

A Basis for Discussion

Central Programmatic Questions of the Struggle for the Socialist Revolution and Communism



Gegen die Strömung (Against the Current)

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Foreword

The following document in its first part summarises in a compact form principal considerations about capitalism, imperialism and communism and about socialist revolution.¹ The second part then presents – also in a compact form – questions about the preparation for socialist revolution in Germany. Here too there is an extensive explanatory programmatic statement for more detailed study.² The principles of scientific communism didn't emerge out of thin air, they weren't simply thought up, but were developed from the study of the history of capitalism and of the class struggle. In order to underline this relationship, the last sections present an overview of the framework of our understanding both of the history of world imperialism and of worldwide class struggles, and of the history of German imperialism and of the class struggles against German imperialism.³

The aim of these abstracts is both to present our position in a clear, concise form and also to encourage and invite study of the extensive explanations in the “Programmatic Documents” (volumes No. 1 and 2) and in the “Fundamentals Documents” (volumes No. 3 and 4). The version of the “Central Programmatic Questions” presented here, together with the contents of volumes No. 1-4 will be submitted to discussion within ‘Gegen die Strömung’ (GDS) and its supporters, but also to other revolutionary groups oriented on communism. The results of these discussions will be presented in summary form in one year and incorporated into a future edition.

December 2016

1 Refer to volume No. 1 of “The Struggle for Communism” about “Basic Questions of the Struggle for the Socialist Revolution and Communism”.

2 Refer to volume No. 2 of “The Struggle for Communism” about “Basic Questions of the Preparation of the Socialist Revolution in Germany – Tasks and Challenges of the Struggle against German Imperialism.”

3 Refer to volumes No. 3 and No. 4 “The Struggle for Communism” where volume No. 3 is about “An Outline of the Development of World Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900 – 2010) – A First Overview and volume No. 4 is about “An Outline of the Development of German Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900 – 2010) – A First Overview”

Suggestions for reading:

- Volume No. 1: “The Struggle for Communism” about “Basic Questions of the Struggle for the Socialist Revolution and Communism”. (180 Pages, 8€)
- Volume No. 2: “The Struggle for Communism” about “Basic Questions of the Preparation of the Socialist Revolution in Germany – Tasks and Challenges of the Struggle against German Imperialism. (125 Pages, 5€)
- Volume No. 3: “An Outline of the Development of World Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900 – 2010) – A First Overview”. (245 Pages, 10€)
- Volume No. 4: “An Outline of the Development of German Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900 – 2010) – A First Overview”. (230 Pages, 10€)

Currently available only in German. Order: Literaturvertrieb Georgi Dimitroff, Postfach 102051, D-63020 Offenbach a.M. info@litvertriebdimitroff.de

I. The Struggle for Socialist Revolution and Communism

1. Why Scientific Communism?

For hundreds, indeed for thousands of years there have been utopian visions of a just life, free from exploitation and oppression. These utopian visions were built on idealistic thinking, on religion and pious wishes.

In contrast, Marx and Engels analysed the characteristics of human society by means of scientific evidence. A central result of this scientific analysis was that history (after the era of primeval communities in which no classes yet existed) is a history of class struggle arising from the development of the forces and relations of production. In each of the dominant forms of society (slave-owning, feudal and capitalist societies), those who produced things, the working and exploited class, developed into the driving force of history through a process of class struggle against the respective exploiting class. So history is not simply about the development of the productive forces as pseudo-Marxists claim in order to gloss over the irreconcilable class antagonism between bourgeoisie and proletariat and to deny the necessity of a revolution against capitalism.

Marx and Engels analysed above all the capitalist form of society, they drew out its characteristics, its laws of development and its contradictions in both the political and economic fields, and they conducted an analysis of the class struggles, first and foremost those of the proletarian class. In this, they didn't restrict their analysis to the current situation of their time.

The demonstrable conclusion arising from the development of capitalist society and its class struggles is that the proletarian class, after establishing its rule, must forcibly change the property relations of capitalist society; that the ever-expanding socialised character of production demands the socialised ownership of the means of production; that the victorious proletarian class must not just overthrow the old exploiting class, but, after smashing the old state apparatus, it must also act against the capitalist class and its allies, against all reactionaries, with a new state apparatus, the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to secure the

achievements of socialist democracy for the previously exploited masses, in order to reach, step by step, the clearly visible concrete preconditions for communism; that to achieve communism it's not just necessary to eradicate all concrete relations and conditions of exploitation, but also all reactionary ideas corresponding to these exploitative relations and serving their continuation or restoration.

Communism has developed from a utopia to a genuine science which encompasses the experiences, methods and goals of the class struggle of the proletariat for a successful proletarian revolution and for the struggle for communism.

2. Capitalism

Capitalism arose from two powerful and brutal historical developments.

Over 500 years ago, world trade and a predatory colonial system began to develop in conjunction with the expansion of commodity production, centred on several European nations. These ensured that, through fraud and deception but primarily through violence, theft and slavery, the populations of the colonies were plundered and whole sections of those populations were hunted down and murdered.

Through this, gigantic wealth piled up in the hands of the developing capitalist class, and this was decisive in the emergence of capitalism. With this wealth it was possible not just to build up an infrastructure (railways, roads, etc.) on a large scale, but it also provided the means to develop and construct large industrial plants using the newest technologies. Yet all of the collected stolen wealth wasn't enough to set industrial production in motion on its own. And it wasn't enough just to take over the workers, male and female, from small craft production: it was necessary to concentrate large masses of people in cities who were then driven into the factories through hardship and poverty. This was primarily achieved through the expulsion of a large part of the rural population, who then had to fight for their survival in the cities and factories.

The men and women workers are forced to sell their labour power to the capitalist class in order to live. The capitalist class, in possession of

the decisive means of production, buys their labour power which has become a commodity and sets about 'consuming' the labour power as intensively and for as long as possible: in other words, they set the labour power to work. Through their work in the factories of the capitalist class, the working class creates a surplus which is greater than the value required in order to produce (or reproduce) their own labour power under the specific concrete conditions of a society (this value is paid by the capitalists to the working class as wages). The surplus is appropriated by the capitalists free of charge.

This production of surplus value, capitalist exploitation, forms the cornerstone of the capitalist economy. It enables not just the luxuries enjoyed by the capitalist class, but above all allows the introduction of better means of production using new technologies on an ever greater scale in order to maximise profits and to succeed against capitalist competitors, and in order to advance mass production, producing ever more goods in an ever shorter time. Yet soon, this large mass of goods can no longer be sold. Why is this? The impoverishment of the proletarian class, formed and emerging on a worldwide scale, increases more and more, because the capitalist class forces down wages in order to increase the surplus value. Thus the expansion of capitalist production is unavoidably restricted by the limited consumption possibilities of the population. This is an ever-sharpening insoluble internal contradiction of capitalism worldwide. This is exactly what has led to - and still leads to - great crises.

The male and female workers in the factories are played off against each other through a sophisticated system of competition in order to put pressure on wages but above all to impede a united struggle. The capitalist class intensifies exploitation, there are large waves of redundancies and a large army of the unemployed is created. In short: the situation of the working class gets worse, it has to fight – and it fights.

In the tradition of the ruling classes of slaveholders and feudal lords, the existing state of the exploiters, the existing state apparatus, (above all the army, the police and other repressive organs) was systematically expanded. The bourgeois-capitalist state mobilises its powers against

the proletarian class internally; for the ruling capitalist class it is primarily an instrument of oppression and it was - and still is - an instrument for their wars of plunder. All of this is denied by reformist groups who seek to hide the necessity of an armed struggle to smash the bourgeois state apparatus.

At the same time an ever more powerful apparatus of manipulation came into being, piece by piece, which uses primarily the bourgeois ideology of exploitation in all of its variants in order to allegedly prove the senselessness of class struggles and in order to incite parts of the exploited population against each other: and all with the goal of breaking class struggles and to impede them wherever possible. A central theme of this deception is that bourgeois rights (that were originally fought for) have now been transformed into a “democracy for all”, whereby in reality this was - and is to this day - a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over all of the exploited. Through the mechanism of bourgeois parties and the bourgeois parliament, the illusion is created and fostered that all problems can be solved through elections within the framework of this bourgeois state, of this so-called “democracy”. At the time of the transition from capitalism to imperialism however, the revolutionary section of the proletarian class, under the leadership of proletarian parties, increasingly began to see through and combat this deception and to shake the strongholds of the bourgeois state. The revolutionary part of the proletarian class increasingly demanded the destruction of capitalism, the expropriation of the means of production of the capitalist class and the smashing of the old state apparatus. In order to prevent this, the ruling class showed that it can very quickly impose its open dictatorship (state of emergency, military dictatorship, fascism).

Through historical experience it became ever clearer that the goals of the struggle of the proletarian class can only be achieved through a violent armed revolution, and that, for the oppression of the overthrown capitalist class and for the organisation of socialist production free from exploitation, a genuine socialist democracy needs to be established and protected by a strong proletarian state, which will act dictatorially against counter-revolution.

3. Imperialism, the Highest and Final Stage of Capitalism, and the Proletarian Revolution

All of the important contradictions of capitalism grew more acute as capitalism developed further and capitalism entered a new stage, the stage of imperialism, the highest and final stage of capitalism. Despite all of the important specific features arising from this, the underlying characteristics and laws of capitalism are still present in imperialism.

The greatly expanded capitalist centres of production allowed and allow the establishment of monopolies in particular sectors and for a certain period of time - and thus the realisation of elevated profits through the fixing of higher prices which are not subject to competition. A monopolistic capital arose in which the capital from industry was fused with the capital of the existing banks and which in imperialism holds all of the vital branches of industry in its hands and which controls the vast majority of the wealth of society.

A large mass of commodities are increasingly exported, but above all capital is exported on a world scale. This exported capital was and is used to set up factories on a large scale across the globe and whole countries are made dependent and subordinated. The world is divided up amongst the newly-formed and internationally-operating monopoly capitalist groups using all means at their disposal – not just via economic means, but also through violence and through wars between the imperialistic Great Powers which have emerged in the meanwhile.

In imperialism there were no more new regions to conquer, for the world was already divided up between the strongest capitalist countries. The new distribution of the world between the imperialistic Great Powers is therefore only possible through waging war against imperialist rivals. The fight to distribute the world again thus becomes the fight for world domination between the strongest imperialist countries, the imperialistic Great Powers. That means war, regional wars and finally large imperial wars, world wars – if they aren't hindered by democratic forces or fully prevented by proletarian revolution. There is no "peaceful imperialism".

The existing great monopolistic capital uses the state apparatuses of

the imperialistic Great Powers not just to increase its profits and to oppress the proletarian class internally, but also to hold down and oppress the exploited masses fighting for liberation in those countries controlled by imperialism, and also to challenge for the regions and sources of profit of its imperial competitors. Small and normal profits were no longer enough for the large capitalists and these were rapidly absorbed by the owners of monopoly capital. In the struggle between the owners of monopoly capital, to win meant to achieve maximum profits, which above all came from the exploitation and plundering of the working masses of countries exploited by imperialism and which were secured primarily through the means of theft, mass murder and imperialist war.

The contrast between the misery and the enormous wealth in the world becomes ever clearer, but it also becomes increasingly clear that possible technical advances in production are being blocked, and what's more that existing and developing technical advances are not being applied in a way which could meet the needs of the mass of the population.

The class struggles of the proletarian class intensified and the imperialist bourgeoisie responded. Very systematically a small but relatively stable layer of the proletarian class (the so-called labour aristocracy) was bribed from the huge profits of great monopolistic capital so that they could be employed against the struggles of the proletarian class. The existence of this layer is contested by diverse revisionist and opportunist groupings. There were also concessions made to large sections of the proletarian class, mainly in the imperialist Great Powers, so that they would be bound to the bourgeoisie. Another of the manoeuvres used to divide the proletarian class is to use nationalism to whip up prejudice amongst workers, male and female, who have lived and worked longer in one country against those immigrant men and women workers arriving, looking for work and fleeing from wars and poverty in other countries. Proletarian solidarity and united struggle is the correct answer to this attempt to divide the class.

The imperial state organises reaction across the board. The promises of bourgeois democracy are increasingly broken, hard fought-for rights are increasingly rolled back and the imperialist state organises reaction-

ary mass movements dependent upon it. It's also possible for an open dictatorship to be suddenly set up (state of emergency, military dictatorship, fascism).

All of these measures are deemed necessary because the capitalist crises get worse on a world scale. Local imperialist wars increasingly arise out of these crises, which can lead towards a world war.

It became increasingly clear there was a potential developing to overthrow imperialism, so that imperialism was correctly identified as "moribund" capitalism, which has reached its highest and final stage. The contradictions in the imperial states between the capitalist class and the proletarian class become sharper, the fight against imperialism through liberation struggles and mass actions in countries dependant from imperialism intensifies, and at the same time the competition and antagonism between the great monopolistic capital of the different countries and alliances increases and these, despite peace treaties here and there, cannot live in peace with one another for long and fight to re-divide the world to their advantage by means of waging imperialist wars.

Under imperialism there is a great potential for the proletarian class in all countries, in the fight against all forms of the ideology of nationalism, to unite in a common struggle with the mass of the exploited and oppressed population in those countries controlled by imperialism - in Europe, primarily through the fight against European chauvinism. This is necessary because the forces of counter-revolution worldwide join together against revolutionary forces across the globe and don't just fight amongst themselves. Thus the forces of worldwide revolution stand in opposition to the worldwide counter-revolution.

It also becomes ever clearer that the process of world proletarian revolution takes a different course dependent on the very different developments in different countries, that there will be different stages of the revolution and that the revolutions will proceed with different speeds in different countries, so that the overthrow of capitalism may well be achieved initially in one or more individual countries. In these gigantic struggles it was and is a great challenge to identify the weaknesses of the international counter-revolution and to use them for our struggle. It

is important to exploit the contradictions between imperialisms in a way that does not result in supporting one imperialist side against the other, and to exploit the contradictions in a way that strengthens our struggle for the destruction of world imperialism as a whole.

The possibility of proletarian revolution exists, despite all of the difficulties. But the victory of the socialist revolution is not an automatism, it needs to be prepared, organised and carried out.

4. The Proletariat is the Only Really Consistently Revolutionary Class – On the Meaning and Danger of a Corrupted Layer in the Proletarian Class (the so-called Aristocracy of Labour)

The analysis of capitalism, including imperialism, and of the struggles against capitalism shows in many aspects the decisive role that is played by the industrial proletariat, concentrated in ever-growing factories and companies.

The class of the men and women workers is an international class. The proletarian class in each country has common class interests with the proletarian class of all countries and in essence leads one and the same struggle against the international bourgeoisie. That enables the creation of the unity of male and female workers of all nations in order to destroy capitalism worldwide and to construct communism.

The proletarian class is the force which produces surplus value and is the class without which the capitalist class cannot exist. But for the proletarian class itself, the capitalists as a class are completely superfluous.

Large-scale production as realised through the labour of the industrial proletariat contains the potential of production without the exploitation of one person by another.

When the proletarian class, concentrated in large-scale production and aided by its Communist Party, unites through its struggle for scientific communism, then it recognises that the task is not to “reign in the monopolies” or to reform capitalism as diverse groups of reformists, pseudo-Marxists and opportunists claim, but rather that the goals must be large-scale socialist production on the basis of social ownership of the

means of production and the construction of a proletarian state, and that it must fight for socialism as the first step towards communism.

In the proletarian class there are different layers, for example the industrial proletariat of the towns and cities and the proletariat in agricultural enterprises. The composition of the class changes over time. But above all there is the dangerous layer of the so-called aristocracy of labour in the workplaces and in the unions, which tries to nullify struggle and revolutionary developments wherever it can. But there is also a core of the proletarian class which is primarily composed of the lowest levels, of the most exploited and oppressed sections of the proletarian class.

This core, through their own experience and through the education of the Communist Party, through the discipline of the factory – which has not just an oppressive function, but which also schools the workers, male and female, in logic and discipline – and united through many large struggles, can develop the strength to become a pole of attraction for other more fragmented parts of the population, for the middle classes of the cities and rural areas, and to become a battle-hardened, well-grounded authority which can unite all struggles against capitalism and imperialism. This core, under the leadership of the Communist Party, can consciously and in an organised fashion support and where possible lead these struggles according to a united plan, to combine these partial struggles into the main struggle, the preparation and carrying out of the socialist revolution and to help clarify the goals for the time after the victory of the socialist revolution.

The struggle to win allies, especially amongst the petty-peasant workers, to win them as allies or to prevent them becoming enemies, is a fundamental struggle against the ruling class, which leaves no stone unturned in its attempts to win the rural and non-proletarian urban layers of the population – and even parts of the working class - for its reactionary politics, often for fascist mass movements. Thus the struggle for allies is also a life-and-death struggle, a struggle which will decide between victory and defeat, a struggle of immense drama and in certain situations of crucial importance.

5. The Communist Society: No Classes, No State, Each According to Their Abilities and Needs

The real goal of the proletarian class across the globe, and the answer to capitalism and imperialism, is communism. Communist society is essentially the opposite of capitalist society.

Communism means that the possibility of the exploitation of one person by another is removed, because the means of production really belong to the consciously united producers. Through the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production and the elimination of the private expropriation of socially-produced goods, social production - already widespread under capitalism - is, under communism, brought under the control and planning of genuinely equal members of society. Only in this way can exploitation be thoroughly eliminated, only in this way can production really become 'rational', that is, be organised and improved in the interest of the producers and of all people living in communist society, only in this way can the things we need to live be more easily produced, better apportioned and distributed according to needs - on the basis of a scientifically planned, organised and technically advanced society.

Communism means that the division of society into classes is ended. That means that the possibility to eliminate all types and forms of oppression and exploitation of people by people is created through the comprehensive social planning of production. So in communism there will be no more classes and states. State borders lose their meaning when nations no longer exist and will disappear. National differences will be set aside and all countries will merge into a worldwide communism. In the place of class struggles arises the voluntary unity of men and women workers worldwide. For the first time in history, humanity will consciously take control of its own development. The age-old humanistic and utopian idea of the unity of humanity across the globe will then have a material basis and will determine communist thoughts and deeds of humanity

Communism is the end of socially produced misery, the end of wars and mass murder and also the end of the absurd destruction and waste of forces of production and produce. Production, scientifically planned, is

oriented on the conscious needs of the people and not for profit. The development of technologies genuinely adapted to the people's needs will be decisive for the advancement of the economy, whereby both short- and long-term aspects (use of natural resources, health considerations, etc.) will be considered to the highest possible degree. People will no longer simply be appendages of technology but will be empowered to decide to apply (or not apply) technology appropriately and with dignity.

Communism means that people have freed themselves from all aspects of what Marx described as the “muck of ages” of capitalism and of all other exploitative societies, in a planned way, without their lives being ruled by any state machinery of oppression. This means that they are self-consciously organised as a “commune” and that all can express and develop their individual personalities in and through the collective. In the place of the various reactionary ways of thinking and exploitative ideologies, in communist society it will become part of the common understanding of humanity that our actions will be moral, humane and based on clear scientific insights, and that the communist morality now no longer has at its core the militant solidarity of the “wretched of the earth”, but that the communist ideal of liberated humanity really embraces all of the people in a classless, stateless, communist society.

Communism means that every person works according to his or her abilities and that these abilities improve and develop. And every person lives according to his or her needs, and that these also develop and expand. People both want and are capable of highly-skilled work and planning, and they will produce that which corresponds to their real, verified needs, and they will grasp and solve the problems that arise in an appropriate fashion. These are the characteristics of the highest stage of communist society, in which the slogan “From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs” becomes a reality.

6. Socialism, the First Phase of Communism, and the Necessity of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat until Communism

It's clear that a communist society with all of these characteristics cannot be constructed directly after the victory of the socialist revolution or

inside a few years.

After the victory of the socialist revolution, after the smashing of the old state apparatus, the proletariat builds a new state of its own with its army and security forces under the leadership of its Communist Party. In the first weeks and months directly after the victory of the proletarian revolution the main task is the disarming of the exploiting classes and their allies and the start of the expropriation of the capitalists, of occupying the command centres of the economy, of taking over the key centres of infrastructure and communication and the construction of a new administrative apparatus which can guarantee the provision of the population.

This new state of the proletariat, desired, built and supported by the majority of the population, has several parallel tasks from the start until the final victory, until the establishment of a communist society worldwide.

The first fundamental task, without the completion of which all of the successes of the socialist revolution would be lost, is not just to expropriate the exploiting classes, step by step, but to hold them down, to oppress them. Because although the political power of the bourgeoisie has been broken, its efforts to instigate counter-revolution and to restore its power will not stop for decades. They need to be fought and oppressed. Thus it is necessary to take up the fight against the danger (which will remain until communism is reached) that the dictatorship of the proletariat could be destroyed and the capitalist path resumed. This struggle must be led in the knowledge that the efforts of the counter-revolution, as history has shown, will be concentrated in organising military attacks on socialist countries and on the smashing (or the bourgeois-revisionist disintegration) of the Communist Party, which remains necessary until communism is reached. Central to this fight is the successful and large-scale recruitment and education of revolutionary “successors”, of young communist cadres from the generation which does not know of the class struggles under capitalist conditions out of their own experience. To prevent the reintroduction of capitalism it’s not enough to have the right line and the right politics, but needs also the successful recruitment of numerous followers, armed with the theory of scientific communism, who can continue the revolutionary struggle begun by the older generation

of proletarian revolutionaries, in order to guarantee that the dictatorship of the proletariat continues in the right direction. The importance of this question can be seen in the negative case, primarily through the transformation of the once socialist Soviet Union and of revolutionary China into capitalist countries.

If the dictatorship of the proletariat is destroyed and eliminated by the counter-revolution and the power of the bourgeoisie is re-established, then the task of the communist forces is to prepare and carry through a new socialist revolution.

The dictatorial side of the proletarian state, which is necessary and must be strengthened until communism has been reached, is so fundamental that Marx consciously described this state as the dictatorship of the proletariat, fully aware of the outcry that this term would trigger. The revisionist thesis of a “state of the whole people” which could allegedly be created after the building of socialism ignores the fact that even after the introduction of socialist relations of production and the destruction of the exploiting classes as economic classes, there will still be counter-revolutionary forces which need to be fought and held down by the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that the class struggle needs to be continued and intensified across all fields. This intensified class struggle is directed against the objectively existing remnants, powers and forces of the bourgeoisie which has been liquidated as an economic class, as well as against newly emerging bourgeois elements, unavoidable given the situation, which could become the nucleus for the restoration of capitalism.

Key to the correct understanding of the dictatorship of the proletariat is that the withering of the proletarian state is not the consequence of the weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but of its maximum strengthening.

This strengthening is not primarily via an expansion of the state apparatus. When every worker learns how to run the state and then runs that state, it becomes clear how strong and powerful such a state would be. For it is primarily the consciousness of rank and file masses which makes the state strong. And the state becomes stronger the more the men and women workers know, the more they are able to make decisions,

and the more they act consciously.

On the other hand in certain areas of the proletarian state, for example the army and the security organisations, the maximum strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat on the basis of an ever-closer connection with rank and file workers, men and women, would actually mean (at least for a certain period of time) the expansion and the strengthening of the army and the security organisations of the proletarian state, both in personnel and technically, in order to successfully lead the fight against internal and external counter-revolution.

Imperialism makes this problem much more critical. The remaining internal class enemies are closely linked with the international class enemy, and the class struggle against the internal enemy is part of the worldwide struggle to overthrow world imperialism. There is no room in the political analysis of the whole situation for the idea to allow the oppressive side of the state, the army and the security organisations, to “wither away”. The military victory of the socialist USSR over Nazi-fascism demonstrates the correctness of this approach.

These functions of the socialist state can only wither away when the dictatorship of the proletariat is won and secured on a world scale.

But it is precisely due these oppressive tasks of the socialist state that it must be clear to everyone that they must be accompanied by the raising of the consciousness of the soldiers and the ever-closer bonding of the army and the other security organisations with the rank-and-file workers, male and female, – otherwise there is the very real danger of a revisionist police dictatorship, as the repellent images of police states in the pseudo-socialist states such as East Germany or the Soviet Union of the 60s, 70s and 80s clearly illustrate.

Yet the proletarian state cannot fulfil the task of the suppression of counter-revolution if it isn't deeply democratic, where both the proletariat and its allies are fully equipped with all their democratic rights as they set about what is termed the construction of socialism: the removal of the capitalist “muck” as Marx described it in all fields and the building and expansion of socialist relations of production, that is, the expansion of the social ownership of the means of production on an ever-great-

er scale, until finally all areas of social production are socially owned.

The exercising of the dictatorship over the counter-revolution is strongly linked with the development of socialist democracy, with the expansion of the self-activity and of the democratically organised activity of the mass of the working population under the leadership of the proletariat.

The more democratically organised the proletarian class is, the broader the participation of its allies in the essential task of the suppression of counter-revolution; and the more self-aware the proletarian class is, the more powerfully the general struggle against the exploiters and against the counter-revolution on all fronts can be driven forward and intensified.

The proletarian class does not strengthen its dictatorship against the counter-revolution alone, but in alliance with the other previously exploited and oppressed sections of the working population. In this alliance, the proletarian class takes the lead and asserts its class interests. It draws its allies ever-closer by persuasion and through their own experiences.

The socialist democracy does not just arise and develop in the struggle against counter-revolution, but also in a continuous struggle against the apparatus that it built for itself. It is a struggle against bureaucracy, directed against self-important and careerist bureaucrats. The goal is to ensure in the best way that the broad masses of men and women workers, through access to education and through creating transparency, are in a position to educate themselves, to judge decisions, to develop own suggestions, plans and initiatives and to run their own revolutionary state. There should be a maximum of criticism and self-criticism “from below” and a maximum of accountability. The ability to immediately recall elected representatives of the working class, who are responsible for the carrying out the decisions made and who must be accountable to their electorate, must be enforced, and the payment of those tasked with the administration of the state should be a wage that corresponds to that of a skilled worker, an important measure against careerism. All of these measures are indicators of the level of mobilisation of the working masses and for their participation in the running of the state; they are characteristics of socialist democracy.

Thus the development of socialist democracy is based on the raising of

the consciousness and the activity of the masses through the ever-greater participation of the broad mass of the workers, male and female, in the concrete administration and leadership of their state in ever-more areas. An important characteristic of socialist democracy is whether in times of heightened class struggle these cultural-revolutionary aspects, the active participation of roundly-educated and informed men and women workers, is encouraged and expanded or not.

7. The Fundamental Road of Socialist Revolution for Winning of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Communism

Communists fight for the abolition of exploitation and oppression, of war and violence. The goal of our struggle is communism, more explicitly: world communism, in which there are no more wars, no more classes and no more states. At first sight it can seem a contradiction when we say that on the road to a communist society without weapons, the weapons of the class enemy - in particular their army and police - need to be smashed and destroyed in an armed struggle. In other words, the conditions faced by communists and with which they must deal with in their struggle are fundamentally different to the world-historic goal of their fight.

As a result of these conditions, the application of mass revolutionary armed struggle is necessary primarily for three reasons:

1. The realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the goal of communism demand the forcible revolution of the conscious, organised majority of the proletarian class, the smashing of the bourgeois state apparatus (especially the bourgeois army and police, but also the civil service apparatus, the courts, parliament, etc.) from top to bottom through the armed struggle of the proletarian class and its allies. The capitalist exploiters will not voluntarily leave the stage, but will use their apparatus of violence and terror to defend their exploiters' paradise. Thus the formation of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a peaceful "conquest" of the intact bourgeois state machine on the way to winning a majority in parliament. The theory of the "peaceful road" or the "possibility of the peaceful road" is reformism and a central tenet of the ideol-

ogy of revisionism, of opportunism cloaked as “Marxism”; it is a counter-revolutionary position which needs to be decisively fought and destroyed in all its forms.

2. Only via this route, through the application of armed revolutionary force against their oppressors will the majority of the working class rid themselves of their illusions, but also their subservience, indifference and humiliation, and in this way they become capable of building a new society without exploitation.

3. This revolutionary violence will always be an armed confrontation between the majority of the exploited, oppressed men and women workers – led by the majority of the proletarian class – with the defenders and helpers of the exploiting classes, whereby a minority of the incited population can and will fight on the side of the exploiters. It is never a fight between 99 percent and 1 percent. The majority of the population must defeat the not insignificant minority in armed struggle. In this struggle the basic elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat are developed, the proletarian state, which will later be set up.

The analysis of all of the experiences of revolutionary armed struggle, the study and the evaluation of the methods and tactics of the counter-revolution, the organisational support of spontaneous violent and armed conflicts as well as the initiation of armed struggle long before the immediate overthrow of the bourgeoisie, organised and led by communist forces – all of this is a precondition in order to be able to systematically, scientifically plan the preparation and active execution of armed struggles up to the precise determination of things such as the timing of an armed uprising to overthrow the bourgeoisie when a revolutionary situation exists, and to achieve the victory of the socialist revolution through the armed struggle of the majority of the proletarian class and the allied working masses.

In order to win the support of the majority of non-proletarian layers of the population to the socialist revolution and to neutralise parts of these layers, it is the main task of the proletarian class to explain the goals of the revolution and of communism, but also to fight for economic improvements and for democratic rights in the numerous, just daily strug-

gles, to explain and to educate on how - in contrast with the situation under capitalism - the economic and democratic interests of the workers, men and women, can be realised under socialism and then in a communist society. These struggles also prepare the majority of the proletarian class, but also its allies, for addressing the economic questions, for taking over production after the victory of the revolution and for the development of socialist democracy. The alliance, necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution, between the majority of the proletarian class with the mass of the other working and exploited masses, is prepared and forged in these struggles. Thus the daily struggles under capitalism, in which the opportunists and their politics of preventing or choking really radical democratic struggle, their politics of reformism and nationalism need to be fought, these daily struggles, with correct explanation and analysis, become struggles for the preparation and carrying out of socialist revolution in our “own” country.

8. On the Necessity of a Communist Party and the Struggle against Opportunism and Revisionism

When the term ‘Communist Party’ is used these days, it’s often the case that the vast majority of the youth who identify themselves as revolutionary often turn away with understandable disgust, because they relate it to the reactionary, chauvinistic and authoritarian pseudo-communist parties, for example the revisionist Communist Party of the Soviet Union or the East German Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) of the 60s, 70s and 80s. Clearly it’s not enough to make propaganda about the necessity of a Communist Party. Much more important, but also more difficult, is the work of convincing them, by making connections to the lessons learned from the struggles of today, and making clear the reasons why a Communist Party needs to be built.

A genuine Communist Party is necessary for a number of reasons, as is clear (and will become clear) from the history of the class struggle.

With all due respect for the wealth of spontaneously arising class struggles and armed class conflicts, whatever form it takes, the just struggle of the proletarian class left alone leads to the dominance of bourgeois

ideology inside the proletarian class, despite the readiness to make sacrifices and all of the often incredible exertions.

It is the task of the Communist Party to carry the ideas of scientific communism to the proletarian class together with a sound analysis of the international situation and of all classes and layers in its “own” country, their relations to each other and to the bourgeois state, because proletarian class consciousness does not emerge spontaneously.

The proletarian class must and will learn that a solid organisation is necessary to combat the terror of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois demagoguery, spread in the most diverse variants and forms through a gigantic ideological apparatus. This organisation leads the revolutionary struggle for socialist revolution with scientific methods and precise knowledge of the consciousness and feelings of our own class and its allies.

So the primary characteristics of a Communist Party are argumentation and justification, scientific logic and scientific research. These are not things that can be achieved spontaneously. It’s necessary to have a solid grounding in scientific communism in order to lack principles or to act in an abstract way that doesn’t connect with reality.

For this it is necessary to understand the theory of scientific communism so that, through planned, organised scientific work, bourgeois ideology and above all the ideology of revisionism - that opportunism disguised as “Marxism” which remains the main danger on the theoretical plane - can be seen through, fought, demolished and neutralised for future struggles. For this it is necessary to expose everywhere the reality of capitalism, to create a program of struggle for socialist revolution in our “own” country and to critically analyse and learn lessons from the worldwide struggles of the proletarian class and its allies for our own struggle, working together with communist groups in other countries.

On this basis the Communist Party utilises the experiences of the proletarian class and carries proletarian class consciousness into its struggles. It connects theory with practice and, through both agitation and propaganda and carrying out its own actions, it creates the necessary consciousness and organisation of the majority of the proletarian class.

The class struggle itself requires an organisation characterised by great

dependability and by the strong, conscious discipline of its membership. It needs an organisation with a leading centre which discusses both inside and outside its own ranks and which learns and learns again. An organisation which is strengthened through the struggles within the party by carrying out conscious criticism and self-criticism in order to expose and eliminate mistakes as well as, when necessary, the expulsion of opportunist groupings when the method of criticism and self-criticism doesn't resolve differences over fundamental questions.

What then characterises a Communist Party which can lead, convince and organise in concrete struggles and which can win the victory of the socialist revolution through the planning, preparation and successful leadership of the armed struggle of the majority of the proletarian class and its allies?

It needs the combination of a clear theory and a convincing programme together with dependable and conscious cadres who combine the strongest empathy and a deep inner connection with the “wretched of the earth”, with the struggling sections of the world proletariat, with scientifically based conviction of the theory of scientific communism.

The responsible, independent thought and actions of these cadres are an essential criterion for whether it is really a communist cadre or not. The question of “why” in the struggle against blind obedience, the growth and development of a well-rounded, competent communist personality which can both independently and collectively work and fight, which can responsibly carry out those tasks it has taken on without lapsing into narrow thinking but instead sees the big picture, which learns to struggle “against the stream” and to correct its own mistakes at the root through criticism and self-criticism – these are the essential factors in the struggle against imperialism, opportunism and revisionism which really make the communist cadre and thereby also the Communist Party into a genuine role model and to a leadership of all of the developing revolutionary struggles that is both unassuming and determined.

It requires a tightly-knit organisation which is a master of underground work but does not neglect legal activity, and which regards this conspiratorial work as a fixed component, as the basis of its organisational work,

and is thus well able to withstand the blows of the class enemy.

An organisation which is able to guide actions and class struggles across the whole country so that the majority of the proletarian class can attack and destroy the centres of power of the ruling class with a decisive, pivotal effort.

Such a Communist Party is a part of the proletarian class and indivisible from it. This relationship is expressed in particular through the way that the Communist Party doesn't just lead, guide and convince, but also regularly and systematically presents and gives an account of its work and development to its supporters and to the proletarian class, in order to learn as much as possible from the criticism, initiatives and ideas from the ranks of the proletarian class and its allies.

And what is to be done if the communist centre becomes an opportunist centre and begins to falsify the political line of the party and of scientific communism, in other words, if the party leadership becomes revisionist? A wrong party line and a party centre no longer oriented on scientific communism will result in the conscious forces in the Communist Party leading a struggle using the methods of struggle of criticism and self-criticism, of inner-party struggle and of convincing, solidarity-based analysis. They will thoroughly examine whether such a struggle is possible or not, and if necessary they can convincingly document and conclude that the process of the transformation of the formerly communist organisation is already so far advanced that the communist forces can only resume the task of building a genuinely Communist Party through splitting away. At that point it is necessary to break from the formal party discipline, to act "against the stream", even if this would mean expulsion from the party or even death.

It has been shown and will be shown again: without a Communist Party there can be no successful socialist revolution. Therefore the # 1 task for all genuinely communist forces in Germany and in all countries across the world is the building and strengthening of a genuine Communist Party.

II. Preparation of the Socialist Revolution in Germany

Germany is a highly-industrialised, capitalist-imperialist country. The next goal for the revolutionary movement of the proletarian class in Germany is to carry out a socialist revolution and the immediate installation of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

German imperialism is the main enemy of the socialist revolution in Germany because it holds the political, military and economic power in its hands. It is the main enemy of the socialist revolution above all because its state apparatus (especially its armed forces such as the army and police) must be smashed through the armed struggle of the majority of the proletarian class and its allies in order to overthrow capitalism.

The main elements of the preparation of the socialist revolution are: The fight against bourgeois ideology, and the political and organisational preparation of the armed struggle to smash the bourgeois state apparatus in Germany and the installation of socialist democracy, which needs to be protected by a strong dictatorship of the proletariat. The majority of the proletarian class needs to be convinced that, immediately after the victory of the revolution, the commanding heights of the economy must be expropriated and placed in the hands of the proletarian class; that all areas of social and economic life also of cultural life need to be planned and organised in terms of the proletarian class, and to prevent counter-revolution. The more realistic the perspective of socialist revolution becomes, the more the Communist Party will precisely present and discuss all of these measures and the next steps in the light of the concrete situation in order to wage the struggle to break the power of the bourgeoisie across all fields. This struggle will be fought by the majority of the proletarian class and its allies, with the Communist Party at its head. This is the road to building socialism, the road to the struggle for communism in Germany, arm-in-arm with the proletarians of all nations.

To really move closer to these goals in the real world we need to proceed from a concrete analysis, today and in the next years and decades, of the current low level of class consciousness of the different sections of the proletarian class and its allies, in order to break their ties to the bourgeoisie.

Proletarian internationalism, a precondition for the socialist revolution in Germany, also means a fight for worldwide communism, a fight against European chauvinism and a fight against German nationalism.

The first crucial precondition for the preparation of the socialist revolution in Germany is to pay increased attention to all of the struggles against imperialism, against reactionary regimes and reactionary wars taking place across the globe. It's necessary to develop a sense of solidarity and to organise concrete acts of solidarity for all of those involved in these struggles, as the perspective of a socialist revolution in every country is inseparable with the struggle for worldwide communism. Imperialism is a worldwide system which can only be finally destroyed by the proletariat of all nations through the victory of world communism.

In order to restrain the proletarian class from acts of worldwide solidarity and to chain it to the bourgeoisie, the imperialists of all European countries foment fantasies of superiority over the "rest of the world". It's a special task to declare war on this European chauvinism, on this historically formed arrogance of "Europeans", especially in Germany with all of its special characteristics. It's necessary to systematically expose the history of colonialism, of neocolonialism and the exploitation and oppression of the non-European countries by the European imperialists and in this way to propagate the idea of the solidarity of the proletarian class across the globe and to organise the solidarity of all of the "wretched of the earth" far beyond the borders of Europe.

The most important and difficult part in the struggle for the preparation of the socialist revolution in Germany was, is and remains the fight against German nationalism in all of its forms, against its central slogan of "being proud to be a German" and against the ideology, built on German nationalism and German racism, of the German "master race". German nationalism in all of its forms is the most potent ideological weapon of the German bourgeoisie and of German imperialism in suppressing and dividing the democratic and revolutionary movements in Germany, and, as history has shown, in organising pro-imperialist mass movements and in nullifying progress made on the road to the preparation of the socialist revolution. German nationalism is directed not just

against people in other countries but also against people in Germany and is closely connected to the falsification of history in Germany and the covering-up of the crimes of German imperialism.

The preparation of the socialist revolution cannot advance a single millimetre without a decisive struggle against German nationalism in all of the developing and the current economic and democratic struggles of the day.

Next to the goal of the overthrow of the rule of capital and finally its complete expropriation here in Germany, it is also part of the unmistakably clear programmatic statement of the proletarian revolution in Germany that all of the capital of German companies operating in other countries belongs to the workers, men and women, and the exploited masses of those nations.

The following aspects of revolutionary policy in the coming daily struggles that will be organised all serve the goal of breaking the authority of the bourgeoisie and the real preparation of the socialist revolution. The following goals of the struggle are in the first instance simply questions of social justice and democratic principles. These are the first steps in the fight against German imperialism as it exists today and as it presents itself to the world.

1. The Fight against German Imperialism as an Imperialist Great Power

International Solidarity in the Fight against German Imperialism

The task of international solidarity relates not just generally to those struggling against imperialism and injustice across the whole globe, but wins particular force here in Germany only when the struggle is directed against the crimes, the exploitation and the oppression by German imperialism worldwide. It is necessary to expose the real actions and plans of German imperialism, an imperialist Great Power, and in practice to support and organise actions in Germany and supportive actions in other countries in the tradition of the International Brigades in during the Civil War in Spain after 1936. This also means to concretely orga-

nise as a priority the support of precisely the revolutionary movements in those countries dominated by German imperialism.

This all-embracing struggle for international solidarity is not just of practical importance but is also a crucial point in the development of the consciousness of the majority of the proletarian class in Germany, for this solidarity is the decisive antidote to German nationalism.

The men and women workers, the working and exploited masses in Germany carry part of the responsibility for the crimes of German imperialism and to a large extent are also jointly guilty of those crimes. Therefore it is a task of the preparation of the socialist revolution to develop a consciousness such that after the overthrow of the bourgeoisie it will be possible to deliver the greatest possible compensation for the crimes committed under the rule of the exploiting class. Without delivering on this obligation, it's impossible to think of a proletarian-internationalist relationship with the mass of the population in those countries assaulted by the murder and exploitation of German imperialism.

Antimilitarist and Antirevanchist Struggle, the Struggle against Imperialist War

In the work of solidarity with the worldwide struggle against imperialist wars, the focus in Germany must be on the exposing and opposing of German imperialism, its army and its crimes. In this, it is crucial to expose and fight against the ideology and politics of revenge after defeat in two world wars, that is, revanchism and the unbroken tradition of German imperialism. German imperialism today is essentially the same imperialism which triggered the First World War, the same imperialism which, in the Second World War, carried out the greatest crimes yet in world history in the state-planned and organised, industrially executed genocide against the Jewish population, and against the Cinti and Roma peoples. In Germany it is also necessary to fight unwaveringly and without concessions against the mentality of German militarism, which radiates from the army into all sections of society.

The struggle against the war preparations of German imperialism, against its current war operations abroad, against revanchism and mil-

itarism with precise knowledge of the various revanchist plans against various countries around the globe as well as the struggle against the ideological and political justifications for imperialist wars are a precondition for stopping German imperialism being able to rope in a broad mass of the population for its goals of world domination. On the contrary, it can lead to ever-greater sections of the population in Germany, primarily the proletarian class, themselves declaring war on the revanchist war politics of German imperialism.

Without abdicating on the struggle inside of the German army (the Bundeswehr), it is crucial for the core of the Bundeswehr, its elite units, to be combatted and attacked from outside, to make it more difficult or to prevent imperialist wars of aggression.

In this it is important not to fall into the trap of bourgeois legality. It's necessary to carefully prepare in a timely manner for the illegal struggle, especially as preparation against large-scale fascist attacks, without neglecting the maximum-possible usage and organisation of all legal methods of struggle.

As part of showing solidarity with the struggle against militarism of the exploited and labouring masses worldwide, in times of imperialist wars it's necessary to use the conditions arising during the war in order to unwaveringly pursue the line that "The main enemy is at home!" (Karl Liebknecht), the goal of overthrowing the ruling class in our own country, the politics of turning the imperialist war into a mass armed struggle against this main enemy.

2. Economic Struggles, the Fight against Moves towards Fascism and the Danger of an Open Dictatorship

Daily Struggles against Intensified Exploitation and Increasing Impoverishment

The capitalist economic order in Germany intensifies exploitation and oppression in the workplace and worsens social conditions across many fields, not just for the proletarian class. However, justified economic fights, day-to-day struggles cannot develop in breadth or depth if the

ideology of the welfare state - and above all the superstitious belief in the state with all its German peculiarities - is not relentlessly exposed and fought.

The solidarity between employed and unemployed, including the millions forced to live under “illegal” conditions or those gagged and bound in the Hartz-IV system, is of special importance here.

In this struggle there can be no progress without recognising and fighting against the mechanisms of the bribery and social preferential treatment of individual sections of the proletarian class.

In Germany, German imperialism was able – precisely through the plundering of other countries - to bind to itself a small but relatively stable layer inside the proletarian class, the so-called aristocracy of labour, which holds in its hands the trade union apparatus.

One of our tasks is to recognise and fight, point by point and unremittingly, against the whole demagoguery and treacherous politics of the leadership of the trade unions and their apparatus as a crucial barrier to the development of struggle. The day-to-day economic struggles are directed not just against the exploitation in the workplace, but are necessary across all fields where the working and living conditions of the proletarian class and its potential allies are deteriorating. It's necessary to support and organise all struggles for an improvement in the conditions of the proletarian class and the majority of those working in the cities and in rural areas. These struggles serve the preparation for the socialist revolution when the fighting strength, the willingness to fight and the solidarity of the proletarian class are strengthened, when in these struggles the indispensable precondition for the united struggle with allies of the proletarian class from other layers, especially the small farmers, is created, when mutual trust can be built and cemented, and the crucial role of the proletarian class as the leading force in the joint struggles can be established, step by step. In all of this it is crucial to be guided by the principle of focussing on those at the bottom, the most exploited and oppressed parts of the proletarian class.

The Fight against Creeping State Fascism, Against Nazi Terror and For Democratic Rights

A crucial political battlefield is the increased rolling-back of various democratic rights. The Hartz-IV system, a huge step in the tendency of the state towards fascism, shows exactly how the day-to-day economic struggles and the fight against fascist tendencies in the state need to be connected with each other. The key point here is that the necessary fight against the Nazi-movement on the streets and its supporters cannot be counterposed to the fight against Nazis in the heart of the state apparatus and against the general fight against fascist tendencies in the state. Although - correctly and understandably in the light of the burning of refugee accommodation and a mass of murderous actions of the Nazis - the fight against the Nazis is an fundamental precondition, it is nevertheless necessary to expose the numerous variants of the tendency to fascism in the state – from the intensification of the murderous state deportation and segregation policies to the police-state surveillance, arrest and imprisonment of democratic and revolutionary forces - and to organise and lead the fight against this with all our strength. The greatest dimension of reactionary terror is today due to these moves towards a fascist state.

The Struggle against the Danger of a State of Emergency, Military Dictatorship and Fascist Dictatorship

It would be a fatal mistake to not see the danger that German imperialism is clearly capable of pushing to one side the bourgeois-democratic facade and establishing an open dictatorship even in a short period of time, whether by the declaration of a state of emergency (the Emergency Act) or by the establishment of a military or fascist dictatorship. It's the job of the Communist Party to prepare itself and all democratic and revolutionary forces well for such a possibility, both politically and organisationally, in order not to be taken by surprise and smashed.

3. The Fight against “Divide and Rule” as a Precondition for a Victorious Socialist Revolution

A huge task in the struggle for communism and in the preparation for

socialist revolution is the fight against the centuries-old, millennia-old oppression and exploitation of the vast majority of women, and generally against all discrimination against women.

A realistic assessment of the situation of women, which reflects the fact that in the context misogyny in Germany every year hundreds of women are murdered, tens of thousands of cases of rape and abuse take place, mass sexist propaganda is a daily fact of life and an oppressive atmosphere exists in factories and various workplaces, must be seen by the Communist Party as a crucial, indispensable part of its struggle, if it is to be able to take up the fight against this special oppression of women.

Here too it is necessary to connect the democratic tasks with the fight for women's liberation in communism as a fundamental perspective, and to lead the struggle against all variants and forms of sexist discrimination, persecution and oppression.

That also applies to the group of same-sex oriented people, who were brutally persecuted in the Nazi era (primarily male homosexuals), but also smaller groups such as those who do not totally – if at all – identify with the gender role assigned to them on the basis of the external sexual attributes with which they were born.

Jews, Sinti, Romanies and people with disabilities (these groups were main targets of the systematic mass murder of the Nazis) are also today the targets of hate campaigns in Germany.

But such campaigns of hatred are not just directed against these groups but also against other groups which are pilloried and attacked with various hate-filled justifications: migrants and their children and grandchildren, refugees, the Muslim population, people threatened by the ideology of the “white master race”, the Sorb minority, and other groups.

In the last few years, German imperialism and its various departments have massively increased their nationalist and racist agitation as well as their discriminatory and repressive policies using German “master race” ideology and German-nationalist and racist arrogance.

The hate-campaigns of German imperialism are combined in various ways and are continually newly constructed. They can be quickly turned

on and off or directed at different target groups with great speed by the media apparatus. In this German imperialism is using the technique of “divide and rule” with the aim of undermining and smashing legitimate struggles, of pre-emptively binding large parts of the population to the ruling class, to draw them into activities of the “master race” and to brutalise those drawn in. This is also part of the war preparations of German imperialism.

The most important part of the fight against such agitational campaigns of hatred is to show solidarity with the attacked group and to actively support them. This applies both in the case of the current policies of discrimination and persecution and in the larger ideological campaigns of hate (from anti-Semitism to hatred against Sinti and Romanies to Islamophobia), but also in smaller acts of discrimination, in summary: Solidarity with the victims of all hate-campaigns. Communists have the task of clarifying every point and of initiating and guiding the various struggles.

It's necessary to fight for democratic rights for all of the groups attacked in these hate-campaigns, for the complete equality of all national minorities in Germany. We need a conscious unity of all democratic and revolutionary forces in the face of all attempts to divide us.

4. The Fight against All Shades of Open Anti-Communism

Open anti-communism is an important instrument for German imperialism in its fight against scientific communism and communists groups. Open anti-communism is as old as scientific communism itself. Its main target was initially scientific communism, which was most closely connected with the name Karl Marx. After the victory of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 it was then primarily directed against the building of socialism in the Soviet Union, which was most closely linked with the name Lenin and then with the name Stalin.

Open anti-communism in Germany today is mostly connected with the hatred against Stalin. So-called “anti-Stalinism” is also seen in those who see themselves as left-wing and even in revolutionary groups. In Germany that is connected to the fact that the socialist Soviet Union under

the leadership of Stalin contributed the major effort in the military defeat of Nazi Germany. For this Stalin is seen positively by many across the globe, but hated by many, especially in Germany.

5. The Fight Against All Forms of Opportunism and Revisionism

The struggle against open anti-communism also demands a fight against all forms of the opportunistic politics of class conciliation, of legalism and of capitulation to imperialism, as well as against all forms of the revision of the theory of scientific communism.

In this it is important to correctly assess the different opportunist, reformist and revisionist groups in Germany in different periods. Through this we can see that the greater the influence on a developing revolutionary movement of groups genuinely oriented on scientific communism, the greater is the danger from the old and newly developing forms of revisionism. Opportunists and renegades will consciously invoke scientific communism to deceive, in order to better fight against the influence of communist groups.

Decisive for the genuine, offensive struggle against all forms of anti-communism is to study the ideas of scientific communism and to really make them your own, to spread them, to explain and to elucidate them in a lively form. This needs to be done in connection with the defence of the communist world movement and the building of socialism in the Soviet Union in the time of Lenin and Stalin, in the fight against modern revisionism, against the revisionist distortions such as the East German Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) or the CPSU in the Soviet Union of the 60s, 70s and 80s. These acted as a deterrent example for decades and are one of the factors which facilitated anti-communism in Germany up to the present day.

Only through these struggles can a Communist Party with clear goals be built and the different economic and democratic daily struggles guided. Only in this way can a successful fight be led for the preparation and carrying out of socialist revolution, for a genuine struggle for communism. That is and remains the main issue.

Learn From History!

**An Outline of the Development of World
Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900–
2010) - A First Overview**

(The Struggle for Communism, Vol. 3)

**An Outline of the Development of German
Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900–
2010) - A First Overview**

(The Struggle for Communism, Vol. 4)

Introduction

The most comprehensive understanding of the history of capitalism, of imperialism and of German imperialism is really a precondition for a deeper understanding of the fundamental basis of scientific communism and for grasping the societal laws underlying so many concrete events which can then be recognised and understood. The history of world imperialism and the history of German imperialism, the history of class struggles, both worldwide and against German imperialism, offer an incredibly wide and we believe incredibly important source of material to help us to rise to the challenges and tasks of the present day, and where we can learn from the history of the efforts of the counter-revolution, but also from the experiences of the revolutionary struggles for the current situation and the current struggles and those in the years and decades ahead.

Despite all of the shortcomings of chronological descriptions and the problems of structuring them, it is in our opinion nevertheless indispensable to give an overview of - and to understand - the history of the last 100 years, its context, its development, its stages and its inner contradictions.

Is it even possible to learn from history? History doesn't repeat itself in detail. A precondition for learning from history is that it's necessary to precisely study both history and the current situation. We need to clearly and responsibly identify similarities and differences both in manifestations and structures, while neither neglecting historical experiences nor employing false historical analogies or methods of imitation.

III. An Outline of the Development of World Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900–2010) - A First Overview

In the study “An Outline of the Development of World Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900-2010) A First Overview” (Vol. 3), a short outline is presented of the emergence of capitalism through to the development of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. In this, the focus is on the analysis of the importance of the colonial system in the development of capitalism.

The condensed portrayal of the main features of the development of world imperialism and class struggles in three parts from 1900 through to 2010 which then follows aims primarily at showing important steps in the intensification of the three most important contradictions of imperialism in relation to the crisis-ridden economic development of capitalism.

Part one covers the period from 1900 until the October Revolution of 1917. This part begins with the transition from the 19th to the 20th century because it was in this time that imperialism, the highest form of capitalism, had formed, and it then covers the First World War from 1914 as a further central event. This was the first worldwide war over the redistribution of spheres of influence between the imperialist Great Powers.

On the eve of the First World War, with the exception of the Bolshevik Party just about all of the parties of the Second International, which had carried out revolutionary activity amongst the masses of the proletarian class and had achieved a wide influence amongst them in the decades before, defected to the counter-revolutionary ranks under the slogan of the “defence of the Fatherland”. In the time leading up to this, opportunism and revisionism had increasingly won the upper hand in the parties of the Second International, primarily with the assistance of the labour aristocracy and their helpers.

This was initially a great defeat for the worldwide revolutionary movement. But revolutionary forces across the globe were inspired by the victory of the February Revolution in Russia in 1917, which overthrew the Tsar and opened the perspective of the victory of socialist revolution across a sixth of the globe and which placed the October Revolu-

tion on the agenda.

Part two covers the period from the October Revolution of 1917 until 1955, two years after the death of Stalin in March 1953. The revolutionary movement in Russia was able to use the situation towards the end of the First World War to break through the front of world imperialism through the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 and the building of a socialist state with its own military power. A new communist world movement grew.

The October Revolution was a world-historic event, because it threw into question the existence of world imperialism as a whole. It had proven that the overthrow of the bourgeoisie is possible and that the socialist revolution can be victorious. The epoch of proletarian revolution began. The aura of invincibility of imperialism was smashed once and for all. But world imperialism was far from destroyed.

The period after the victory of the October Revolution was characterised in many countries by the mobilisation of the counter-revolution against the threat of revolution, especially in regions outside of Europe. The revolutionary movement had developed in a way which can hardly be grasped today. But the advance of fascist reaction and the victory of Nazi-fascism in Germany were crucial features of the first 20 years after the victory of the October Revolution.

The overall situation in the world changed dramatically through the war of German imperialism in Europe from 1939 and its invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 as well as the attack of Japanese imperialism on the bases and sphere of influence of the USA and the attempt to destroy the Chinese revolution. German imperialism committed, particularly after 1939, monstrous crimes of mass murder including the historically unprecedented and unique genocide against the Jewish population and the Sinti and Romanies in Europe. Japanese imperialism committed terrible crimes of mass murder, above all in China but also in Korea and in the Philippines.

There were two results of this huge worldwide war. Before and during this world war there were indeed great victories of the counter-revolution against the communist movement in many countries, especially

in Germany from 1933.

But the world-historic victory of the anti-Hitler coalition and above all of the socialist Soviet Union over German imperialism in Europe and over Japanese imperialism in Asia resulted in a further enormous strengthening of the communist world movement. In Eastern Europe after 1945 a series of revolutionary states emerged which had cut themselves loose from the world imperialist system, and the revolution was victorious in China in 1949. There was an unprecedented upswing of the revolutionary movement under the leadership of Communist Parties. World imperialism was shaken to its core to a far greater degree than in 1917, it was severely restricted in its ability to act by the various forces of the proletarian world revolution and saw itself seriously threatened by the worldwide revolutionary upturn.

However it also became clear in this situation that the great expansion of the communist movement across the whole globe carried within itself an element of instability. The lack of theoretical and political clarity and firmness allowed the counter-revolution to win decisive victories in the cloak of revisionism.

After the death of Stalin in 1953, counter-revolutionary, revisionist forces, with Khrushchev at their head, succeeded in taking over the leadership of the CPSU and expanding their influence in the following years, in order to pursue their goal of revisionistically breaking down the CPSU and transforming the previously socialist Soviet Union into a capitalist country.

Part three covers the period from 1956 to 2010. At the 20th party conference of the CPSU in February 1956 the revisionist forces under Khrushchev's leadership made a decisive breakthrough and were able to force through their revisionist programme, to expand and stabilise their leadership. The international communist movement had suffered a gigantic defeat – its worst up to that point – through modern revisionism, particularly through the revisionist disintegration of the CPSU and through the start of the transformation of the Soviet Union into a capitalist country.

After the victory of Khrushchev-revisionism in the Soviet Union and the East European countries (apart from Albania), the imperialist forc-

es could breathe easily again and to turn all its efforts on the smashing of the socialist camp and the communist world movement – despite the continued existence of socialist China. The period of the devastating defeat of the communist world movement began, of the transformation of the previously socialist Soviet Union into an imperial Great Power, Russian Social-imperialism, and the retreat of the revolutionary movement worldwide.

History is the history of class struggles. This applies to the period from 1956 to 2010 too. Class struggles do not just mean the struggles of the proletarian class. Class struggles can also mean the advance of the imperialist bourgeoisie against the proletarian class, the expansion and strengthening of their position against what is for them the ever-present danger of victorious class struggles and revolutions. In Indonesia in 1965 the rapidly growing communist movement was halted and destroyed with a single blow in one of the most brutal military coups in world history.

After the great defeat of the communist world movement in 1956 and the following years, there were in the first 20 years – due to the influence of socialist China and of the major struggle against the transformation of China into a capitalist country (the Cultural Revolution) as well as of the start of the open struggle against modern revisionism primarily by the Chinese Communist Party and the CP of Albania (later the Party of Labour of Albania) at the start of the sixties – a further series of incredibly impressive struggles, especially in Cuba, Vietnam and Kampuchea, but also the huge struggles of 1968, especially in France and the USA, and the mass movements in Chile before 1973 and in other countries. The victory of the Vietnamese liberation movement in 1975 resulted in worldwide enthusiasm among the revolutionary groups, but this success was rolled back all too quickly in the following years by the revisionist developments in Vietnam. The victories and defeats of the revolutionary forces in individual struggles in these 20 years made them into a visible, crucial factor which posed a direct challenge to the imperialist world system.

The following period was shaped to a large extent by the increasing success of the imperialistic Great Powers in playing off one section of

the population against another in various countries to further their own interests. Regional wars became a significant characteristic of inter-imperialist rivalry. At the end of the 70s there was an impressive revolutionary movement which overthrew the reactionary Shah regime in Iran in 1979, but here, too, it was seen how quickly the successors of a revolutionary movement could be nullified when reactionary forces such as the Khomeini movement are able to turn revolution into counter-revolution through clever demagogic manoeuvres, and to install a new reactionary dictatorship.

This was the period in which socialist China, which can be seen as supportive of revolutionary forces during the lifetime of Mao Tse-tung, became revisionist after the death of Mao Tse-tung in 1976 (socialist Albania also sank into the revisionist swamp at the end of the seventies). This meant a second great defeat for the communist world movement. The decline of the communist movement across the globe was reinforced once more. Huge markets in China became accessible for world imperialism. China increasingly developed the features of an imperialist power. The previously socialist Albania was directly taken over by imperialism.

A realistic analysis of the class struggles in this period shows that the policies of the imperialistic Great Powers made revolutionary movements difficult or stifled them at birth through their imperial wars of aggression, especially with the help of fascist mass movements. Added to this, the collapse of the social-imperialist state system in 1989 led to an extreme sharpening of the inter-imperialist conflicts. After 1990 in particular, so-called proxy wars in Africa and other countries shaped the worldwide military situation. Amongst others there were the imperialist wars in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989 and then again from 2001, the imperialist wars against Yugoslavia in 1995 and 1999 as well as the terrible mass murder in Rwanda and Burundi in 1993-4.

Where we see oppression, we also find resistance. This is as true today as ever. There were - and are to this day - ongoing impressive revolutionary movements in Mexico, India, Nepal, Kobane (Syria) and other countries; there were - and there are today - great strike movements of the proletarian class in different countries. Nevertheless this period

is characterised by a retreat of the revolutionary movement and an advance of imperialist world reaction and all of its various departments – an assessment which unfortunately hasn't changed in the years from 2010 to 2015.

IV. An Outline of the Development of German Imperialism and the Class Struggles (1900–2010) - A First Overview

When building a Communist Party in Germany it's clear at the outset that the main enemy is at home, and that it is German imperialism. The history and development of German imperialism can only be understood in the context of the history of world imperialism. In our opinion it is nevertheless indispensable to have a precise analysis focussed on German imperialism in order to assess as precisely as possible our direct enemy in the class struggle, with all of its victories and defeats, all of its short- and long-term manoeuvres, and the development of the struggles of the proletarian class in Germany and the communist forces.

The history of German imperialism is a part of the history of world imperialism and it must be studied as such.

In part one of the study “An Outline of the Development of German Imperialism and the Class Struggle (1900-2010) A First Overview” (Vol. 4), after a portrayal of the pre-history of German imperialism the period from the development of German imperialism from 1900 up until the victory of the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 is analysed.

In the development of German imperialism it becomes clear – primarily in its colonial crimes – that it will stop at nothing, up to and including the genocide against the Herero and Nama peoples between 1904 and 1907 in what is today Namibia.

At the time of the emergence of imperialism there were already great hopes in the movement of the proletarian class in Germany. But this movement, despite its impressive strength and size, was not up to the challenges of the First World War and it ended up falling in line behind German imperialism, proclaiming the “defence of the Fatherland” in the coming imperialist world war.

German imperialism committed particularly brutal crimes during the First World War. Notable amongst these was the first wartime use of poison gas as well as its leading role in the genocide against the Armenian population in 1915 on the territory of what was then the Ottoman Empire.

Part two begins with the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 and deals with the period up to 1955, two years after the death of Stalin in March 1953.

After the October Revolution in Russia in 1917 the movement of the proletarian class in Germany, despite initial successes in the November Revolution of 1918 which led to the overthrow of the monarchy, was not able to seize the great chance for the victory of socialist revolution in Germany. After the belated formation of the German Communist Party (KPD) in 1918, the greatest and often armed class struggles in the history of German imperialism (the Munich Soviet Republic of 1919, the Ruhr Red Army of 1920, armed struggles in Halle and Leuna in 1921, the Hamburg Uprising of 1923) didn't lead to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. The counter-revolution murdered the best of the revolutionary forces. They murdered Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. German imperialism was able to recover from the First World War and gradually became an imperial Great Power once again.

The communist movement in Germany, which nevertheless regained strength, led by the KPD and having achieved great success in its first 15 years, was then defeated in 1933 and, despite the illegal resistance of a small minority of anti-Nazi and communist forces, was effectively destroyed by Nazi-fascism. Tens of thousands of comrades of the KPD were murdered. The Nazi war in Europe in 1939 and the Nazi invasion of the socialist Soviet Union in 1941 did not meet any meaningful resistance in Germany.

German imperialism in the years between 1933 and 1945, above all in the period of its invasions of other countries from 1939, committed mass murder against those civilian populations and leading to the unparalleled genocide against the Jewish population and against the Sinti and Romanies in Europe.

The movement of the proletarian class in Germany was not in a position to overthrow the Nazi leadership and to end the war. Nazi-fascism had to be smashed "from outside" by the armies of the anti-Hitler coalition and above all by the Red Army of the socialist USSR and through the partisan struggles and uprisings in the countries occupied by Nazi Germany.

German imperialism was militarily defeated and the armies of the anti-Hitler coalition occupied Germany. However German imperialism was not smashed and destroyed.

The capitalist economic system remained in place in West Germany and great monopolistic capital re-attained its old power and grandeur. The German bourgeoisie founded the German Federal Republic in May 1949 with the help and blessing of US imperialism and the other western powers. In the Soviet zone of occupation, an attempt was begun in the first years after 1945 to develop a new democratic Germany with the help of the Red Army and the Soviet authorities and on the basis of the Potsdam Agreement. Unlike in the western zone, in the SBZ and then in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) established in October 1949 the requirements of the Potsdam Agreement in its essential points were met - or at least a start was made. The Red Army of the socialist Soviet Union was centrally involved in the implementation of the Potsdam Agreement.

However the great chance after the military victory over German imperialism was not used to establish a stable communist movement which could have resisted the frontal attack of revisionism at the 20th conference of the CPSU in 1956, either in West Germany or in the SBZ/GDR.

The third part begins with the revisionist 20th conference of the CPSU in 1956 and covers the period until 2010.

After the victory of revisionism at the 20th conference of the CPSU, of the consolidation of power of the Khrushchev-revisionism in the Soviet Union and the consequent destruction of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union and its replacement by a revisionist-capitalist regime, it quickly became clear that the KDP/SED in West Germany and the GDR respectively would sink into the swamp of modern revisionism, which then happened at a rapid speed. The communist forces in West Germany and in the GDR were massively weakened by this, which greatly facilitated the comeback of German imperialism.

In West Germany the KPD was banned in 1956 and its members persecuted and imprisoned. A further milestone in the move towards fascism in the state was the introduction of the Emergency Act in 1968. In

the years after that, revolutionary and democratic organisations primarily from other countries were then banned and persecuted.

German imperialism has resumed its role as an imperial Great Power since the beginning of the 1970s. Through collaboration or rivalry with the other imperialistic Great Powers, US imperialism, Russian imperialism, English, Japanese and French imperialism, it exploits and oppresses the mass of the population of the world, leads localised wars of plunder and prepares for world war.

With the swallowing of the GDR and West Berlin, the revanchist so-called “Re-unification” of 1989/90, German imperialism has made a great step towards reversing the result of its historic defeat in the Second World War. It has made further steps towards implementing its extensive plans of revenge, plans for the regaining of the so-called “lost territories” and for the conquest of new regions in its struggle for world dominance against the other imperialistic Great Powers.

Both the whole history of German imperialism, since it developed until it swallowed the GDR, and the current analysis of the development of German imperialism from 1989 until today shows: German imperialism as it exists today is not a newly developed imperialism, but is at its core the same German imperialism that triggered the First World War, the same imperialism that carried out the biggest crimes in the history of the world to date, culminating in the industrially organised genocide against the Jewish population and the Cinti and Roma in the Second World War. It is at its core the same imperialism which has already shown twice that it is capable of recovering from economic, political and military defeats in a relatively short period of time. The same imperialism which, even in its most predatory acts, could rely on the support of broad sections of the population. This is, besides other reasons, due to the fact that the overwhelming majority of the working masses have never made a radical break with the ruling class in Germany.

This has influenced particularly its militarism and revanchism. Today, German imperialism is ready to act. It is still a particularly aggressive imperial Great Power.

German imperialism is actively working on the preparation not just

regional wars – which it is already waging today – but it is also on the preparation for an imperial world war.

Through the employment of its technologically advanced economic power, German imperialism is today intensifying the exploitation of the population in other countries and of its own proletarian class. Through a large-scale build-up of arms and special elite units, through increasing worldwide use of its army and the building up of a worldwide system of military bases, armed for all eventualities, German imperialism is waiting for its chance to realise its extensive plans for revenge.

Internally, German imperialism has strengthened the move towards fascism of the state, and the Nazi movement is growing. This is all aimed at ensuring the “peace of the graveyard” in its own “backyard” both for now but above all for the approaching larger wars.

German imperialism is one of the largest industrial powers of the world – behind the USA, alongside Russia, the UK, France, Japan and now China too. It uses this economic strength to exploit and financially enslave the mass of the population worldwide. German imperialism is an international exploiter.

With its political and economic levers of power, German imperialism conquers new business markets, new sources of raw materials and spheres of capital investment, and in doing so carves out a huge reservoir of the cheapest labour at the same time, above all in those countries dominated by imperialism. It squeezes an ever greater magnitude of profit out of the mass of the population of the world.

In order to secure and increase/expand these imperialist profits and spheres of influence against the increasing struggles of the mass of the population in those countries dominated by imperialism on the one hand and against its imperialist rivals on the other hand, German imperialism applies a whole arsenal of direct and indirect political and military oppression.

From the financing of collaborators and agents in other countries or fascist regimes, from arms shipments to for example Turkey or Indonesia through to the training and assistance for building police and military apparatuses in reactionary countries across the globe up to the di-

rect employment of the Bundeswehr of German imperialism – German imperialism has never shied away from war, murder and terror when its profits were in need of protection.

In the whole period from 1956 to 2010 there was always resistance to German imperialism too. There were huge strikes of the proletarian class, even if they were for limited goals; there were also the beginnings of revolutionary movements amongst the youth, including students and school students. There were also struggles against militarization and armement, against wars, Nazis, fascistisation and the deterioration of social conditions. These struggles have never reached the scale and strength of the struggle of the proletarian class in France in 1968 for example, and it would make no sense at all, in any realistic portrayal of the real struggles in Germany, especially in the last 60 years, to talk of a conscious and organised class struggle or to artificially emphasise or glorify certain nevertheless important individual struggles. However, German imperialism makes great efforts to ensure that all these struggles are forgotten or misrepresented, so it is our task to ensure that these struggles remain in our consciousness, to learn from their strengths and weaknesses in order to better lead and organise the struggle today.

That is the goal of this extensive volume about the history of German imperialism and about the class struggles against German imperialism.

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