* area. Without a strategy for political mobilization and the development of a secure political base among the peasantry, Che's *foco* reaped the results of its political isolation. Che wrote in his diary that "the peasants do not give us any help, and they are turning into informers."⁵⁰ The *foco* was defeated after six months in the field. Che was captured and executed in 1967 by a force of 1800 Bolivian Rangers under the direction of U.S. Army Special Forces and the Special Activities Division of the CIA.

Insurrection with Bourgeois Forces in Nicaragua

Carlos Fonseca was the political leader of the FSLN (Frente Sandinista⁵¹), which was formed in 1961. In the early 1960s, Fonseca and other members of the Prolonged People's War (GPP) tendency of the FSLN criticized the Nicaraguan pro-Soviet party's electoralism, its unwillingness to commit to armed struggle, and its lack of confidence in the ability of Nicaraguan peasants and workers to carry out a two stage revolutionary democratic and socialist revolution.

In 1969, Fonseca authored the *Programa Historico* (Historic Program), which demanded the overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship; a radical land reform; the nationalization of the property of the Somoza dictatorship as well as the property of the banking, foreign trade and foreign-owned natural resource sectors; replacing the National Guard with a people's army and militia; an end to the "odious discrimination" suffered by the Miskito Indians and black Creoles on the Atlantic Coast; an end to the discrimination of women; and solidarity with anti-imperialist struggles around the world.⁵²

From 1970-1973, when the Allende government's peaceful road to socialism in Chile allegedly superceded the guerilla struggle in Latin America, Cuban and Soviet advisers in Cuba refused to provide military training to the FSLN.⁵³

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 104.

⁵⁰ *The Fall of Che Guevara*, by Henry Ryan (1998), pp. 82-102.

⁵¹ Augusto Sandino led a heroic but unsuccessful guerilla movement in Nicaragua against U.S. Marines and Nicaraguan comprador forces in the 1930s.

⁵² *Sandinista: Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution*, by Matilde Zimmerman (2000), pp. 123-124.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 164.

Fonseca joined a guerilla front in 1975. The GPP combatants got their best response from peasant contacts on the issue of land reform. At the same time, Fonseca criticized the GPP leadership for their lack of military initiative in the *montana* (peasant bases in the mountains), trying to accumulate strength without engaging in active combat.

In a major blow to the Nicaraguan revolutionary movement, Fonseca was ambushed and executed by the National Guard in November 1976. The “Insurreccional “ or Third Tendency (the Terceristas), led by Humberto and Daniel Ortega, stepped into the political vacuum in the leadership of the FSLN. The Terceristas came to dominate the FSLN and the Sandinista revolt in 1977-1979 with the promise that their allies in the bourgeois opposition would share power with the FSLN in a post-Somoza government.⁵⁴

A 1978 Tercerista document dropped the word “Revolutionary” from Fonseca’s call for a “Revolutionary Democratic and Popular Government,” and promised to limit nationalizations only to the property belonging to members of the Somoza family and government. The Terceristas called for forming a new army that would include elements of the National Guard. In addition, the Tercerista program never mentioned struggle against U.S. imperialism, and dropped Fonseca’s reference to the “odious discrimination” suffered by Nicaragua’s Miskitos and black people.⁵⁵

Fonseca thought that short-term alliances with bourgeois forces could be useful. However, he believed that the FSLN had to establish itself as the revolutionary leadership of the struggle against the Somoza government, and that the FSLN had to build its own independent mass base among the peasants, the working class, the urban poor and the Miskito Indians and black people.

While Fonseca provided leadership to the GPP up to his death in 1976, Jaime Wheelock was forming another group within the FSLN, the Proletarian Tendency. The PT concentrated its work among urban workers and rural agricultural proletarians. The PT criticized the GPP and the Terceristas as “guerilla adventurists” and held that the struggle was going to take such a long time that armed rebellion had to be postponed under the “proper conditions” developed.⁵⁶

The pace of events picked up dramatically in 1978-1979. In early 1979, the three tendencies in the FSLN reunited. In June, the FSLN, with the assistance of newly formed independent insurgent forces, took power in Leon and Matagalpa, the second and third largest cities in the country. In mid-July FSLN guerilla columns entered the capital, Managua. This capped a two-month insurrection as the corrupt Somoza regime collapsed and the demoralized National Guard fled or surrendered.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 214.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 208.

⁵⁶ *FSLN: The Ideology of the Sandinistas and the Nicaraguan Revolution*, by David Nolan (1984), pp. 54-55.

In the 1980s, the Nicaraguan revolution was held up as a model by the CPP's "Red Area-White Area" forces in the 1980s in the Philippines and other countries who claimed that urban-based revolutionaries could bring down reactionary regimes.

However, the FSLN's victory had a number of particularities. The FSLN Terceristas promised the formation of a mixed economy and political pluralism to win over the anti-Somoza section of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie. State power was narrowly concentrated in the Somoza family, and Somoza's National Guard was weak and easily overwhelmed by FSLN military initiatives and spontaneous mass actions in

the cities. Moreover, after a 1972 earthquake, the Somoza regime pilfered millions of dollars in international humanitarian aid, furthering isolating it.

After they took power in 1979, the Sandinistas instituted a policy of making significant concessions to the bourgeoisie called *concertacion*. The newly formed Junta of National Reconstruction agreed to pay off Nicaragua's \$1.64 billion external debt, the highest per capita debt of any Latin American state. Some \$600 million of the debt was scheduled for 1979, a sum greater than the country's total income from exports. By 1985, the debt had climbed to \$4.5 billion.⁵⁷

During the entire 11 years of rule of the Sandinistas and the anti-Somoza Nicaraguan bourgeoisie, the private sector accounted for between 50 and 85% of the GDP.⁵⁸ The Junta made costly and wasteful efforts to offer large sums of money to big capitalists who promised that they would reactivate their enterprises. The capitalists' response was a flight of capital overseas for 1977-1988 of \$1.7 billion.⁵⁹

The political perspective of the Sandinistas on the Junta's bourgeois allies was expressed by FSLN Commander Tomas Borge: "Even if we were Marxist-Leninists, we'd have to be mad to think that socialism is possible here. Nothing will work unless it is economically and politically pluralistic."⁶⁰

There were some social reforms. A nationwide literacy campaign in 1980 cut illiteracy from 51% to 13%. On the other hand, there was a series of work stoppages, factory takeovers and strikes in which thousands of workers demanded that the Junta take action against their bosses. In the countryside, large numbers of peasants occupied state lands and the lands of big private estates. FSLN claimed that

⁵⁷ *Triumph of the People: The Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua*, by George Black (1981), p. 20

⁵⁸ Richard Fagen, "The Nicaraguan Crisis," *Monthly Review*, November 1982.

⁵⁹ *Nicaragua: Living in the Shadow of the Eagle*, by Thomas Walker and Christine Wade (2011), pp. 99, 105; *Christian Science Monitor*, August 13, 1988.

⁶⁰ *New York Times*, November 26, 1981.

factory actions and land seizures were part of a counter-revolutionary strategy against the state.⁶¹

The Junta faced a brutal U.S.-backed Contra war between 1981-1989 that sabotaged the economy, incurring \$2 billion in material damage. The Junta imposed a state of emergency and an unpopular military draft, which included a militia of 100,000, in 1983. In 1989, workers' salaries had lost 70% of their purchasing power since the early 1980s, and inflation reached the unheard of rate of 36,000%.⁶² To deal with the economic crisis, the Junta instituted an austerity program that drastically held down real wages.

On the Atlantic Coast, the Sandinistas repressed the historic struggle of the Miskito Indians for autonomy. When hostilities broke out in 1981, the Sandinista army moved all of the Miskito Indians 40 miles to "resettlement camps" carved out of the jungle. The Sandinistas torched the Miskitos' homes and crops, triggering three years of warfare. After four years of war, a peace agreement was signed in 1985 between the government and the Miskito leadership.⁶³

Another area of continuing social discrimination concerned women. According to an official report in the 1980s, doctors who performed abortions at any time were subject to prison terms of 1-4 years. Women were by far the lowest paid section of the working class. It was not until 1988 that the right to divorce was enacted by the National Assembly.⁶⁴

In 1980, the FSLN signed an agreement establishing party-to-party ties with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. FSLN representatives faithfully followed the Soviet and Cuban lines on issues such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the suppression of Solidarity and Polish trade unionism in 1981.⁶⁵

As the Contra threat grew in 1981, the FSLN began to import weapons from the Soviet bloc. However, Soviet deliveries of weapons, oil and other assistance declined by over 2/3 in 1986, and continued to decrease thereafter, as Soviet leader Gorbachev promised President Reagan that he would stop all military deliveries to the Sandinistas if the U.S. stopped financing the contras.⁶⁶ When President Daniel

⁶¹ *The Sandinista Revolution: National Liberation and Social Transformation in Latin America*, by Carlos Vilas, *Monthly Review* (1986), p. 181.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁶³ *Nicaragua: A Decade of Revolution*, introduction by Eduardo Galeano (1991), p. 45.

⁶⁴ *Oficina Legal de la Mujer*, AMNLAE, pp. 9-12.

⁶⁵ *FSLN: The Ideology of the Sandinistas*, p. 117

⁶⁶ *Living in the Shadow of the Eagle*, pp. 203-204.

Ortega visited Moscow in 1987, he was told that he had “no alternative to a political settlement.”⁶⁷

The FSLN’s policies led to resignations of a number of senior leaders in 1988 such as Moises Hassan, who served on the Junta and as Mayor of Managua. In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times* on July 3, 1988 with a reporter who was supportive of the Nicaraguan revolution, “Hassan spoke critically of the Terceristas, the FSLN faction led by the Ortega brothers that is generally associated with a more moderate brand of Sandinismo. The Terceristas’ continuing effort to mollify the bourgeoisie, Hassan told me, has caused the revolutionary quality of the front to suffer tremendously.”

In 1990, the Sandinistas gave up power after a losing electoral contest with a U.S.-backed opposition parties. In a “piñata” of self-enrichment during the months between the 1990 election and the inauguration of the new president, FSLN officials and politicians appropriated thousands of houses and farms that had been nationalized following the 1979 uprising. This wholesale privatization of state property made Humberto Ortega--the leader of the Terceristas, who remained commander of the army until 1995-- one of the richest men in Nicaragua.⁶⁸

A Neo-Confucian Family Dynasty in North Korea

In “Philippine Revolution,” Sison claims that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) is “an example of a state that is independent and democratic and that is building socialism in a sound and admirable way.” Based on a visit to the DPRK in 1987, Sison claimed that the ruling Korean Workers’ Party is a “Marxist-Leninist party that has victoriously led the Korean people and state in frustrating imperialist aggression and in achieving socialist revolution and construction.” (p. 191) This fulsome praise for North Korea under Kim Il Sung, especially from the 1960s to the 1980s, again, raises serious questions about the nature of the “socialism” that Sison envisions building in the Philippines.

The CPP continues to claim in its major statements that the DPRK is “socialist” and/or a model of “defending national independence.” An analysis of the political stands and social relations in North Korea refutes these claims. If socialism ever existed in North Korea, by the mid-1960s it had turned into a state capitalist militarized state based on a uniquely Korean neo-Confucian veneration of several generations of the Kim family. According to Bruce Cummings, the leading academic expert in the West on North Korea, as early as 1946 Kim Il Sung was described as “the Sun of the Nation” and “a beautiful new red star in the sky, wisely guiding everything with his brilliant, scientific methods.”⁶⁹

⁶⁷ New York Times, December 18, 1987.

⁶⁸ Carlos Fonseca and the Nicaraguan Revolution, p. 226.

⁶⁹ *Korea’s Place in the Sun: A Modern History*, by Bruce Cummings (2005), p. 417.

In 1981, the Korean News Agency ran an article that stated "This love by the Great Leader for our people is love of kinship...Our respected and beloved Leader is the tender-hearted father of all the people ... Love of paternity ... is the noblest ideological sentiment possessed only by our people, which cannot be explained by any theory or principle or fathomed by anything." ⁷⁰

This is a reactionary patriarchal regime, given a "socialist" dressing and transmitted by Kim Il Sung to his male progeny. It is not surprising that Sison does not see anything wrong with this extreme exaltation of Kim Il Sung, and has identified with the most extreme cult of the individual ever practiced in the 20th century.

While it is often stated that the Korean Workers' Party took a "centrist" position on the polemics between Mao and the CCP and the Soviet revisionists in the mid-1960s, Kim and the KWP denounced the Cultural Revolution in China, probably sealing a break with Mao and the Maoists in the CCP. It was undoubtedly heretical, and politically threatening, for Kim Il Sung and the top leaders of the KWP and the armed forces to understand, much less agree with and practice, the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist position that class struggle continues in socialist society. Under the all-wise and fatherly guidance of the Kim political dynasty, a new bourgeoisie could not possibly emerge in the KWP.

Cummings suggests that in a political system in which "the leader is perfect, this is one reason, perhaps, for the absence of much public conflict in the DPRK since 1948, a remarkable phenomenon even when Korea is compared to other communist states."⁷¹ Two other factors might be at work here.

First, the KWP has instituted an efficient and well documented system of suppression of both secular and Christian political dissent by means of prisons and "reform-through-labor" camps. Though the regime maintains strict secrecy, according to many knowledgeable estimates, about 100,000 North Koreans are being held in prisons and labor camps, and the majority of them are political prisoners. The labor camps demand long hours of work seven days a week in a network of factories and mines, leading to short longevity among the prisoners. In addition, the KWP implements a policy of imprisoning whole families along with the individual targets of state repression. ⁷²

Second, the North Korean regime has cut off all of its 22 million people but the party elite and loyal academics and intellectuals from information about the rest of the world, especially about the much more prosperous bourgeois democratic regime in South Korea.

While the North Korean regime trumpets its practice of "juche," or self-reliance,

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 428.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 424.

⁷² Ibid., p. 408.

Cummings points out that in the late 1950s and 1960s, the KWP's program of putting heavy industry first was fed by "unprecedentedly large amounts of aid from the Soviet bloc." With large scale Soviet aid, North Korea's industrial production grew by 25% in the decade after the end of the Korean War, and by 14% from 1965-1978, outstripping industrial growth in the U.S. neo-colony of South Korea.⁷³

In the 1970s, the DPRK turned to the Western imperialists and Japan to purchase turnkey plants, including complete French petrochemical and cement plants. According to Cummings, these purchases ran up North Korea's external debt to between \$2-3 billion, which it has had difficulty servicing.⁷⁴ Even though the KWP never officially joined COMECON,⁷⁵ "juche" has been more of a self-serving political myth for the leaders of the KWP than a reality since the DPRK's founding in 1948. The extent of North Korea's dependence on the Soviet Union and the revisionist-ruled countries of Eastern Europe was underlined by several years of declining GNP and famine conditions in much of the countryside in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet bloc.

Cummings writes that drought and floods between 1995 and 1997, along with "a near collapse of the energy system (which caused many factories to close)," led to a widespread famine that claimed the lives of more than half a million people.⁷⁶ The Chinese state capitalist regime, as well as U.S. and Western aid agencies, had their own political agendas for providing extensive aid that prevented the death toll from rising to substantially higher levels.

The KWP dismissed the well-documented reports on this famine as "Western propaganda." It has invariably tried to draw attention away from the poverty in the countryside to the capital city of Pyongyang, where 10% of the population lives. These inhabitants have a relatively privileged standard of living in order to maintain political stability and to create an internal and external tourist attraction.

After the final collapse of Soviet social-imperialism in 1991, the DPRK shifted its economic dependence to state capitalist China, which has provided North Korea with billions of dollars of grain, oil and coal in order to prevent its economy from collapsing and being forcibly "reunited" with the South (as East Germany did).⁷⁷

The great fear of the Chinese leaders that keeps it propping up North Korea is that South Korean and even U.S. troops would reach the Chinese border in a reunited Korea under South Korean leadership. Thus, the KWP understands that it has significant political leverage to play against China, and it is using it effectively.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 433, 434.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 434.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 430.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 442.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 506 on the "German model" of Korean reunification.

In recent years, North Korea has set up several very un-“juche” like export zones with Chinese and South Korean capital, for which it supplies cheap North Korean labor. One large export zone at Najin-Sobong was established in the early 1990s on the northeast border with China. Another export zone at Kaesong that is close to the border with South Korea was established by Hyundai Motors and currently employs 53,000 North Korean workers.⁷⁸

“Dear Leader” Kim Jong Il’s reaction to the dire economic situation in 1993 after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, when the North Korean economy was experiencing annual GNP declines of 2-5%, was to tell reporters that he would like to “take Singapore as a model; it combines in his view, ‘great freedom in business activities’ with ‘good order, discipline and laws.’”⁷⁹

At the same time, Kim retained his father’s “army first” policy. North Korea has diverted high levels of industrial and high-tech investment into its 2 million strong armed forces, where indoctrination in patriotism and veneration for the latest Kim can be carried out more easily. The conscription of more than one in 20 people into the North Korean armed forces has led to major distortions in the economy and has contributed to the continuing crisis conditions in much of the countryside.⁸⁰

This militarization of North Korea is more than matched by the smaller but more advanced South Korean armed forces and 40,000 U.S. troops in South Korea. While the U.S. has pulled its tactical nuclear weapons out of South Korea, U.S. submarines with nuclear-armed cruise missiles patrol the Sea of Japan, and B-52 and B-2 Stealth bombers are within striking distance of North Korea from U.S. bases in the American colony of Guam. Even though there is no current North Korean threat to its territory, the U.S. military is building a string of surface-to-air missile sites from Alaska to California and from Guam to Okinawa.

4. Sison’s Evaluation of Stalin, the CPSU and the United Front Against Fascism

Sison’s view that “Stalin’s merits within his own period of leadership are principal and his demerits are secondary” (p. 17) is not supported by Stalin’s record of domestic policy after 1929 and his foreign policy after 1935.

To begin with, it must be recognized that Stalin’s political positions after Lenin’s death in 1923 were more correct in meeting the challenges of building socialism in the early years of the Soviet Union than those of the other top leaders of the CPSU.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 437.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 436, 437.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 446.

In the early 1920s, Stalin defeated Trotsky's line that it was impossible to build socialism in the Soviet Union unless the working class in Western Europe, mainly Germany, was first successful in overthrowing their bourgeoisies. This political struggle was critical to overcome pessimism about the prospects for socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

In the 1920s, Stalin also defeated Trotsky's "left" line of rapid industrialization at the expense of the exhausted peasantry, and Bukharin's mirror opposite rightist line of continuing the New Economic Policy based on a permanent political alliance with the rich peasants. Stalin had to overcome opposition in much of the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) to the first Five-Year Plan of undertaking industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture at the end of the 1920s.

Under the leadership of Lenin and then Stalin, CPSU adopted the New Economic Policy (NEP) in the 1920s that made it possible to rebuild the Soviet economy and reconstitute its working class after four years of devastating civil war. While the CPSU maintained firm control over the socialist state and over most strategic industries and financial institutions, the NEP permitted Russian capitalists to manage many industries. The NEP also invited foreign concessions in some industries. As the Soviet economy got back on its feet in the late 1920s, cancellation of the concessions began.

In 1922, Lenin signed the first military treaties with Germany. First Lenin and then Stalin took advantage of the desire of the Weimar governments to engage in cooperative training and weapons development with the Red Army at air bases and tank training grounds in the Soviet Union. This military cooperation came to an end when Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in 1933 with a virulently anti-Bolshevik program that included suppression of the German Communist Party.⁸¹

The Top Down, Militarized Collectivization of Soviet Agriculture in 1929-1932

Sison writes that "the collectivization and mechanization of agriculture [in the early 1930s] was carried out in accordance with the teachings of Marx, Engels and Lenin," and that collectivization was opposed by "the violent reaction of the rich peasants who refused to put their farms, tools and animals under collectivization, slaughtered their work animals and organized resistance." ("Stand for Socialism," pp. 13, 14)

Sison avoids discussion of the top-down, militarized collectivization that took place in the Soviet Union in the early 1930s. This turned potential allies into enemies, leading to the deportation of two million kulaks (rich peasants) to Siberia and Central Asia and the employment of the Soviet military and armed workers against

⁸¹ *Hitler's Nemesis: The Red Army, 1930-1945*, by Walter S. Dunn, Jr. (1994), pp. xvi, 15, 107. Dunn's book is based on declassified Soviet military sources that became available after 1991, as well as captured German records on the Red Army.

peasants who resisted collectivization. These policies also led to widespread famine and the death of millions of peasants in the Ukraine and other regions.

In a speech to the CCP Central Committee in 1955, Mao addressed several important aspects of the collectivization that was underway in China, including the voluntary nature of collective-formation and the importance of uniting with rich and middle peasants who had livestock:

“It is necessary to observe the principles of voluntary participation and mutual benefit, make comprehensive plans and give flexible guidance. Given these conditions, the co-operatives, I think, will be able to achieve better quality, increase production and prevent the loss of livestock. We must by all means avoid the mistake once made in the Soviet Union which led to the slaughtering of livestock in large numbers. . . . Since we have only a few tractors, oxen are a treasure, they are the chief implement in agricultural production.”⁸²

In the Soviet Union from 1929-1933, the collectivization of agriculture was not a voluntary, largely peaceful process as there was in new democratic China in the early 1950s under Mao’s leadership. This included the formation of mutual work teams based first among poor and middle peasants, and then proceeding to lower and higher levels of peasant collectives that drew in the rich peasants. In socialist China, widespread state coercion was not needed to force the middle and rich peasants to join the collectives.

The Rapid Industrialization of the Soviet Union in the 1930s

Beginning in 1929, successive five-year plans accelerated the development of heavy industry. Mass production techniques were adopted with capitalist technical contracts from American companies. Entire auto, tractor and steel industries were expanded and modernized in this way. These factories formed the basis for Soviet war industry, turning out tanks, artillery and other weapons. By 1937, the Soviet Union had become the third largest industrial power in the world behind the U.S. and Germany.⁸³

However, in the course of this all-out industrialization drive in the 1930s, Stalin and the CPSU leadership promoted the idea that building socialism was a matter of increasing production, employing one-man management, letting the cadres decide key matters in the plants, and making widespread use of material incentives. The widespread use of U.S. managers and technicians reinforced the CPSU’s belief that civilian and war production could be accelerated without making revolutionary transformations on the factory shop floor.

⁸² “The Debate on the Co-operative Transformation of Agriculture and the Current Class Struggle,” Concluding Speech to the Enlarged Sixth Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the CCP, October 11, 1955, *Selected Works, Volume IV*, p. 221.

⁸³ *Hitler’s Nemesis*, pp. xvii, 3.

Just as in the case of Liu Shiaoqi and Deng Xiaoping in China in the 1960s and the 1970s, the line that the development of the “productive forces” outweighs the promotion of revolutionary politics created fertile ground for the development and promotion of capitalist roaders like Khrushchev and Brezhnev in the 1930s.

In contrast, Mao’s political and economic line for the development of the socialist economy in China was concentrated in the slogan of “grasp revolution, promote production.” By 1971, piece rate system and individual bonuses had been abolished in most Chinese factories. “Triple combinations” of workers, technicians and managers were organized to solve technical problems and make innovations at the point of production. Managers and full-time cadre were required to work on the shop floors on a regular or rotating basis.⁸⁴

These revolutionary innovations stimulated production in socialist China. During the Cultural Revolution years of 1966-1976, industrial production grew at a documented rate of more than 10 percent annually.⁸⁵ The capitalist methods employed in the Soviet Union in the 1930s raised production, but at a high cost to socialism.

The Great Purges of 1937-1938 and their Grievous Political Legacy

Sison’s summation of Stalin’s leadership of the CPSU in the late 1930s mainly consists of political apologetics for Stalin. Sison states that “One ramification abetted the failure to distinguish contradictions among the people from those between the people and the enemy, and the propensity to apply *administrative measures* against those construed as enemies of the people...Thus, in the 1936-1938 period, *arbitrariness* victimized a great number of people.” (“Stand for Socialism,” p. 14)⁸⁶

This analysis prettifies the widespread political repression that was employed against all perceived political dissent, including much of the leadership and rank and file of the CPSU, from 1937 up to the German invasion in 1941. Sison employs the muted term of “arbitrariness” to the show trials and executions of “Old Bolsheviks” such as Kamenev, Bukharin and Zinoviev, and to most of the high command of the Red Army, who were falsely accused of being “German agents” or “saboteurs.”

⁸⁴ *China’s Industrial Revolution: Politics, Planning and Management, 1949 to the Present*, 1977, by Stephen Andors, 218, 187.

⁸⁵ *The Deng Xiaoping Era: 1978-1994*, by Maurice Meisner (1996), p. 1989; Mobo Gao, “Debating the Cultural Revolution: Do We Only Know What We Believe?” *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 3, 2002, pp. 424-425.

⁸⁶ The italics are meant to underline Sison’s political euphemisms and his attempt to avoid mentioning the Great Purges of 1937-1938 that took place under Stalin’s leadership.

Red Army Chief of Staff Tukhachevsky was removed from his command after the German Gestapo took advantage of the purges by forging documents accusing him of treason, and sent them to the NKVD via President Benes of Czechoslovakia. In

May 1937, Tukhachevsky was arrested and executed by the NKVD (the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, the forerunner of the KGB).⁸⁷

The Old Bolsheviks and the top generals of the Red Army were only the highest profile victims of the Great Purges of 1937-1938, under which Stalin, Molotov and Nikolai Yezhov of the NKVD executed over 680,000 people, and sent 1.3 million into prison camps by 1939.⁸⁸ These figures do not come from anti-communist historians, but from the detailed archives of the NKVD, which were opened up to Russian and Western historians in 1991.

Sheila Fitzpatrick has provided more detail on this period: "For two full years in 1937 and 1938, top Communist officials in every branch of the bureaucracy—government, party, industrial, military, and finally even police— were denounced and arrested as 'enemies of the people.' Some were shot; others disappeared into the Gulag...Only 24 members of the Central Committee elected at the 18th Party Congress in 1939 had been members of the previous Central Committee, elected five years earlier at the Congress of Victors" in 1934.⁸⁹ For Sison to state that many of the 680,000 people executed during the Great Purges of 1937-38 were "real British and German spies and bourgeois nationalists" ("Stand for Socialism," p. 14) was to accept NKVD falsifications and refuse to face difficult historical facts.

When Sison wrote "Stand for Socialism" in 1992 after he had settled in the Netherlands, he studiously avoided discussion of the grave damage done to socialism in the Soviet Union by the Great Purges.

We will never know how many revolutionary communists both within and outside the CPSU were falsely accused of being "counter-revolutionaries" and executed by the NKVD or sent to Siberian prison camps to experience slow death. Stalin's Great Purges eliminated a major revolutionary cohort in the CPSU. The Purges also made any form of political dissent life-threatening, thereby undermining the very basis of continuing class struggle under socialism.

Capitalist roaders like Khrushchev not only escaped the wrath of the NKVD, but served up political opponents to Yezhov's executioners in 1937-1938.⁹⁰ Thus, the Great Purges were a major factor in preparing the ground for the capitalist

⁸⁷ *Hitler's Nemesis*, pp. 3-4.

⁸⁸ *The Russian Revolution*, by Sheila Fitzpatrick (2008), pp. 166, 184.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-166.

⁹⁰ According to the Ukrainian NKVD chief, it was "only after the faithful Stalinist Nikita Sergeyeovich Khrushchev arrived in Ukraine [that] the smashing of enemies of the people began in earnest." *Khrushchev*, by William Taubman (2003), pp. 119-120.

restoration led by Khrushchev, Brezhnev and their revisionist allies in the leadership of the CPSU and the military that took place in 1957.

Sison diverts attention from the formation of this grouping of capitalist roaders in the top leadership of the CPSU by discussing only a social stratum of lesser political importance: "The new intelligentsia produced by the rapidly expanding Soviet educational system had a decreasing sense of proletarian class stand and an increasing sense that it was sufficient to have the expertise to become bureaucrats and technocrats in order to build socialism..." ("Stand for Socialism," p. 15)

If Sison did not have full access to the revealing contents of the NKVD archives on the Great Purges when he wrote "Stand for Socialism" in 1992, there is no excuse for his even more blatant attempt to justify Stalin's actions in 2004: "It seemed adequate that Stalin paid attention to those that could be construed as enemies of socialism and agents of imperialism." What about the 680,000 people, supporters of socialism and opponents of imperialism, that Stalin and the NKVD's Yezhov "paid attention to"? ("At Home in the World," p. 161)

A materialist discussion of Stalin's actions that politically repudiates, instead of lightly criticizes, his actions during the late 1930s is necessary to make sure that something like the Great Purges is never repeated under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This is necessary to win over revolutionary and anti-imperialist forces around the world who are well aware of these executions and imprisonment of millions of honest party members and people in the Soviet Union. As part of this, Sison's euphemistic description of 680,000 executions by Stalin's secret police as "administrative measures" must be rejected.

In a certain sense, it is even more important for Maoists in the Philippines to discuss and repudiate Stalin's Great Purges because of the anti-infiltrator (DPA) campaigns from 1985-1989 that falsely charged CPP and NPA members with being enemy agents. The Philippine government has time and again used these campaigns as examples of how the "Stalinist" CPP would handle political dissent if it came to power.

The Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945

Sison correctly points out that the historic victory over Nazi Germany came at a steep political cost to the Soviet Union. Sison notes that Stalin "made concessions to conservative institutions and organizations. For instance, the Russian Orthodox Church was given back its buildings and its privileges....the line of Soviet patriotism further subdued the line of class struggle among the old and new intelligentsia and the entire people." ("Stand for Socialism," p. 16)

The war with Nazi Germany of 1941-1945 was not fought to defend socialism, but to defend the national interests of Russia, the most developed republic in the USSR.

This undermined the process of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, both during and after the war.

Sison does not come to grips with the lack of combat readiness of the Red Army in 1941 as a result of the purges by Stalin and the NKVD and executions of nearly the top military command of the Red Army in 1937-38.⁹¹ In addition, Stalin and his newly appointed Chief of Staff, Georgi Zhukov, adopted an incorrect military strategy in the face of the looming German invasion.

In the late 1920s the Red Army had adopted a strategy of "strategic defense," which was appropriate for the deployment of its relatively weak armored and air force. In June 1941, the military strategy of Stalin and Zhukov was to halt a German invasion as close to the border as possible, and then to launch a "deep" counter-offensive that would surround and destroy the German army's main forces.⁹²

This strategy was a very costly failure. In June 1941, most of the Red Army was annihilated by the Wehrmacht and German air force, losing more than 3 million killed or missing. The German army rapidly broke through the Red Army's weak border defenses, and encircled and captured whole Red armies at a time. With no plan for a strategic retreat, Stalin ordered his commanders to stand and fight--and face certain destruction.

As a result of the disaster at the front in June 1941, 40% of the population of the USSR, including its most economically developed regions and principal wheat-growing areas, were occupied by the German army. Fanatical Nazi SS and Gestapo units followed the German army into these regions, and undertook a reign of terror and executions of millions of suspected communists, government officials and Jews.

Stalin and Zhukov were able to correct their military errors, and replace the Red Army's losses with the emergency mobilization of 5.3 million reservists by June 30, 1941. The reorganized Red armies, which now adopted the doctrine of "strategic defense," stopped the German army at the gates of Moscow and Leningrad in the unusually harsh winter of 1941-42.

The Russian government's mobilization allowed the Red Army to increase its strength at the front to 6.1 million in 1943, after the encirclement and capture of the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad, the initial turning point of the battle against Nazi Germany. By 1945, 2 million women were fighting in the Red Army, driving tanks,

⁹¹ According to *Stalin's Keys to Victory*, "The disaster experienced by the Red Army in 1941 was a direct result of earlier decisions made by Stalin. In 1938, he had purged the army of practically all officers from the level of division commanders upward.... The atmosphere of fear created a philosophy of referring all decisions to higher authority and refusal to take responsibility. Inaction was preferable to any action that might be considered wrong in the future. Such a condition was suicidal in the face of the German blitzkrieg." (p. 163)

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5, 7.

serving as snipers that killed 12,000 German soldiers and flying combat aircraft.⁹³

While the U.S. government extended a “Lend-Lease” program of military equipment, the Soviet army largely fought with Russian-made weapons. All of the huge ex-automobile and tractor factories employing as many as 40,000 workers had been built under U.S. technical supervision in the 1930s.⁹⁴ These factories turned out T-34 tanks, anti-tank guns and long range artillery, including the mobile multiple-fire Katyusha artillery, which the intimidated German soldiers called “Stalin organs.”⁹⁵

The victories at Stalingrad in late 1942 and at the decisive tank battle at Kursk south of Moscow in the spring of 1943 made it clear to Stalin and the leadership of the Red Army that it was only a matter of time before they defeated Nazi Germany without a U.S.-British “second front” in Western Europe, which was still a year away.⁹⁶

Through the sacrifice of at more than 20 million people—at least 9 million civilians and 11 million military dead or missing--the people of the Soviet Union, led by the leadership of the CPSU and the Red Army, successfully defended Russia and ended Nazi Germany’s threat to the people of Europe and the world.

The Rise of Khrushchev and his Revisionist Allies in the Top Levels of the CPSU

According to Sison, in 1952 “Stalin realized he had made a mistake in prematurely declaring that there were no more classes and class struggle in the Soviet Union. ... But it was too late, the Soviet party and state was already swamped by a large number of bureaucrats with waning proletarian revolutionary consciousness. These bureaucrats and their bureaucratism would become the base of modern revisionism.” (“Stand for Socialism,” p. 16)

Sison claims that “Khrushchev’s career as a revisionist in power started in 1953. He was a bureaucratic sycophant and actively took part in repressive actions during the time of Stalin. To become the first secretary of the CPSU and accumulate power in his own hands, he played off the followers of Stalin against each other and succeeded in having Beria executed after a summary trial.” (pp. 19-20)

⁹³ Ibid., pp. 85-86.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 209.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 133, 163, 169.

⁹⁶ While the U.S., British and French imperialists had been glad to let the Soviet Union do the bulk of the fighting against the German army in order to weaken both of their armed forces, they agreed to an invasion of France in 1944 when they grew concerned that the Red Army would occupy all of Germany, and even drive further into Western Europe. The much hyped “D-Day” in June 1944 of U.S.-British forces took place only as the Red Army crossed the Soviet border into Poland. It was the Red Army, not the U.S.-British forces, that liberated the Nazi concentration camps in Poland and eastern Germany, saving the lives of thousands of Jews and political prisoners from a number of countries in Europe.

It is not coincidental that Sison claims that Khrushchev's career as a revisionist in power started in 1953, the year of Stalin's death. In fact, Nikita Khrushchev rose to power as First Party Secretary of the Ukraine and member of the CPSU Presidium and Politburo in 1938 in the midst of the Great Purges, which he loyally carried out in the restive Ukraine. During World War 2, Khrushchev was appointed Lieutenant-General and became the political-military commander of Kiev Military District No. 2. after its liberation in 1944.⁹⁷

Thus, Khrushchev achieved high positions and cultivated revisionist allies in the CPSU and the Red Army during the 1930s and 1940s, at a time when Stalin was General Secretary of the CPSU. In March 1953 Khrushchev was appointed Secretary of the CPSU after Stalin's death. It took Khrushchev four years to eliminate his rivals and consolidate power. Stalin's last secret police chief, Lavrenti Beria, who had led the NKVD purges in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1936-1937, was the first to fall in December 1953.⁹⁸

In February 1956 at the 20th CPSU Congress, Khrushchev made his famous "secret speech"—none of the foreign communist delegations were invited--detailing Stalin's imprisonment and execution of tens of thousands of innocent Party leaders and members. Khrushchev did not criticize his own widespread use of executions by NKVD agents against members of the Ukrainian Communist Party.

Mao wrote that Khrushchev's "opening the books" on Stalin's Great Purges was justified. However, Mao also pointed out that Khrushchev was undertaking "de-Stalinization" in order to attack the socialist construction that did take place in the Soviet Union under Stalin's leadership. In other words, Khrushchev was playing the "Stalin card" in order to clear the way politically for the open restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union.

The "secret" nature of Khrushchev's speech was quickly ended when it was read at "closed" Party meetings, and when it was published abroad. Following the 20th Party Congress, anti-communist riots erupted first in Poland. Then in October 1956, a much more powerful anti-Soviet uprising took place in Hungary. These revolts targeted unpopular regimes that had been publically identified with Stalin. As they took on an openly pro-Western orientation and threatened to bring to power governments that would leave the Soviet bloc, these revolts were crushed by Soviet troops and tanks directly (Hungary) and indirectly (Poland).⁹⁹

⁹⁷ *The Khrushchev Era: 1953-1964*, by Martin McCauley (1995), pp. 9-11.

⁹⁸ *Beria: Stalin's First Lieutenant*, by Amy Knight (1993), pp. 79-86.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-73. While Mao criticized Khrushchev for sending Soviet military forces into Hungary after seeking "advice" from the Chinese CP after the fact, Mao did support the Soviet intervention in Hungary because the uprising was clearly under the leadership of the reactionary Petofi Clubs and the U.S. imperialists, who were trying to break up the Soviet bloc. Mao had serious criticisms of how the Communist Parties in Hungary and Poland were handling political dissent, leading to popular revolts that could have been minimized.

In the spring of 1957, CPSU Politburo members Molotov, Malenkov and Kaganovich—who had reservations about Khrushchev's method of de-Stalinization and his adoption of a line of "peaceful competition" with the U.S. imperialists--deposed CPSU Secretary Khrushchev at an emergency meeting of the CPSU Presidium. In response, Khrushchev played his military trump card, calling on the support of Marshal Zhukov, who Khrushchev had appointed Minister of Defense. Zhukov's jets flew 100 Central Committee members loyal to Khrushchev to the Kremlin in order to restore him to power.¹⁰⁰

Thus, revisionist military coups in the Soviet Union in 1957 and China in 1976 brought openly state capitalist forces to power.

Sison's Inaccurate and Self-Serving Chronology of Khrushchev's Rise to Power

Sison's chronology serves his inaccurate claim that "Khrushchev's career as a revisionist in power started in 1953," the year of Stalin's death. It denies that a new bourgeoisie in the Soviet party developed *during* the period of Stalin's leadership, and was poised to seize nationwide power under Khrushchev's leadership after Stalin's death.

It was also misleading to claim, as Sison does, that "the new bourgeoisie" in the USSR arose from "the bureaucracy and the new intelligentsia." In his 1996 paper, "Long Live Lenin and Stalin," Liwanag/Sison writes that "In the historical experience of both the Soviet Union and China... eventually a new petty bourgeoisie arose from the new intelligentsia and bureaucracy as a result of uneven development and the errors and shortcomings of the revolutionary party of the proletariat in the conduct of the two-line struggle with the bourgeoisie." (p. 12)

This is an attempt by Sison to negate the Maoist understanding that a new bourgeoisie of capitalist roaders develops *within the leadership of the party itself* and is the main target of genuine communist party leaders, party members and the people in socialist society. Instead Sison claims that the new bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union developed from government bureaucrats and intellectuals, and appeared only after Stalin's death. Instead, Khrushchev, Brezhnev and other capitalist roaders in the CPSU gained important positions of power beginning in 1936 (or earlier) when Stalin claimed in a major speech that exploiting classes had disappeared and class struggle in the Soviet Union had ended.

Nevertheless, Mao considered the Soviet Union and its East European allies to still be socialist in late 1956.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 76-77. In the wake of the Khrushchev-Zhukov coup, Khrushchev's chief rivals were politically sidelined for good. Molotov was made the ambassador to Mongolia, Malenkov was appointed the director of a power station in a remote corner of Central Asia, and Kaganovich was made director of a cement factory in Sverdlovsk. Ibid., p. 78.

Mao's Views on Stalin in the 1950s

In the middle of the 20th century, the prevailing view in the international communist movement was that a capitalist class had to be anchored in the *private ownership* of the means of production. In a November 1936 speech on a new Draft Constitution for the CPSU(Bolshevik), Stalin claimed that due to the nationalization of industry and collectivization of agriculture, no exploiting classes and class struggle existed in the Soviet Union.¹⁰¹ In contrast, Mao recognized that class struggle would persist and intensify at key points in socialist society. As he pointed out in 1957 in *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*:

“In China, although in the main socialist transformation has been completed with respect to the system of ownership... the class struggle is by no means over. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the different political forces, and the class struggle in the ideological fields between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will continue to be long and tortuous and at times will even become very acute. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question of which will win out, socialism or capitalism, is still not really settled.”¹⁰²

This theoretical perspective has immense political implications. A claim that exploiting classes have been abolished under socialism strongly implies that the main threat to socialism must be external (capitalist encirclement and aggression), and that internal opposition is not rooted in the contradictions among classes but rather in sabotage or imperialist subversion. In contrast, Mao emphasized the existence of internal contradictions and dangers to socialism, and that they must be addressed through political and ideological means.

Denying the existence of internal contradictions in socialist society leads to serious political problems in the communist party and among the masses of people. In a speech at a CCP Cadres Meeting in Shanghai in March 1957, Mao asked: “Are there any contradictions in socialist society? Lenin once talked about this question and thought there were contradictions. But Stalin did not admit this for a long time. During Stalin's later life, people were neither allowed to speak ill of the society nor to criticize the party or the government. In fact, Stalin mistook contradictions among the people for those between ourselves and the enemy, and consequently regarded those who bad-mouthed [the party or government] or who spread gossip as enemies, thus wronging many people.”

In Nanjing that same day, Mao stated: “After describing an incident involving students who had brought a petition to a party leader in Nanjing and had yelled,

¹⁰¹ www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1936/11/25.html

¹⁰² www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-5, Section VIII.

“Down with bureaucratism” and wanted certain problems resolved, Mao commented, “As I see it, if these were brought in front of Stalin, I think a few heads would surely have rolled.”¹⁰³ These talks indicated that Mao was extremely critical of Stalin’s methods of handling popular dissent.

This and many other talks by Mao on the subject of Stalin in the mid-1950s were not published outside the CCP at the time. Mao may have wanted to deny support to Khrushchev’s attacks on Stalin and on socialism in the Soviet Union beginning in 1956. China was also receiving a significant amount of economic aid from the Soviet Union in building its industrial base, and China was protected from the U.S. imperialists by the Soviets’ strategic nuclear missile force in the 1950s.

Mao and the leadership of the CCP were based in Ya’nan when the 1937-1938 purges in Moscow and other cities took place. They were dependent on the pro-Soviet Comintern representatives in the CCP for information about political developments in Moscow and the Soviet Union. Stalin and the NKVD kept the extent of the purges beyond the show trials of the “Old Bolsheviks” and top commanders of the Red Army from becoming public knowledge.

It was not until the mid-1950s, after socialist construction had begun in the People’s Republic, that Mao began to discuss Stalin’s mistaking of “contradictions among the people for those between ourselves and the enemy.” Unfortunately, most of the international communist movement, including Mao and the leadership of the CCP, was not aware of the true extent and damage done by the Great Purges under Stalin’s leadership. The number of executions and deportations in 1937-1938, and up to the outbreak of war in 1941, was a closely guarded state secret until the NKVD archives were opened up in 1991.

Stalin, the Comintern and the United Front Against Fascism

On p. 15 of “Stand for Socialism,” Sison claims that “Stalin encouraged and supported the communist parties and anti-imperialist movements in capitalist countries and the colonies and semi-colonies through the Third International.” This is exactly the opposite of what happened in international policy under the leadership of Stalin and the Comintern after the adoption of the United Front Against Fascism beginning in 1935.

From Spain¹⁰⁴ to France and Italy and from the U.S. to the British colonies of

¹⁰³ *The Writings of Mao Zedong: 1949-1976, Volume II: January 1956-December 1957*, ed. John Leung and Michael Kau, 1992, p. 465.

¹⁰⁴ See “The Line of the Comintern on the Civil War in Spain,” *Revolution magazine*, June 1981. This 65-page article critically examines the line and policies of the Comintern in the

India and Malaya, communist parties that slavishly followed the Comintern's line formed, and subordinated themselves to, anti-fascist united fronts with their own bourgeoisies or colonial rulers.

In the U.S., the CPUSA under the leadership of Earl Browder was dissolved during World War 2 in order to place its membership at the direction of the Roosevelt administration and the U.S. army under the pretext of the U.S. wartime alliance with the Soviet Union. To its lasting shame, the CPUSA leadership did not oppose the jailing of 120,000 Japanese-Americans and Japanese nationals as "subversives," including Japanese-American members of the CPUSA.¹⁰⁵

As applied to China, Stalin and the Comintern's representatives in the CCP repeatedly tried to pressure Mao and the CCP to merge its Red Armies into Chiang Kai-shek's reactionary Guomindang forces and give up its liberated areas in the name of forming a national united front against Japanese fascism in 1937 and 1938, and then again in 1946 as civil war between the CCP and the GMD was approaching.¹⁰⁶

There was a history to this incorrect political line. In the 1920s, Stalin and the Comintern pressured the CCP to maintain a united front with Chiang Kai-shek's GMD both before and after the GMD's armies committed massacres of thousands of communists and trade union members in Shanghai on April 12, 1927 and in other major cities.¹⁰⁷

The only communist-led independent revolutionary movements that emerged from World War 2 were in Greece and the Philippines (both of which had sharp struggle within their communist parties), and with the greatest impact, in China. Mao stated at one point that if the CCP had given up its liberated areas and merged its

revolutionary struggle against Franco's fascist revolt and placing limits on it in line with the Comintern-CPSU alliance with the British and French imperialists. www.bannedthought.net.

¹⁰⁵ In 1964, Mao described Browder's political capitulation to U.S. imperialism during World War 2. ("The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchov's Revisionism," the 8th Comment of *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement*, pp. 403-405, 390)

¹⁰⁶ "The Political, Military and Negotiating Strategies of the Chinese Communist Party (1937-1946) and Recent Developments in Nepal" (2007) www.mlmsrg.com

¹⁰⁷ See "The Prospects of the Revolution in China" (November 30, 1926) by the Executive Committee of the Comintern. The ECCI refers to Chiang's armed force as a "revolutionary army... [which is] one of the advantages of the Chinese revolution." This article also asserts that "The withdrawal of the Chinese Communists from the Kuomintang at the present time would be a profound mistake" pp. 505, 508. Also see "Questions of the Chinese Revolution," by the CPSU(B) (April 21, 1927). Written nine days after the massacre of thousands of Communists in Shanghai, this article refers to the "victorious advance of the national army on Shanghai." p. 660. Both articles are reprinted in *On the Opposition*, by J.V. Stalin (FLP, 1975).

Red armies into the Guomindang's armed forces, there wouldn't have been a revolution in China.

In 1948 in Moscow, Stalin noted belatedly that "the Chinese comrades have succeeded" at a meeting attended by Molotov, Zhdanov, Malenkov and Suslov from the CPSU, the Yugoslav representative Kardelj, and the Bulgarian and Comintern leader Dimitrov. Without mentioning Mao by name, Stalin admitted that he had made a mistake about the Chinese revolution.¹⁰⁸ However, Stalin explicitly distinguished his support for the Chinese revolution from the "Greek uprising."

The Role of the Communist Party of Greece in the Anti-German Resistance from 1941-1944 and the Civil War in Greece from 1946-1949

The left-wing EAM (National Liberation Front) and ELAS (the People's Liberation Army), both led by the KKE (Communist Party of Greece), rose to prominence during the Resistance against German and Italian occupation forces from 1941-1944. Throughout the intense fighting against the British army in 1944-1945, and the Greek Civil War in 1946-1949, these communist-led forces received weak support or were opposed by Stalin, who placed Soviet national interests over support for the revolutionary movement in Greece.

The Greek landscape was favorable to guerrilla operations. By 1943 the Axis forces and their collaborators were in control only of the main towns and connecting roads, leaving the mountainous countryside to the Resistance. After the September 1943 armistice with Italy, ELAS seized control of Italian garrison weapons across the country. In response, the Western imperialist allies began to favor rival anti-Communist resistance groups. Still, after the German army withdrew from Greece in October 1944, the ELAM-ELAS controlled the majority of Greece, and had more than 50,000 men and women under arms.

At this point there was little to prevent ELAS from taking full control of the country. At a KKE Conference in 1950, Athens Party leader, Vassilis Bartiotis, stated that "On October 12, 1944, we could have easily seized power with the forces of the First Army Corps of ELAS alone ... We did not seize power because we did not have a correct line, because we all vacillated, including me ... Thus, although we had decided on armed insurrection, beginning in September 1944, instead of going ahead, instead of organizing the struggle for power, instead of seizing power, we capitulated and did not seize power."¹⁰⁹

A critical reason for why the KKE-ELAS-EAM did not launch a nationwide offensive to seize power throughout Greece in late 1944 was that the KKE leadership was

¹⁰⁸ *Conversations with Stalin*, by Milovan Djilas (1962), pp. 173, 182.

¹⁰⁹ *Red Acropolis, Black Terror: The Greek Civil War and the Origins of Soviet-American Rivalry, 1943-1949*, Andre Gerolymatos (2004), p. 131. A political summation six years later, particularly one that does not take into account the lack of support of the Greek revolution by the Soviet Union, may contain a great deal of hindsight.

instructed to not do so by Soviet military envoy Col. Grigorii Popov. Popov's instructions to the KKE were that they were not to "precipitate a crisis" with the British imperialists, who were about to return to Greece with the royalist Greek government.¹¹⁰

Underlying the Soviet strategy was the "Percentages Agreement," signed in October 1944 by Stalin and Churchill. They agreed that the Soviets would control 90% of Romania, while the British would control 90% of Greece. While the KKE leadership were aware of the Soviet position via Col. Popov's, they had not been informed of the existence of the Soviet-British Percentages Agreement.¹¹¹

Under these circumstances, most of the KKE leadership accepted the Soviet position that the KKE should put the brakes on the revolutionary struggle, while other KKE leaders--such as Andreas Tzimas, EAM political chief, and Aris Velouchiotis, the military commander of the ELAS—wanted to mobilize the KKE's forces to stop the British forces from embarking in Athens.

In October 1944, the government of King George II, which had spent the war in Cairo, returned to Greece under the protection of the British army commanded by General Ronald Scobie. When Scobie demanded that the ELAS-EAM be disbanded, ELAS commander Velouchiotis decided that General Scobie's demands should be resisted.

Josef Broz Tito, whose communist partisans had liberated Yugoslavia from the Germans in 1944, may have played a role in the resistance of some of the ELAS forces to the demand by the British that they disarm.¹¹² Although EAM and the KKE had participated in the coalition government brought into being in late 1944 by the newly returned pro-British Greek government from Cairo, their differences with the traditional bourgeois parties led to the resignation of EAM ministers.

On December 3, 1944, a peaceful pro-EAM rally of 200,000 people in central Athens was shot at by the police, leaving 28 protesters dead and 148 wounded. The killings ushered in the "Dekemvriana" (the December events), a month of full-scale fighting in Athens between EAM forces and the British army. These clashes, which led to the defeat of the EAM in Athens, were followed by a period of "White Terror." During the White Terror that lasted until early 1946, the Greek government with British support captured approximately 40,000 Communists or ex-ELAS members. Entire villages that had helped the pro- communist partisans were attacked by right-wing gangs.

¹¹⁰ Red Acropolis, pp. 121-123.

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 126-127. It is not known if and when Col. Popov's mission informed the KKE leadership about the agreement.

¹¹² Curiously, Tito was the KKE's main arms supplier and military base. At the same time, Tito was a British ally, owing his physical and political survival in 1944 to British military assistance. From 1944 to 1949, Tito proved to be a more reliable ally to the Greek communist resistance than Stalin.

As a result, a number of veteran partisans hid their weapons in the mountains, and 5,000 of them escaped to Yugoslavia, although the KKE leadership did not encourage this. Many ex-ELAS members formed self-defense troops, without approval from the KKE leadership.

Under the 1946 British-backed Treaty of Varkiza, the KKE remained legal. Its new leader Nikolaos Zachariadis, who returned from East Germany in April 1945, said that the KKE's objective now had the objective of a "people's democracy" to be achieved by peaceful means. This line of "peaceful transition" was opposed by a number of KKE leaders, including former ELAS leader Aris Velouchiotis. The KKE under Nikos Zachariadis renounced Velouchiotis when he called on the veteran guerrillas of the ELAS to start a new revolutionary struggle.

The Greek Civil War was fought from 1946 to 1949 between the Greek National Army—backed by the British and U.S. imperialists—and the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE), the military branch of the KKE. Its Provisional Government in northern Greece was given logistical support by Yugoslavia and by Albania, and by Soviet-occupied Bulgaria for a brief period of time.

In 1946, KKE reversed its former position of collaboration with the Greek government as thousands of communist sympathizers were falling victim to the pro-British government's White Terror. In February 1946, the KKE leadership decided "since our enemies are continuing the one-sided civil war, we will answer with the same means."¹¹³

The king's return to Greece reinforced British influence in the country. The head of the Athens station of MI6, admitted that "Greece was a kind of British protectorate." Fighting resumed in March 1946, as armed bands of ELAS veterans infiltrated Greece through bases in mountainous regions near the Yugoslav and Albanian borders. They were now organized as the Democratic Army of Greece, under the command of ELAS veteran Markos Vafiadis.

The Yugoslav and Albanian governments were the main source of support for the DSE fighters, but the Soviet Union remained ambivalent. KKE leader Zachariadis visited Moscow on several occasions, but returned with little in the way of military support.

In 1947, President Truman announced that the United States would step in to support the Greek government. Through 1947 the scale of fighting increased. The DSE launched large-scale attacks on towns throughout Greece. Army morale was low and it would be some time before the military support from the United States became effective.

Rural areas suffered as a result of tactics dictated to the Greek National Army by U.S. advisers. As admitted by high-ranking CIA officials in the documentary *Nam: The True Story of Vietnam*, an efficient strategy applied during the Greek

¹¹³ Red Acropolis., p. 208.

Civil War, and later in the Korean and Vietnam Wars, was the evacuation of villages. This deprived the partisans of supplies and recruits.

In September 1947, however, the KKE's leadership decided to move from guerrilla tactics to full-scale conventional war, despite the opposition of DSE Commander Vafiadis. In December 1947 the KKE announced the formation of a Provisional Democratic Government in the Macedonian region of northern Greece, with Vafiadis as prime minister. In 1948, the DSE suffered heavy defeats at the hands of the Greek Army and its U.S. advisers. During the Civil War 100,000 ELAS fighters—mostly KKE members—were imprisoned and at least 3,000 were executed.

Two significant blows to the KKE and DSE toward the end of the civil war were political, not military. In a meeting in Moscow in June 1948, Stalin stated his unqualified opposition to the "Greek uprising." Stalin explained that the U.S. and Britain would "never permit [Greece] to break off their lines of communication in the Mediterranean."¹¹⁴ Stalin was intent on avoiding a military confrontation with the U.S. and British imperialists, and this required cutting off material and political support to the Greek revolutionary struggle.

Instead of making arrangements to provide badly needed military assistance for the KKE and DSE to use against the U.S.-backed Greek Army through the long land border between Bulgaria and Greece, Stalin used the word "svernut," Russian for "fold up," to express what the Greek Communists should do.¹¹⁵

As for Tito, he closed the strategically important DSE camps in Yugoslavia as a price for joining the Western imperialist bloc in 1949. This was all the more damaging because Yugoslavia had been the KKE's main supporter dating from the years of the Nazi occupation up through the Civil War.

The KKE had to choose between its loyalty to the USSR and its relations with its closest ally. After some internal conflict, the great majority of KKE members left for Tashkent, the capital of Soviet Uzbekistan in central Asia. They were to remain there, in military encampments, for three years.

In October 1949, pro-Soviet KKE leader Zachariadis, under pressure from Stalin,¹¹⁶ announced a "temporary ceasefire to prevent the complete annihilation of Greece." This marked the military defeat of the KKE-DSE and the end of the Greek Civil War. The final victory of the U.S.-supported government led to Greece's membership in NATO, and rule by a U.S.-backed military junta between 1967 and 1974.

Ultimately, neither the Soviet nor Yugoslavian governments proved to be reliable allies for the KKE and the revolutionary struggle in Greece between the crucial years

¹¹⁴ *Conversations with Stalin*, by Milovan Djilas (1962, 1990), pp 181-182.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Red Acropolis, Black Terror*, pp. 227.

of 1944-1949 when the possibilities for revolutionary advance were the most favorable. The KKE's successful achievement of anti-imperialist revolution against the British and the U.S., followed by an advance to socialism, would have required a more self-reliant revolutionary struggle that could have withstood the denial of Soviet aid and the closure of the DSE camps in Yugoslavia by Tito in 1949.

The leadership of the KKE, the ELAS (in 1944-1945) and the DSE (1946-1949) did not take consistent revolutionary and anti-imperialist stands. Some of the KKE leadership vacillated at key points in the revolutionary struggle, joined reactionary governments (particularly the pro-Soviet KKE leader Nikos Zachariadis) and signed pro-British "peace treaties" aimed at disarming the revolutionary forces. More revolutionary KKE leaders and members refused to compromise with British and U.S. imperialism and with the royalist Greek government.

While the Comintern did not exist after 1943, the political thinking of Stalin and the political line behind the United Front Against Fascism of advancing Soviet national interests in Greece by negotiating counter-revolutionary deals with the Western imperialists continued. The revolutionary forces in the KKE, its armed forces and its mass organizations paid a heavy price.

The PKP-Led Hukbalahap during World War 2 and the 1948-1957 Civil War

Based on the official history of the CPP in *Philippine Society and Revolution*, in the U.S. colony of the Philippines, the Philippine Communist Party (PKP) followed the line of the nearby Chinese CP more closely than that of the Comintern during World War 2. The PKP fought against the Japanese occupation forces and maintained its political and military independence and initiative from the anti-Japanese guerilla forces supported and financed by the U.S.

In early 1942, Gen. MacArthur's forces and Filipino "volunteers" of the USAFFE (U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East) were facing impending defeat at the hands of the Japanese army on the Bataan Peninsula. The revolutionary cadre of the PKP, over the objection of the revisionist Lava-Taruc forces in the party leadership, met in Central Luzon on February 6, 1942 and decided to form a people's army to fight the Japanese occupation forces. This was a broad coalition of guerilla forces commonly referred to as the Hukbalahap (the People's Anti-Japanese Army).¹¹⁷

One historian claims that a number of veterans of the Chinese CP's Eighth Route Army served as military instructors for inexperienced Hukbalahap units. Van der Kroef states that these Chinese instructors blended among Chinese-Filipino members of the PKP; 10% of the country's population is of Chinese ancestry.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ *PSR*, p. 30;

¹¹⁸ *Communism in South-East Asia*, also by Justus van der Kroef (1980), p. 24.

In spite of the efforts of the Lava-Taruc party leadership to impose a line of “retreat for defense” on the Hukbalahap, by March 1943 the PKP-led Hukbalahap numbered 10,000 guerilla fighters. They were supplemented by numerous Barrio United Defense Force units in the villages, which carried out recruiting, intelligence collection, supply and civil justice functions.¹¹⁹ These units forced Japanese units to leave garrisons in the cities and towns, and annihilated them in the flames of guerilla warfare in the countryside.

The PKP Central Committee repudiated the “retreat for defense” policy only in September 1944. This paved the way for the Hukbalahap under the leadership of the PKP to liberate almost the entire region of Central Luzon, and dispatched armed units to Manila and Southern Luzon. One month later, the Hukbalahap had to confront MacArthur’s forces which had landed in the Visayas and were trying to recapture the Philippines for U.S. imperialism.¹²⁰

However, after adopting a largely self-reliant revolutionary line of maintaining their independence and initiative from U.S. forces during most of World War 2, the PKP under the Lava-Taruc leadership took a opposed stand to that adopted by Mao and the CCP in China when the U.S. troops returned to the Philippines in late 1944.

According to *Philippine Society and Revolution*: “Misled by the bourgeois reactionary gang of the Lavas and Tarucs, the Hukbalahap welcomed the U.S. imperialist troops that marched through Central Luzon from Lingayen in 1945. Some units of the people’s army fought together with the U.S. imperialist troops in dislodging the Japanese troops from the Floridablanca airfields, but were surprised when after the battle the U.S. troops turned their guns on them and disarmed them.

In Manila, the imperialist aggressors also disarmed and turned back units of the Hukbalahap that had preceded them. Squadron 77, a unit of the people’s army, was massacred in Malolos, Bulacan while on its way from Manila after being disarmed.”¹²¹

In the face of this U.S. military campaign of repression, the Lava-Taruc leadership of the PKP hailed the establishment of a puppet U.S. commonwealth government after a sham declaration of “independence” in 1946. The PKP leadership accepted the government’s offer to take part in elections, even though the Party and Hukbalahap units were coming under fierce attack from a Filipino Army reorganized by the U.S. military. This brought the PKP’s cadre out into the open and exposed them to violent suppression.¹²²

In 1950, the PKP Politburo under Jose Lava declared the existence of a “revolutionary situation” and adopted an adventurist line of quick military victory. All units

¹¹⁹ PSR, p. 30-32. Communism in South-East Asia, p. 24.

¹²⁰ PSR, p. 31;

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-32.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp. 32-34.

of the people's enemy were ordered to make simultaneous attacks on provincial capitals, cities and enemy camps throughout 1950. In response, campaigns of encirclement and suppression were launched against the thinly spread people's army and their overextended supply lines.

Just as with the military adventurist "Red Area-White Area" line adopted by the CPP leadership in the 1980s, this putschist orientation led to steady defeats of the PKP's armed forces at the hands of the puppet Quirino regime (1948-1953), and then by ex-guerilla Ramon Magsaysay, who became Defense Minister in 1950. Magsaysay conducted a bloody counter-insurgency campaign under the direction of U.S. military advisers during his regime of 1954-1957. This led to the final military defeat and capitulation of the PKP under the Jesus Lava leadership.¹²³

The class collaborationist United Front Against Fascism (UFAF) of the 1930s and 1940s outlasted the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 and undoubtedly influenced the revisionist Lava-Taruc leadership of the PKP and their attempts to block the development of a revolutionary struggle against both the Japanese occupation forces and the returning U.S. Army.

5. Sison's Attack on the Cultural Revolution and on the Revolutionary Leadership of Mao and his Closest Allies

In "Stand for Socialism," a 55 page paper, Liwanag/Sison devoted just three pages to the Cultural Revolution at the end of the paper. Sison claimed that "the Cultural Revolution succeeded for a number of years until it resulted in a Rightist backlash." (p. 54) What Sison did not say is even more important than what he said explicitly. Here he suggested that the Cultural Revolution and its proponents (who were Mao and his four closest allies) failed due to unnamed errors, not that they were defeated politically by the Right.

Sison did not uphold the heroic efforts of the genuine Maoist forces, primarily four revolutionary communist leaders on the Politburo (called the "gang of four" by revisionist supporters of Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping) to defend the Cultural Revolution and resist the Rightist counter-offensive. Sison also made an intentionally vague reference to the need for the "positive aspects [of the Cultural Revolution to be] upheld and the negative aspects [to be] corrected." This had the effect of suggesting that during the Cultural Revolution, Mao and the Four made serious errors that led to the revisionist coup led by Deng's forces.

In "At Home in the World" (2004), Sison stressed the fact that "Left opportunist or ultra-Left errors, were indeed committed in the course of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." (p. 164) However, he did not identify who committed these ultra-Left errors. This had the effect of lumping together the counter-revolutionary

¹²³ Ibid., p. 38.

program of the ultra-leftists in the May 16 Group, who called for the overthrow of all top party and government officials, and the genuine Maoists—the Four—that Mao supported throughout the 1970s. (p. 164)

In Sison's 2012 paper, he finally got around to criticizing "Dengist counter-revolution." ("Prospects of Maoism in the Philippines," Part 2¹²⁴) However, this appears to apply only to the post-1978 period in which Deng took complete leadership of the CCP, not the critical and more controversial 1973-1976 period in which Deng was openly campaigning to reverse the achievements of the Cultural Revolution and to overthrow Mao's four closest allies. In the mid-1970s, Mao openly criticized Deng for his revealing statement that capitalist methods in industry and agriculture are equivalent to socialist methods. According to Deng, "Black cats or white cats—as long as they catch mice, it's all right."¹²⁵

The CPP and Sison have never taken a position upholding the Maoist policies of the Four, three of whom came to prominence during the "January Storm" in Shanghai in 1967 in which the working class with Maoist leadership seized power from revisionist party leaders and factory managers, and established revolutionary committees in the factories, collectives and local governments.

At the 10th Party Congress in 1973, the leaders of the January Storm who were elected were 39 year old Vice-Chairman and Standing Committee member Wang Hongwen, Standing Committee member and Head of the PLA Political Department Zhang Chunqiao, and Politburo members Yang Wenyuan and Mao's estranged wife, Jiang Qing. The Four were the highest-ranking revolutionary Maoist members of the CCP elected with Mao's well-known support.

Sison (who was still at large and CPP Chairman in 1976) and the CPP were mute on these matters. This left a strong impression that they pragmatically supported Deng and the rightist PLA generals in this critical showdown in October 1976 because they emerged victorious.

Sison's view of the Cultural Revolution is that in order "to preempt anarchy, institutions like the Party, the state, the people's organizations, the educational system, the mass media and so on should take on responsibility for leadership over the cultural mass movement, with due process rigorously followed and the rights of individuals and groups respected." ("Re-Affirm," p. 52)

This view of the Cultural Revolution is that it should be entirely top-down and has to be managed carefully by the party. There is no hint of a Maoist mass-based revolution from below in socialist society that overthrows and seizes power from the capitalist roaders in the party. Sison's view has more in common with the

¹²⁴ www.ndfp.net/joom15/index.php/readings-mainmenu-73/1515-deve...nd-prospects-of-maoist-theory-and-practice-in-the-philippines.html.

¹²⁵ *People's China 1966-1972*, edited by the Miltons and Schurmann, p. 223.

reactionary efforts of capitalist roaders such as Deng and Zhou to reverse the Cultural Revolution than the revolutionary political work of Mao and the Four to defend and further develop its historic achievements.

In "At Home in the World," in reference to the Cultural Revolution, Sison claimed that "A major error was to let loose factional groups fighting each other and dividing the masses." Sison characteristically did not identify who was responsible for this "major error." What appeared to be "factionalism" was in some cases intense class struggle between revisionist party officials who formed conservative factions (including "loyalist" Red Guards) to protect their privileges, and revolutionary organizations of students, workers and peasants. This was an objective reflection of the class struggle, not because the Maoists "let loose" factional struggle.

In other cases, there was unprincipled factional struggle that was opposed on all sides to the actual political line of Mao and the Central Cultural Revolution Group (CCRG). Further advances of the Cultural Revolution and consolidation of its many achievements would have required a higher level of political understanding, consciousness and willingness to put collective interests first in order to reduce the level of unprincipled factional struggle.¹²⁶

Sison's idealist criticism of Mao and the Cultural Revolution for "let[ting] loose factional groups fighting each other and dividing the masses" demonstrates a profound lack of understanding of the dynamics of class struggle under socialism. "Factional groups [that] divide the masses" cannot be willed or legislated out of existence by all-knowing party leaders who stage-manage life and death revolutionary mass struggles against capitalist restoration. Political struggles in socialist society must be addressed and given leadership by revolutionary Maoist forces among the masses themselves.

This approach to class struggle within the communist party even before the period of socialism can be used to blame revolutionary cadre for reverses that are the result of incorrect political lines propagated by top party leaders

Sison does not see the need for such revolutionary mass upheavals from below to maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat, instead opting for "Cultural Revolutions" carefully stage managed by top party leaders to "pre-empt anarchy." In addition, Sison's political fixation on the "new petty bourgeoisie" points the spearhead of revolutionary class struggle downward instead of targeting the bourgeoisie/ capitalist roaders at the top levels of the communist party.

¹²⁶ Hundreds of millions of copies of the *Quotations of Chairman Mao* were considered by many revolutionary activists to be the "Constitution" of the Cultural Revolution. Red Books were supplemented by tens of millions of copies of Volumes 1-5 of *Mao's Selected Works*. Both were translated into dozens of languages and distributed and studied by Maoist parties and organizations around the world, including the Philippines and the U.S.

In his 1996 paper, Liwanag/Sison developed his erroneous theory that "the new petty bourgeoisie is the initial social base of modern revisionism in socialist society." He explained that "In the historical experience of both the Soviet Union and China, the old bourgeoisie and the landlord class took their last line of resistance in the superstructure under many pretenses, and eventually a new petty bourgeoisie arose from the new intelligentsia and bureaucracy as a result of uneven development and the errors and shortcomings of the revolutionary party of the proletariat in the conduct of the two-line struggle with the bourgeoisie. Mao observed and fought the new petty bourgeoisie and won against it in his lifetime but his line would still be defeated after his death." (p. 12)

This is a gross distortion of the political line of Mao and the Cultural Revolution. Sison knows full well that the primary targets of the Cultural Revolution under Mao's direct leadership from 1966-1976 were capitalist roaders inside the Communist Party, or "the bourgeoisie in the party."¹²⁷ The new bourgeoisie arises from the economic, social, political and intellectual/cultural inequalities that continue to exist within socialist society.

This new bourgeoisie does not arise from a "new petty bourgeoisie." In contrast to Sison's viewpoint, sections of the petty bourgeoisie that developed in socialist China, especially those working in the state apparatus, were one part of the social base of the bourgeoisie in the party, but they were not a part of the ruling bourgeoisie in the party itself.

In Part 1 of his paper written in September 2012, misleadingly titled "Prospects of Maoism in the Philippines,"¹²⁸ Sison attempted to resuscitate Lenin's statement from the early 1920s that the resistance of the defeated bourgeoisie will increase "10,000 fold" after the victory of the socialism.

Lenin's statement was based on the first few years of socialist construction, the experience of a bitter civil war and continuing class struggle prior to his untimely death in 1923. Sison quoted Lenin out of time and context in order to oppose Mao's more developed and correct understanding of the development of the bourgeoisie in the party leadership, including its critical role in the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union that Lenin did not live to see and sum up.

¹²⁷ The "16 Point Decision" written by Mao and issued by the party's Central Committee on August 8, 1966 defined the principal target of the Cultural Revolution as top party leaders taking the capitalist road, or "capitalist roaders." Mao and his allies in the Politburo of the CCP later identified these capitalist roaders as a new exploiting class, a "bourgeoisie in the party." (See "Capitalist Roaders are the Bourgeoisie Inside the Party," by Fang Kang, Peking Review, June 18, 1976, reprinted in *And Mao Makes Five*, ed. Raymond Lotta, pp. 358-367.)

¹²⁸ www.ndfp.net/joom15/index.php/readings-mainmenu-73/1515-deve...nd-prospects-of-maoist-theory-and-practice-in-the-philippines.html.

In 1976, Mao issued an important statement that was aimed at Deng as the leading capitalist roader in the party. Mao and the Four had recently removed Deng from power a second time for stirring up a “rightist deviationist wind.” Mao stated, “You are making the socialist revolution, and yet don’t know where the bourgeoisie is. It is right in the Communist Party—those in power taking the capitalist road. The capitalist-roaders are still on the capitalist road.”

The author of the article in *Peking Review* quoting Mao on the bourgeoisie in the party pointed out that the economic and social inequalities left over from the old society, or “bourgeois right,” cannot be eliminated overnight. He stated that “In the socialist period, what attitude one takes towards bourgeois right—to restrict it or expand it—is an important criterion for distinguishing whether one is continuing the revolution.... On this issue, our struggle against the capitalist roaders in the Party—a struggle between restriction and counter-restriction—will continue for a long time to come.”

The author explained how the capitalist roaders/bourgeoisie in the leadership of the party begin the process of capitalist restoration even while the proletariat controls most of socialist society: “We can see from real life that once the leadership in certain units or departments was controlled by capitalist-roaders like Liu Shao-chi, Lin Biao and Teng Hsiao-ping, they would use the power in their hands to energetically push the revisionist line and turn the socialist mutual relations among people into capitalist relations between employers and employees.... with the result that socialist ownership exists only in name but is actually turned into capitalist ownership under the control of the capitalist-roaders.”¹²⁹

The bourgeoisie inside the party is all the more dangerous because they usurp portions of economic and political power, and are adept at using communist ideology at the highest levels of the party to justify their program for the overthrow of proletarian power and capitalist restoration.

While Sison was arrested by the AFP in northern Luzon in 1977, there is substantial evidence that he was able to continue to play a leading role in the CPP until his release a decade later. He even credits himself with issuing a “definitive paper” on the “Philippine mode of production” in 1982 while he was in prison.¹³⁰ Thus, Sison must take some responsibility for the length of time that it took the CPP to come out against the revisionist coup in China after Mao’s death and in opposition to the state capitalist regime instituted by Deng Xiaoping in 1978. Even in 1992, Sison and the CPP leadership criticized a draft of a party policy paper on international relations in 1984 which “unnecessarily attacked China.” (“Re-Affirm,” p. 19)

¹²⁹ The quotes from Mao and Fang Kang are from “Capitalist Roaders are the Bourgeoisie Inside the Party,” in *And Mao Makes Five*, pp. 358, 362-364.

¹³⁰ *Mao Zedong Thought Lives* (1993), p. 103.

In his 1996 paper, Sison/Liwanag concluded by intoning "Long Live Lenin and Stalin!", "Build a Marxist-Leninist Party in Russia!" and "Long Live Marxism-Leninism!" Thus, Mao and Maoism are political footnotes to Sison, and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is not considered to be a higher stage of Marxism-Leninism in Sison's eyes. This makes it hard to take seriously his 2012 version of "Maoism," both theoretically and as applied to the Philippines. This paper included Sison's continuing efforts to airbrush out his decades of support for Soviet social-imperialism and state capitalism in China

Mao's Anti-Imperialist "Three Worlds Perspective"

In the early 1970s, the balance of forces shifted in an unfavorable direction for the revolutionary Maoists. A serious military threat to socialist China by the Soviet imperialists began with military clashes on China's northern border in 1969. This forced Mao, Zhou and other leaders in the CCP and the PLA to agree to an opening to the West in order to avoid fighting on both the north with the Soviet Union and the south with the U.S. imperialists.

Negative political developments within China included the defection in 1970 of Chen Boda, the head of the Central Cultural Revolution Group since 1966 and Mao's long time secretary; a serious coup attempt by Mao's designated successor, Lin Biao, in 1971; and Mao's sharply declining health with multiple sclerosis and other serious ailments beginning in 1972.

It is useful to compare international conditions at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution with the shifting political conditions confronting Mao and the Four in the early and middle 1970s. In 1966, the situation in the world was favorable for such an unprecedented revolution within a socialist society and for building support for revolutionary and liberation struggles around the world. In the 1960s it was no exaggeration to say that revolution was the main trend in the world and imperialism was on the defensive.

U.S. imperialism—the chief enemy of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the world—was bogged down in Vietnam due to the heroic struggles of the peoples in South and North Vietnam. National liberation and revolutionary struggles were on the rise in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and within many imperialist countries. Of great importance, the Chinese Communist Party under Mao's leadership had launched a bold political and ideological challenge in 1963 to the revisionist CP of the Soviet Union and to its previous undisputed leadership over the international communist movement.

However, just three years into the Cultural Revolution, the military intervention of the Soviet imperialists in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the growing threat of a Soviet nuclear attack on China in 1969 produced a radically different international playing field for the People's Republic.

The “opening to the West” beginning secretly with U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger’s trip to China in 1971 was a necessary compromise by a socialist country, similar to the Brest-Litovsk Treaty that the Bolsheviks signed with the German imperialists in 1918. Then, Lenin overruled the opposition of Trotsky and the Left Social-Revolutionaries by trading substantial Soviet territory to gain precious time to build a Red Army to defend proletarian power.

This changing and threatening international situation led Mao and his political allies to develop a “three worlds perspective” that did not make a correct analysis of the imperialist system as a whole. Beginning in 1970, they developed a position that the two superpowers (the U.S. and the Soviet Union—“the first world”) were the principal enemies on a world scale; the Western imperialists and Japan (the “second world”) were part of an international united front against the superpowers; and the “peoples *and countries* of the third world” were the most reliable revolutionary force in opposing the superpowers.

This theoretical framework sowed political confusion about the nature of the “second world” and exaggerated their conflicts with U.S. imperialism.¹³¹ Addressing the newly independent countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and even long independent countries in Latin America, Mao wrote in 1963: “Without strengthening their armed forces, without preparing to meet imperialist aggression and intervention, and without adhering to the policy of waging struggles against imperialism, countries which have won independence will not be able to safeguard their national independence and still less to ensure the advance of the revolutionary cause.” (p. 387) This thesis had several errors.

¹³¹ This position on the “anti-U.S. imperialist” potential of the Western European imperialist powers first appeared in *The General Polemic on the Line of the International Communist Movement* of the Chinese Communist Party, which was written by Mao or under his direction in 1963-1964. In “The Proletarian Revolution and Khrushchov’s Revisionism,” Mao wrote that “In the capitalist countries which are subject to bullying, control, intervention and aggression by U.S. imperialism, the proletarian parties should raise the national banner of opposition to U.S. imperialism and direct the edge of mass struggle mainly against U.S. imperialism as well as against monopoly capital and other reactionary forces at home which are betraying the national interests. They should unite all the forces that can be united and form a united front against U.S. imperialism and its allies.” (p. 394 of the Polemic)

Mao almost certainly had De Gaulle and the French imperialists in mind, who had developed a relatively small nuclear *force de frappe* (strike force) outside of U.S. control. This was not a progressive development. In general, Mao’s emphasis on trying to unite the West European imperialists against U.S. imperialism did not understand that NATO was being built under U.S. military leadership in the 1960s and 1970s in order to prepare for nuclear war against its rival Soviet imperialist war bloc in Eastern Europe.

The Third World countries that Mao referred to had not in fact won their “national independence” economically and militarily. “Strengthening their armed forces” meant increased military aid from the West, including training their officers by the U.S., France and other countries in West Europe.

These “independent” militaries—not outside military intervention--overthrew the leaders of the most vocal “independent” Third World countries, such as the Congo, Ghana, Guinea and Indonesia, in the 1960s and Chile in 1973, bringing openly pro-U.S. regimes to power. Kwame Nkrumah, who claimed to be building “African socialism” in Ghana, was ironically overthrown by his Western-trained generals during state visits to China and North Vietnam in 1966.

A widely quoted and eclectic statement from the early 70s-- “Countries want independence, nations want liberation, and the people want revolution”-- placed the struggles of neo-colonial Third World governments for “national independence” on a par with revolutionary movements aimed at overthrowing them. This objectively undermined China’s support for revolutionary, including Maoist-led, struggles around the world.

These secondary errors that appeared in *The Polemic* in 1963-1964 were not corrected, but reappeared in Mao’s “three worlds perspective” in the 1970s. They should not be repeated by Maoists today. This is particularly true of the support for “countries defending national independence” that appears in the international line that Sison and the CPP have advocated in recent years.

6. Deng’s and Zhou’s Counter-Revolutionary Three Worlds Theory

An entirely different and counter-revolutionary “Three Worlds Theory” was developed by Deng Xiaoping and Zhou Enlai in the 1970s. They asserted that the U.S., the West European and Asian imperialists played a progressive role in the world by defending their “national independence” against the Soviet Union, the “most dangerous” imperialist superpower.

After 1973, Deng, Zhou and the pro-U.S. revisionist forces grouped around them asserted that the Soviet Union had become the main danger not only to China, but to *the countries and peoples of the world*. With the U.S. imperialists still the dominant power in most of the world, this had a deeply disorienting effect on many Maoist forces around the world, including the CPP, and all of the Maoist forces in the U.S. with the exception of the RCP.

The CCP press attempted to justify Deng’s position by historical parallels to World War 2, when the Soviet Union made alliances with the Western imperialist and colonialist countries against German imperialism. This line was not simply a necessary tactic to defend socialism in the USSR, but was a position of support for

the allegedly “progressive” Western imperialist governments, omitting mention of their repressive colonies.

As noted above, the United Front Against Fascism was an incorrect strategy imposed on the international communist movement by Stalin and the Soviet leadership by means of their domination of the Comintern. Just as in the China in the 1970s, this line of identifying one bloc of imperialists as “more dangerous” than an opposing imperialist bloc encouraged class collaboration on the part of Communist Parties in the U.S., France, Italy, and Britain, as well as in their colonies such as India, Vietnam, Indonesia, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and most of Africa and the Middle East.

It is important to distinguish Mao’s incorrect but still mainly anti-imperialist “three worlds perspective” from Deng’s and Zhou’s pro-imperialist and counter-revolutionary Three Worlds Theory. While Mao and the Four advocated *tactical* unity and compromises in some areas with the U.S. and the members of its bloc in order to deal with the Soviet threat to China, Zhou and Deng sought to implement a *strategic* alliance, economic ties and a political understanding with the U.S., the European and Asian imperialists and the neo-colonial states they dominate.

Chinese Foreign Policy from 1971-76 Goes from Bad to Worse

Most of the debate in the CCP during the 1970s over foreign policy was non-public. We do know that Zhou and Deng, not Mao and the Four, were mainly in control of Chinese foreign policy and steered it in a counter-revolutionary and pro-Western imperialist direction during these years.

Beginning in 1971, the Chinese Foreign Ministry aligned itself with the reactionary rulers of a number of Third World countries who were solidly in the camp of U.S. imperialism. This included Iran, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Chile, Angola and Israel.

Support for the Reactionary Monarchy in Iran

Under Premier Zhou Enlai’s direction, China sent representatives in 1971 to the Shah of Iran’s celebration of 2500 years of monarchical rule. In November 1971, industrial and oil trade delegations were exchanged by China and Iran, and in the fall of 1972, the Empress Pahlavi visited China.¹³²

By the mid-1970s, Deng’s forces in the Foreign Ministry referred to the Shah’s CIA-backed regime in Iran as a bulwark against “Soviet hegemonism.” The Chinese Foreign Ministry supported the Shah’s massive purchases of U.S. military equipment, key elements of which was used by the SAVAK, the Shah’s secret police, to suppress the growing revolutionary movement in Iran. Support for

¹³² “Friendly Relations Between China and Iran are Uninterruptedly Developing,” People’s Daily, September 19, 1972, *People’s China: 1966-1972*, edited by the Miltons and Schurmann.

arming the Shah's regime with U.S. arms by the PRC was used by the reformist pro-Soviet Tudeh Party as an occasion to attack both socialist China and the Maoist forces in the Union of Iranian Communists.

Chinese Military and Economic Assistance to Sri Lanka in the 1970s

Under the leadership of Zhou, the People's Republic continued to send economic and military support in 1971 to the pro-Western government in Ceylon (Sri Lanka in May 1972) after it suppressed an insurrection organized by the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (People's Liberation Front). The JVP was based in rural areas among unemployed or under-employed educated majority Sinhalese youth. Its adventurist attacks on 74 police stations lasted only less than a week. Approximately 1200 suspected insurgents were rounded up by the army, shot and their bodies burned to prevent identification.¹³³

In the midst of this reactionary bloodbath, Zhou sent a message of support to Premier Bandaranaike commending the Sri Lankan government for having brought under control "a handful of persons who style themselves Guevarists, and into whose ranks foreign spies have sneaked." Zhou did not specify what country or countries had sent foreign spies to influence the insurrection. However, his letter was accompanied by an interest-free, long-term loan of Rs 150 million (some \$27 million) to the Sri Lankan government.¹³⁴

According to the Ceylonese Ambassador in Beijing, Zhou said that China could "give both financial and military aid to the Ceylon government. The Chinese Premier promised wholehearted support of the Ceylonese government, saying 'whom else can we support in Ceylon except the government of Mrs. Bandaranaike.'" ¹³⁵

Zhou also promised an outright grant of five high-speed naval boats to guard against non-existent "external assistance to the JVP," which were delivered in 1972.¹³⁶ At a banquet in Beijing in June 1972 in honor of Bandaranaike, Zhou praised Sri Lanka for "achieving considerable success in ... safeguarding and consolidating independence... and developing the national economy." Bandaranaike brought home another interest-free loan of Rs 265 million, repayable in 20 years.¹³⁷

In the 1970s, China became Sri Lanka's main trading partner. Sri Lanka was also dependent on exports from its tea industry, loans from the World Bank, and

¹³³ A detailed description of the JVP's ill-fated insurrection comes from *Mankind*, December 1981, "The Sri Lankan 'Insurrection' of 1971," by Paul Alexander.

¹³⁴ *Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka*, Shelton Kodikara (1982), pp. 137, 138.

¹³⁵ *Asian Affairs*, January-February 1974, "Sri Lanka Turns East," pp. 194-195.

¹³⁶ *Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka*, p. 138.

¹³⁷ *Asian Affairs*, p. 195.

foreign aid from the U.S. and other Western imperialists.¹³⁸

Zhou's Support for the Pakistani Military Regime's Suppression of the People of East Pakistan/Bangladesh in 1971

Elections in December 1970 in East Pakistan were won by the Awami League, which was seeking autonomy from the military dictatorship in West Pakistan. China supported West Pakistan. In a message to Gen. Yahya Khan during his trip to Beijing in April 1971, Zhou Enlai stated that "In our opinion, unification of Pakistan and unity of the peoples of East and Pakistan are basic guarantees for Pakistan to attain prosperity and strength."¹³⁹

Zhou offered Pakistan an additional \$20 million in economic aid in May even while West Pakistani troops had placed East Pakistan under martial law and large-scale massacres were under way there. The main targets of the West Pakistan army in East Pakistan were members of the Awami League, "militant students and intellectuals," Bengali military units and Hindus.¹⁴⁰ Instead of opposing these war crimes by the West Pakistani army, China denounced the formation of Bangladesh at the United Nations in December 1971 as a puppet state of India and the Soviet Union.¹⁴¹

China's position politically paralyzed most of the Maoist parties in East Pakistan from taking up underground revolutionary struggle against the West Pakistani military, which unleashed a genocidal campaign in 1971 that killed millions of East Pakistan's Hindu majority and other East Pakistanis. The main Maoist organization in East Pakistan/Bangladesh which maintained its revolutionary political bearings during these years was the Proletarian Party of East Bengal (PPEB), led by Siraj Sikder. Sikder was captured and executed by the Bangladeshi military four years later in 1975.¹⁴²

Even before the brutal military intervention of the West Pakistan armed forces in large numbers in the spring of 1971, the PPEB was operating underground and was building rural bases to conduct armed struggle against the colonialist West Pakistan government. In the course of military interventions by both West Pakistan and India, the PPEB built a National Liberation Army to fight both foreign enemies.

Zhou's positions in these countries lent support to the comprador regimes of Iran, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, and undermined the work of genuine revolutionary and Maoist forces in them. Zhou's actions were based on a pragmatic policy of

¹³⁸ *India and Sri Lanka-China Relations (1948-84)*, by Vijay Kumar (1986), pp. 116, 133, 135, 138, 150.

¹³⁹ *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Major Powers*, G.W. Choudhury (1975), ps. 211.

¹⁴⁰ *The Rape of Bangladesh*, by Anthony Mascarenhas (1971), pp. 111-120.

¹⁴¹ *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Major Powers*, p. 214.

¹⁴² Translated works of Sikder can be found at <http://sarbaharapath.com/?p=444>.

supporting Third World countries that were opposed to the Soviet social-imperialists, even if that opposition was based on unity with U.S. imperialism and its puppet states.

As Zhou and Deng gained increased control over Chinese foreign policy in 1973, China's positions became overtly counter-revolutionary and aligned with U.S. imperialism. China withdrew support for revolutionary and even Maoist movements in the Third World at an accelerated pace. Parades of U.S. puppets, including Marcos who had placed the Philippines under martial law, the Shah of Iran, General Yahya Khan, and Mobutu, the dictator of Zaire, were honored in Beijing for their contributions to "the struggle against Soviet hegemonism."

Zhou and the 1973 Coup in Chile

Zhou's pro-U.S. imperialist line appeared in a very damaging fashion in Chile after a CIA-backed military coup in 1973 against the reformist Allende regime that was supported by the Soviet Union and Cuba. Zhou and the Chinese Foreign Ministry did not condemn the pro-U.S. dictatorship of General Pinochet, and instead recognized it within days. The Chinese embassy in Santiago did not aid political activists who were being hunted by the Chilean army, and did not offer them political refuge.

While Zhou denied support to the Chilean revolutionaries, it is important to recognize what political forces were responsible for the deaths of as many as 30,000 communists and their supporters at the hands of the Chilean military. The primary responsibility lay with the adoption of a Soviet-backed "peaceful road to socialism" by the leaders of the revisionist Chilean Communist Party. In an attempt to head off the coming coup and bloodbath, the leaders of the Chilean CP issued an order to party members and supporters to turn in their guns to the "constitutional" military.

Zhou's rush to support the Pinochet regime discredited socialist China and unfortunately, Maoism, among genuine communist and revolutionary forces in Latin America and worldwide. Zhou's actions also enabled the pro-Soviet and pro-Cuban parties in Latin America to avoid badly needed scrutiny of the "peaceful road to socialism" that paved the way for the counter-revolution in Chile.

The Civil War in Angola: Deng Xiaoping Joins the U.S. Imperialist Camp in 1973

Under the tutelage of Deputy Premier Deng Xiaoping, China's position on the Angolan civil war in 1975 and its relationship with two of the three main anti-Portuguese colonial movements propelled China into the camp of U.S. imperialism and the South African apartheid regime.

Socialist China's involvement in Angola began in 1963 with its association with the first secretary-general and theoretician of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), Viriato da Cruz. He was enthusiastic about the application of

Maoist guerilla warfare to the anti-colonial war in Angola in the early 1960s, and was reported to have received Chinese aid. However, da Cruz was forced out of the MPLA leadership by Agostinho Neto, who received support from the pro-Soviet Angolan Communist Party. Neto had already started developing close political and military ties with the Soviet Union. ¹⁴³

In 1973, China, represented by newly rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping, threw its political and military support to Holden Roberto's FNLA (the National Front of Liberation of Angola), which was based among the Bakongo people of northern Angola and southern Zaire. The FNLA was a reactionary group which was under the control of the U.S. puppet Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire.

In December 1973, an FNLA delegation visited China and met with Deng. From this point on, Roberto began to receive Chinese aid in the form of military training and weapons shipments. Between May and August 1974, over 100 military advisers, led by a PLA Major-General, and 450 tons of weapons in August, arrived in Zaire. ¹⁴⁴ China provided military assistance to the FNLA for over a year, from early 1974 until October 1975.

This period saw the steady escalation of a reactionary civil war between three bourgeois nationalist forces supported by rival imperialists: UNITA, supported by the U.S. imperialists and South Africa; the FNLA, supported by the U.S. imperialists, Mobutu in Zaire and by China; and the MPLA, supported by heavy weapons from the Soviet Union, a large Cuban expeditionary force and several thousand Katangese mercenaries opposed to Mobutu. There was very little difference between the political programs of the three groups, other than which imperialist superpower and their proxies to rely on to make a grab for power.

In late October 1975, in an attempt to head off the MPLA from its plan to proclaim an "independent" government in Luanda, around 2,000 members of the South African Defense Force (SADF), former Portuguese officers and various mercenaries invaded southern Angola. In coordination with UNITA, based in southern Angola, the SADF rolled over MPLA forces on its way to Luanda. In northern Angola, there was a U.S. and Chinese-backed FNLA-Zairean offensive against the MPLA and the Cuban advisers that were already in Angola. This was the signal for the desperate MPLA to formally request "internationalist" Cuban military assistance.

Beginning in the spring of 1975, 230 Cuban military advisers started training MPLA troops. Thus, the Cuban military intervention in Angola, as official revisionist histories claim, was not in response to the South African invasion in October 1975,

¹⁴³ *The Origins of the Angolan Civil War: Foreign Intervention and Domestic Political Conflict*, by Fernando Andresen Guimaraes (2001), p. 156.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159

but to the MPLA's military and political weakness, and the danger that it would be defeated by the combined U.S.-supported forces of the FNLA and UNITA.¹⁴⁵

In November 1975, in preparation for the MPLA's declaration of independence, a battalion of elite Cuban troops was airlifted into Luanda to hold the capital for the MPLA. The Cuban expeditionary force under "Operation Carlota" soon reached a total of 10,000 troops. The intervention of the Soviet-supplied Cuban military forces assured the defeat of the FNLA and Zairean troops to the north, and the defeat of the South African forces to the south—and the victory of the MPLA.¹⁴⁶ In October 1976, President Neto traveled to Moscow, where he signed a 20 Year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, officially inducting Angola into the Soviet imperialist-led bloc, including the COMECON economic alliance.¹⁴⁷

According to all reports on the civil war, Cuban forces did most of the fighting, contradicting the claims of their MPLA allies.¹⁴⁸ The MPLA had always been a predominantly urban force, and since the early 1960s it opposed the line of protracted people's war based in the countryside in a predominantly rural country like Angola.¹⁴⁹

By the time the Angolan civil war was in full swing in 1975, the Chinese Foreign Ministry under Deng Xiaoping found itself pitted against the Soviet Union, as it wished. However, its support for the reactionary FNLA brought it into an alliance against the South African racist regime. This was a serious liability for China's political image in Africa and the Third World. In order to cut its losses, Deng cut off military aid to the FNLA and withdrew from the civil war as South African military units drove deep into Angola in late October 1975.¹⁵⁰

So what was the correct stand for Maoists to take on the Angolan civil war? In the U.S., the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist, which received an official political franchise from the transitional regime of Hua Guofeng in 1977, opposed the Soviet and Cuban military intervention in Angola as the "main danger." The CPML loyally followed the lead of *Peking Review* in August 1975, which claimed that "It is the Soviet social-imperialists themselves that have kindled the flames of war in

¹⁴⁵ James, pp. 54

¹⁴⁶ Guimaraes, p. 147

¹⁴⁷ James, p. 191.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148

¹⁴⁹ In 1982, an interesting revelation came from Brigadier General Rafael del Pino Diaz, who defected to the U.S. in 1987. Diaz, who was the highest-ranking official to defect from Cuba, estimated that Cuba had 10,000 soldiers lost, dead or wounded in Angola. With the rationale of the South African invasion in 1975 a distant memory, he said the war was "extremely unpopular" in Cuba. *Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹⁵⁰ Chinese military assistance to UNITA, another pro-Western Angolan "liberation" organization, resumed after Mao's death in 1976. In 1979, China airlifted 550 tons of weapons to UNITA bases inside Angola. *Ibid.*, p. 179.

Angola.”¹⁵¹ This application of Deng’s Three Worlds Theory to Angola brought China into an alliance with the U.S. imperialists and the “liberation” organizations they were supporting politically and militarily.

In contrast, the newly formed Revolutionary Communist Party USA, before it degenerated into a propaganda sect in the late 1970s, opposed the intervention of both the U.S. and Soviet imperialists and Zaire/FNLA/UNITA/South Africa on the one hand, and Soviet Union/Cuba/MPLA on the other, in this inter-imperialist civil war. The RCP raised the slogan “Superpowers Out of Angola,” with a particular focus on opposing the military intervention of the U.S. imperialists and their proxies in Angola. This was a basically correct position, particularly for communists carrying out internationalist political work in the U.S.

It is tempting to take the position that the “Angolan revolution” would have been defeated without massive Cuban military intervention against the South African interventionist forces. This does not take into account the possibility that self-reliant revolutionary forces, including Maoist forces, could have developed in Angola. Revolutionary forces in Angola could have waged a successful people’s war against South Africa, UNITA, FNLA and other U.S.-backed reactionary forces.

In order to target the MPLA and its Cuban and Soviet military backers, genuine revolutionary forces would have to assist the masses of Angolan people in the countryside and the cities to distinguish between pro-Soviet and Cuban revisionism, and genuine Maoist-led national liberation and socialism. As it turned out, the MPLA government installed by Cuban troops in Luanda joined the Soviet bloc economically, politically and militarily in 1976, achieving neither national liberation nor genuine socialism.

Today Angola is a Western and Chinese neo-colony that is dependent on oil exports to the international market. Imperialist China has stepped into the neo-colonial shoes of the Soviet Union and Cuba of the late 1970s and 1980s, employing the same rhetoric of providing “internationalist assistance to the Angolan people.” As of 2008, Angola became China’s second-largest trading partner, supplying China with 15% of its oil imports. Chinese investments, loans and aid to Angola, which are estimated from \$2 billion to \$9 billion, reinforce neo-colonial relations in Angola.¹⁵²

Chinese Recognition of the Zionist Settler State in Israel in 1975

In the Middle East, China's prior support for revolutionary movements was reversed. Chinese aid to revolutionary forces in the Gulf States was dropped in favor of diplomatic ties with Oman. Another sign of this reversal of Chinese foreign

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁵² *China Into Africa: Trade, Aid and Influence* (2008), “China and Africa: Engaging Postcolonial Interdependencies,” by Stephanie Ruff, p. 74. Neither China nor Angola have been forthcoming in providing statistics on their economic relationship.

policy was a speech by Foreign Minister Qiao Guanhua in 1975 in which he said that China was reconciled to the existence of the Zionist settler state of Israel as a "fait accompli."¹⁵³

Political Struggle Within the CCP over Foreign Policy in the 1970s

After Deng and Zhou developed and imposed their pro-imperialist Three Worlds Theory in the early 1970s, there were signs of sharp struggle in the CCP over foreign policy. At a Politburo meeting in October 1973, Jiang Qing and Deng locked horns over the policy of buying ships from the imperialist countries for China's merchant fleet. Jiang criticized this as an example of a "slavish comprador philosophy," and pointed to the *Fang Qing*, the first ocean-going cargo ship designed and built in China, as a symbol of Mao's policy of self-reliance and national independence.

When Wang spoke to a visiting Cambodian delegation in 1974, shortly before Deng's speech to the UN calling on Third World countries to "achieve national independence" through economic development and opening up their countries to imperialist investment, Wang called for continued support for revolutionary struggles and said that Mao had "recently" reminded them: "We are communists, and we must help the people; not to help the people would be to betray Marxism."¹⁵⁴

That year, articles in *Peking Review* and the theoretical journal *Red Flag* called attention to the revisionist line of "the liquidation of struggle against the imperialists, reactionaries and modern revisionists, and the reduction of assistance and support to the revolutionary struggles of the people of various countries."¹⁵⁵ This political line was being recycled from that advanced in 1962 by the followers of State Chairman Liu Shiaoqi in the International Liaison Department, the CCP department responsible for relations with foreign communist parties.¹⁵⁶

The development of a serious military threat to the People's Republic by the Soviet social-imperialists beginning in 1969, followed by Defense Minister Lin Biao's coup attempt in 1971 (and especially since Lin had been so closely associated with the Cultural Revolution), created a political vacuum for Premier Zhou Enlai to fill in both domestic and foreign policy. These developments strengthened the social base of pro-Western sections of the CCP leadership led by Zhou, who had given conditional support to Mao in the earlier phases of the Cultural Revolution, insisting that Zhou's rightist allies in the State Council be protected from political scrutiny.

¹⁵³ *The International Relations of the Palestine Liberation Organization*, ed. Norton and Greenberg, 1989, p. 152.

¹⁵⁴ "Speech at Peking Rally Welcoming Cambodian Guests," *Peking Review*, April 12, 1974, in *And Mao Makes Five*, ed. Raymond Lotta, 1980, p. 173.

¹⁵⁵ See Hung Yu, "History Develops in Spirals," *Peking Review*, October 25, 1974, in Lotta, p. 163.

¹⁵⁶ In the course of the Cultural Revolution, Liu was identified as "the No. 1 Capitalist Roader" in the CCP, followed by Party Secretary Deng as "No. 2 Capitalist Roader."

These developments made it possible for Zhou to bring back Deng as his Deputy Premier in 1973. Party Secretary Deng Xiaoping was stripped of power early in the Cultural Revolution, but was allowed to retain his party membership. This made it relatively easy for Zhou to bring Deng back from his internal exile. Deng continued to be an unrepentant opponent of the Cultural Revolution and an aggressive proponent of the pro-U.S. Three Worlds Theory.

This rightist offensive met with strong opposition from Mao and his four allies on the Politburo. They fought to maintain political and military support for revolutionary and national liberation movements in Vietnam, the Philippines, Palestine, Zimbabwe, South Africa and the Portuguese colonies in Africa.

The case of the Philippines is instructive. Even as China was normalizing political and trade relations with the Philippines, the CCP stepped up its support for the CPP-NPA. CPP and NPA members visited and received military and political training from the PLA in China.

In 1971, the Chinese provided 1,400 M-14 rifles and 8,000 rounds of ammunition in a ship sent from the Philippines by the CPP. Socialist China sent at least four ships containing small arms to the NPA in 1972 and 1974, but these shipments were mainly unsuccessful. One ship was intercepted and the other ran aground; only 200 rifles reached the NPA. Another two other ships were sent from China but were not able to make it to the Philippines as the AFP was on the lookout for these arms shipments from China.¹⁵⁷

Premier Zhou Enlai intervened more than once to limit the size and frequency of the CPP's delegations to China in the early 1970s. This was an indication of continuing struggle in the CCP over whether the "opening to the West" required cutting back support for revolutionary struggles such as that led by the CPP. In his leading position at the Foreign Ministry, and as part of his efforts to ingratiate China to the U.S. imperialists, Zhou assured Philippine Governor Benjamin Romules at a secret meeting in February 1972 that he was cutting off aid to the CPP-NPA. It is clear that Zhou did not completely control Chinese relations with the Philippines, since the revolutionary internationalist forces grouped around Mao and the Four were able to continue sending military aid to the CPP-NPA until at least 1974.¹⁵⁸

During this period, Mao's health declined rapidly, The mass campaigns that he had a hand in launching from 1973-1976 were focused on consolidating what had been won during the Cultural Revolution—and preparing the ground for future struggles

¹⁵⁷ "Recollections of Juanito Rivera," a founding member of the NPA, in *Bulatlat*, April 2-8, 2006. www.bulatlat.com

¹⁵⁸ *China in World Affairs: The Foreign Policy of the PRC Since 1970*, by Golam Choudhury (1982), p. 238.

to defeat revisionism and to stay on the socialist road. Significantly, it was only after Mao died in September 1976, and his supporters were arrested in October, that the revisionist leaders of China attempted to attribute the Three Worlds Theory to him.¹⁵⁹

Thus, there was a back and forth struggle over the conduct of foreign affairs in the CCP in the years before Mao's death, but it rarely came out into the open. For reasons that are not clear, Mao and his supporters did not launch a mass political campaign that explicitly opposed the direction that Deng and Zhou were taking foreign policy from 1973 to 1976.¹⁶⁰

The counter-revolutionary developments in Chinese foreign policy in the mid-1970s were a direct outgrowth of the program for capitalist restoration advanced by Zhou and Deng. This sharp reversal of China's political and military support for revolutionary movements worldwide during the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s¹⁶¹ threw many Maoist parties and organizations around the world into a tailspin, from which most never recovered.

Sison on the Three Worlds Theory

In "The Philippine Revolution" (1989) Sison described claims that the CPP understood the "Three Worlds Theory" as part of "the international united front against the United States and the Soviet Union." He described this theory as that of "promoting independence among the third world countries (comprising the overwhelming majority of countries) and relying mainly on them, encouraging the lesser capitalist countries to become independent and opposing the two superpowers as practitioners of hegemonism and as the main source of the danger of war." (pp. 179-180)

Here, Sison eclectically mixes up Deng's pro-U.S. imperialist Three Worlds Theory with Mao's incorrect but still mainly anti-imperialist "three worlds perspective." Sison claims that Deng's UN speech in 1974 was "an elaboration of the phrase 'countries want independence' in that complete slogan, 'peoples want revolution, nations want liberation and countries want independence.'" This slogan, of course, was Mao's, not Deng's, who wanted no part of struggles for national liberation and revolution (p. 180).

¹⁵⁹ See "Chairman Mao's Theory of the Differentiation of the Three Worlds is a Major Contribution to Marxism-Leninism," *People's Daily*, November 1, 1977.

¹⁶⁰ More in-depth investigation is needed into the terms of this struggle, and how the revolutionary and revisionist forces lined up during this period.

¹⁶¹ See pp. 24-31 of *Chinese Foreign Policy during the Maoist Era and its Lessons for Today*, by the MLM Revolutionary Study Group in the U.S. (2007). www.bannedthought.net.

Given the importance of the shifting international line of the Chinese Communist Party in the early and middle 1970s in sharp inner-party struggles between Maoist and revisionist forces, it is striking that Sison devoted just two paragraphs in one book to the Three Worlds Theory. He noted that the Chinese tried to send ships of weapons to the CPP-NPA in 1972 and 1974, but ignored the implications of Zhou Enlai's repeated attempts to cut off military aid and training to the CPP-NPA (which he was undoubtedly aware of as CPP Chairman), and the ability of the revolutionary Maoist forces in the CCP to maintain this aid up to 1974.

Sison also avoided analyzing the visit of U.S. puppet Marcos to Beijing in 1974 in the middle of martial law aimed at the CPP, NPA and their mass organizations. At the same time, the U.S. imperialists were undertaking a rapid expansion of the Philippines military from 50,000 to three times that number in the 1970s.¹⁶²

No political discussion and no summation is a surefire method to avoid taking a position on dividing line questions of international line for revolutionary Maoist forces. The CPP failed this test at that time, and it has never publically criticized its erroneous positions on the Three Worlds Theory.

Ultimately, Mao and the Four did not succeed in mobilizing the masses against Deng and the other capitalist roaders in the CCP leadership after 1973 to the degree that was needed, and which the earlier stages of the Cultural Revolution had accomplished. While Deng was toppled from power a second time in early 1976 by leftist forces in the party led by the Four, this came too little too late. It also came too close to the death of Mao in September 1976 for the Four to consolidate a stable and lasting anti-Deng and anti-revisionist coalition in the CCP, mass organizations, the people's militia and the PLA.¹⁶³

In spite of the fact that they were ultimately defeated, Mao and the Four's defense of the achievements of the Cultural Revolution and support for revolutionary forces around the world must be upheld politically. This became an even more important proletarian internationalist duty after the Four were arrested in a revisionist military coup in October 1976, carefully timed to occur after Mao's death in September. After quick show trials in televised kangaroo courts, the Four received harsh sentences of 20 years to life.

¹⁶² *Communism in South-East Asia*, by Justin van der Kroef (1980), p. 95.

¹⁶³ A thorough discussion of the complex path of the Cultural Revolution from 1966-1976--including its historic achievements, the considerable obstacles it faced and its political shortcomings--can be found in *Evaluating the Cultural Revolution in China and its Legacy for the Future*, by the MLM Revolutionary Study Group in the US (2007) at www.mlmsg.com.

7. Sison's and the CPP's View of the International Situation and International Work, including the International League for People's Struggles

In the section on the international situation of the CPP's message to the NPA on March 29, 2010, the CPP referred to the recent "full restoration of capitalism in several revisionist-ruled countries." This echoed Sison's writing on the subject. This recognition comes more than 50 years after the actual restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union in 1957 under Khrushchev, and in the People's Republic of China after 1976.

The CPP statement continued: "Having become a big debtor, the U.S. is vulnerable to efforts of China to adopt economic, trade and finance policies serving its national interest." Approving of the pursuit of the Chinese imperialists of their "national interest," the CPP statement obscured the massive export of billions in capital by Chinese state-owned enterprises and banks to Latin America, Africa, Asia and even to several crisis-ridden governments in the southern tier of the European Union. Instead the CPP statement refers in vague terms to China's "economic, trade and finance policies."

Even worse, the 2010 CPP statement stated: "Of long term importance to the Philippines are ASEAN-China economic relations as a departure from the sole dominance of U.S. imperialism in East Asia. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization can be a counterweight to U.S. hegemonism in the whole of Asia." The Shanghai Cooperation Organization has been dominated from its conception by the Chinese and Russian imperialists, but has never taken off politically and militarily due to competing imperialist conflicts between the Russian and Chinese governments.

This is an example of supporting a developing group of imperialists against the more powerful U.S.-dominated imperialist bloc, echoing the Comintern's United Front Against Imperialism of the 1930s and 1940s. It appears that the CPP views the U.S./Japan/NATO/Israeli imperialists as the main international enemies of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines, and they are looking for imperialist allies through a bourgeois nationalist instead of a revolutionary internationalist lens.

In this statement, the CPP correctly stated that the U.S.'s "military interventions in the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and South Asia are adversely affecting its overall dominance." However, it also claimed that "Certain countries have been asserting their national independence in East Asia, Latin America and Africa." This line is similar with Mao's eclectic slogan of "Countries Want Independence, Nations Want Liberation, and the People Want Revolution" from the early 1970s. The

difference is that in Sison's hands, "Nations Want Liberation" and especially "People Want Revolution" disappear.

This political line is the hallmark of Sison's writings on the international situation and his leadership of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS) since its founding in May 2001. Sison appears to be determined to remain the Chairman of ILPS indefinitely. The CPP may have given Sison control over the implementation of its international line and foreign policy, particularly through ILPS and the NDFP in the Netherlands.

Well beyond Sison and the CPP, sentiments are heard about the central importance of struggles for "national independence" against the U.S. imperialists. Today, this refers particularly to Iran, Syria, North Korea, Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador. Iran is a reactionary Islamic theocracy that executed 18,000 members of Maoist and anti-imperialist groups in 1988¹⁶⁴; Syria has been ruled by two generations of the al-Hassad dictatorship; state capitalist North Korea is currently ruled by a third generation of the neo-Confucian Kim dynasty; Cuba is a state capitalist country that is developing a large private capitalist sector with the help of foreign investors; and Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela are social-democracies that are grabbing the ancestral lands of indigenous peoples.

Putting aside the relative strength and thoroughness of these various bourgeois nationalist opponents of U.S. imperialism today, there is a widely held view that these governments, not people's movements, are the most important challenge to imperialism, particularly to U.S. imperialism. This is cause for some forces, including ILPS under Sison's leadership, to deny support for people's movements within these countries, especially Iran. With the U.S. imperialists and Israeli Zionists threatening to launch military attacks on the nuclear development sites of the Islamic Republic of Iran, it is essential to extend our solidarity to the Iranian people, not to the reactionary mullahs.

However, according to Sison, the U.S. "has made bellicose statements against Syria and Iran in order to frighten them into submission. It has demanded that they give up their anti-imperialist and pro-Palestinian position against Israeli occupation, and to cooperate in dismantling the Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Palestine."¹⁶⁵ To hold up the reactionary leaders of Iran and Syria as consistent

¹⁶⁴ "The Iran Tribunal and the Crimes of the Islamic Republic," November 14, 2012, <http://revolutionaryfrontlines.wordpress.com/2012/11/14/the-iran-tribunal-and-the-crimes-of-the-islamic-republic>

¹⁶⁵ "On the US as Most Rapacious and Violent Imperialist Power," reprinted in *US Terrorism & War in the Philippines*, edited by Fidel Agcaoili (2003), p. 118.

opponents of Israel is myopic. The economic and military aid that Iran and Syria give to Hezbollah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad is meant to give Iran and Syria political leverage in Lebanon and Gaza that they can trade off with the U.S. and Western imperialists. These groups do not have a political program that can lead to national and social liberation for the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.

Sison's Support for Chavez and Social-Democracy in Venezuela

In a statement dated March 3, 2013, Sison issued a statement in the name of ILPS conveying its "most heartfelt condolences over the demise of Comrade Hugo Chavez." Sison stated that "We honor Comrade Chavez for having upheld, defended and promoted national independence and socialism." Among other measures undertaken by Chavez, Sison mentioned the nationalization of the oil and other key industries, a program of land reform, and "greatly increased government funding for health care, education and housing and the significant reduction of poverty."

Chavez's populist social programs have been made possible by a rise in oil prices, which soared from \$10 per barrel in 1998, the year he took office, to between \$80-120 per barrel in recent years. The pattern that appears repeatedly in oil states like Venezuela, Iran, Iraq, Angola and Nigeria, which have made little or no effort to diversify their economies, is that social spending is highly dependent on the rise and fall of oil prices in the international market.

Thus the nationalized Venezuelan economy (in which oil workers have no power) is wrapped up from head to toe in the world imperialist system. This neo-colonial economic structure was not affected by Chavez' overheated "anti-imperialist" rhetoric. These countries in Latin America---even if led by social-democrats like Hugo Chavez, Evo Morales and Rafael Correa—are still caught in the web of imperialist economic relations. According to James Petras:

"Venezuela, Bolivia and the entire spectrum of social movements, trade union confederations, parties and fractions of parties do not call for the abolition of capitalism, the repudiation of the debt, the complete expropriation of U.S. or EEC banks or multinational corporations, or any rupture in relations with the U.S. For example, in Venezuela, private national and foreign banks earned over 30% rate of return in 2005-2006, foreign-owned oil companies reaped record profits between 2004-2006 and less than 1% of the biggest landed estates were fully expropriated and titles turned over to landless peasants. Capital-labor relations still operate in a framework heavily weighted on behalf of business and labor contractors who rely on subcontractors who continue to dominate hiring and firing in more than one half of the large enterprises. The Venezuelan military and police continue to arrest suspected Colombian guerrillas and turn them over to the Colombian police.

Venezuela and U.S.-client President Uribe of Colombia have signed several high-level security and economic co-operation agreements.”¹⁶⁶

While these countries may implement reforms—and even some features of a social welfare state with enough oil revenues or exports of valuable minerals—this is not a substitute for the development of a mass-based revolutionary movement. As history shows, this is the only pathway to new democratic revolution and socialism that can stand up to imperialist blackmail and aggression.

In Venezuela, the development of an anti-imperialist union in 2009 at a Mitsubishi assembly plant brought the workers into sharp conflict with both management and the pro-Chavez Labor Ministry. After 860 out of 883 workers decided to occupy the factory to protest the use of contract workers, local police opened fire, killing two workers. The Labor Minister told them that their sit-in was setting a “bad example” for other unions in state-owned factories, and was creating unfavorable conditions for investment by Japan and other imperialist countries. This forced the Mitsubishi workers to go back to work.¹⁶⁷ Chavez and his government officials who advocated “21st century socialism” have demonstrated that the repression of the working class by the Venezuelan state and multinationals corporations has not ended.

To take one of the sectors that Sison points to, Venezuela’s public hospitals are in poor conditions. According to a report by *The Economist* on September 29, 2012, “Poor wages and conditions have led thousands of doctors to abandon the public-health system for private clinics.... The doctors’ federation says that the country has only half the doctors it needs.” Faced with this public health crisis, Chavez has turned to Cuban doctors, not a program of building medical schools and training Venezuelan doctors and medical staff.

The Venezuelan government has pointed to high spending on health care through Barrio Adentro (Inside the Barrio), a mission set up by Cuban advisers in 2002 in exchange for cheap Venezuelan oil. According to doctors working in the program, at least a third of these Cuban-run clinics are closed. “If so, that would be an improvement on 2009, when Chavez himself admitted that about half were closed, and another quarter operated only half-time. His information, he said, came from his ally Fidel Castro: it is the Cuban medical mission, not the Venezuelan government, that keeps the books on Barrio Adentro.”¹⁶⁸ *The Economist*, a bourgeois British magazine, has its own political agenda, but these figures have not been refuted by the Venezuelan government.

¹⁶⁶ “U.S.-Latin American Relations: Measuring the Rise or Fall of U.S. Power,” November 1, 2006, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article15464.htm>.

¹⁶⁷ *Venezuela Speaks: Voices from the Grassroots*, by Martinez, Fox and Farrell (2010), pp. 113-123.

¹⁶⁸ *The Economist*, September 29, 2012.

Venezuela does not have much of an economy other than oil production. 96% of its export revenue comes from state-run Petroleos de Venezuela, up from 67% when Chavez took office in 1998.¹⁶⁹ Sison's statement omits the fact that most of Venezuela's oil exports still go to the U.S. Thus, American automobiles run on gasoline from Venezuelan crude in order to finance Chavez's "anti-imperialist Bolivarian revolution." In addition, under Chavez and his Foreign Minister, and now President, Nicolas Maduro, Venezuela has developed close ties with the reactionary regimes in Iran and Syria.

Sison also refers to "participatory councils" formed under Chavez's leadership. Chavez's United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), which includes the historically pro-Soviet Communist Party along with a number of "socialist" parties, dominates these councils and mainly uses them for electoral purposes. They have neither any power over government policy nor independent democratic power.

Disregarding Chavez's actual historical record, Sison "honors Comrade Chavez for having been an outstanding fighter against imperialism...and for having advocated socialism as the banner of the 21st century." In actuality, Venezuela under Chavez developed a populist form of social democracy fueled by oil profits from the U.S. and Western imperialist countries. If Sison believes that Chavez advocated "socialism," this raises the question, once again, of what Sison believes socialism consists of, and what he thinks it would look like in the Philippines.

Sison's final words point to the fact that ILPS under his leadership has been aggressively courting Chavez and the Venezuelan government, and the political direction that ILPS is going in general. "We are ever grateful for his [Chavez's—ed] high sense of international solidarity and for extending political and moral support to our League. We are determined to always support the Bolivarian Revolution and to stay in close alliance and cooperation with the Bolivarian revolutionary forces and people."

Bolivia under Evo Morales and Ecuador under Rafael Correa, the other two countries in the toothless ALBA economic federation along with Venezuela and Cuba, are oil-poor social-democracies that have not broken their economic ties with the Western imperialist countries and their neo-colonies. Bolivia and Ecuador are gravitating to the much stronger pro-U.S. imperialist economic alliance in South America [Mercosur] led by Brazil.

Bolivia and Ecuador have in common with Venezuela widespread attacks on their indigenous peoples (many of Venezuela's indigenous people are of African descent). These indigenous peoples are waging militant struggles to defend their ancestral lands that are rich in natural resources. In 2013, Ecuador's President Rafael Correa

¹⁶⁹ New York Times, October 6, 2012

announced the end of a 6-year program to keep oil companies from drilling in a pristine part of the Ecuadorean Amazon that is inhabited by indigenous peoples.¹⁷⁰

Bolivia's president, Evo Morales, despite his indigenous (highland Aymara) background, has developed close ties with resource-hungry Brazil to exploit natural gas and mineral deposits in Bolivia. Morales' attempt to build a road through lowland Amerindian territory with Brazil's financing and construction led to a 40 day march to the capital of three Amerindian peoples. In 2011, Morales sent in the police to arrest the marchers as they clutched bows and arrows. The marchers said that the road would lead to uncontrolled settlement, coca growing and felling of the forest.¹⁷¹ Morales also traveled to France and Spain to talk with international energy companies and to work out trade agreements with China.

Support for State-Private Capitalist Cuba by the NDFP/Netherlands

There are also political initiatives under way by the NDFP in the Netherlands to support the "Cuban Revolution" and the revisionist Cuban Communist Party led by Raul Castro. On July 26, 2013, Luis Jalandoni issued a "solidarity message" in which the "NDFP congratulated the Cuban people and government on the 60th Anniversary of the Moncada Attacks." This attack on July 26, 1953 carried out by 160 revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro failed, but it signaled the start of an anti-imperialist movement that eventually overthrew the U.S.-supported Batista dictatorship in January 1959. Jalandoni went on to hail the "victorious Cuban revolution that established a democratic government which asserted the national sovereignty of the Cuban people and government."

In this solidarity statement, Jalandoni glossed over the merger of Castro's July 26th Revolutionary Movement with the pro-Soviet reformist Popular Socialist Party in the early 1960s. This resulted in the establishment of a new neo-colonial country in Cuba under Soviet domination from 1965 until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Jalandoni claimed that "The victory of the Cuban Revolution ... meant militant solidarity support for the liberation struggles of other peoples. In Africa, Cuban fighters joined Angolan and Namibian revolutionaries in defeating the armed forces of the South African Apartheid regime." Jalandoni has revisionist political blinders on, supporting the role of 55,000 Cuban troops and their Soviet and East European

¹⁷⁰ The Economist, August 24, 2013.

¹⁷¹ The Economist, October 1, 2011.

advisers and heavy weaponry that brought the pro-Soviet MPLA of Angola to power in November 1975, and kept it in place until the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1991.

Jalandoni also ignored the Cuban government's shameful record of supporting the Dergue, the allegedly "socialist" but extremely repressive military dictatorship in Ethiopia led by Col. Mengistu. Beginning in 1977, Cuba sent over 20,000 troops to Ethiopia to repress the Eritrean independence movement, the just struggles of the oppressed nationalities within Ethiopia, and to support the Ethiopian regime's self-proclaimed "red terror" against opposition forces. In December 1978, the walls of Addis Ababa and provincial towns were plastered by posters with the unambiguous message, "Intensify Red Terror."¹⁷²

This was not "militant solidarity support for the liberation struggles of other peoples." Instead Cuba's mainly Black troops served as a more acceptable proxy military force in Africa than the European Soviet imperialist forces in bringing neo-colonial regimes to power under Soviet and Cuban domination.

In recent years, Cuba's state capitalist system has been accompanied by a rapidly growing private capitalist sector, similarly in many ways to China and Vietnam. The Chinese imperialists have become the second largest trade partner, after Venezuela, for the Cuban state capitalists. While he was visiting China in 2005, Raul Castro told his hosts that "it was truly encouraging to see everything you have done here." Ricardo Alarcon, President of the National Assembly, met with his Chinese counterparts in November 2010, and declared that "Cuba is prepared to take advantage of the development experience of China's reform and opening."¹⁷³ Alarcon had clearly studied the Chinese imperialist terms of art for "reform" (application of capitalist techniques to industry and agriculture) and "opening" (opening up the economy to foreign capital).

As a result of a "reform" package of 313 measures passed by the Sixth Communist Party Congress in 2011 under Raul Castro's leadership, over 400,000 Cubans now work in private enterprises. The private sector in the Cuban economy constitutes 17% of the workforce.¹⁷⁴ State enterprises are allowed to keep half of their post-tax profits.¹⁷⁵ This is an indicator of the extent to which open capitalist relations have penetrated into the Cuban economy.

¹⁷² *The Ethiopian Revolution*, by Fred Halliday and Maxine Molyneux (1981). pp. 122-123.

¹⁷³ www.cubaalamano.net/sitio/client/brief.php?id=8565, 26 Noviembre 2010; Cuba a la Mano, 20 Noviembre 20, 2010; *Cuba's Aborted Reform*, by Carmelo Mesa-Lago (2005), p. 35.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹⁷⁵ *The Economist*, July 20, 2013.

Opening Cuba to increased foreign penetration, Brazil is building a container port at Mariel, 25 miles west of Havana. This port will include a free trade zone featuring Brazilian pharmaceutical firms which will produce for export.¹⁷⁶ At a meeting in New York City with a group of Cuban-Americans, Cuba's Foreign Minister said that "Today the economic development of Cuba does not demand investments of \$100,000, \$200,000 or \$300,000." Rather he called for hundreds of millions of dollars to expand this Brazilian-built port.¹⁷⁷

In 2002, joint venture partnerships between the Cuban government and foreign capital accounted for nearly 50% of exported goods, and were especially important in mining, natural gas, telecommunications and rum. The Cuban government has also created a number of joint ventures with Canadian companies to exploit nickel deposits, Cuba's principal natural resource.

By 2005, 2.3 million Canadian and European tourists descended on Cuba annually. The burgeoning tourist industry was financed by joint ventures with Spanish and other imperialist joint enterprises. Their principal Cuban partner has been Gaviota, an arm of the Cuban military created to develop private enterprise.¹⁷⁸ While tourism has been lucrative for the Cuban government, it has also led to the growth of prostitution, inequality, street hustling and a black market created by a shortage of consumer goods. These are social ills that "the revolution" was supposed to have eradicated.¹⁷⁹

A growing injection of capital into the moribund Cuban economy has been foreign remittances, mainly from the U.S. In 2012, they reached \$2.3 billion a year, up from \$1 billion in 2004. These remittances feed racial inequality in Cuba. Since 92% of Cuban exiles are whites, Black Cubans receive from five to six times less in remittances in dollars than their white compatriots.¹⁸⁰ Another indication of the crisis in the economy is Cuba's debt, which in 2008 amounted to \$46 billion. This is the equivalent of 380% of the country's annual exports. The regional average in Latin America is 83%.¹⁸¹

Another defining feature of the Cuban economy is the steep decline of the agricultural sector. From 1989 to 2007, agricultural production fell from 10% to 4% of GDP. The Cuban government now imports 84% of its basic foods, and even then it is incapable of satisfying the basic needs of its people.

The production of sugar has fallen to such an extent that the Cuban government has to import sugar from Brazil and Colombia in order to fulfill its contractual

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ New York Times, November 20, 2012.

¹⁸² Farber, p. 290.

¹⁷⁹ *The Cuban Economy*, "An Introductory Analysis," ed. Dominguez, p. 7.; Farber, pp. 52, 68.

¹⁸⁰ New York Times, October 17, 2012; Farber, p. 181.

¹⁸¹ "La Veleta Economica Cubana," by Meso-Lago, pp. 51-52; Farber, p. 278.

obligations to the Chinese imperialists, who are the principal foreign consumer of Cuban sugar. Current government plans call for closing the Sugar Ministry and replacing it by a state-run corporation that allows foreign direct investment similar to current arrangements in the nickel industry (Cubanique).¹⁸²

Another important development in the Cuban economy has been the participation of the army in joint ventures with foreign capital, and the creation by high-ranking officers of their own enterprises.

Led now by Raul Castro, the Cuban Communist Party has claimed that it is providing free medical and education benefits to the Cuban people. However, what the Cuban government is actually providing to the Cuban people is similar to the levels of education and medical care in many Latin American countries.

Cuba's well-known "free" educational system has recently been the subject of steep cuts. In 2008, Raul Castro told the National Assembly, "What we need to root out definitively is the irresponsible attitude of consuming, with nobody—or a very few people—worrying how much it costs the country." With this guidance, the number of students in higher education dropped almost 50% from 2008 to 2011. These cuts have been jarring to Cubans who have taken a full, free education as a birthright.¹⁸³

Since 2003, medical care for the Cuban people has been seriously hurt by the government's export of a third of the country's doctors to other countries. By far the largest number of doctors are being sent to Venezuela, which in exchange sends oil to Cuba. This oil-for-doctors program has a particularly negative impact of Cuba's family doctor program. This considerably increases the patient-doctor ratio and the waiting time for specialized operations for Cuban patients. The armed forces and the political elite have their own medical systems, which provide higher quality care.¹⁸⁴

It is hard to know what the next target of NDFP and ILPS diplomacy will be. The main point is that Sison and possibly the CPP leadership are wedded to a political line of support for any imperialist government, reactionary government or political force that claims it is upholding its "national independence" against U.S. imperialism.

¹⁸²"La Veleta Economica Cubana," by Meso-Lago, pp. 36, 40; Reuters, "Cuba Sugar Ministry to be Shut.," pp. 62-63.

¹⁸³ New York Times, October 4, 2012.

¹⁸⁴ Espacio Laical, (Havana), 2009), interview of Carmelo Meso-Lago by Roberto Veiga Gonzalez, p. 62; Farber, pp. 74-75.

Sectarian Maneuvering and Expulsions from the International League of People's Struggles in 2008-2009

In 2008, Sison hatched a plan to send ILPS representatives to a "solidarity" meeting in Lebanon sponsored by Hezbollah, which is economically supported and armed by the reactionary regime in Iran. A long list of anti-U.S. but state capitalist governments and overtly reactionary political forces were slated to attend. The Indian, Turkish/Kurdish, Brazilian, Greek and several U.S. representatives to ILPS opposed Sison's plan. After a sharp struggle, Sison withdrew it.

This was a sign that Sison intended as Chairman of ILPS to take unilateral action in violation of an important political understanding reached when ILPS was formed in 2001. When any important political initiative was proposed, the representatives of all of the major communist forces would be consulted, and there would be an attempt to reach political unity.

In 2009, Sison wanted ILPS to support and help organize a conference in Greece of the CPP-led migrants group in Europe. Sison was relying on a Greek group, the Communist Organization of Greece (KOE), which was not a member of ILPS. KOE is a member of the social-democratic Syriza, and has gained a number of seats in Greece's Parliament based on Syriza's agenda. When the Greek Marxist-Leninists in ILPS refused to support this reformist conference, Sison called an emergency meeting of the members of ILPS from the Philippines and other countries, accused the Greek comrades of "sectarianism," and removed them from ILPS's leading body. The Indian, Brazilian, Turkish/Kurdish and other ILPS members supported the Greek comrades and left ILPS.

Today ILPS is a shell of its former self, and it has become a vehicle for Sison's statements with periodic international conferences that attempt to give the impression that actual anti-imperialist work is being done.