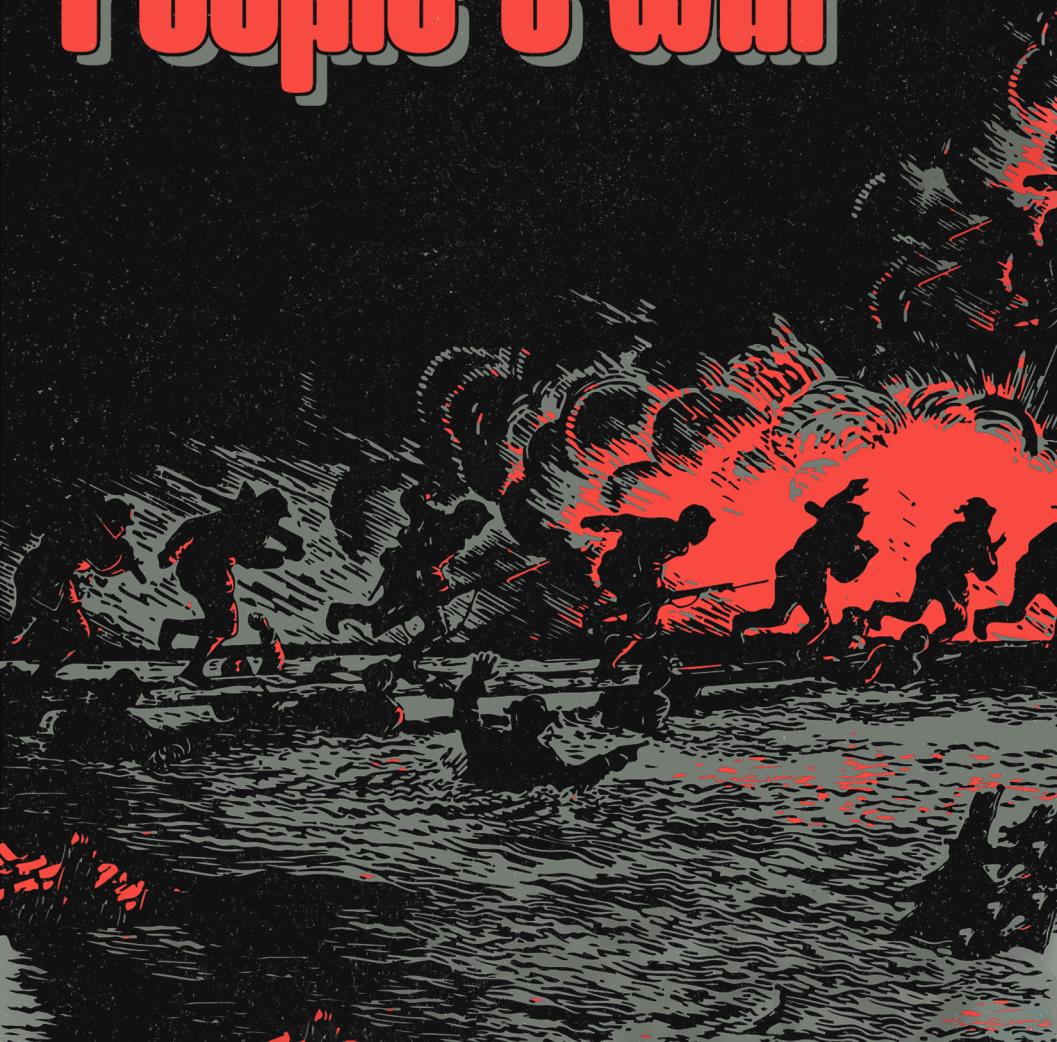


Polemics on Protracted People's War



PROLETARIANS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

THE POLEMICS ON PROTRACTED PEOPLE'S WAR

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Chairman Mao Tse-tung

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The following is a series of polemical exchanges between Serve the People - Communist League (Tjen Folket, Norway), and Andy Belisario, representing the People's Resource for International Solidarity and Mass Mobilization (PRISMM), which is a part of the National Democratic Front of the Communist Party of the Philippines. These polemics represent the two-line struggle currently unfolding in the contemporary International Communist Movement. The debate centers around the following question: Is Protracted People's War (PPW) universally-applicable? The Norwegian comrades hold that it is, while the Filipino comrades hold that it is not. Both sides are presented in this compilation to encourage the reader to come to their own conclusion on the matter.

Other subjects that are briefly touched upon throughout the polemics include the Russian Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the People's War in Peru, the Philippines, and India, Chairman Gonzalo, and the trend of line-struggle in the International Communist Movement in general.

The only editing has been based on restructuring the format of each piece for easier reading, or for adjusting and correcting the rare grammatical error.

Long live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!

ON THE QUESTION OF PEOPLE'S WAR IN INDUSTRIAL CAPITALIST COUNTRIES

Jose Maria Sison

5 June 2019

I have been asked many times by avowed proletarian revolutionaries whether protracted people's war as carried out by Mao in China can be successfully waged in capitalist countries where the industrial proletariat has become the majority class and the peasantry has become a minority class. I will try to answer the question in a theoretical and hypothetical way on the basis of history and social conditions and within the existing constitutional and legal bounds of industrial capitalist countries. In the process, I will deal with the notion of some people that Mao's theory of protracted people's war is universally valid and applicable.

Protracted People's War in China and the Philippines

Mao himself explained in his own time that protracted people's war is not only possible but necessary for the revolutionary party of the proletariat to realize a successful people's democratic revolution in a semicolonial and semifeudal country in chronic crisis.

By applying the strategic line of encircling the cities from the countryside, the proletarian revolutionaries can lead the people's army to grow from small and weak to big and strong in stages by availing of the countryside as a wide

area of maneuver and getting the support of the peasant masses as the main force of the revolution.

The Chinese Communist Party could successfully use the countryside for a protracted period of time in order to accumulate enough armed and political strength to ultimately seize the cities and thereby win the people's struggle for democracy and socialism.

I adhere to Mao's theory and practice of protracted people's war in my writings on the specific conditions of the Philippines for armed revolution. And I have taken into account the archipelagic and mountainous character of the Philippines among other considerations.

The armed revolution led by the Communist Party of the Philippines has been able to preserve itself and gain strength for more than 50 years by carrying out the strategic line of protracted people's war, despite all the strategic plans of US and puppet regimes to crush it and despite drastic changes in the world, such as the full restoration of capitalism in China and the collapse of the Soviet Union since 1991.

In industrial capitalist countries, the proletarian revolutionaries cannot begin the revolutionary war with a small and weak people's army in the countryside and hope to use the wide space and indefinite time in the countryside to sustain the war.

As soon as that army dares to launch the first tactical offensive, it will be overwhelmed by the huge armed army

and the highly unified economic, communications and transport system of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

However, the term "people's war" may be flexibly used to mean the necessary armed revolution by the people to overthrow the bourgeois state in an industrial capitalist country. But definitely, what ought to be protracted is the preparation for the armed revolution with the overwhelming participation of the people.

As Lenin pointed out, the revolution cannot win unless the capitalist system has been so gravely stricken by crisis that the ruling class can no longer rule in the old way, the people are desirous of revolutionary change and the revolutionary party of the proletariat is strong enough to lead the revolution.

It is futile to ignite armed revolution in the city or in the countryside without due regard to the objective conditions and subjective factors of the revolution. An urban armed insurrection against the capitalist state can succeed only as a result of grave debilitation by its internal crisis, the crisis of the world capitalist system, involvement in an inter-capitalist or inter-imperialist war and the rise of the revolutionary mass movement with sufficient armed strength.

Historical Examples of Armed Proletarian Revolution

The Paris Commune of 1871 showed that the proletarian revolutionaries could wage a successful urban insurrection when France was preoccupied with the Franco-Prussian

war and the armed city guards themselves carried out the insurrection, with the overwhelming support of the proletarian masses. In imperialist Russia, the Bolsheviks had the foresight to sow cadres as revolutionary seeds within the Tsarist army. When the masses of troops became discontented like the people in the course of World War I, they rose up to overthrow the Tsar and then the Kerensky bourgeois government. Subsequently, they waged a successful war against the reactionaries and the foreign interventionists in the countryside of the vast Russian empire.

Even before they were favored by the monopoly bourgeoisie to govern Germany and directly use state terrorism to suppress the proletariat and its revolutionary party, the German fascists formed their armed groups or paramilitary organization and collaborated with the army and police of the capitalist state to break workers' strikes and people's protests.

During the severe crisis of the Weimar Republic, the German communists and social democrats had also their own armed groups but were surpassed by the fascists at the crucial point. But the lesson remains valid that proletarian revolutionaries and the people must always strive to excel and be successful at both preparations and actual conduct of the armed revolution.

During World War II, the partisans could arise in several European countries, such as in France, Italy and elsewhere, to wage partisan warfare against the fascists. Where fascism first rose to power in 1922, the communists and

the people engaged in guerrilla warfare in both urban and rural areas until they could hang the fascist dictator and come to the verge of taking state power. Based on the foregoing historical facts, it is always wise for the organized revolutionary proletariat and masses to assume and anticipate that the capitalist system is prone to crisis and that the monopoly bourgeoisie resorts to fascism in order to head off the proletarian revolution. Even if the material foundation for socialism exists in capitalism, the proletariat must first defeat fascism, thus winning the battle for democracy, before socialism can triumph.

It is logical and necessary for proletarian revolutionaries to arm themselves, be consciously disciplined and conduct politico-military training in preparation for future armed conflict. I presume that the armed capability of the proletarian revolutionaries is in the first place bound by ideological, political and organizational principles and rules.

As the Bolsheviks did, the proletarian revolutionaries can also deploy cadres for revolutionary work in the reactionary army, especially because most of the soldiers come from the working class. A capitalist state can in the future become so debilitated by crisis and war that its reactionary armed services tend to disintegrate, like the Tsarist army in World War I.

As regards to obtaining and keeping arms covertly for decades and launching small-formation offensives under the most limited and difficult conditions, the revolutionary armed organizations in Ireland and Palestine provide good

examples of conscious discipline, skillfulness, resourcefulness and durability due to mass support of entire communities opposing an occupying force. However, they are in situations and processes of development which are not typical in capitalist countries today.

Considerations for Arming the Proletariat

By the current constitutional and legal standards of the industrial capitalist countries that pretend to be liberal-democratic, any individual can legally acquire firearms for the purpose of sport and self-defense against criminals as well as against the potential of the state to become tyrannical and oppressive. In the United States of America no less, the arms manufacturers invoke the constitutional right of citizens to bear arms in order to keep wide the domestic market for the sale of weapons, despite the bourgeois liberal clamor for stricter gun licensing laws, disarming the white supremacists and the overblown jihadists and keeping the arms out of the reach of children who are in the first place heavily influenced by the US culture of imperialism and senseless violence. In quite a number of industrial capitalist countries, citizens are allowed to keep the firearms that they acquire in military training under the auspices of the bourgeois state. And they have no problems like a few American crazies and a few children using firearms from the home armory to shoot and kill innocent people in schools and other public places.

It is therefore possible to organize proletarians with firearms as sporting gun clubs, as community selfdefense organizations and as voluntary security for public events and structures. But of course it is unwise to make displays of armed groups of people and at the same time provocatively declare themselves in opposition to the capitalist state, its army and police.

Such imprudence would immediately prompt state measures of violent suppression, as in the historical case of the Black Panthers. In capitalist societies, it is the fascists and other reactionary armed groups that are privileged to publicly boast of their arms and their military training and exercises. It is also unwise to bring arms to mass protests that are supposed to be legal and peaceful and where most of the people are unarmed and are far from ready to launch an armed insurrection. It is wise for the revolutionary party of the proletariat not to declare publicly the intent of building a people's army before the conditions are ripe for armed revolution.

Whatever are gun licensing laws and no matter how strict they are, there are also among the people those who have the skills, materials and equipment to make firearms discreetly in their private garages and work sheds. In the long-term effort to prepare for people's war against the fascists and the capitalist state, the people can acquire and make firearms.

While there are yet no conditions for fighting and using the arms in a particular capitalist country, proletarian revolutionaries ought to continue arousing, organizing and

mobilizing the masses in legal and persuasive ways with the confidence that they have the means of self-defense to fight back with certain success against the fascists and capitalist state when the necessity arises. Far more important than acquiring or making the firearms is fulfilling the ideological, political and organizational tasks to make the proletariat and its party truly revolutionary. But, of course, it is more important to have firearms before the fascists come to power than not to have any when the fascists are already in the process of taking power.

To repeat the point, for the purpose of emphasis, even in the USA, the people have the constitutional right to have firearms to preclude the state from monopolizing arms and thus allow the citizenry to have the arms to oppose and overthrow a tyrannical or oppressive government when it arises. And there are many particular legal reasons for citizens to bear arms.

Worsening Global Conditions and Proletarian Internationalism

In the aftermath of the full restoration of capitalism and collapse of the Soviet Union, US imperialism enjoyed the status of the sole superpower in a unipolar world and proceeded to carry out in a reckless and aggressive way its neoliberal economic policy and neoconservative military policy, unwittingly undermining its own strength and accelerating its strategic decline. Now, under Trump, the US is acting protectionist and more bellicose than ever.

The strategic decline of the US has become obvious in economic and financial terms since the crisis of 2008, although the US has become more bellicose. The rise of China and Russia as new imperialist powers has aggravated the crisis of the world capitalist system and has intensified inter-imperialist contradictions in a conspicuously multipolar world.

The imperialist powers always try to shift the burden of crisis to the proletariat and people of the world, who consequently suffer the escalation of oppression and exploitation and who are ultimately driven to resist. The imperialists will someday force the issue of armed revolution to the proletarian revolutionaries and masses in some of the capitalist countries. Right now, the imperialist states are becoming more repressive and are also generating fascist movements.

While proletarian revolutionaries are not yet immediately faced with the need to launch an armed revolution in any capitalist country, they can also consider in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and anti-imperialist solidarity to share their revolutionary ideas, experience and capabilities, including arms and their skills in making these, with the proletariat and people who are preparing for armed revolution or are already engaged in it in the underdeveloped countries.

The spread and development of people's war in the underdeveloped countries or in the countryside of the world can be helpful to the rise of armed revolution in the capitalist countries. At present, the imperialist powers

headed by the USA are carrying out military intervention and wars of aggression on a wide scale in the underdeveloped countries. Thus, all concrete acts of proletarian internationalism and anti-imperialist solidarity are urgently needed.

Follow-up Note

Waging protracted people's war in any industrial capitalist country is not a matter of dogmatically asserting it or putting every part of my article out of its clear context.

For many decades already, I have heard of the notion or threat to wage a protracted people's war in imperialist countries but to this day I have not seen any Maoist party proclaiming and actually starting it in any imperialist country.

In fact, I am not aware of any Maoist party in an industrially developed capitalist country strong enough to lead any armed revolution with the participation of any sizable proletarian masses in the industrial and service sectors of the economy. Nowhere in the industrial capitalist countries is there any Maoist party as formidable as the Bolshevik party in the trade unions and workers' cooperatives in the run up to the October revolution of 1917.

There is no protracted people's war of any kind going on in any industrial capitalist country. What has been protracted is merely idle talk or hot air about the possibility of waging protracted people's war. No serious preparations

for it are being made. There can never be such a people's war without preparations for a certain period of time, depending on the subjective factors and the objective conditions. It will take at least some years to prepare and to realize the start of such armed revolution of the people.

A people's war of whatever duration and scale is possible in the industrial capitalist country only after a period of preparations of ideological work, political education and mass work, party and mass organizing, clandestine accumulation of arms, politico-military training and Bolshevik style penetration of the reactionary armed forces. Such preparations or suggestions thereof should not be disdained or begrudged.

These preparations ought to take advantage of the imperialist crises and wars, splits among the imperialist powers, violent contradictions among reactionary factions in the imperialist countries, the revolutionary advances being made in the underdeveloped countries, the desire of the proletariat and the people for revolutionary change and the strength of the revolutionary party to lead the armed revolution of the people in their millions.

It is only a "Left" opportunist, a fake Maoist or even an agent provocateur who has disdain for the lasting admonition of the Communist Manifesto to win the battle for democracy against the bourgeois class dictatorship and who clamors for proclaiming and starting a people's war in an industrial capitalist country without the necessary preparations of the subjective forces and the favorable objective conditions that I have mentioned.

Winning the battle for democracy does not mean merely competing with the bourgeoisie within the confines of its class dictatorship but fighting in every possible and necessary way the attempt of the monopoly bourgeoisie to misrepresent itself as the center of moderation and to use reformism or social democracy and fascism as its two arms to stave off the proletarian revolution by debilitating or destroying it.

In any kind of country, the serious Maoist party makes concrete plans and preparations for armed revolution. The Filipino proletarian revolutionaries had to study the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, put forward the general line of people's democratic revolution and the strategic line of protracted people's war, conduct social investigation and mass work in the effort to develop the party, the people's army and the united front as the weapons of the people's revolutionary struggle against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

To prepare for the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines on December 26, 1968 and the New People's Army on March 29, 1969, the Filipino proletarian revolutionaries used a full decade of ideological, political and organizational work and some five years of politico-military training and linking up with remnants of the old people's army whose main force had been decimated from 1950 to 1952.

Communists proclaim their ideological position and political program and never conceal their ultimate goal of

overthrowing the class dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and replacing it with that of the proletariat. But they are smart enough to use both the open and legal as well as the clandestine and nonlegal forms of struggle and methods of developing the revolutionary mass movement towards the proletarian-socialist revolution. And they are prudent enough not to go into the pitfalls of "Left" and Right opportunist, the fake Maoist or the Agent.

DEFEND AND APPLY THE UNIVERSALITY OF PROTRACTED PEOPLE'S WAR!

Ard Kinera, Tjen Folket Media

6 June 2019

What is the path of revolution in imperialist countries? This is a burning question for every revolutionary in this part of the world, in Western fortresses of imperialism. It is a question that, for a hundred years, has been answered incorrectly by the overwhelming majority of self-proclaimed revolutionaries in Europe.

Maoism puts forward the universality of the strategy of People's War, and it puts this forward as the sole military strategy of the international proletariat, applicable in each and every country, applied concretely in accordance to the different concrete conditions. But some people are stubbornly denying this, and clinging to the old strategy of protracted legal struggle until conditions are "ripe for revolution" due to a cluster of crises and the revolutionaries accumulating overwhelming forces against the old capitalist state, making them able to sweep it away in some kind of blitz war.

This is a strategy that has failed in practice while People's War has been victorious. The theory of accumulation of forces is more than ready for the dustbin of history. But still, some are still attracted to the old, like flies are attracted to garbage.

Sison's Sinister Attack on the Strategy of People's War

The founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines has again spoken out against the universality of Protracted People's War (PPW) in a text dated 5th of June 2019: *On the Question of People's War in Industrial Capitalist Countries* by Jose Maria Sison. [See pp. 2-14 -- Ed.]

Sison writes:

"I will deal with the notion of some people that Mao's theory of protracted people's war is universally valid and applicable."

This is a sinister way of putting the question. Is this theory just a "notion"? Who are "some people"? For most Maoists, it is well known that when Maoism was synthesized for the very first time, it was done by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru. This was finalized by the Party in 1982 in the midst of People's War. In 1988, the Party adopted an updated document explaining the Ideology, *On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, where they state:

"People's war is the military theory of the international proletariat; people's war sums up for the first time, in a systematic and all-encompassing way, the theoretical and practical experience of the struggles, military actions, and wars waged by the proletariat, as well as the people's long experience in waging armed struggle, especially the war waged

by the Chinese peasants. It is because of Chairman Mao that the class has a military theory; however, there is much confusion and misunderstanding around this issue. (...) A key and decisive question in understanding the universality of people's war is understanding its universal validity and consequently applicability, taking into account the different types of revolutions and the specific conditions of each revolution. To understand this key question it is helpful to keep in mind the fact that since the Petrograd insurrection this model has not been repeated, and to consider the antifascist resistance and guerrilla wars in Europe during World War II, as well as the armed struggles being waged in Europe today, and to see that in the end, the October Revolution was not only an insurrection but a revolutionary war that lasted several years. Consequently, in the imperialist countries the revolution can only be conceived of as revolutionary war and today this can only mean people's war."

Why is the Communist Party of Peru, and other parties and organizations that take up the same view, chief and foremost among these the Maoist Parties and Organizations of Latin America, referred to by Sison as "some people"? The names of the Parties and organizations today, and the line they put forward, can be read in statement after statement. They should be well known by Sison. They are serious and dedicated Parties that have shed blood for the revolution. But Sison talks about the "notion" of "some people". There cannot be any

other explanation than Sison choosing the most cowardly way of struggle, not even recognizing his opponent as worthy of a name, and thus not having to answer what they actually have written. There are no references to documents, just to "notions".

The whole of Sison's text is written in a way as if the theory of the universality of PPW was never even formulated. His text is written as if his objections against it have never even been answered, even though every single one was answered a long time ago, in the very act of synthesizing Maoism. This method of Sison is quite shameful.

On the People's War in Urbanized Versus Mainly Rural Countries

His text begins with the following paragraph:

"I have been asked many times by avowed proletarian revolutionaries whether protracted people's war as carried out by Mao in China can be successfully waged in capitalist countries where the industrial proletariat has become the majority class and the peasantry has become a minority class."

We must ask ourselves, what countries is Sison speaking of? There is no country in Europe or North America at least, where the industrial proletariat is the majority. The proletariat is the largest class in the world, but there are large segments in it, especially in the so called "industrialized countries", that are employed in public or

private services. By far, they outnumber the industrial proletarians in most imperialist countries. This is not a key question of the text, but it shows its lack of quality and precision.

Also, we would claim that the most important defining characteristic of the countries he must be referring to is not "industrialized" but "imperialist". Many third world countries, even with very large rural populations, could be defined as more "industrialized" today, than many imperialist countries. Most industrial products in the world are produced in the oppressed countries.

Sison writes:

"In industrial capitalist countries, the proletarian revolutionaries cannot begin the revolutionary war with a small and weak people's army in the countryside and hope to use the wide space and indefinite time in the countryside to sustain the war."

Who made this the defining factor of People's War? Not the Communist Party of Peru at least. It is crystal clear from all Maoists that adhere to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, that the path of surrounding the cities is not a universal law of PPW. This is the path in mostly rural oppressed nations of the world. The Communist Party of Peru defined the People's War in Peru as a Unified People's War, where the urban areas played a greater role from the beginning of the People's War than in China. And others have been clear that the

People's War will not be a rural peasant war in imperialist countries. This must be well known to Sison, but he acts as if it is not.

Falsehood, Prejudice and Opportunism

Sison writes on waging war in industrialized countries:

"As soon as that army dares to launch the first tactical offensive, it will be overwhelmed by the huge armed army and the highly unified economic, communications and transport system of the monopoly bourgeoisie."

This is a known objection against People's War. And it has been dealt with before. It is simply not true that an armed group must be overwhelmed by "the huge army" (!) as soon as it acts. The Red Brigades of Italy was active from 1970 up to 1988. The Red Army Faction of Germany was active from 1970 up to 1998. Japanese Red Army was active from 1971 to 2001. The Weather Underground was active in the US from 1969 to 1977. The Black Liberation Army was active in the US from 1970 to 1981. The ETA of the Basque Country was active from 1959 to 2018. To this day, there are several active armed groups in Ireland. The list goes on, with guerrillas active in urban areas all over the world.

What is important is that most of these groups were not armed with the omnipotent ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. They were not led by a militarized Maoist Communist Party. As a Maoist, one would identify

this as a major weakness that would hamper them in the struggle. And still, these armed groups were almost never "overwhelmed" by the Army or the reactionary state. In most cases, the groups capitulated due to loss of morale or lack of Ideology and political leadership! That is true of many of these groups. Sison's claim, hypothetical and theoretical, is completely false. It is not rooted in reality. It is just the rotten old opportunist stance, that the enemy is almighty, sees and knows everything, and thus we have no way of fighting him.

Sison writes:

"However, the term 'people's war' may be flexibly used to mean the necessary armed revolution by the people to overthrow the bourgeois state in an industrial capitalist country. But definitely, what ought to be protracted is the preparation for the armed revolution with the overwhelming participation of the people."

This is a classic opportunist way of "unifying" what cannot be unified. Sison knows very well that this is not what is understood and stated when Maoists define revolution just simply as People's War, universally applicable also in the imperialist and mainly urbanized countries. We are all in favor of being flexible in tactics, but one should not be "flexible" in ideology. One should be, as Lenin and Mao thought, principled in this realm. Or else, it is not Marxism but opportunism.

Sison here states his line, which is only the line opposed to People's War but posing as revolutionary; the line of accumulation of forces through protracted legal struggle. This was what the Communist Party of Peru challenged from the beginning. This is the line of the whole heterogenic flora of "Marxist-Leninists", hoxhaites, trotskyites and western adherents of Mao Zedong Thought today. Protracted, very protracted, preparation by all legal means and sometime in the future, an armed revolution. It must be said again and again, that this has never happened. Not in a hundred years has this happened, even though hundreds and thousands of groups and parties adhered to this strategy, and the practice of these groups and tendencies has always been more or less identical to the practice of the openly reformist forces.

There is no qualitative difference between the work and practice of the British Socialist Workers Party, Belgian PTB, German MLPD or German Die Linke. And this is the practice hailed by Sison and supported by many of his followers, who support the revolution in the Philippines, but partake in the reformism of such parties here in Europe. The theory differs, but the practice is the same. How is this possible? It is possible because they lag behind, they lag behind the wheel of time that is constantly turning and has, a long time ago, proven the theory of protracted accumulation to be nothing but a sham. It is possible because there is no connection between their theory of revolution and their practice of reformism and legalism. They have a goal of revolution that is totally and fundamentally alien to their life and practice.

October Road or Really No Road At All?

Sison writes:

"In imperialist Russia, the Bolsheviks had the foresight to sow cadres as revolutionary seeds within the Tsarist army. When the masses of troops became discontented like the people in the course of World War I, they rose up to overthrow the Tsar and then the Kerensky bourgeois government. Subsequently, they waged a successful war against the reactionaries and the foreign interventionists in the countryside of the vast Russian empire."

On the question of Russia, the Communist Party of Peru stated in the above mentioned document [*On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*]:

"In the final analysis, the October Revolution was not only an insurrection but a revolutionary war that lasted for several years. Consequently, in the imperialist countries the revolution can only be conceived as a revolutionary war which today is simply people's war."

The armed struggle of Russia in 1917 cannot be mentioned without also bringing forward the failed revolution of 1905. This was the pretext to 1917, and the war lasted until 1921, over a span of 15 years, where there was a lot of armed activity not only in 1905 and 1917. But still, we have had to wait for more than a hundred years for any Western "acumulationists" to finally accumulate

enough forces, and also experiencing what Sison explains as the necessary objective conditions: "the capitalist state (...) [in] grave debilitation by its internal crisis, the crisis of the world capitalist system, involvement in an inter-capitalist or inter-imperialist war". No wonder we have waited for a long time, and by this method one could go on forever, was it not for the fact that imperialism is doomed. These people want to do revolution by doing everything but revolution! This is a charade and an expression of intellectual bankruptcy.

Even the question of accumulation was answered by Lenin a long time ago, stating that only when they see socialism triumph will the majority of the People finally be convinced.

Sison writes:

"Even if the material foundation for socialism exists in capitalism, the proletariat must first defeat fascism, thus winning the battle for democracy, before socialism can triumph."

We know this strain of thought from our homely Moscow-revisionist "Communist Party" [the Khruschevite-Brezhnevite Communist Party of the Soviet Union]. It is not far from the anti-monopoly theory developed in Soviet Party Schools to sell the idea of European revisionist parties working tirelessly to build a pro-Soviet position in the Western European states, in parliament, and in allying with parts of the Social Democratic parties. It was a formula to "first secure world

peace" (!) or "first establish an anti-monopoly-capitalist government", and then, after this, the socialist revolution. It is nothing other than "peaceful transition", even if it is masked as first winning against fascism, then armed revolution. The armed revolution will not be unfolded in this way, it has never happened. The only way to smash fascism is People's War. And the only way to wage People's War is waging it as a protracted war of the masses led by a militarized Maoist Communist Party, and waged by a People's Army and a United Front.

An Utter Lack of Knowledge on Laws and Possibilities in Imperialist Countries

Sison writes:

"By the current constitutional and legal standards of the industrial capitalist countries that pretend to be liberal-democratic, any individual can legally acquire firearms for the purpose of sport and self-defense against criminals as well as against the potential of the state to become tyrannical and oppressive."

Again, what countries is Sison talking about? This is by no means the situation in Europe. In most European countries, there are strict gun laws, and it is far from being an option for "any individual" to acquire firearms for self-defense! By all means, there are legal possibilities in many countries and revolutionaries can make use of them. But this statement again shows a gaping lack of precision in Sison's knowledge.

Sison writes:

"It is therefore possible to organize proletarians with firearms as sporting gun clubs, as community self-defense organizations and as voluntary security for public events and structures."

We must disappoint Sison, if he cares to read our short text, with the fact that this is considered a criminal offense in most of Europe. And were it not illegal, we might speculate that the "huge army" Sison spoke of earlier, could choose to act as if it were, if armed proletarian gun clubs where organized in large scale by a revolutionary movement!

This theory also reminds us of Trotsky's transitional program and his advocating of Workers Militias in the factories. Neither Trotsky nor Sison has ever tried to organize such gun clubs or militias in Europe, but this is a very poor and naïve alternative to the People's Army we need for waging People's War. Done in the open or semi-openly and in the framework of legalism, it will be almost defenseless against state prosecution and repression. The proletariat needs its army. Militias should be formed and integrated into the army, but this is not possible inside a legalist framework of protracted legal struggle.

Is It Wise or Opportunist to Hide Our Intent?

Sison writes:

"It is wise for the revolutionary party of the proletariat not to declare publicly the intent of building a people's army before the conditions are ripe for armed revolution."

Again, the typical opportunist is at work. This is also something we heard many times before. So called revolutionaries saying "we should not declare our intent publicly", but who are they fooling? If this is a real intent, stated internally, it is quite hard to keep the secret from the intelligence services, at least if the Party is as loosely and legally organized as Sison's friends in some European countries. Is the purpose to hide our intent from the masses? To hide the necessity of building a People's Army from the people themselves?

Who are to be fooled by this hidden intent, by this "wisdom"? We dare to propose that the only ones being fooled are the honest revolutionaries that believe the opportunists have any intent of building a People's Army; fooled by Sison's concessions by advocating gun clubs and political and practical exchanges with the revolutionary wars in the oppressed countries; fooled by prestige more than content, because the content is old and in the same tune as the one played in every opportunist reformist group in the west.

The plan to dogmatically repeat what they conceive as the October Path of Lenin, more than 100 years later and against an enemy that has studied insurrection and how to beat it for just as long, as some kind of surprise attack, is

extremely naïve. Criminally naïve, if applied as a real strategy by a self proclaimed Communist Party.

On the question of hiding our intent, the great first teachers of Marxism, Marx and Engels, has answered this in the only Communist way already in the *Communist Manifesto*:

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win."

Compare this daring statement with the "wise" advice of Sison of waiting for ripe conditions to declare our intent...

Also, let us note that Sison talks about proletarian revolutionaries, not Communists, and about the party of the proletariat and not the Communist Party. This is, in our point of view, not the most correct and clear language for this matter.

Even the Imperialists Understand the Universality of People's War

Let us leave Sison and listen to Dr. Thomas A. Marks, a Yankee political risk consultant working in the business of counter-insurgency:

"In any discussion of insurgency, the works of Mao Tse-tung are unavoidable. His innovations resulted in 'people's war,' a formulation that lifted the asymmetric challenge from the tactical and military to the strategic and political. Mao was to irregular war what Napoleon and Clausewitz were to regular warfare."

And:

"To the contrary, as Mao made clear time and again, violence is integral to all phases of insurgency. It is merely used at a level appropriate to the situation to eliminate resistance and government presence so that insurgent politics can produce mass and resource mobilization."

And:

"The FARC case illustrates that, whether Maoist or not, insurgencies must pursue the Maoist strategic essentials as realized in operational art."

Bourgeois intellectuals specializing on guerrilla warfare and insurrection often refer to Mao in this way. His theory of People's War is not referred to, by them, as peasant war or "encircling the cities from the countryside". It is referred to as lifting guerrilla warfare to a strategic level and synthesizing the laws of irregular, or asymmetric, and guerrilla warfare. What bourgeois experts understand, many revolutionaries fail to grasp; People's War as

synthesized by Mao Zedong is universally applicable in all countries of the world. It is the only military strategy of the Proletariat, and thus of the oppressed masses of the World.

The People's War is an Essential and Integral Part of Maoism

Further on, the Communist Party of Peru wrote in its *International Line*:

"In the face of this situation, in 1979, at the PCP's First National Conference, Chairman Gonzalo called upon the whole party to defend and apply Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought against the revisionist triple assault. The Party's principled positions remained firm and unalterable. In 1980, the PCP launched the People's War based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought. And it is with the application and development of the People's War that the PCP has advanced further in the comprehension of Maoism as the third stage of Marxism. Hence, at the Second National Conference held in May 1982 the Party agreed that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was the third stage of Marxism. The PCP was the only party in the world in the vanguard of the defense of Maoism, assuming the task of struggling for the unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists of the world so that this ideology be the command and guide of the world and Peruvian revolutions."

This is the line put forward by Chairman Gonzalo and the PCP, the Red Line in the International Communist Movement, to struggle for unification under Maoism. Let us emphasize the statement that Maoism was comprehended only through the People's War in Peru and that the PCP was the only Maoist Party in the world in 1982. This is completely true. What is important is not the word, but the content, and the content of Maoism was not clearly stated before 1982, and then only by the PCP. People's War is an integral part of this third and higher stage of the ideology of the proletariat; Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism.

It is good that Sison puts forward his line, even in a cowardly and mediocre way. It makes for another good opportunity to put forward the correct line of Protracted People's War in each and every country as the only path to Communism. The counter-arguments are well known to us and have been answered many times, but they are not well known to every revolutionary. Now, they can see for themselves - what is put forward against People's War, what the "alternative" is, and they can, for themselves, evaluate if this is a victorious path, or just the same old goose step down to the swamp of reformism, opportunism and parliamentary cretinism that so many of our forerunners have made, only to drown in this bitter muddy water.

Let us also recommend the following three great texts which are very relevant to this topic, not only to highlight the strategy of People's War, but on the question of how to view Chairman Gonzalo and how to evaluate the October

Revolution of Russia from our higher viewpoint today, conquered due to Maoism.

- Redaction of *Klassenstandpunkt*, German Federal Republic: *People's War - the Sole Path to Liberation*
- Maoist Communist Party, French State: *To Defend the Life of Chairman Gonzalo is to Defend Maoism!*
- Revolutionary Front in Defense of the People's Rights, Brazil: *Long Live the Shining October Path!*

These are expressions and examples of the great efforts of the Red Line to forward the line of Gonzalo, to promote and propagate the line of the PCP, and to give a new impulse to the International Communist Movement. They are expressions of how the Red Line gives guidance and support to Maoists in the whole world, and why Maoism is advancing now also amongst revolutionaries in the imperialist countries. The efforts must be saluted and studied by every Maoist.

The Red Line Will Unite the International Communist Movement Under Maoism

This response to Sison's text is made in a hurry. The question of People's War has been investigated and formulated a lot more thoroughly many a time, for example in the three texts above, and especially in the great documents of the Communist Party of Peru. It is written polemically, but it is not written with any

disrespect of the Communists and Fighters of the Philippines.

For 50 years the Communist Party of the Philippines has waged a glorious People's War. Communists and the masses have shed blood as a living and struggling part of the world proletarian revolution. It is not only a practical contribution to the International Communist Movement, but again proof of the invincibility of People's War and the universality of the People's War. The People's War of the Philippines is one of four People's Wars in the world today, and thus, it is important and deeply cherished by every true Communist. We wish for it to develop further and to succeed in wiping away the old state, for New Democracy, socialist transition and cultural revolutions until Communism. As long as the fire of People's War is burning, however meek the fire might become in periods, we salute the fire and celebrate it.

This hope and support is unwavering, whatever José María Sison might recommend as wise or flexible, but such support cannot and must not put a lid on the two-line struggle. Unprincipled unity is an expression of the black line, the bourgeois line, the line of liquidation and revisionism. Two-line struggle must be waged without fear of being out of order, because we know it to be a struggle of life and death for the world proletarian revolution.

The Red Line of the International Communist Movement upholds as true the fact that Maoism is the third and higher stage of the ideology of the proletariat and that People's War is universally applicable in each and every

country. This is the position of the left, this is the correct position, proven true again and again. This is the position that will prevail and is already uniting the International Communist Movement under one glorious banner for the first time in ages.

Unite under Maoism!

Reconstitute and reconstruct Militarized Communist Parties!

People's War until Communism!

AGAIN IN DEFENCE OF THE UNIVERSALITY OF PEOPLE'S WAR

Ard Kinera, Tjen Folket Media

26 June 2019

On the 5th of June 2019, the Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, José Maria Sison, put forth a text on People's War in what he defines as industrialized capitalist countries. The day after, we made public a response to this article, and Sison has replied on the 7th of June.

The reply is quite interesting. While the first text has to be read as a condemnation of the line of People's War being universally applicable, his second text is kind of a retreat. It is even less clear than the first article on the question of People's War. While the question is raised to the level of the title, it is not clearly answered in the article itself, not directly or beyond doubt, that is. It is still impossible to read these texts as anything else than an attack on the universal applicability of Protracted People's War, but the door is left with a tiny crack open.

We know the extreme flexibility of many opportunists. They are able to wiggle themselves through the most narrow cracks, and thus, they might pretend there is no contradiction between Sison's statements and upholding the necessity of People's War in the imperialist countries. As usual, they pretend "two merges into one" and want

nothing more than to run away from the two-line struggle.

Sison Attacks the Universality of Protracted People's War

It is necessary to shut the door closed. If Sison does not do this himself, we have to do it for him. In his first text, Sison wrote: "the term 'people's war' may be flexibly used to mean the necessary armed revolution by the people to overthrow the bourgeois state" and "what ought to be protracted is the preparation for the armed revolution" and "the revolution cannot win unless the capitalist system has been so gravely stricken by crisis that the ruling class can no longer rule in the old way, the people are desirous of revolutionary change and the revolutionary party of the proletariat is strong enough to lead the revolution". Even though we have made this more condensed, the line put forth is quite clear.

Since Sison is not in the habit of summing up his thoughts, we are forced to do it for him; in his view, People's War in the imperialist countries is nothing more than armed revolution, and the war itself cannot be protracted, only the preparations for it. This is a position against the strategy of Protracted People's War, but he does not clearly state it. If we misread, or as Sison claims, "put every part of his article out its clear context", he can, at any time, state clearly his position on the PCP's synthesis of Maoism and the understanding of People's War as being universally applicable. It is impossible to read his article as anything else than dismissive of this doctrine,

but if it does not represent his real stance, he might correct this at any time.

We know this is not the first time he has dismissed the universality of People's War, but who knows, he might have changed his opinion...

Dishonest Methods of Debate

In his short "Follow-up Note" dated 7th of June, Jose Maria Sison writes an "answer" to our text dated 6th of June. Again, Sison does not name anyone or answer anyone directly. Instead, he writes:

"Waging protracted people's war in any industrial capitalist country is not a matter of dogmatically asserting it or putting every part of my article out of its clear context."

We would state that the question of People's War, or any other key question in our ideology, neither should be a matter of passive aggressive statements that does not address or even directly quote the ones you call dogmatists. In and of itself, it is of no greater importance that Sison answers our text directly, but in the name of intellectual and – more importantly – revolutionary honesty, in the name of Leninist clarity, he should at least briefly name the Communist Party of Peru, quote at least some of their documents, or refer to any one of the documents and statements put forth by other Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Parties and organizations.

He does not, and it speaks volumes on the methods of Sison.

What is Old and What is New?

Sison writes:

"For many decades already, I have heard of the notion or threat to wage a protracted people's war in imperialist countries but to this day I have not seen any Maoist party proclaiming and actually starting it in any imperialist country." and "In fact, I am not aware of any Maoist party in an industrially developed capitalist country strong enough to lead any armed revolution with the participation of any sizable proletarian masses in the industrial and service sectors of the economy. (...)"

This could be a weighty argument, if it was not for the fact that he cannot show us any Maoist party *not* adhering to the strategy of People's War, and being of such quantity and quality. Even if we expand the period to a hundred years, there is no example of a Communist Party leading armed revolution in the imperialist countries, and not adhering to the People's War strategy. The only such struggles, led by Communist Parties, have taken the form of the national liberation war, in essence, People's War.

Sison is tired of the "talk" and "notion" of waging People's War, since he has heard of it in past decades (we dare say, since the Communist Party of Peru established this as a

Maoist principle in 1980, as the first only Maoist Party in the world). But he seems to be one of those that are never tired of the protracted legal accumulation of forces, in wait and want of the cataclysm of economical, political and military crisis of capitalism, making relations "ripe for revolution".

The strategy of protracted legal accumulation to the brink of crisis and revolution is an old strategy. It has been, and still is, the totally dominating strategy of "the Left" in Europe, of all trotskyite, hoxhaite and brezhnevite deviating parties and organizations in Europe, even of all, or almost all, that adhere to "Mao Zedong Thought", and of the seemingly endless flora and variations of so called revolutionaries.

The Maoist principle that upholds Protracted People's War, that lifts the asymmetric warfare of the proletariat and all oppressed masses up from the tactical level to the strategic, that establishes in theory the universality of People's War in each and every country of the world, is only established with the summation and synthesis of Maoism done by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru. It was only part of the doctrine since 1980, and especially since the General Political Line of the Communist Party of Peru was established in 1988. It is, thus, quite new, and even then, it was only one single Party in the world adhering to this line.

Sison is already tired of this "notion", but it is not a baseless speculation to make that, for him, the synthesis established by the PCP was tiresome from the beginning.

We make the assumption, and Sison is free to correct us if this assumption is wrong, that he never viewed the universality of Protracted People's War as correct or applicable, even when this was new to him. The years passing is not most important, it is the content. And it seems clear that the one that rejects the new and clings to the old is Sison himself.

Sison is painting a picture of the People's War strategy being something old in the imperialist countries, but we know it is not so. Upholding this strategy, and making it part of the general line for revolution, is very new in the imperialist countries. The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) sanctioned it in its statement of 1993, but not wholeheartedly. The revisionist Avakian never adhered to it in a real way, or with the same understanding as the PCP. It is true that the PCP fought for this line since they first adopted it, but it is a falsehood to portrait it as something old in the revolutionary movement of the west.

The New is Born Fragile

Amongst the RIM parties and the Marxist-Leninists supporting the People's Wars, and in the PCP itself, there were several contending lines in the 1990s, and not a clear dominance of Maoism proper. When real Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, principally Maoist organizations and Parties are now emerging in the imperialist countries, it is with the characteristics of something new being born. In its youthfulness, it has all the features of the new. It is small, it does not have a long track record, it does not have

all the quantitative mass that is the only thing that impresses the opportunist – but it has something much more important; it is developing, it is growing, it has the future ahead of it, while revisionism is old, rotten and only ripe for the dust bin.

When we speak of Maoism and the strategy of People's War in the imperialist countries, we must bear in mind the words of Chairman Gonzalo when he speaks of the New Power in the *Line of Construction* of the PCP:

"Comrades, it will be born fragile, weak because it will be new, but its destiny is to develop itself through change, through variation, through fragility, like a tender sapling."

Sison paints this picture of reality upside down, and confuses the tender light of dawn with the shades of dusk. He might have been seated in the first row, listening to the first tuning of instruments, and now he thinks the show is over, before the orchestra has even begun to perform the prelude.

On the Political Preparation of People's War

Sison states:

"There is no protracted people's war of any kind going on in any industrial capitalist country. (...) No serious preparations for it are being made. (...) It will take at least some years to prepare and to

realize the start of such armed revolution of the people."

We cannot really address the statement of no preparations being made. This might be true. It might not. But Sison's statement clearly shows that if anyone *were* to make such preparations, they should never tell Sison, since he feels obliged to inform the whole world of any such preparations and the seriousness of them. The other two statements we agree on, at least for the most part. No Maoist Communist Party is leading a Protracted People's War in the imperialist countries today, and such a People's War would have to be prepared for "at least some years".

On the content of such preparations for war, the author of this text would refer to the preparations made by the Communist Party of Peru which, in short form, is presented in the *Military Line* of the Party. We would again refer to the excellent article from the editorial board of the German magazine *Klassenstandpunkt, People's War – The Sole Path to Liberation*. We also could refer to some of Lenin's texts, amongst them the article *Guerilla Warfare*, where he writes:

"In a period of civil war the ideal party of the proletariat is a fighting party. This is absolutely incontrovertible." and "Every military action in any war to a certain extent disorganizes the ranks of the fighters. But this does not mean that one must not fight. It means that one must learn to fight. That is all."

This article of Lenin has clear limitations. The ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has moved on since 1906. But we emphasize the point that *one must learn to fight*, and the quotation of Mao Zedong stating that one must learn war by waging war.

The Communist Party of Brazil (Red Fraction) has written a new article on the militarization of the Communist Parties [*Lenin and the Militarized Communist Party*, PCB (FV)], and this article has been translated and publicized in *Dem Volke Dienen*. They have also made public other important articles on the topic.

We know these articles and excerpts are not sufficient, but it is a beginning, and there is much more to be read and said on the question, and more importantly; there is more to be done. The whole of the General Political Line of the PCP, and the complete body of work of Chairman Gonzalo, should be studied by revolutionaries today. It is stated that the strategy of People's War is established mainly by Mao Zedong, and his works must be studied. And, as the PCP has stated, the experiences of armed struggle in Europe should be studied, analyzed and synthesized. We would, especially amongst these, emphasize the protracted war of independence fought in Ireland. This war in its modern form has been waged without stop for over one hundred years, with its ups and downs, with its flow and ebb, with its victories and defeats, but never stopping. The traitors in the Sinn Fein leadership tried once again to liquidate it in the 1990s, but still the war is continuing in an industrialized, advanced,

capitalist country, subjugated by one of the most powerful imperialists in the world!

We uphold that the universality of People's War was established in the People's War in Peru, and that the question in the imperialist countries is not to establish the doctrine, but to apply it creatively on the specific conditions in the specific countries. The theory cannot make any more significant leaps solely in the realm of theoretical science, but it must do so in the midst of People's War.

It is a very common way of debating, a method we have often encountered, to demand every minor question, even the most remote and hypothetical, to be answered before one can act on the information we have already got. Have we not met a seemingly endless thread of questions on how every aspect of life will be organized in the future Communist society? As if the bourgeoisie had every such question of capitalism sorted out, before they led the charge on the Bastille! Sison has similar demands, and also distorts the whole problematically. It is posed like there is something completely different to wage war in imperialist countries than in the oppressed countries, like war has no universal laws, and like a gun works in a different way in Europe than in Asia.

Of course, one has to put emphasis on to the specific conditions of specific countries. There are qualitative differences between a country like England and the country of the Philippines. Sison might actually also have pointed to some of these, as they are obvious.

On the Practical Preparations of People's War

Sison writes:

"A people's war of whatever duration and scale is possible in the industrial capitalist country only after a period of preparations of ideological work, political education and mass work, party and mass organizing, clandestine accumulation of arms, politico-military training and Bolshevik style penetration of the reactionary armed forces. Such preparations or suggestions thereof should not be disdained or begrudged."

We would claim that none has disdained or begrudged preparations of this character, at least not us ourselves, though we do not blindly accept the "clandestine accumulation of arms" suggested by Sison. The People's War of Peru, and the People's Wars in other countries, have not been preceded by such, and neither by the "penetration of the reactionary armed forces". The seizure of weapons have mainly been part of the People's War in its initiation and development, and not its preparation.

The same is to be said by the penetration of the armed forces. But one must also emphasize the concrete situation of the Russian armed forces during the First World War being completely different from the imperialist armies of Europe and Northern America today, and thus the military line of penetration cannot be applied in a "Bolshevik style", at least not without a great deal of adjustment to the concrete conditions.

And in this question, one must apply the doctrine of the PCP when they state the generated organisms as being principal and the penetration of other organizations as being secondary. The penetration of the reactionary armed forces is secondary to generating the People's Army under the sole leadership of the Militarized Communist Party.

*The Importance of Combating Confusion and
Understanding War as "Politics with Bloodshed"*

The question of preparations before the People's War, and the first stage of it, are easily confused, with or without ill will. If one denies, or just does not take into account, the protractedness of the People's War, one can "postpone" it to the distant future where all objective conditions are "ripe". If one does not understand the bloodshed of war, if one is not clear on the military aspect, one might negate the war for protracted preparations without any real prospect of waging war. One might even, as we have experienced in Norway, and maybe also Italy, *develop a right opportunist line that portrays the protracted preparations as part of the People's War itself*. It is similar to experiences in several European countries, where adherents to Mao Zedong thought, or even Maoism, have dressed the political activities in the vocabulary of war. It in itself is not an error, but it becomes an enormous error if this negates the bloodshed and confuses the very concept of war with just simply politics.

Parts of guerrilla warfare might be applied in all realms of politics. We might find similarities to this, when Sun Tzu's eternal work "Art of War" is re-written and adopted for

the use of stock brokers and businesspeople. This is also true for the Proletarian Military Strategy. Many of the laws and concepts of this might be applied in political strategy as well, but we must emphasize the thesis of Clausewitz that war is the continuation of politics *by other means*, and the truth of Mao Zedong that politics is war without bloodshed *while war is politics with bloodshed*. The political work, part of preparing for People's War, is not war, it is simply politics.

The strategy of universality of People's War is not a question of simply changing the definitions and words while one continues the old practice of protracted legal accumulation of forces. The question of People's War is a matter of accepting that, in all countries, the revolution will take the form of Protracted People's War, developed from its limited, undeveloped and unadvanced beginning, but still developed as warfare proper, and not simply as the endless "preparation" through legal political work, primarily, as we have seen in practice, through elections, trade unions and NGO work.

In the preparations for People's War, everything must be for the People's War. We know the practice of Parties and organizations with the same position as Sison. We know that the talk of armed revolution is mere talk. We know they do not even study military theory. We know they only pay lip service to revolution. We know this to be true, even though many of them have no ill will, no sinister agenda, they are only "trapped" in the ideological framework of revisionism and especially dogmato-revisionism. They might talk the talk, but they do not walk the walk. Sison

plays the part of a crass judge when he makes the claim "notions" have been upheld for decades without even any serious preparations, but what really deserves a crass judgement is the track record of the accumulationists. They do not adhere to Maoism as it was defined for the very first time, they do not have a real answer for how to make revolution, they can only fall back to the century old practice of protracted legal struggle in the confines of parliamentarism and trade unionism.

Also, no war of the masses can be fought without propaganda, or without ideological and political schooling. The question of line is the most important, and secondly the question of a solid organization to bring the line into practical life, and key in this the question of cadres. The question of propaganda is essential to create popular opinion and also bring more people into the organizations, but this cannot only be propaganda against imperialism and capitalism, it must also be propaganda for the People's War. This cannot be done if the question is confused by the revolutionaries themselves by constantly leaving the door half-open for every imagined possibility or always postponing the question of war, that is revolution.

*Sison Advocates Right-Opportunist Stagism Counter to
the Communist Manifesto*

Sison writes:

"It is only a 'Left' opportunist, a fake Maoist or even an agent provocateur who has disdain for the lasting admonition of the Communist Manifesto

to win the battle for democracy against the bourgeois class dictatorship and who clamors for proclaiming and starting a people's war in an industrial capitalist country without the necessary preparations of the subjective forces and the favorable objective conditions that I have mentioned."

One might say "the cat is out of the bag". Sison doubles down and smears others with "fake Maoist" and even "agent provocateur", without any basis for such claims. Again, his wording is sinister. He speaks of "misrepresentation" in his first paragraph, but clearly everyone that has read our former article has seen no claim that People's War should start "without the necessary preparations"(!). His claims of others' disdain for the Communist Manifesto is also completely sinister.

Sison wrote in his first text [*On the Question of People's War in Industrial Capitalist Countries*]:

"Even if the material foundation for socialism exists in capitalism, the proletariat must first defeat fascism, thus winning the battle for democracy, before socialism can triumph."

In this context, this can only be read as Sison advocating a form of stageism. The thesis being, and we know it very well from many right opportunists, but also many an honest revolutionary, that in order to prevent revolution the bourgeoisie will apply fascism and then the first stage of struggle becomes the democratic struggle against

fascism, winning this before entering the stage of socialist revolution. But this has nothing to do with the *Communist Manifesto*, where Marx and Engels write:

"We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy."

Marx and Engels thus claim the necessity of establishing the proletarian dictatorship as a precondition to win the "battle of democracy". To raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class is to establish socialism, and thus this is winning the battle of democracy. Penetrating further into this question, it is revealed how Sison has fallen into stageism of a non-Marxist type. It is similar to the anti-monopoly coalition strategy proposed by the Moscow revisionists and their satellites in Europe. This strategy is simply summarized as the first stage being the coalition against monopoly capital and wresting the power from their hands(!), and then in the second stage waging socialist revolution against capitalism. This is the programmatic line of the revisionist "Communist Party" of Norway, and it is not so different in essence from the Sison line of firstly winning the battle of democracy (by defeating fascism) and then secondly "socialism can triumph".

Our position is that fascism can only be defeated in the midst of People's War, and winning the battle of democracy and thus winning the battle of state power, can

only be done by and through the socialist revolution, that is the People's War, and not in some pre-stage to this.

More on the Necessity of Militarized Maoist Communist Parties and Protracted People's War

We agree, and every revolutionary would, that People's War must be prepared by ideological, political and organizational work and politico-military training. Just as we agree that revolutionaries must apply both the open and legal as well as the clandestine and non-legal forms of struggle and methods of developing the revolutionary struggle. But guided by Maoism, we adhere to the doctrine of revolutionary war being the highest form of class struggle and the sole way of taking power. This must demand the full attention of the Communists to the military question, to preparing and developing People's War. It cannot be treated, like every right opportunist in reality does, as the last point on the agenda, the last thought added as if it was almost forgotten.

Further, it demands a Communist Party organized for the sole purpose of waging People's War. It is impossible for a Party organized in total legality to develop any clandestine and non-legal forms of struggle. To propose for such a legalist organization to take up non-legal forms of struggle is in reality the work of an agent provocateur. Sison is spewing such words against the Maoists, but with his policy of not naming names nor referring to documents, he can talk about "the pitfalls of the 'Left' and Right opportunist, the fake Maoist or the agent", with the slippery style of not accusing anyone and having to prove

anything. It is again a form of intellectual dishonesty which exposes Sison himself more than any other.

To be clear, to be Maoist is to adhere to the universality of Protracted People's War. It means to defend and apply this strategy, principally applying it. To apply People's War, one must apply the universally-applicable contributions of Chairman Gonzalo, especially the concept of the Militarized Communist Party and the concentric construction of the Party, the Army and the Front-New State. The Communist Party is core and center, it is the highest form of proletarian class organization, and it has to be militarized to be able to lead a People's War.

The Communist Party of Peru writes in its *Military Line*:

"The third moment (1980 to the present). The Party begins to lead the People's War. Its military line is formed with the 'Application and development of the Road.' This third moment has four milestones: 1) Definition; 2) Preparation; 3) Initiation; and 4) Development of the guerrilla war."

The same is universal for every People's War. It must firstly be defined, then prepared, then initiated, then developed. To clearly define it, one must wage two-line struggle against all old opportunism. As the PCP refers to Engel's thesis in the *Mass Line* of the Party:

"In a country with such an old political and workers' movement, there is always a colossal heap

of garbage inherited by tradition that must be cleaned step by step."

The theory of protracted legal accumulation is part of this colossal heap of garbage. It has to be swept away by the broom of Maoism. As all old traditions, it will reappear in new forms, even take the form of "Maoism". This has been a characteristic of the development of the proletarian ideology every step of the way. Revisionism was rebranded as Marxism, and has later been rebranded as Marxism-Leninism. And today it is rebranded as Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Why should it be any different today?

It should not, it could not, it has to be this way. So this is nothing to be afraid or surprised of. We are in favor of active ideological struggle, we fear it not, as we do not fear revisionism. Even when it is attempted to smuggle it into the movement, or when comrades blindly introduce it because they have not understood its revisionist content and are mesmerized by its shiny and polished surface.

Finally, none amongst the newest and youngest Maoist organizations should be arrogant in this matter, for have we not been struggling with such questions ourselves? The communist attitude is fearless in the two-line struggle, but at the same time humble. Reaching new highs, one must be careful not to, as we say, "pull the ladder up after us". We must not condemn or behave arrogantly against comrades or friends or masses, who are now where we were a short time ago, while we believe we have moved further.

As the Communist Party of Brazil (Red Fraction) has quoted from Chairman Mao [*Combat liquidationism and unite the ICM under Maoism and the People's War, About the C(M)PA critique of the Joint Declaration of 1 May 2018 - PCB (FV)*] – we must have two hands when we deal with these questions. On the one hand, we struggle against the incorrect lines, on the other hand, we wish all honest revolutionaries to join us if they do away with former mistakes.

Insight needs to be conquered, unity must be conquered, for the newborn, every breath and heartbeat is fought for. Life is struggle, and so the struggling movement is living, vibrantly, and the movement that shys away from struggle to promote unprincipled unity is dying and decaying.

Forward to the unification of the International Communist Movement under Maoism and People's War!

Define, prepare, initiate and develop People's War in each and every country!

People's War until Communism!

ON THE SO-CALLED UNIVERSALITY OF PROTRACTED PEOPLE'S WAR

Andy Belisario, PRISM

31 August 2019

Introductory Note

Two articles by a certain Ard Kinera, "Defend and apply the universality of Protracted People's War!" and "Again in defence of the Universality of People's War," have been posted respectively on 6 June 2019 and 26 June 2019 in response to Jose Maria Sison's two articles on the same subject. Kinera's articles were posted originally on the TFM site and reposted the same day on the Democracy and Class Struggle site. Since Kinera is raring for direct polemics on the question and feels short-changed by Sison's replies, I'll indulge him.

Before I comment on his articles, let me pose the question as directly as possible: Is Mao's strategy or theory of protracted people's war one that has universal validity in the present era, and particular applicability in capitalist countries?

Kinera will most probably answer a definitive "Yes", while I say "No, generally"—with certain qualifications and clarifications that will be presented further below. I will also show that Kinera is wrong not only on this question, but on a number of related questions particularly raised in his polemics with Sison.

"Protracted People's War" vis-a-vis "People's War" as a Generic Term

Kinera asserts: "Maoism puts forward the universality of People's War strategy, puts this forward as the sole military strategy of the international proletariat, applicable in each and every country applied concretely in accordance to the different concrete conditions." In another article he says in no uncertain terms: "[T]o be Maoist is to adhere to the universality of Protracted People's War."

He also says: "The Maoist principle that upholds Protracted People's War ... that establish in theory the universality of People's War in each and every country of the World, is only established with the summation and synthesis of Maoism done by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru. It was only part of doctrine since 1980, and especially since the General Political Line of the Peruvian Communist Party was established in 1988. It is thus quite new. And by then it was only one single Party in the World, adhering to this line."

Take note that in his two articles, Kinera sometimes uses the term "protracted people's war" and at other times simply "people's war". But it's clear, especially when he argues vs. Sison, that he treats the two as interchangeable terms in the context of the theory's "universality."

This is a crucial weakness in Kinera's arguments, since the protracted character of the people's wars that liberated China and Vietnam has a precise socio-economic context and political-military meaning for agrarian or semifeudal

countries that are oppressed by imperialism as colonies or semi-colonies. It is not merely expressed in numbers of years that armed revolutions in industrial countries could quantitatively measure up to.

Kinera also implies that the application of this universal theory of people's war in different countries is a matter of simply "being flexible in tactics," ergo, is not a question of difference in strategic line. This is another flaw, because it implies that CPs need only to concern themselves with tactics and no longer need to define their own strategies based on the particularity of their own countries—because, after all, their dear Gonzalo has already defined the Maoist "sole military strategy" of PPW for them!

The True Universality of People's War

The true universality of the term and concept of "people's war" is that of the justness and historic role of armed revolution everywhere throughout the world when waged by exploited and oppressed classes to overthrow exploiter and oppressor classes.

Marx and Engels had long developed this theory on the necessity of armed revolution by the masses of toiling people led by the working class, further clarifying the need to smash the existing bourgeois state machinery and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat in order to pursue and complete the socialist revolution. The basic principles of armed revolution by the proletariat and other allied classes were further elaborated by Lenin in his many works.

So, yes, in this sense, there should be no debate about the universal applicability of people's war in all countries ruled by the big bourgeoisie and its reactionary allies. Had Kinera kept his polemics within these bounds, about "people's war" being the equivalent of "armed revolution," then there would be essentially no debate on the question.

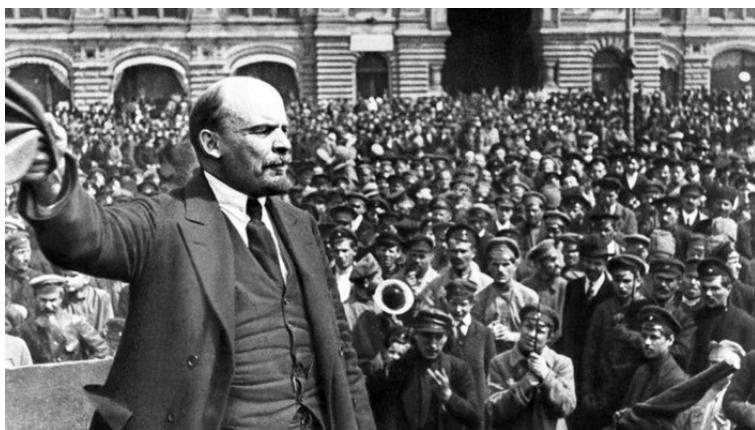
However, Kinera glosses over two important corollaries to this fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism. First, his arguments assume (even though not directly) that a revolutionary situation currently (or perennially) exists in all countries. Therefore all communist parties (CPs), if they are truly engaged in revolution, must adopt a corresponding military strategy and place armed struggle on their practical work agenda. And second, he insists that the Maoist strategy of protracted people's war is applicable to industrial capitalist countries.

I will take these two corollary questions separately.

On the Concept of Revolutionary Situations

While the fundamental task of armed revolution is axiomatic for all Marxist-Leninist parties (not just Maoist parties), it is not a dogmatic imposition that disregards concrete conditions. It doesn't oblige all these parties to adopt armed struggle as the main form of struggle in their countries, to implement a corresponding military strategy for seizing political power, and to immediately start combat preparations and build combat formations.

The crucial question to ask is this: Is there a developing revolutionary situation in the country, or not? If there is no such revolutionary situation on the horizon, then it will be putschist if not suicidal for a party to mobilize an army and wage armed struggle in an attempt to seize political power. If there is such a developing situation, then preparing for armed struggle and mobilizing all forces under the correct military strategy certainly becomes an urgent and practical question.



The concept of "revolutionary situations" should be familiar to anyone who seriously studies Lenin's works. From 1905-06 onward, Lenin had identified and described in detail the basic elements of a revolutionary situation through a close study of the 1905 Revolution. He further deepened his grasp of the concept in 1917. In *"Left-Wing" Communism: an Infantile Disorder* (1920), he summarized the necessary conditions for the existence of such a situation:

The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: it is not enough for revolution that the exploited and oppressed masses should understand the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; what is required for revolution is that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the "lower classes" do not want the old way and when the "upper classes" cannot carry on in the old way can revolution win. This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nationwide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that revolution requires, firstly, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking and politically active workers) should fully understand that revolution is necessary and be ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes should be passing through a governmental crisis which would draw even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is a rapid tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the number of representatives of the toiling and oppressed masses—who have hitherto been apathetic—capable of waging the political struggle), weaken the government and make it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly.

Lenin of course assumed the existence of a proletarian revolutionary party and its correct leadership of the masses as an additional necessary condition for such a revolution to advance and win victory.

Sison reiterates this basic Leninist view when he says, in *Basic Principles of Marxism-Leninism: A Primer* (1981-82):

In either capitalist or semifeudal country, armed revolution is justified and is likely to succeed when objective conditions favor it and the subjective factors of the revolution are strong enough. Objective conditions refer to the situation of the ruling system. A political and economic crisis of that system can become so serious as to violently split the ruling class and prevent it from ruling in the old way. The ruling clique engages in open terror against a wide range of people and is extremely isolated. The people in general, including those unorganized, are disgusted with the system and are desirous of changing it.

The subjective factors of the revolution refer to the conscious and organized forces of the revolution. These are the revolutionary party, the mass organizations, armed contingent, and so on. To gauge their strength fully, one has to consider their ideological, political and organized status and capabilities.

The objective conditions are primary over the subjective factors. The former arise ahead of the latter and serve as the basis for the development of the revolutionary forces. The Communist Party cannot be accused of inventing or causing the political and economic crisis of the bourgeois ruling system.

In short, an armed revolution can only be justified and possible when objective conditions favor it (serious political and economic crisis and violent splits among the ruling classes, who can no longer rule in the old way, while the broad masses are disgusted with the system and no longer want to live in the old way). But the proletarian party must do its work well to develop the revolutionary forces, by undertaking serious and long-term preparations even before the revolutionary situation sets in.

The problem with Kinera is that he disregards the matter of objective conditions in specific countries, the level of crisis, the political behavior of the ruling classes, the range of responses by various political forces, the level of consciousness and readiness for struggle of the masses, and thus, a realistic evaluation of whether a revolutionary situation really exists or is at least a developing trend.

Mao on the Strategy of Protracted People's War

From 1917 all the way through the 1940s, Lenin and Stalin—through their writings and through the Comintern—had consistently educated the CPs and revolutionaries of their time about formulating and

implementing the correct strategy and tactics appropriate to the class structure, history, balance of forces, and concrete conditions of their corresponding countries.

Lenin, Stalin and the Comintern warned the other CPs particularly in the 1920s and 1930s of the danger of "Left-wing" infantilism, brash insurrectionism and military adventurism, especially since the victories of the Bolshevik party and the young Soviet state inspired these other CPs to emulate and replicate (sometimes dogmatically) the Russian model, often to reject the painstaking and seemingly non-revolutionary work within bourgeois parliament, reactionary trade unions and the like.

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) especially under Mao had learned and benefited much from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and Comintern, so at first they followed the strategy and overall tactics of the Russian revolution. Due to the great differences between Russia ca. 1900-1920s and China ca. 1920s-40s, however, the Mao-led CCP eventually developed its own strategy and tactics, which would lead to nationwide victory 22 years later and would be emulated by other CPs in many countries under the popular rubric of "protracted people's war" (PPW).



The people's war in China's new-democratic revolution had fundamental commonalities with the 1917 October revolution but followed a distinctive strategy that was, in many ways, the latter's opposite. The most crucial difference was that in contrast to capitalist Russia, the main force in semifeudal China was the peasantry in its huge numbers, and agrarian revolution was the main content. This meant that the main area for developing Red political power was in the vast rural areas while the ruling reactionary regimes could entrench themselves for quite some time in the cities.

There was indeed in China, throughout the first half of the 20th century, an increasingly favorable revolutionary situation as defined by Lenin in 1920. But still, the armed revolution had to start with small and weak forces relative to the size and strength of the counter-revolutionary forces. The process of overcoming the tremendous

unevenness, accumulating strength in the countryside and eating up the enemy forces piece by piece, would take some time before the revolutionary forces were ready to take the cities and win nationwide victory.

It was on such comprehensive basis that Mao arrived at the necessary conclusion that, when compared to the relatively rapid process of armed seizure of political power in Russia, the process in China would be more protracted. This is the substantial meaning of protractedness, not merely the number of years of war. Mao would later elaborate this main theme to clarify other aspects specific to China's PPW, such as the role and principles of guerrilla warfare, army building, base-building, and the three strategic stages of the war.

The Maoist strategy of PPW and many of its operational and tactical principles clearly remain applicable, and flexible enough to be adopted further, to the different conditions in various countries that are semi-feudal or principally pre-industrial due to imperialist rule and plunder. On this there is no fundamental question, and we will not dwell much further on this point.

On Armed Struggle in Capitalist Countries

The question however remains: What should be the strategy and tactics for armed revolution in capitalist countries? Will the Maoist strategy of PPW also apply? Sison rightfully says a different non-PPW strategy should apply. But Kinera insists that Maoist PPW strategy applies, even as he sometimes drops the term "protracted":

"Maoists define revolution just simply as People's War, universally applicable also in the imperialist and mainly urbanized countries."

Since Kinera (and his idol Gonzalo) invoke Maoism as their framework, let us then go back to what Mao actually said on the matter. We quote from Mao's *Problems of War and Strategy*, written in 1938 as a well-known pillar of his military writings and major source of PPW theory:

The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle of revolution holds good universally, for China and for all other countries.

But while the principle remains the same, its application by the party of the proletariat finds expression in varying ways according to the varying conditions. Internally, capitalist countries practice bourgeois democracy (not feudalism) when they are not fascist or not at war; in their external relations, they are not oppressed by, but themselves oppress, other nations. Because of these characteristics, it is the task of the party of the proletariat in the capitalist countries to educate the workers and build up strength through a long period of legal struggle, and thus prepare for the final overthrow of capitalism. In these countries, the question is one of a long legal struggle, of utilizing parliament as a platform, of economic and political strikes, of organizing trade unions and

educating the workers. There the form of organization is legal and the form of struggle bloodless (non-military). On the issue of war, the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries oppose the imperialist wars waged by their own countries; if such wars occur, the policy of these Parties is to bring about the defeat of the reactionary governments of their own countries. The one war they want to fight is the civil war for which they are preparing. But this insurrection and war should not be launched until the bourgeoisie becomes really helpless, until the majority of the proletariat are determined to rise in arms and fight, and until the rural masses are giving willing help to the proletariat. And when the time comes to launch such an insurrection and war, the first step will be to seize the cities, and then advance into the countryside' and not the other way about. All this has been done by Communist Parties in capitalist countries, and it has been proved correct by the October Revolution in Russia.

We repeat and underscore what Mao said in no uncertain terms: The task of the proletarian party in the capitalist countries is "to educate the workers and *build up strength through a long period of legal struggle...* of utilizing parliament as a platform, of economic and political strikes, of organizing trade unions... There the form of organization is legal and the form of struggle bloodless (non-military). ... And when the time comes to launch such an insurrection and war, *the first step will be to seize the cities*, and then advance into the countryside..."

The contrast is stark as day and night: Mao says that PPW does not apply to capitalist countries ("when they are not fascist or not at war"), while Kinera insists it does. Mao (reiterating Lenin on the same question) says that the way to build mass strength towards eventual armed insurrection in capitalist countries is through a long period of legal struggle. Quite the opposite, Kinera says this "Petrograd model" is a "tired old strategy."

On this point alone, Kinera's entire house of cards about the "universality of protracted people's war" collapses into a heap. He claims to be Maoist but doesn't really get Mao's teachings. He is shown up to be an infantile Maoist, or worse, a fake Maoist.

The Specific Characteristics of People's War in Capitalist Countries

In his article on the same question, Sison rightfully asserts: "In industrial capitalist countries, the proletarian revolutionaries cannot begin the revolutionary war with a small and weak people's army in the countryside and hope to use the wide space and indefinite time in the countryside to sustain the war." He thus warns of the folly of applying the PPW strategy ("surrounding the cities from the countryside") in capitalist countries.

Kinera says: "Who made this the defining factor of People's War? Not the Communist Party of Peru at least. It is crystal clear from all Maoists ... that the path of surrounding the cities is not a universal law of PPW." Kinera's problem is that he swallows Gonzalo's distorted

definition of Maoism and PPW, forgets to check with Mao's original military writings and theory about PPW, and then complains—on that hopelessly confused basis—that Sison is making things up about the factors for a successful people's war.

Sison's point is that in the highly urbanized and other highly developed areas of capitalist countries, under current conditions when there is no full-scale war and revolutionary crisis, a people's army that launches tactical offensives with no sizeable mass base (at least equivalent to rural guerrilla bases in countries such as China and Vietnam) will be hard-pressed to counter-maneuver, employ guerrilla tactics, retain initiative, and hit back at the enemy's weak points, and much less be able to consolidate and expand their bases. In the most realistic and practical terms, such a people's army cannot sustain itself and continue to grow into bigger formations that combine military work, political work, and production work (as Mao defined the tasks of a people's army).

Such a people's army can only do so when other crucial factors favorable to the armed revolution's advance are at play such as an intense crisis that has greatly weakened the enemy state and demoralized its rank-and-file, extensive and expanding political base engaged in mobilizing the masses of toiling people, and of course correct Party leadership.

Sison rightly asserts: "As soon as that army [in a capitalist country] dares to launch the first tactical offensive, it will be overwhelmed by the huge armed forces and the highly

unified economic, communications and transport system of the monopoly bourgeoisie."

Kinera counter-argues that "this is simply not true." Then he proceeds to mention Italy's Brigada Rossa, Germany's "Red Army Faction", Japan's "JRA", the US Weatherman Underground and "Black Liberation Army", the Basque ETA, and "several active armed groups in Ireland," all of which continued to operate for a number of years before they folded up. He explains their failure this way: "... most of these groups were not armed with the omnipotent ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. They were not led by a militarized Maoist Communist Party. ... In most cases, the groups capitulated due to loss of morale or lack of Ideology and political leadership! That is true of many of these groups."

In short, Kinera focuses exclusively on subjective factors for the failures, e.g. "loss or morale" or "lack of ideology and political leadership" by a "militarized Maoist CP." He avoids giving weight to the objective factors, which were stressed by Lenin and Mao. In nearly all cases he mentioned, there were no favorable objective conditions for an armed revolution to advance and win, in addition to big gaps in preparing the masses (through open and underground channels) for eventual armed struggle. It remains for genuine Marxist-Leninist (ML) or Marxist-Leninist-Maoist (MLM) parties—certainly not Kinera and his Gonzaloite friends with their "militarized CP" mindset!—to make comprehensive summings-up to explain the eventual failures and draw lessons.

On Kinera's Vision of PPW in Capitalist Countries

But let us allow Kinera another chance to describe in detail his "Maoist PPW strategy" for capitalist countries.

If it is to be a protracted people's war, as in Mao's China and Ho's Vietnam, then where in the social and geographic terrain of a capitalist country, and how exactly, will the organs of revolutionary political power be organized and sustained?

Remember that the essence of protracted people's war is not simply to maintain fighting teams that use guns—which the fascists, the Mafia, and conspiratorial terrorists also do—but to mobilize the masses in the armed struggle in order to dismantle the bourgeois-reactionary state machinery (especially its armed forces) step by step and in likewise fashion to build the revolutionary state machinery and use it to defend the people's gains.

If it is to be a genuine revolutionary war, and not just idle prattle or showing militancy in street battles against the police, what is to be the main form that war is going to take? Armed insurrection in the cities? Pockets of guerrilla/partisan warfare in populated areas that will either grow into or support wider theaters of regular mobile warfare, or grow into (or support) armed insurrections? What types of military formations will be built and deployed, and from which main social class?

The Bolsheviks in Lenin's time, the CCP in Mao's time, and the Communist Party of the Philippines in the

current period, went into extensive and detailed description of their strategic, operational, and tactical principles in order to flesh out their theory and vision of armed revolution. Since Kinera disdains "hiding our intent from the masses," then this is his chance to explain his own version of "Maoist military strategy and tactics" in detail. My guess is that it will be a revised edition of Gonzalo's Peru ca. 1988, transplanted to current-day Europe. But Kinera should further expound.

On the Military Theory of the International Proletariat

Despite Kinera's misplaced flattery, Mao was not the original proponent or first theorist of people's war as "the military theory of the international proletariat." For Kinera (or his idol Gonzalo) to make this claim is a disservice to other great communist leaders who made equally valuable contributions to the proletariat's military theory and practice, as expressed in the strategic, operational, and tactical principles that they adopted for their respective revolutions and are now available for study and creative application by all revolutionaries of the world.

Marx and especially Engels closely studied military theory based on existing armies and military doctrines of their time, actual wars and battles not just among European states but in the mass uprisings of the 1848 revolution, the 1871 Paris Commune, and anti-colonial insurrections in Asia. Lenin led the Bolsheviks in turning the principles he expounded (e.g. in *State and Revolution*) into the practical tasks of organizing the Bolsheviks' armed uprising, of building the Red Army from partisan units and

reorganized tsarist troops, and of organizing Soviet power in the many localities wrested from the White armies. Stalin shared his rich experience acquired as a field commander in the Civil War, and encouraged other Soviet commanders to draw from their experience of partisan warfare (e.g. a growing understanding of deep operations with a peasant rear in a long war) and systematize these in the fledgling institutes of military science and training.



Bolshevik Red Guards in October 1917

Mao of course made immense contributions to proletarian military theory based on his vast leadership experience in the long years of Chinese revolution, as did Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan and Vo Nguyen Giap in the case of the Vietnamese revolution, and Sison in the case of the Philippine revolution. All of them successfully applied proletarian military theory to practical questions of people's war in their respective countries, and in the process enriched such theory.

However, these communist leaders did not set out to "synthesize" a "universally applicable theory" on how to wage armed revolution, or forge some "military theory of the international proletariat," as Kinera claims Gonzalo had done. In fact, these great leaders repeatedly emphasized "concrete analysis of concrete conditions" and carefully applied theory to grapple with the specific characteristics of their own countries and solve concrete problems of their own revolutions.

In one line of argumentation, Kinera even cites Thomas Marks, a US counter-insurgency expert, to show that a bourgeois-reactionary expert agrees with his distortions about the content and value of Maoist military strategy. Both Kinera and Marks bloat up notions of "asymmetric warfare" into some sort of "universal Maoist principle". In the process, they set aside the historically specific class basis of Mao's PPW strategy (a rural peasant war led by the proletariat) and its concrete social setting (semi-feudal country oppressed by imperialism). To strengthen his weak arguments about the universality of PPW, Kinera even goes as far as to arrogantly claim: "What bourgeois experts [like Marks] understand, many revolutionaries fail to grasp."

In another line of argumentation, Kinera belittles the proletarian strategy for armed revolution in capitalist countries, as forged by the Bolsheviks: "The plan to dogmatically repeat what they conceive as the October path of Lenin, more than 100 years later and against an enemy that has studied insurrection and how to beat it for

just as long, as some kind of surprise attack, is extremely naive." In short, Kinera believes that the all-wise enemy "has studied [Bolshevik-style] insurrection and how to beat it," but in the same breath agrees with counter-insurgency expert Marks that "guerrilla warfare is universally applicable."

On a "Militarized" Communist Party

What exactly is meant by a "militarized Communist Party"? Does it mean that the principle of democratic centralism, which applies to the essentially civilian and voluntary membership of a CP, will be replaced by a military command structure and its concomitant military law and military discipline? If so, that would be a monstrous distortion of the principles of proletarian Party life and would reflect an extreme case of purely military viewpoint or militarism.

Or does a "militarized Communist Party" simply mean that the Party operates underground outside of base areas, and that Party members are encouraged to learn military work, e.g. be familiar with guns and work in tight teamwork with near-military discipline? But CPs that lead armed struggles are already expected to adopt such methods, yet have no need to enshrine it as a principle on the same level as the name "Communist Party" or "Bolshevized party" and the practice of democratic centralism.

If the term simply means that CPs cannot viably combine open and underground channels of work, legal and illegal

methods, but must choose one or the other, to either be "militarized" or be guilty of "legalism", then Kinera is an infantile brat whose coloring pens are limited to blacks and whites.

On Protracted Preparations for Armed Revolution in Capitalist Countries

Sison rightfully says: "[T]he term "people's war" may be flexibly used to mean the necessary armed revolution by the people to overthrow the bourgeois state in an industrial capitalist country. But definitely, what ought to be protracted is the preparation for the armed revolution with the overwhelming participation of the people." He explains, in his various writings, about the need for a strategy for accumulating strength through the legal mass movement combined with underground methods when objective conditions for armed struggle do not exist.

In fact, it was by such Bolshevik strategy that Lenin greatly contributed to, that powered the two 1917 Russian revolutions to victory, and which he brilliantly expounded at the tactical level in his work "Left-Wing" Communism as applicable to many other capitalist countries during the Comintern period prior to World War II.

Kinera accuses those proletarian revolutionaries in capitalist countries who are patiently accumulating strength in the Leninist way (which he labels "Western accumulationists", including Sison) as "opposed to People's War but posing as revolutionary," as practising "reformism and legalism." He rejects "the line of accumulation of

forces through protracted legal struggle" as just passively waiting for the necessary objective conditions to arrive. He rants: "No wonder we have waited for a long time, and by this method one could go on forever, was it not for the fact that imperialism is doomed. These people want to do revolution by doing everything but revolution!"

He complains: "Protracted, very protracted, preparation by all legal means and sometime in the future, an armed revolution. It must be said again and again, that this has never happened. Not in a 100 years has this happened, even though hundreds and thousands of groups and parties adhered to this strategy. And the practice of these groups and tendencies has always been more or less identical to the practice of the openly reformist forces."

In short, Kinera disdains the work in reactionary trade unions and bourgeois parliaments that Lenin (in "*Left-Wing Communism*" and other works) had so patiently explained as important part of revolutionary tasks during a non-revolutionary period. Kinera disdains the very essence of mass line and painstaking mass work that Mao had so consistently reminded Communists to practice. He disdains the patient work of accumulating strength because he is too shortsighted to see its connection and eventual result in people's war. He wants people's war on the agenda, but is too impatient to build the strength needed to wage one in the future. He wants to see people's war now.

And yet, when Sison asks Kinera to show what the so-called "Maoist" champions of "PPW" in capitalist

countries" have achieved so far, the latter could only shrug off the challenge with the cavalier remark: "We cannot really address the statement of no preparations being made. This might be true. It might not. ... If anyone were to make such preparations, they should never tell Sison, since he feels obliged to inform the whole world of any such preparations and the seriousness of them." So much for "not hiding our intent as Communists!" which he is so fond of invoking.

Sison's remark about not seeing "any Maoist party proclaiming and actually starting" PPW in imperialist countries was obviously to show that truly serious Maoist formations in these countries see such course of immediate action as not viable for now. Kinera's response to this is dishonest and disingenuous: he basically challenges Sison to publicly reveal "any Maoist party not adhering to the strategy of People's War and being of such quantity and quality" (note that he dropped the word "protracted"). This is a cunning trap.

Kinera rejects the so-called "strategy of protracted legal accumulation to the brink of crisis and revolution" in capitalist countries as an "old strategy," and chides Sison of being "never tired of the protracted legal accumulation of forces, in wait and want of the cataclysm" of crisis. But he doesn't produce any arguments that show why such strategy is incorrect.

He simply condemns it as "the totally dominating strategy" of practically all Left forces in Europe, including those that "adhere to Mao Zedong Thought" (but not

Gonzaloites). This shows that Kinera is a hopeless infantile sectarian who cannot even derive good points of tactical unity with other revolutionaries and progressives who do not kowtow to Gonzalo Thought.

*Conflating the 1905 and 1917 Russian Revolutions into
"15 Years of Armed Activity"*

Kinera tries to prove the applicability of PPW in capitalist countries by conflating the three Russian revolutions into one: "The armed struggle of Russia in 1917 cannot be mentioned without also bringing forward the failed revolution of 1905. This was pretext to 1917. And the war lasted to 1921, over a span of 15 years, where there was a lot of armed activity not only in 1905 and 1917."

In short, he conflates the three Russian revolutions into "a span of 15 years" during which there was "a lot of armed activity" (ergo, supposedly long years of armed struggle). Kinera thus dishonestly conjures an illusion of a continuous PPW in a capitalist country. He conveniently forgets about the years of reaction (1907-1910) when the revolution was in full retreat, and the years of revival (1910-1914) when the Bolsheviks pursued tactics combining illegal work (but not yet armed struggle!) with the "obligatory utilisation" of many legal channels including winning seats in the reactionary parliament.

Kinera says nothing about the waves of favorable objective conditions that underlay both 1905 and 1917 (including the Russo-Japanese war, World War I, and the ensuing severe crises). In doing so, he also belittles the patient

process of accumulating strength in the open (and therefore essentially legal) workers' movement as well as in the underground before the said crises, which took many years, and which resulted in economic and political strikes and the emergence of the Soviets prior to the actual armed mass uprisings.

On the Size of the Industrial Proletariat in Advanced Countries

Kinera responds to Sison's explanation on differences of class composition between capitalist and semi-feudal countries, which underlies revolutionary strategy and tactics, in this way: "We must ask ourselves, what countries is Sison speaking of? There is no country in Europe or North America at least, where the industrial proletariat is the majority."

Again, Kinera is confused. Sison was clearly comparing the size of main productive classes in feudal vis-à-vis modern or industrial capitalist countries. In that regard, the industrial proletariat is indeed the majority class in capitalist countries compared to the peasantry. The peasantry, in turn, remains the majority class in feudal or semifeudal countries especially if other rural semiproletarians outside direct farming occupations are added up.

Kinera claims that "[those] employed in public or private services ... outnumber the industrial proletarians in most imperialist countries." He must be reminded that the modern industrial proletariat includes such service

workers, insofar as their class situation is most analogous to industrial workers. They also do not own any industrial means of production; their income comes from the sale of labor power to the capitalists; and their role in services also involves operating powered and automated machinery for mass-producing commodities (although in the form of services and not discrete material goods).

Apparently, Kinera automatically excludes from the industrial proletariat those sizeable working masses employed in major service firms in transport and storage, communications and media, health, and so on. There is no such class as "service proletariat" mechanically separate from the modern industrial proletariat, as if they are boxed off from the intense class struggles and the aspirations for socialism. If at all, the bulk of workers in service industries are a powerful motive force for revolution—if only an ML or MLM party takes serious notice and conducts painstaking social investigation, mass work, and union-based economic and political mass struggles among them.

On Winning the Battle for Democracy

Sison explains: "Even if the material foundation for socialism exists in capitalism, the proletariat must first defeat fascism, thus winning the battle for democracy, before socialism can triumph." He was actually anticipating the convulsions of capitalist crises and the rise of fascism, which impels all proletarian revolutionaries to prepare for future armed conflict even prior to the actual socialist revolution. This was in fact the scenario that led to Communist-led forces waging extensive partisan warfare

in Europe during World War II and even earlier during the Spanish Civil War.

Incongruously, however, Kinera goes ballistic and immediately screams about errors of "revisionism" and "peaceful transition from capitalism to socialism."

It was Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) who first expressed the proletariat's first revolutionary task in this manner:

We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to *raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class to win the battle of democracy*. The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degree, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total productive forces as rapidly as possible. (My underscore)

This concept ("winning the battle for democracy") must be seen in multiple but related contexts. First, in the context of 19th-century Europe, the proletarian movement had to fight for bourgeois democracy as part of its first attempts to gain and exercise political power, as was shown during the 1848 revolutions.

Later (and especially after the 1871 Paris Commune), Marx and Engels concluded that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery,

and wield it for its own purposes" but had to smash the existing state machinery. Still, they continued to uphold the democratic republic as the best form for the proletarian dictatorship that would implement socialist democracy as a thousand times more democratic than bourgeois democracy.

At the same time, in many countries with substantial vestiges of feudalism and autocracy, they saw the need for the proletariat to lead and complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution as a prelude to the proletarian-socialist revolution. Finally, since imperialism also brought forth the conditions of fascism and inter-imperialist war, it presented a still broader arena for the proletariat to lead all democratic forces in anti-fascist and anti-imperialist wars as a prelude to or as an extra dimension of socialist revolution.

In this regard, Sison mentions the possibility of "organizing proletarians with firearms" (for sport, community self-defense, voluntary security) as one of many legal ways of preparing the advanced masses in capitalist countries for armed struggle—which is very different from immediately waging armed struggle. He mentioned "current constitutional and legal standards" as one of many considerations in openly acquiring arms. This question in fact becomes an increasingly popular issue nowadays given the rapid rise of violent (even armed) neo-Nazi and ultra-Rightist movements in Europe and North America and the need for a clearcut proletarian call for combating fascism on all fronts.

But here Kinera turns ballistic again. He argues about "strict gun laws in Europe" (which of course was not Sison's point). He also wrongly associates Sison's ideas with the creation of Russian workers' militia (which emerged in the extremely revolutionary situation of 1917 and certainly was not just Trotsky's idea but incorporated into the Bolshevik program). The Red Guards were a creation of the Bolsheviks and the masses, not Kinera's idol Trotsky.

These are all opportunities for the proletariat to arm itself and seize power when the conditions are ripe, and make the necessary but calibrated or discreet preparations prior. But Kinera doesn't see the underlying Marxist-Leninist logic. He is singular obsessed with the template of PPW (as "synthesized" by Gonzalo) needing to be implemented now; anything outside the template is branded as revisionism, reformism, or legalism.

On Other Pertinent Matters

Like a hyper-active puppy, Kinera's debating style is to seize on certain phrases he doesn't like linguistically, to tug on bits of ideas that he relishes, and to chew on them until the whole thing turns into a sorry senseless mess. Then he barks at Sison for the sorry senseless mess.

Kinera throws a temper tantrum when Sison describes the claim about "the universality of Mao's theory of protracted people's war" as a mere "notion of some people."

He even complains of Sison's use of the terms "proletarian revolutionaries" and "the party of the proletariat" instead of "Communists" and "the Communist Party". (The two sets of terms are synonymous or at least near-equivalent if one is not misled by pseudo-communists fixating themselves on a few terms and merely waving the communist party banner. But Kinera the nitpicker just has to have his snide comments in edgewise.)

Kinera repeatedly accuses Sison of being opportunist, of wiggling through "the narrowest cracks," of "running away from the two-line struggle," and of using "dishonest methods of debate" – just because his infantile mind doesn't get Sison's main points as well as nuanced handling of the issues at hand. He is enraged that Sison's two articles do not name anyone, or even briefly name the Partido Comunista de Peru or quote "at least some of their documents."

When Sison reminds readers that a Communist Party needs to take its clandestine tactics and underground methods seriously, and not publicly declare its intent to commence warfare or to build a people's army "before the conditions are ripe for armed revolution," Kinera labels Sison as an opportunist and launches into a sanctimonious lecture on the famous dictum in the *Communist Manifesto*: "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims." This guy is too funny if not too much of a nitwit!

Kinera and his group Tjen Folkdet lack self-awareness and self-criticalness. Since 1998, which is more than twenty

one years ago, they have not advanced from a pre-party formation and have not become a revolutionary party of the proletariat or a Communist Party to lead the proletariat and people in any kind of armed revolution. Their protracted talk about PPW has not yet proven to be any different from the illusion of the social democratic and other reformists about the protracted evolution of capitalism to socialism.

Despite their mantra of PPW, they have not done anything to start any kind of people's war in Norway or assist such war if any in some other industrial capitalist country or give any significant kind of help to the people's wars going on somewhere else in the world. They still need to grow from their small-group status and infantile mentality by doing serious mass work among the Norwegian workers and engaging in truly MLM Party-building to be able to contribute more significantly to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution against imperialism, revisionism and all reaction.

On Real and Fake Maoism

But enough of Kinera's capers. Let us end with a most serious question of principle.

Kinera idolizes Gonzalo to high heavens, for his role in "synthesizing" Maoism: "Maoism was comprehended only through the People's War in Peru and that the PCP was the only Maoist Party in the world in 1982." "[T]he content of Maoism was not clearly stated before 1982 and then only by the PCP." "[It] is well known that when

Maoism was synthesised for the very first time, it was done by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru. This was finalized by the Party in 1982 in the midst of People's War."

These incredibly arrogant claims by Kinera (following his idol Gonzalo) is a brazen insult to Mao, who after his death apparently needed another thinker to "synthesize for the very first time" his well-known teachings and to pin on it the shiny new name Maoism. It is a historic slap at the Chinese Communist Party, which up to 1976 was led by Mao himself together with other proletarian revolutionaries, and which was guided by Mao's theories (which was called Mao Zedong Thought and eventually Maoism).

Mao's *Selected Works*, his many other writings and CCP documents ascribed to him, and unpublished talks (representing his immense contributions to Marxist-Leninist theory and revolutionary practice) have been in wide circulation outside China since the 1950s. These have been studied by countless proletarian revolutionaries in many countries, have been applied to varied conditions, and have inspired and helped guide many people's wars and internal rectification movements. Mao's works (and the theories of Maoism that run through them) remain publicly available for every serious revolutionary activist to study and grasp.

Kinera's claim that PCP was the "only Maoist Party in the world in 1982" is a blatant lie, if only because the Communist Party of the Philippines had already been

reestablished earlier in 1968 on the basis of its founding cadres' firm grasp of Maoist theory and its application to concrete Philippine conditions. In *Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party* (a major CPP document of reestablishment issued in 1968), Mao Zedong Thought was already repeatedly and correctly described as the acme of Marxism-Leninism in the current world era. The CPP has been assiduously building itself and achieving victories in people's war on the basis of MLM since then, as its voluminous documents, publications, and study courses show.



Kinera and his kind of infantile communists are grossly ignorant of the pronouncements of the Chinese Communist Party under the leadership of Mao since the onset of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966. Far ahead of Gonzalo, the Chinese communists have upheld the theory and practice of continuing revolution under proletarian dictatorship through cultural revolution in order to combat modern revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism.

They have considered the cultural revolution as the greatest and most original contribution of Mao to the

development of Marxism-Leninism and the guarantee for imperialism heading for total collapse and socialism marching towards world victory in the next 50 to 100 years from 1969. He have regarded the cultural revolution as the hallmark of the third stage in the development of Marxism and as surpassing his major contributions in philosophy, political economy, social science, rectification movement in Party building and people's war.

Despite his great theoretical and practical revolutionary achievements, Mao was modest enough to resist the superlative titles (except teacher) being addressed to him by his comrades. It took sometime for the comrades to gradually modify the reference to Mao's theoretical work from "Mao's thinking" to Mao Zedong thought (with a small "t") and finally to Mao Zedong Thought (with a big "T"). The significant content and consequences of Mao's theory and practice were already summed up and recognized upon his death in 1976.

It is laudable if indeed in 1982 Gonzalo was the very first to transcribe Mao Zedong Thought to Maoism. It is another matter whether his supposed "synthesis" of Maoism would surpass the summing up by Mao's own loyal Chinese comrades. By itself, the transcription from Mao Zedong Thought to Maoism is not a great achievement. Marx berated Paul Lafargue in 1883 for using the term Marxism for revolutionary phrasemongering against the struggle for reforms. Even then, Karl Kautsky popularized the term Marxism and subsequently used it to deny the Marxist character of Lenin's theory and practice, which he termed as Leninism.

To differentiate "Maoism" from "Mao Zedong Thought" is to nitpick and invent a false distinction. Even Gonzalo used the phrase Mao Zedong Thought until 1982. Whichever term is used, we certainly have no need for the dubious genius of a Gonzalo to "comprehend" or "synthesize" or canonize or reinvent it anew for the world's benefit. He could not have added to the achievements of Mao himself after his death in 1976. It is pure nonsense to make it appear that the continuous significance and consequentiality of Mao's theory and practice depend on the words of Gonzalo.

On Gonzalo's Revolutionary and Opportunist Record

The infantile or pseudo-Maoists characteristically use such expressions as Maoism and Gonzalo Thought to browbeat other people or trample on others as "revisionists" and "opportunist" without the concrete analysis of concrete circumstances and issues. As dogmatists and sectarians of the worst kind, they use such expressions as "Gonzalo is the greatest after Mao", sounding like evangelists who proclaim Jesus is the Lord. Mistaking struggle mania for revolutionary struggle, they are quick to throw invectives and do not really engage in a serious substantive debate."Gonzalo thought", as painted by Kinera, is not ideology but IDOLOGY.

Kinera and his fellow dogmatists and sectarians are incapable of recognizing the egotism, immodesty and arrogance of certain leaders who wish to proclaim their universal greatness even before winning the revolution in their own country and who actually brand their own

theories and practices with their own names, like Gonzalo Thought, Prachanda Path and Avakian's Synthesis (to proclaim himself the great leader of the new wave after MLM).

Let us focus on the idol of Kinera. Gonzalo may be praised for founding the PCP (Sendero Luminoso) in 1969 under the guidance of Mariategui and Mao Zedong Thought. But despite his belief that people's war can be started at the drop of a hat, Kinera does not take Gonzalo to task for being a sluggard, starting the people's war only in 1980 (eleven years after the PCP-SL founding), so different from the CP of the Philippines being founded on December 26, 1968 and starting the people's war on March 29, 1969 (three months after the CPP founding).

Despite his gross failures at building the united front as a political weapon from 1969 to 1992 , Gonzalo may still be praised for engaging in the building of the Party and the People's Guerrilla Army up to late 1980s when without respect for the facts of the revolutionary armed struggle he invented the illusion of "strategic equilibrium" and proceeded to seek a "Left" opportunist shortcut to victory through urban insurrection. Inasmuch as he abhors stages, Kinera can praise Gonzalo for disregarding the probable stages in the development of protracted people's war as previously defined by Mao. But Gonzalo is a gross violator of Mao's teachings on protracted people's war.

After his capture in 1992, Gonzalo was quick to capitulate to the Fujimori regime and become a Right opportunist by offering peace negotiations and peace

agreement with the regime, causing costly splits among the members and supporters of the PCP-SL. Since then, the infantile Maoists have made a blanket denial of Gonzalo's capitulation and Right opportunism despite subsequent manifestations of the truth since 1993, such as his public TV appearance, confirmation by his wife and testimonies of his lawyer who visited him weekly. On this basis, RIM started to become critical of Gonzalo's behavior.

Notwithstanding his flip-flop from "Left" opportunism to Right opportunism, which has caused the people's war to decline and nearly total defeat in Peru, Gonzalo deserves compassion for having been imprisoned for more than 27 years and for having suffered so many violations of human rights. The campaign to seek amnesty and release from prison deserves support and international solidarity, provided he does not call on the Peruvian revolutionaries to surrender and stop the people's war even under the revisionist pretense that the people's war can be resumed after his "genius" or "great thought" becomes available in the battlefield.

'UNIVERSALITY OF PEOPLE'S WAR' DEBATE
HEATS UP ON EVE OF MAOIST CHINA'S 70TH
FOUNDING DAY
Andy Belisario, PRISM

12 September 2019

Opinion by PRISM Editors

The debate is heating up on whether Mao Zedong's theory of protracted people's war has worldwide applicability today. The timing, while probably unintended, aptly coincides with the forthcoming 70th anniversary on October 1 of the People's Republic of China. Mao's theory developed and proved a success in China's civil and national wars through the late 1920s, 1930s and 1940s until the Communist-led forces won nationwide victory in 1949.



The current debate involves one side proclaiming that the principles of protracted people's war, developed and most comprehensively articulated by Mao based on the rich practice of China's revolutionary wars (1927-1949), are applicable throughout the world including the most advanced capitalist ones.

This camp, which usually describes itself as "Marxist-Leninist-Maoist, principally Maoist", also claims that it was Chairman Gonzalo (Abimael Guzman) of the Partido Comunista de Peru – Sendero Luminoso who first "synthesized Maoism" in 1982 and "raised it to a new level". It is supposedly this "synthetic Maoism" (equated to Gonzalo Thought) that enshrined "protracted people's war" to the level of "universality."

On the other side, Marxist-Leninists, many of them also Maoists, question such claims to "universality." They also contest other claims of the "principally Maoist" camp, such as the supposedly absolute role of "militarized Communist Parties".

In recent years, "principally Maoist" groups have publicized a renewed initiative to work towards a "United Maoist International Conference" (UMIC). In May 2019, several such groups pledged to organize a preparatory meeting for UMIC this same year. These groups are also pushing for a "two-line struggle" in order to unite "global Maoism" on the "universal validity of Gonzalo Thought and of People's War."

On 5 June 2019, the debate heated up when an article by Jose Maria Sison, "On the Question of People's War in Industrial Capitalist Countries" was posted on the Democracy and Class Struggle website. It was immediately criticized the next day by a writer going by the name Ard Kinera.

Joma Sison, who is founding chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines and is clearly no neophyte on the Maoist theory and practice of people's war, posted a sharp "Follow-up Note". Kinera continued the anti-Sison tirade with another post on June 26, containing more of the same notions based on Gonzalo's "synthesized Maoism". Sison's articles and Kinera's responses are posted on the DCS website.

The debate also began to get the attention of other Maoists, as reflected in recent posts critical of Kinera's line on the "Red Lamp" and "Otto's War Room" websites.

PRISM itself began to engage in the debate when our website recently posted "On the So-called Universality of Protracted People's War"

PRISM's editors have decided to help bring into sharper focus the issues in the ongoing debate by starting to compile materials that we see as relevant to the most important issues while at the same time remaining faithful and consistent to what Mao's theory of protracted people's war actually propounded in his own historical place and time. We will soon start posting the said materials.



Mao moves his headquarters away from Yenan with the CCP-led People's Liberation Army in the increasingly mobile warfare during the homestretch of the second revolutionary civil war vs. the US-backed Guomindang armies of Chiang Kai-shek.

We hope that disseminating these materials among a wider range of anti-imperialist, socialist, and other progressive activists will contribute to a deeper understanding and appreciation of Mao's theory of protracted people's war. Its real historical impact and validity among countries and peoples fighting for national liberation and people's democracy on the long road to socialism takes additional relevance as we commemorate the 70th anniversary of that earth-shaking victory of a great people's war.

TO DISCARD PEOPLE'S WAR IS TO DISCARD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION - PART I

Ard Kinera, Red Flag editorial group

24 September 2019

"At present, the modern revisionists are opposing Marxism-Leninism under the pretext of opposing dogmatism, are renouncing revolution under the pretext of opposing "Left" adventurism, and are advocating unprincipled compromise and capitulationism under the pretext of flexibility in tactics. If a resolute struggle is not waged against modern revisionism, the international communist movement will be seriously harmed."

Editorial in Renmin Ribao, December 31, 1962

"While the leaders of the CPSU and their followers talk about the use of all forms of struggle, in reality they stand for legalism and discard the objective of the proletarian revolution on the pretext of changing forms of struggle. This is again substituting Kautskyism for Leninism."

*Editorial Departments of Renmin Ribao (People's Daily)
and Hongqi (Red Flag), 1964*

"Epistemologically speaking, the source of all erroneous views on war lies in idealist and mechanistic tendencies on the question. People with such tendencies are subjective and one-sided in their approach to problems. They either indulge in groundless and purely subjective talk, or, basing

themselves upon a single aspect or a temporary manifestation, magnify it with similar subjectivity into the whole of the problem. But there are two categories of erroneous views, one comprising fundamental, and therefore consistent, errors which are hard to correct, and the other comprising accidental, and therefore temporary, errors which are easy to correct. Since both are wrong, both need to be corrected. Therefore, only by opposing idealist and mechanistic tendencies and taking an objective and all-sided view in making a study of war can we draw correct conclusions on the question of war."

Mao Zedong, On Protracted War, 1938

Introduction

The cat is out of the bag. On the 3rd of september, the web page of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines published an article signed Andy Belisario with a clear position against the universality of people's war. First published by PRISM, "People's Resource for International Solidarity and Mass Mobilization", the article has been promoted actively by the ILPS chairman Sison in social media.

The article is named 'On the so-called universality of Protracted People's War' and in an editorial the PRISM editors calls this a 'major response by Andy Belisario to the simmering debate on the "universality of people's war"'. It is directed against two articles signed Ard Kinera, published by TFM. The articles was published in june, in response to articles by the founding chairman of the

Communist Party of the Philippines, José Maria Sison – now chairperson of the International League of People's Struggle (ILPS). [*Edit:* This is an error, since june 2019 he is only Chairperson Emeritus in the ILPS, *TFM editor.*]

Belisario is letting the cat out of the bag. He is letting out all of the cats. And Sison is crossing a metaphorical Rubicon by promoting this article. We find this to be an occasion to celebrate, for it is making the contradiction clear and outspoken. There is two lines, and these lines are mutually exclusive.

The draft of this our article was made mainly by Ard Kinera, as the two first articles. But this one has been criticised, edited and rewritten by the editorial group of the new theoretical magazine Red Flag. The finished article is thus the result of a collective effort, and the subject pronoun of this text is then "we" and not "I".

In finishing the text, it was divided into two parts, where the second part is of lesser importance in our view. This was done to make this first part more available for the readers. Still, we hope comrades will read both parts and find the whole article helpful. Even though it addresses the concrete article of Belisario, and the stance of Sison, the positions and questions raised are the same in debates and twoline-struggle in many countries. If we address them correctly, our article will be of help to Maoists in any country, especially in the imperialist ones.

The article is dedicated to the Unified Maoist International Conference and the comrades fighting for its

realization, but the content and form is our own through and through.

– Editorial group of *Red Flag*, September 2019

People's War is Protracted War

Belisario writes:

"Take note that in his two articles, Kinera sometimes uses the term "protracted people's war" and at other times simply "people's war". But it's clear (...) that he treats the two as interchangeable terms in the context of the theory's "universality."

This is a crucial weakness in Kinera's arguments, since the protracted character of the people's wars that liberated China and Vietnam has a precise socio-economic context and political-military meaning for agrarian or semifeudal countries that are oppressed by imperialism as colonies or semi-colonies. It is not merely expressed in numbers of years that armed revolutions in industrial countries could quantitatively measure up to."

It is true that we understand people's war as protracted in its essence, and thus uses the words Protracted people's war and people's war as interchangeable. We do not simply or dogmatically claim this, but argue from facts and historical experience. No revolutionary war, that is people's war, has ever been 'brief'. They have always had a protracted character, not only in the agrarian countries.

The revolution in Russia must be understood as beginning, also its military side, prior to 1905 and not conquering All Russian power before 1921. Still, we would agree the most precise is simply people's war.

The Communist Party of Peru (CPP) writes in its *Military Line*:

"Mariátegui indicated and outlined fundamental ideas on revolutionary violence. He said: 'There is no revolution that is moderate, balanced, calm, placid.' 'Power is conquered through violence... it is preserved only through dictatorship.' He conceived war as being protracted in nature: 'A revolution can only be fulfilled after many years. Frequently it has alternating periods of predominance by the revolutionary forces or by the counterrevolutionary forces.'

Thus, before Maoism was synthesized, great Marxists understood this to be fact – revolution must be protracted. Even Rosa Luxemburg in *Reform or Revolution*, long pre-dating both Leninism and Maoism, both the Russian revolution and the people's war in China, makes a similar point when she writes:

"In the first place, it is impossible to imagine that a transformation as formidable as the passage from capitalist society to socialist society can be realised in one happy act. (...) The socialist transformation supposes a long and stubborn struggle, in the course of which, it is quite probable the proletariat

will be repulsed more than once so that for the first time, from the viewpoint of the final outcome of the struggle, it will have necessarily come to power 'too early.'

In the second place, it will be impossible to avoid the 'premature' conquest of State power by the proletariat precisely because these "premature" attacks of the proletariat constitute a factor and indeed a very important factor, creating the political conditions of the final victory. In the course of the political crisis accompanying its seizure of power, in the course of the long and stubborn struggles, the proletariat will acquire the degree of political maturity permitting it to obtain in time a definitive victory of the revolution. Thus these 'premature' attacks of the proletariat against the State power are in themselves important historic factors helping to provoke and determine the point of the definite victory. Considered from this viewpoint, the idea of a "premature" conquest of political power by the labouring class appears to be a polemic absurdity derived from a mechanical conception of the development of society, and positing for the victory of the class struggle a point fixed outside and independent of the class struggle."

In its essence, this points to the necessity for the proletariat to be politically matured through struggle and to grasp for power, even though the right opportunists hold it to be "too early". This do not only apply generally

to political struggle, but specifically also to revolution, that is revolutionary war of the masses, thus making this protracted in its character .

In the *Military Line* of the Communist Party of Peru, which is the center of the General Political Line of the Party and the concentrated expression of Gonzalo Thought, section 3 of the chapter on "People's War" is called "The Protracted War". Here they write:

"The People's War is protracted because it derives from the correlation between the enemy's factors and our factors that are determined by the following four fundamental characteristics: The first is that Peru is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial society in which a bureaucratic capitalism is unfolding; the second is that the enemy is strong; the third is that the People's Guerrilla Army is weak; and the fourth is that the Communist Party leads the People's War. From the first and fourth characteristics we can derive that the People's Guerrilla Army will not grow too rapidly and will not defeat its enemy soon. These peculiarities determine the protracted character of the war."

Only one of these four characteristics has to do with the semi-feudal, semi-colonial character of Peru. The three other characteristics will apply in all people's war, that is all revolutions, and thus, by these standards, makes the people's war a protracted war also in imperialist countries.

We argue the point, that the people's war must be protracted because it cannot be quick. Everywhere, the enemy is strong. Everywhere, the People's Army is either weak or non-existing. Everywhere, the Communist Party must lead the people's wars. The people's war must be developed from the limited, relatively simple and low level, to the higher, more complex and advanced level. The People's Army cannot pop up into existence. The forces cannot be accumulated in total legality. The enemy will not allow it. Revisionism will corrode every attempt in this direction. One cannot learn war without waging war, and the red power, proletarian power, must mature over time. It cannot wait for "ripe" conditions, it must always be "too soon" as Luxemburg stated.

On the Necessity of Particular Strategy and a Guiding Thought

Belisario writes:

"Kinera also implies that the application of this universal theory of people's war in different countries is a matter of simply 'being flexible in tactics,' ergo, is not a question of difference in strategic line."

Here we encounter what is typical for his whole texts, and which is typical for many opportunist writers. Belisario does not quote and he is inaccurate to serve his own agenda. He even put quotation marks on claims that are not quotes, giving the impression they are...

We do not claim that each revolution does not need its own strategy. This is quite ludicrous. True, we uphold the strategy of people's war to be universally applicable. Just as Maoism as a whole is so. Just as we uphold the contributions of Chairman Gonzalo of universal applicability. But applying people's war to a specific country does not only demand specific tactics but also specific strategy. And not only a strategy for the entire process of revolution, but for parts of this; a strategy for a phase or a stage, a strategy for a campaign etc.

The strategy of the Communist Party of one country must be part of the strategy of the International Communist Movement. And thus, the revolution of one country must be guided as part of the World Revolution.

But, as we have stated as clearly as we think possible, we uphold people's war to be universally applicable and the sole path to communism. People's war is the only road to power for the proletariat in each and every country, and in the world as a whole.

Belisario writes, on the basis of the mentioned non-quote of ours:

"This is another flaw, because it implies that CPs need only to concern themselves with tactics and no longer need to define their own strategies based on the particularity of their own countries—because, after all, their dear Gonzalo has already defined the Maoist "sole military strategy" of PPW for them!"

A rubbish claim. On contrary, Chairman Gonzalo, and the Communist Party of Peru explain in their 'Fundamental Documents' that every revolution must develop not only their own strategy, but even their own guiding thought:

"Moreover, and this is the basis upon which all leadership is formed, revolutions give rise to a thought that guides them, which is the result of the application of the universal truth of the ideology of the international proletariat to the concrete conditions of each revolution; a guiding thought indispensable to reach victory and to conquer political power and, moreover, to continue the revolution and to maintain the course always towards the only, great goal: Communism; a guiding thought that, arriving at a qualitative leap of decisive importance for the revolutionary process which it leads, identifies itself with the name of the one who shaped it theoretically and practically."

The concept of Guiding Thought is masterly explained further in the article "Regarding the thought of Lenin" in the magazine "El Maoista", and translated and published in english by the comrades of "Dem Volke Dienen". In other words, the position of the Communist Party of Peru, Chairman Gonzalo and the Left of the International Communist Movement, is that the universal truth of Maoism must indeed be applied to the concrete conditions of every revolution. This should be known by Belisario, as he has written a quite extensive reply to our articles. He cannot have written this without reading the Fundamental

Documents of the Communist Party of Peru, since this is most important to this debate. He then must know that the line of Gonzalo and the Maoists, is that there cannot be universal applicability without concrete application. There cannot be universality without particularity. If people's war is universal, it must be concretely and particularly applied. If it cannot be applied particularly, it is not universal. So this has to be our stance, our position, and Belisario has to know. Thus his claim must be sinister for polemical reasons.

The Right Opportunists and the Particularities of Imperialist Countries

They claim we do not concern ourselves with strategies based on the particularities of each country. But does Belisario and Sison bring forth any useful lessons on the particularities and strategies in the imperialist countries? The right opportunists does not engage in practice with this task with the revolutionary optimism it demands of us. Not with the conviction that we are in the strategic offensive of the world revolution, imperialism being rotting capitalism and the world being ripe for revolution.

Instead the task they seem to focus all energy on, is finding "particular" difficulties of making revolution. Only particular strengths of the enemy and weaknesses of the communists, and the negative assertions they have made have often been proven wrong. While we should know our weaknesses and the enemies strengths, we also know the famous words of Mao:

"All reactionaries are paper tigers. In appearance, the reactionaries are terrifying, but in reality, they are not so powerful. From a long-term point of view, it is not the reactionaries but the people who are powerful."

This long term point of view is rejected by Sison and Belisario in fearmongering on behalf of the tiger. Sison spreads fear that any guerilla "will be overwhelmed by the huge army" and this fear is reiterated by Belisario.

They spread this attitude, because they have not taken upon themselves to look at the particularities of the imperialist countries with true revolutionary optimism and a dedication to make revolution. Maoists have addressed the particularities of the proletariat in these countries, making class analysis of their countries and they have addressed the particularities of armed struggles in imperialist countries. They have creatively used the particular situations of these countries to find opportunities for struggle. Sison and Belisario have failed to do this.

Their analysis of the particularities of these countries is so weak that they write that they are "industrialized urbanised capitalist countries" instead of pointing out imperialism as the principal characteristic of these countries. They have not creatively used these particularities for developing revolutionary struggle. And Sison's interest of the particularities of armed struggle is not based in the experience of actual armed struggle in

imperialist countries, but merely his own imagination of the huge army smashing any insurrection.

On Using Lenin's "Left-Wing' Communism" as Justification

On the basis of his "misunderstanding", Belisario seek to give a lecture on "The revolutionary situation". And he tries to use Lenin's work on 'Left-Wing' Communism.

In 1964, the Editorial Departments of *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) and *Hongqi* (Red Flag) answered similar attacks from modern revisionism against the Communist Party of China:

"The leaders of the CPSU often make use of Lenin's great work, "Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder', to justify their erroneous line and have made it a 'basis' for their attacks on the Chinese Communist Party.

This is of course futile. Like all his other works, this book of Lenin's can only serve as a weapon for Marxist-Leninists in the fight against various kinds of opportunism and can never serve as an instrument of revisionist apologetics.

When Lenin criticized the 'Left-wing' infantile disorder and asked the party of the proletariat to be skilful in applying revolutionary tactics and to do better in preparing for revolutions, he had already broken with the revisionists of the Second

International and had founded the Third International.

Indeed, in "Left-Wing' Communism' he stated that the main enemy of the international working-class movement at the time was the Kautsky type of opportunism. Lenin repeatedly stressed that unless a break was made with revisionism there could be no talk of how to master revolutionary tactics."

It is no coincidence that Belisario tries to make use of Lenin's work. We have seen it before. But we maintain that the main danger is from the right. From Khrushchev – in disguise of Leninism – to Hua-Deng – disguised as Mao Zedong Thought – and today the right opportunist line in Peru and in the international movement disguised of Maoism. The main danger is not 'Left-Wing' Communism. It exists, it is a danger first and foremost in the form of dogmatism which really serves the right, but the main danger is right opportunism.

It is no coincidence that Gonzalo and those who adhere to his line, is called secterians and dogmatists. But the real dogmatist is Belisario himself, when he turns to a quote by Mao in 1938 to prove his point. He quotes Mao saying:

"The one war they want to fight is the civil war for which they are preparing. But this insurrection and war should not be launched until the bourgeoisie becomes really helpless, until the majority of the proletariat are determined to rise in arms and fight,

and until the rural masses are giving willing help to the proletariat. And when the time comes to launch such an insurrection and war, the first step will be to seize the cities, and then advance into the countryside' and not the other way about. All this has been done by Communist Parties in capitalist countries, and it has been proved correct by the October Revolution in Russia."

Firstly, we unite with the Communist Party of Peru when they understand the October Revolution as people's war. This is a new understanding, but true. Secondly, is it true that "all this" has been done by Communist Parties in capitalist countries? Has there been any revolutions where insurrection and war has been launched when "the majority of the proletariat is determined to rise in arms and fight"? We do not know of such revolutions. It is simply dogmatism to repeat such a quote as it was a factual description of history. Chairman Mao was eternally great, but this quote is not proof that people's war is not universal. Neither is other potential quotes by Mao or the Chinese Communists. We know that this was their line also in other documents of later dating, but it does not prove the line of people's war is wrong. This question is not decided by "he said", but the content of what is being said and if it is correct in the light of practice, especially revolutionary practice and revolutionary war.

The protracted legal struggle resulting in urban insurrection and civil war has not led to revolution. Not in Russia, nor in any other country. It is simply not the experience of our class. On the other hand, our experience

is people's war being victorious. It has been synthesized by Mao Zedong and Chairman Gonzalo has made clear that this synthesis is a integral and universally applicable part of Maoism.

Let us dwell also with the fact, that not only we argue the point of the Communist Party of Peru, that the Russian revolution should be understood as people's war, we argue this was not precursed by ages of legal work to accumulate forces. The communist party was mainly organized clandestinely. They combined legal work with illegal work. The party was well drilled in secrecy. This should also be included when we learn from this experience. The right opportunists tend to neglect also this part of our history.

Is Revolutionary Theory Even Important?

Belisario writes:

"Quite the opposite, Kinera says this 'Petrograd model' is a 'tired old strategy.'"

Again, as we have noted, this speaks to Belisario's rotten method of debate. It is the same as Sisons. He does not quote us, but here he gives the impression of doing so. Neither of our two articles include the phrase "Petrograd model" or "tired old strategy". We did quote the Communist Party of Peru writing:

"To understand this key question it is helpful to keep in mind the fact that since the Petrograd insurrection this model has not been repeated (...)

and to see that in the end, the October Revolution was not only an insurrection but a revolutionary war that lasted several years. Consequently, in the imperialist countries the revolution can only be conceived of as revolutionary war and today this can only mean people's war."

Why does Belisario make up quotes? Why does he put together different claims and statements? Again, it must be to serve his agenda. Or he is simply lazy. In any way, it is the typical Right Opportunist way, being lazy and inaccurate in the realm of revolutionary theory. It is simply not that important to them.

Belisario quotes Mao from his 1938-speech "Problems of war and strategy" stating that the main form of revolutionary organizing in the imperialist countries is one of protracted legal struggle leading to insurrection and war, and thereby concludes:

"Mao says that PPW does not apply to capitalist countries, while Kinera insists it does. ... On this point alone, Kinera's entire house of cards about the "universality of protracted people's war" collapses into a heap. He claims to be Maoist but doesn't really get Mao's teachings. He is shown up to be an infantile Maoist, or worse, a fake Maoist."

It is worth dwelling on this point. Firstly, all Maoists need to pay attention to what Belisario says and Sison promotes; if you defend, promote and apply people's war as universal, you are an infantile or fake Maoist who do

not understand the teachings of Mao. This is a clear position. Sison and the web page of NDFP has promoted this stance, and with no modifiers.

The second thing worth dwelling on is Belisarios apparent view that one Mao-quote, in a speech on the specific character on revolutionary war in China from 1938, is enough to settle the question of revolutionary strategy in the imperialist countries today, or for that matter provide a conscientious portrayal of Mao's teachings and theory on people's war. Why does not Belisario instead quote Mao on the "three wrong views" on "How to study war" ("Problems of strategy in China's revolutionary war", 1936)? Because Belisario would then openly place himself among those who "cut the feet to fit the shoes" by only studying revolutionary war in this or that particular country, and never the general laws of revolutionary war. Why not quote from Mao's later summaries of the history of the Communist Party of China ('Some experiences in our party's history', 1956)? Because Belisarios "analysis" of the Chinese revolution as a kind of "Russian opposite" would turn into thin air confronted with the actual historical experiences summarized by Mao, emphasizing much more the similarities than the "crucial differences" supposed by Belisario. However, if one follows the hermeneutical method of Belisario, then a carefully picked quote will suffice, distorting Mao to promote legalism and parliamentary cretinism at all cost and argue against universality of armed struggle. What a spectacular and unabashed form of scholasticism that here poses as "Maoist analysis". Hence Belisarios conclusion that a synthesis made in 1980, refined during the development of

people's war in Peru, propagated and elaborated up until today and beyond, is a mere "house of cards" because this synthesis was not fully developed by Mao already in 1938. What an extreme form of dogmatism!

Everchanging Development in Both Practice and Theory

In 1928, Mao wrote the article 'Why is it that Red Political Power Can Exist in China'. Also a favorite of the types of Belisario, setting out to topple 'houses of cards' and dismiss the universality of people's war. The comrade editors of the selected works of Mao including this article has added an interesting footnote reading:

"(...) Thus, much as in China, it has become possible for the peoples of all, or at least some, of the colonial countries in the East to maintain big and small revolutionary base areas and revolutionary regimes over a long period of time, and to carry on long-term revolutionary wars in which to surround the cities from the countryside, and then gradually to advance to take the cities and win nation-wide victory. The view held by Comrade Mao Tse-tung in 1928 on the question of establishing independent regimes in colonies under direct imperialist rule has changed as a result of the changes in the situation."

Let us dwell with this important reminder, that the great Chairman Mao was able to change his view as a result of changes in the situation. Not a surprise to us, but still worth noting. We hold that the theory has to develop even

further on the basis of the everchanging concrete situation, and also our enriched understanding of the history.

An Objective Factors and Failures of Armed Groups in Imperialist Countries

Belisario dismiss our position on why most armed groups of the 1960's, 70's and 80's disintegrated in Europe and North-America. Belisario writes:

"In short, Kinera focuses exclusively on subjective factors for the failures, e.g. 'loss or morale' or 'lack of ideology and political leadership' by a 'militarized Maoist CP.' He avoids giving weight to the objective factors, which were stressed by Lenin and Mao."

It is true the focus was on the subjective factors. The experience of Ireland is proof neither the objective factors, nor the counter revolutionary enemy, defeated these armed organizations. Belisario does not propose a counter-explanation to this, he simply state that this is something to be figured out. Ofcourse, our articles did not pretend to have the full and final analysis and synthesis of the experience of armed struggle in the imperialist countries. Far from it! And Belisario knows this, and yet again fall into dishonesty. Our position is simply that protracted armed struggle has been proven to be possible in imperialist countries. And this is proof against the claim that any such attempt would be smashed by the "huge army" of the reactionaries.

As opportunist always do, Belisario throws around the word "failure". In their vocabulary, all the greatest achievements of revolutionary struggle seem to be "failures". But how do real communists sum up an enormous "failure" like the Paris Commune of 1871? Karl Marx wrote:

"Working men's Paris, with its Commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class."

This is the attitude of the founder of Marxism, today Maoism, towards a failure of great magnitude. The armed struggles in the imperialist countries is not for Belisario to wave off as simple failures of no great relevance when we discuss the road to revolution. No Maoist claim these groups waged a people's war, we simply claim they prove the position of Sison/Belisario to be wrong. Sison claim "As soon as that army [a revolutionary army in a capitalist country, authors note] dares to launch the first tactical offensive, it will be overwhelmed by the huge enemy armed forces", and we hold the very real experiences of groups like RAF, Red Brigades (Italy), ETA and IRA to prove this wrong. Sison tried to wiggle by redefining the term tactical offensive, but the proof is still there.

On the Social and Geographical Terrain of Our People's War

Belisario writes:

"If it is to be a protracted people's war, as in Mao's China and Ho's Vietnam, then where in the social and geographic terrain of a capitalist country, and how exactly, will the organs of revolutionary political power be organized and sustained?"

One great addition to the treasure chest of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, is the forms of New Power in the people's war of Peru. In the rural theatre of war "[the] new Power, the clandestine People's Committees (...) are the backbone of the Support Bases.". In the urban areas, in the slums of Lima, revolutionary mass organizations was established and developed even there into the embryonic new power.

The social and geographic terrain in the imperialist countries is mainly the poor and proletarian neighbourhoods of the big cities, but in general the marginalized areas of the countries. Not only urban, but mainly urban. New power has to be built, and must be built in clandestine forms of organization, like the clandestine People's Committees of Peru. Organs of revolutionary power must be established by mass organizations and sustained only by the help and support by the deepest and broadest masses. This is the road of people's war, in general. The concrete application in concrete revolutions will differ, but in essence it is the

same, and it cannot be any other way if it is to be victorious.

Both Belisario and we understand there are major differences between mainly urban and developed capitalist imperialist countries on the one hand, and the semi feudal and semi colonial third world countries on the other hand. These differences gives birth to different characteristics, and thus different concrete application of the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

Firstly, imperialist countries are imperialist countries. This is the most important defining characteristic. This makes a larger strata of relatively well paid labour aristocrats and thus creates a deeper split in the proletariat, as mentioned by Lenin in his work 'Imperialism'. This is the objective socio-economical root of social patriotism and right opportunism, reformism and legalism. These tendencies are thus very strong in these countries, even amongst the masses.

Secondly, these countries are not semi-feudal or semi-colonial, thus the revolution is not new democratic but socialist in character. There is no basis to build a new democratic class alliance and there is no basis of a worker-peasant alliance for revolution.

Thirdly, the main force of revolution is the proletariat, which is the largest class in all these countries. Thus, the proletariat is not only the leading class but also the social mainstay of the revolution, and not the poor peasants like in the third world. The war is thus not an agrarian war.

Fourthly, the countries is mainly urban, so the main theatre of war is the urban areas, especially the proletarian neighbourhoods. This is the main place of organizing new power, but the main enemies of revolution is situated other places, and thus military work will in now way be restricted to these areas.

These are four characteristics, but there is many more. And each country also has its own particularities.

But how come only we are put on some metaphorical trial? We can refer to several revolutionary wars being waged in this moment, all taking the theory of people's war into account. Why not turn the burden of proof? Where is the successful protracted legal accumulation of forces, followed by insurrection and civil war? Does Belisario and Sison have any such examples, that is in either imperialist countries or the third world? Even if they do not acknowledge the Russian revolution as People's War, but maintain it to follow the "orthodox model", has there been any such revolution after 1921? Any such revolution in the imperialist countries? The models and programs and roads for this has been made in plentiful. Belisario could find lots of books on the british/american/norwegian/italian road to socialism. In all variants of opportunism, this road has been presented in so much detail, one can get lost in it. A prime example is Trotskys transitional program. Another is the soviet brand of "anti-monopolist united front strategy". The "Euro-communists" Togliatti and Thorez might help. Or the backwood of dogmatist, hoxhaist and trotskyist groups.

So much dual power on paper, so little new power in practice. All the time, the answer is quite simple people's war.

Belisario "reminds us" that people's war is about "mobilizing the masses in the armed struggle in order to dismantle the bourgeois-reactionary state machinery (especially its armed forces) step by step and in likewise fashion to build the revolutionary state machinery and use it to defend the people's gains." He ask us what main form the war is going to take, what types of military formations will be built and from which social class. He want to give us a "chance to explain [our] own version of "Maoist military strategy and tactics" in detail" and he says "My guess is that it will be a revised edition of Gonzalo's Peru ca. 1988, transplanted to current-day Europe. But Kinera should further expound".

We uphold, as the Communist Party of Peru, that the essence of people's war is new power, is base areas. We thus agree – as Belisario writes – that dismantling the bourgeois state and building the revolutionary state is essential in people's war. But here Belisario makes a leap, when he says "the essence of protracted people's war is not simply to maintain fighting teams that use guns—which the fascists, the Mafia, and conspiratorial terrorists also do", which is interesting. Armed fighting groups is possible in imperialist countries. They need not be smashed by the "huge army", as claimed earlier by Sison and Belisario. Even isolated groups, groups without a mass base, can fight is the conclusion. Why not within a revolutionary mass movement? In Belisarios world,

something changes qualitatively when such fighting groups is led by a Communist Party and part of a revolutionary war. If this is tried, then the fighting groups will be smashed. It does not make sense.

On his other questions, this article will not answer in depth, but we agree it should be done. It is part of a military line, necessary for each and every people's war. But this article is not such a line. But we will answer very briefly:

- 1) The main form of people's war in the imperialist countries are urban guerilla warfare, but in many countries the operations in rural areas will be an important addition.
- 2) The types of military formations will be the squads, troops and other formations of the people's guerilla army.
- 3) The revolution in the imperialist countries is a socialist revolution, a proletarian revolution, and the party, the army and the front will be mainly proletarian.
- 4) The strategy and tactics must be informed by the military theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and by the contributions of universal validity from Gonzalo Thought

Who Was First and What Is Principal?

Belisario writes: "Despite Kinera's misplaced flattery, Mao was not the original proponent or first theorist of people's war as 'the military theory of the international

proletariat." and he then moves on to mention Marx, Engels and Lenin. Again, Belisario does not quote! Where have anyone claimed Mao to be the first theorist of revolutionary war? Again, this is pure opportunist and sinister claims.

In the introduction to the 'Line of Construction of the Three Instruments of the Revolution' the Communist Party of Peru writes:

"Marx said that the working class creates organizations in its image and likeness, that is, its own organizations. In the XIX century, with Marx and Engels, we started off endowed with a scientific conception, our own doctrine, our own objective, our common goal—how to take Power and the means to do it—revolutionary violence." and "by the end of the XIX century, Engels came to the conclusion that the class did not have either the proper organic forms or the proper military forms to seize Power and hold it, but he never said we should abandon the revolution, rather we should work for revolution, seeking a solution to these pending problems."

All Maoist will acknowledge the contributions of other great communist leaders. Mao stood on the shoulders of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, as he underscored many a time, and as is underscored by Chairman Gonzalo. It is a rubbish claim by Bolsario, and speaks on his methods, as copied by the playbook of Sison.

But, who else than Mao systematized people's war? Would Bolsario claim that Marx, Engels or Lenin did this? It would be a really unique claim, one we haven't heard before. Then Belisario goes on:

"Mao of course made immense contributions to proletarian military theory based on his vast leadership experience in the long years of Chinese revolution, as did Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan and Vo Nguyen Giap in the case of the Vietnamese revolution, and Sison in the case of the Philippine revolution. All of them successfully applied proletarian military theory to practical questions of people's war in their respective countries, and in the process enriched such theory."

We encounter here the arch typical right opportunist reasoning. Mao was not first, because Marx, Engels, Lenin. And then, Mao was not alone, because Ho Chi Minh, Le Duan, Giap and Sison. What is typical here? The unwillingness or inability to tell what is principal. Is Sison of the same importance to the proletarian military theory as Chairman Mao? We do not think Belisario would claim this. What about Ho, Le Duan or Giap? In his eagerness to strip Mao of "misplaced flattery", he reduces Mao's contributions in military questions to one of many. The bourgeois Thomas Marks is wrong, Mao was not to irregular warfare what Clausewitz and Napoleon was to regular warfare. He was simply "one of many", is how Belisario sees it. We know this reasoning from how stale dogmatists and opportunist the same, refuses 'Maoism'. Mao was simply a marxist-leninist, a great revolutionary of

China, or even, as hoxhaists claim, just a bourgeois nationalist.

Further on, who was first? The concrete application of people's war in Vietnam and the Philippines happened mainly after Mao's application in China. They were clearly inspired and guided by the contributions of Mao. If one reads general Giap on people's war, this is very clear. He copied the three stages of the people's war and he adhered to the same principles as Mao already has outlined, like "concentration of troops to realize an overwhelming superiority over the enemy", like "initiative, suppleness, rapidity, surprise, suddenness in attack and retreat", like "exhaust little by little by small victories the enemy forces and at the same time to maintain and increase ours" and "losses must be avoided even at the cost of losing ground". This is Vo Nguyen Giap, but firstly these principles were formulated by Chairman Mao. Does Belisario suggest Giap did not know the writings of Chairman Mao? We doubt it.

The Value of Synthesis for Concrete Application

Belisario writes:

"However, these communist leaders did not set out to 'synthesize' a 'universally applicable theory' on how to wage armed revolution, or forge some 'military theory of the international proletariat,' as Kinera claims Gonzalo had done. In fact, these great leaders repeatedly emphasized "concrete analysis of concrete conditions" and carefully

applied theory to grapple with the specific characteristics of their own countries and solve concrete problems of their own revolutions."

When we spoke of letting 'all the cats' out of the bag, this is a couple of them. In his reasoning, there is no military theory of the proletariat, nothing universal at all, only specific characteristics and concrete problems. It is staggering. These revolutionary leaders set out to apply the universal of the theory on the specific revolutions they partook in. It is not important if they "set out" to synthesize. The principal aspect is to apply, but in application on the particular, the universal shows it self. At least if applied correctly and with success. All the before mentioned leaders would – at least in words – adhere to the universal laws of armed revolution, and of marxism-leninism in general. They would not pretend they did not. And what makes revolutionary war something different from the rest of the body of marxism-leninism-maoism? Mao stated that the highest form of class struggle is revolutionary war, why should this not have universal laws and principles? How could we agree (if we do?), on universal Leninist principles of Party organization, but deny even the existence of a universal proletarian military theory?

In the last paragraph of the Mao-article quoted by Belisaro, 'Problems of War and Strategy', Mao writes:

"But so far only a few people have taken up the study of the problems of strategy and the theory of war. First-rate results have been achieved in the

study of our political work, which, in wealth of experience and in the number and quality of its innovations, ranks second only to that of the Soviet Union; here too the shortcoming is insufficient synthesis and systematization."

Does this sound like a leader that did not set out to synthesize? In the first paragraph of the same text, Mao writes:

"The seizure of power by armed force, the settlement of the issue by war, is the central task and the highest form of revolution. This Marxist-Leninist principle of revolution holds good universally, for China and for all other countries."

Does this sound like a leader who does not have great regard for what is universal? Mao writes in 1938, that there was shortcomings in the systematization and synthesizing of the period up to 1938. And still, there would be 11 years of people's war in China, followed by 27 years of socialist construction and cultural revolution, before Mao died. Even the period before 1938 was not yet properly systematized and synthesized in the view of Mao. How could this article be "the final say" in the question we are discussing?

It is not important if Mao set out to systematize the military theory of the proletariat. What is important is that he did this, in theory and in application. And to deny it, like Belisario does, is simply to refuse to learn the lesson of hard fought victories and defeats, insisting on making

the same errors over and over again. In its essence, to learn is often to synthesize. Even basic lessons, like "stoves are hot, don't touch stoves", comprise of some synthesizing. The likes of Belisario might rage over such focus on universality, insisting that every stove is unique and must be understood in its concrete and particular situation. But most parents would understand the value of systematization and synthesis when you set out to guide concrete application.

On the Militarization of the Communist Parties

Belisario goes on and asks:

"What exactly is meant by a "militarized Communist Party"? Does it mean that the principle of democratic centralism, which applies to the essentially civilian and voluntary membership of a CP, will be replaced by a military command structure and its concomitant military law and military discipline?"

If we set out to debate this topic, we would at least read the Communist Party of Peru's most relevant documents, such as the General Political Line and the five lines it is made up of. There, in the 'Line of construction' they write:

"In the First National Conference (November 1979), Chairman Gonzalo expounded the thesis of the necessity of militarizing the Communist Party of Peru; afterward, in the first months of 1980 when the Party was preparing to launch the

People's War, he proposed to develop the militarization of the Party through actions, basing himself on what the great Lenin said about reducing the nonmilitary work in order to center it on the military; that the times of peace were ending and we were entering into the times of war, so that all forces should be militarized. Thus taking the Party as the axis of everything, build the Army around it and with these instruments, with the masses in the People's War, build the new State around both. That the militarization of the Party can only be carried forward through concrete actions of the class struggle, concrete military-type actions; this does not mean we will only carry out various types of military actions exclusively (guerrilla actions, sabotages, selective annihilation, armed propaganda and agitation) but that we must carry out mainly these forms so as to provide incentive and development to the class struggle, teaching with deeds, with these types of actions as the principal form of struggle in the People's War."

In the same line document, they write:

"In its organic structure, the Party is based on democratic centralism, principally centralism. Two armed Party networks are established, the territorial network which encompasses one jurisdiction and the mobile network whose structure is deployed. The organic system is the distribution of forces in function of the principal and secondary points wherever the revolution is

acting. Party work is the relationship between secret work, which is principal, and open work; the importance of the five necessities: Democratic centralism, clandestinity, discipline, vigilance and secrecy, particularly democratic centralism."

To answer then Belisarios question, another sinister one, we might add, militarization does not replace democratic centralism. It is not the first time such "questions" have been raised against the concept of militarization of the Communist Parties. We write our answer here not for Belisario, who probably will continue asking the same questions for the only cause of trying to sow confusion, but for the honest reader.

In the article 'Lenin and the Militarized Communist Party' in the magazine *El Maoista*, they write:

"As we stated in the introduction, the militarized Communist Party has its foundations in Lenin and Chairman Mao, but it was developed by Chairman Gonzalo and the PCP. Chairman Gonzalo, creatively applying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to the concrete practice of the Peruvian Revolution, developed, through the glorious and invincible People's War, the theory and practice of the Communist Party, raising it to a new level, that of the Militarized Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Communist Party and the line of concentric construction of the three instruments of the revolution."

If Belisario wants to write polemics against militarization of the Communist Parties, he should start with this article of the Latin-American comrades. It gives a thorough presentation of the question and on a much more advanced level than we can hope to do any time soon. The Communist Party of Peru applied the concept of the militarized communist party and concentric construction as particularities in the people's war of Peru, but came to the conclusion that this is a contribution of universal validity. To sum it up, in our best but limited manner, it is to make the communist party a party of and for the people's war, and secure its dedication to the people's war and its undivided leadership of the people's war through the people's army and the front-new state. The Communist Party of Peru has in its General Political Line presented the six characteristics of the construction of the militarized party; Ideological construction (1), political construction (2), organizational construction (3), the leadership (4), two-line struggle (5) and mass work (6).

Why the Strategy of Protracted Accumulation is Wrong

Belisario writes:

"Kinera rejects the so-called "strategy of protracted legal accumulation to the brink of crisis and revolution" in capitalist countries as an "old strategy," and chides Sison of being "never tired of the protracted legal accumulation of forces, in wait and want of the cataclysm" of crisis. But he doesn't produce any arguments that show why such strategy is incorrect."

We do not agree. There is produced many arguments to show this strategy is incorrect. But we are happy to repeat some, and add some. We must emphasize that this is our own arguments. We do not speak for anyone else, and our errors and shortcomings is our own.

1. This accumulist-legalist strategy has not produced any revolutions for (at least) 80 years, and have not even come close to topple a bourgeois state in this period.
2. People's war strategy have produced revolutions, and have become major threats to many reactionary states in several continents.
3. The strategy of protracted legal accumulation is in practice identical to the practice of reformist right-opportunists. It does not prepare revolutionary leaders, cadre, activists or masses for grasping political power with revolutionary violence.
4. This strategy paves the way for capitalist work methods of NGOism, bureaucratic work methods of the social democratic labour movement, and reformist work methods of ministerial socialism.
5. The strategy and tactics of people's war apply to revolutionary warfare in imperialist countries, as we partly (not entirely!) might observe in the war of liberation in Ireland and the Basque Country.
6. In the shining illuminating light of people's war, as explained by Mao Zedong, we should be able to

understand better the experiences of anti fascist resistance during WW2 in Europe – in countries like France and Norway for example, there was protracted armed warfare during nazi occupation and collaboration. It indicate that revolutionary war is possible in industrialized countries with high degrees of control and surveillance.

7. The experiences of armed groups like the KAK, RAF and the Red Brigades proves the possibility of waging armed struggle inside the imperialist countries, even for decades, without being militarily defeated.

8. The experiences of protracted legal work, of accumulation of forces, has led to no revolution. It has led countless parties and organizations into revisionism, reformism or simply dissolution. Their cadre and sympathizers have been integrated more and more into the old society and even the reactionary state apparatus.

9. We march towards militarized societies. The imperialist countries militarize more and more, the reaction is more militarized.

10. The governments of imperialism develop towards fascism, through corporativism, undermining parliamentarism, growing racism, more police surveillance and state violence.

11. The elections are seen as farcical by the majority of the deepest and broadest masses. Most of them do not have any faith in them.

12. The old social democratic trade unions have lost significant masses of members, the masses does not trust the trade union leaderships.

13. We have entered the epoch of proletarian world revolution and people's war sweeping away imperialism in the next 50 to 100 years, as stated by Mao.

14. The big and complex develops from the small and simple, and one learns war from waging war. Thus, revolutionary war must be grown from the little to the grand, and revolutionary fighters must learn war by waging war, in a protracted process.

15. As Clausewitz stated in 'On War': "The greater and more powerful the motives of a war (...) by so much the nearer will the war approach to its abstract form, so much the more will it be directed to the destruction of the enemy, so much the nearer will the military and political ends coincide, so much the more purely military and less political the war appears to be" and what is a more great and powerful motive of war, than seizing power for the proletariat? This makes more war, more protracted war, and not quicker and more limited war.

On the Particular Experiences of War and Fascism in Europe

Belisario quotes Sison and elaborates:

"Sison explains: "Even if the material foundation for socialism exists in capitalism, the proletariat

must first defeat fascism, thus winning the battle for democracy, before socialism can triumph." He was actually anticipating the convulsions of capitalist crises and the rise of fascism, which impels all proletarian revolutionaries to prepare for future armed conflict even prior to the actual socialist revolution. This was in fact the scenario that led to Communist-led forces waging extensive partisan warfare in Europe during World War II and even earlier during the Spanish Civil War."

This comparison completely disregards what were the mistakes and successes of the communist movement in this period. Can the success of partisan warfare in Europe be attributed to line of Sison that Belisario promotes, of protracted legal struggle?

The experience of Norway and many other European countries is that the communist parties had disregarded the tasks originally given to them by the Communist International. In its 21 conditions for membership, the Comintern demanded in the third condition:

"Under such conditions the communists can place no trust in bourgeois legality. They have the obligation of setting up a parallel organisational apparatus which, at the decisive moment, can assist the party to do its duty to the revolution. In every country where a state of siege or emergency laws deprive the communists of the opportunity of carrying on all their work legally, it is absolutely necessary to combine legal and illegal activity."

This task was totally neglected by many parties. Instead the widespread legalist practice made the Norwegian and other European communist parties wide open for being smashed by the fascist once they grabbed state power in some countries followed by the occupation of many more. The result was tens of thousands of communists killed, jailed and put in concentration camps. And it seriously hampered the communist resistance. The protracted legalism of the Communist Party of Norway was fatal.

Belisario and Sison parade the communist resistance and Spanish civil war. If Sison and Belisario sees this situation returning with the rise of fascism, why are they attacking those who want to build communist parties capable of waging wars? If they see guerilla warfare as a tool against fascism, why do they monger fear of the "huge army" overwhelming the people's army? In fact, their failure to see any lessons is clear. They are not capable to learn that protracted legal struggle led to the arrestations and deaths of communists in Europe during the rise of fascism. That the "huge army" could not smash armed struggle, even in countries where the resistance was relatively weak. That this was even possible when the front line and allied forces was a 1000 km and several years away. With this inability to put the experiences of armed struggle in imperialist countries to use, why do they then claim that it is we who do not concern ourselves with developing strategies based on the particularities of our own countries?

Opposing the Military Theory of the Proletariat Under the Pretext of Flexibility

Belisario writes:

"These are all opportunities for the proletariat to arm itself and seize power when the conditions are ripe, and make the necessary but calibrated or discreet preparations prior. But Kinera doesn't see the underlying Marxist-Leninist logic. He is singular obsessed with the template of PPW (as 'synthesized' by Gonzalo) needing to be implemented now; anything outside the template is branded as revisionism, reformism, or legalism."

Here, Belisarios argument is that the proponents of protracted people's war are proponents of people's war. We are guilty of this claim. We do adhere to the universality of people's war. It is true we propose this strategy must be implemented now. That is, if it is not waged it needs to be initiated. If it is not initiated it needs to be prepared. If it is not prepared, it needs to be defined. And all our work, all the work of the communists, must be for the people's war. We do claim this, but we do not claim it dogmatically. We argue the facts, we consider the experience, we propose the synthesis of universal laws based on particularities, experience, analysis and lessons of 200 years of proletarian class struggle. This is not an obsession, but a recognition of necessity.

It is true, we thus discard the accumulationist strategy of protracted legal struggle and preparations for the

cataclysmic crisis where objective conditions gives "all opportunities for the proletariat to arm itself and seize power". We discard this to be a fairy tale fitting hand in glove with revisionism. This was the position of the Communist Parties of Europe, who was mostly smashed in 1940, rebuilt during the war as warfare parties, but then disarmed themselves in 1945 and again turned back to legalism. It has been the position of most of the Marxist-Leninist movement of the 1970s, who either have dissolved or degenerated into reformist electoralist parties.

These parties have not made the discreet preparations to seizing power by violence. Not at all in fact. We know them, and we know them quite well. Belisarios claim of Marxist-Leninist logic, is nothing else than what the communists of China exposed in the Great Polemic of the 1960's, in "The Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us":

"the modern revisionists are opposing Marxism-Leninism (...) under the pretext of flexibility in tactics"

Many activists buys into this. They believe this is what they are doing. They believe they are being flexible and "exploiting" legality by protracted legalism. It is our job not to be arrogant or treat these people with hostility, but to be patient and argue our case. Of course no one will agree with us just because we say they should, or because "Gonzalo said so". Serious people will demand serious answers, facts and summations. This is what the Communist Party of Peru has given. They have applied the

theory of people's war, as synthesized principally by Mao Zedong, on the people's war in Peru, and thus proved its universality. As is also being proved in Turkey, India and the Philippines. It is being explained and applied by great maoists, as the Communist Party of Brazil (Red Faction).

Sison and the Promotion of Right-Opportunism and Liquidationism

Belisario writes:

"Despite their mantra of PPW, they have not done anything to start any kind of people's war in Norway or assist such war if any in some other industrial capitalist country or give any significant kind of help to the people's wars going on somewhere else in the world. They still need to grow from their small-group status and infantile mentality by doing serious mass work among the Norwegian workers and engaging in truly MLM Party-building to be able to contribute more significantly to the resurgence of the world proletarian revolution against imperialism, revisionism and all reaction."

This is a cowards way of arguing. When Belisario is tired of arguing the principles, he wants to argue the person. From the point of Sison, it would be more understandable. Everyone knows where Sison is coming from. But who is Andy Belisario? The first articles of Kinera was not statements of organizations, but it was promoted by Tjen Folket Media and we don't deny Kinera is a supporter of

the Maoist movement of Norway. But where is PRISM based? The web page does not tell. What organization or movement does Belisario support? He does not tell. One might think his angry words against the Maoists of Norway, signalled he is in some way connected to a big and successful communist party. Who knows? As far as we can tell, he does not even say he adheres to Maoism.

The NDFP web page and the ILPS chairperson Sison promotes Belisario. Our own article does not set out to investigate or write about the people's war in the Philippines. It is one of four people's wars today, and we support it wholeheartedly. On the workings of Sison/ILPS/NDFP abroad, especially in the imperialist countries, we will address three points:

1. 12 members of the leadership of ILPS disclosed undemocratic and hegemonic aspirations in the ILPS, led by its leader, Jose Maria Sison in 2011, resulting in their expulsion from ILPS and furious attacks from Sison. Most known of the 12 is probably professor Saibaba of India. To underscore this fact, the well known professor Saibaba was expelled by Sison and the ILPS! Other expelled comrades represented mass organizations in the USA, Turkey, Brazil, Greece and Iran.
2. The right opportunist line of Peru is represented in the ILPS by a MOVADEF group. MOVADEF is traitors of the people's war of Peru, but they are included and defended in the ILPS.

3. Sison does not promote the need for organizing communists or unifying under Maoism, but promote right opportunist and revisionist parties and organizations in Europe and the Americas. The right liquidationist "Jugendwiderstand" and the reformist MLPD of Germany is amongst those who are supported and promoted by Sison.

In summation, the practice of Belisarios promoters in Europe and the Americas, does not differentiate between "truly MLM Party-building" and "the necessary but calibrated or discreet preparations" by Marxist-Leninists on the one hand, and legalist, reformist, right opportunist, right liquidationist and traitorous parties and cliques on the other hand. Or, they do differentiate, by attacking those who do build Maoist parties and do necessary definition and preparation, and warmly embracing and saluting all forms of right opportunism.

Even the mere Sison/NDFP-promotion of Belisarios frontal attack on Chairman Gonzalo and the theory of people's war as universally applicable, is a prime example of what line is being promoted by this centre based in the Netherlands. We know this attitude of being soft on revisionism and aggressively attacking "Left-Communism" very well. It is a typical feature of right opportunism itself.

Again, we mean no disrespect against the Communist Party of the Philippines and the cadre and masses they organize and lead in the people's war of the Philippines. We do not set out to criticise the revolution in the

Philippines. Not that this would be principally wrong, but it is not in the scope of our capacity. Also, we emphasize our heartfelt respect for the combattants and the blood that has been shed for the new democratic revolution and proletarian world revolution. We owe a great debt to the people's war, its combattants and martyrs. It does not however, excerpt Sison or anyone promoted by him or the NDFP web page from criticism. On the contrary, it makes it even more important, since they might promote right opportunism under disguise of supporting the people's war or hold the people's war up as some shield against the two-line struggle.

Gonzalo Did Not Create Maoism But Was the First to Define It

Belisario writes:

"Kinera idolizes Gonzalo to high heavens, for his role in 'synthesizing' Maoism (...) These incredibly arrogant claims by Kinera (following his idol Gonzalo) is a brazen insult to Mao, who after his death apparently needed another thinker to 'synthesize for the very first time' his well-known teachings and to pin on it the shiny new name Maoism. It is a historic slap at the Chinese Communist Party, which up to 1976 was led by Mao himself together with other proletarian revolutionaries, and which was guided by Mao's theories (which was called Mao Zedong Thought and eventually Maoism)."

Belisarios text is dripping of venom. On behalf of Sison and now Mao and the Communist Party of the Philippines, he lashes out against those who he claim insults them. Like there is any insult against Mao in synthesising Maoism as a third and higher stage of Marxism-Leninism, that is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism! Listen to the "insults" against Mao, from the Communist Party of Peru:

"Three big historical landmarks must be emphasized in the present century: first, the October Revolution of 1917, which opened the era of the world proletarian revolution; second, the triumph of the Chinese Revolution, in 1949, which changed the correlation of forces in favor of socialism; and third, the great proletarian cultural revolution, which began in 1966 as the continuation of the revolution under the proletarian dictatorship in order to maintain the revolutionary course towards Communism. It is enough to emphasize that Chairman Mao led two of these glorious historical feats."

And:

"...the key point is to see how, in this great class struggle on the world level, Gonzalo Thought considers that a third stage of the proletarian ideology arises: First, as Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung Thought; then Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought; and later, it is defined as Maoism, understanding its universal validity; and

in this way reaching Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, as the present expression of Marxism."

We hold this not to be insults but facts. Neither Mao nor the Communist Party of China synthesised what is Maoism and understood this as a the third and higher stage of proletarian ideology. It is fact. Belisario blurs this by stating the CPC "was guided by Mao's theories (which was called Mao Zedong Thought and eventually Maoism)". It is correct it was guided by Mao Zedong Thought. This was understood and formulated by Mao and the CPC as the concrete application of Marxism-Leninism on the particular revolution of China. But it was not understood as third and higher stage of proletarian revolution, universally applicable. This is explained masterly in the article concerning Lenin's Thought in El Maoista, also referred to earlier in this document.

We might have made some errors in our formulations, we might have been unclear. The synthesis of Maoism is not about inventing but of revealing. To define Maoism is not to invent it, but to apply and thereby understand what is universal. And the application of Mac's Thought led to really understanding what is universal, and understanding how he developed the proletarian ideology in all three realms, in philosophy, economy and socialism. Chairman Gonzalo did not invent Maoism, neither did he develop Maoism. Maoism was mainly forged in the people's war in China, in the new democratic revolution, the socialist construction and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, under the leadership of Mao. But Maoism as a

third and higher stage of the ideology of the proletariat was firstly *understood and explained* by Chairman Gonzalo. It was firstly defined by him.

*The Struggle Against the So-Called Cult of Personality is
an Attack on Democratic Centralism*

Further on, as the followers of Lenin and Mao, also the followers of Gonzalo gets our fair share of such frenetic slander as Belisario throw at us. When we uphold Gonzalo, when we define him as the greatest living Maoist, we "idolize to high heavens". He talks of "their dear Gonzalo", "his idol Gonzalo", "his Gonzaloite friends" etc. So much hot air, so little substance. We do not idolize anyone, but as Mao was the greatest living communist from 1953 to 1976, Gonzalo is today. Belisario does not agree. Let him disagree and explain why, but this slander and hot air is mere distractions. Gonzalo is no demigod. He is the great leader of the people's war of Peru and has made substantial contributions to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism by applying it on the concrete revolution of Peru, that is Gonzalo Thought. This is our position. Let us explain why. But Belisarios sneering attitude speaks to his contempt of both theory and practice, that is the people's war of Peru.

We find this interesting, because it reminds us of how right opportunists always have attacked the leadership. Listen to the Khrushchev renegades attack on Mao and the CPC in an editorial of "Pravda" named "The Anti-Soviet Policy of Mao Tse-tung and His Group":

"The entire practice of the C.P.S.U. and the other Communist Parties which are consistently developing Leninist standards in inner-party life, strengthening the principles of collective leadership and strictly adhering to democratic principles in the activities of all party organisations from top to bottom, naturally creates a danger to Mao Tse-tung and his power, for Mao Tse-tung's group has long been attacking its own party. The most elementary standards and principles of inner party life-the elective nature of party bodies, the responsibility of leaders to the party and party organisations, publicity in the discussion of the party line, etc. have been trampled underfoot in China. The cult of the personality of Mao Tse-tung has reached absurd lengths and has become actual idolatry..."

From Khrushchev's attack on the so called "cult of personality" of Stalin, to their identical attack on the leadership of Mao, to Belisarios attack on the idolatry of Gonzalo, there is a coherent dark and reactionary thread. On their own hand, they might blur the leadership, but generally are happy to promote their own leaders in the most blatant and servile way.

The Communist Party of Peru states:

"Reaction has two principles to destroy the revolution: Annihilate its leadership and isolate the guerrilla from the masses; but in synthesis its problem is to annihilate the leadership, because

that is what enables us to maintain our course and realize it."

In the great debate between the CPC and the CPSU, the editorial departments of Chinese People's Daily and Red Flag writes "On The Question Of Stalin":

"The Central Committee of the CPC pointed out in its letter of June 14 that the 'struggle against the personality cult' violates Lenin's integral teachings on the interrelationship of leaders, party, class, and masses, and undermines the Communist principle of democratic centralism."

There is no coincidence in the right opportunist attacks on Gonzalo and so called "idolization" and "cult of personality", with the same words as Krustshevites once used against the great Stalin and the great Chairman. We do not here compare Gonzalo to the before mentioned great leaders, but acknowledge his role in understanding and promoting Maoism as a third and higher stage, in applying Maoism on the People's War in Peru and in this forging Gonzalo Thought, which also have contributions of universal applicability.

On the so called "cult of personality", Gonzalo answers like this in the "Interview with Chairman Gonzalo" made by El Diario:

"Here we must remember how Lenin saw the relationship between the masses, classes, the Party and leaders. We believe that the revolution, the

Party, our class, generate leaders, a group of leaders. It has been like this in every revolution. If we think, for instance, about the October Revolution, we have Lenin, Stalin, Sverdlov and a few others, a small group. Similarly, in the Chinese revolution there's also a small group of leaders: Chairman Mao Tsetung, and his comrades Kang Sheng, Chiang Ching, Chang Chun-chiao, among others. All revolutions are that way, including our own. We could not be an exception. Here it's not true that there is an exception to every rule because what we're talking about here is the operation of certain laws. All such processes have leaders, but they also have a leader who stands out above the rest or who leads the rest, in accordance with the conditions. Not all leaders can be viewed in exactly the same way. Marx is Marx, Lenin is Lenin, Chairman Mao is Chairman Mao. Each is unique, and no one is going to be just like them"

The Only Party in the World in the Vanguard of the Defense of Maoism

Belisario writes:

"Kinera's claim that PCP was the 'only Maoist Party in the world in 1982' is a blatant lie, if only because the Communist Party of the Philippines had already been reestablished earlier in 1968 on the basis of its founding cadres' firm grasp of Maoist theory and its application to concrete Philippine conditions. In Rectify Errors and

Rebuild the Party (a major CPP document of reestablishment issued in 1968), Mao Zedong Thought was already repeatedly and correctly described as the acme of Marxism-Leninism in the current world era. The CPP has been assiduously building itself and achieving victories in people's war on the basis of MLM since then, as its voluminous documents, publications, and study courses show."

Before claiming we are liars, an honest revolutionary (then, excluding Belisario), would seek to clearly define then what is a Maoist party. It is quite clear to us, that we depart from Belisario here. Of course, the Communist Party of the Philippines adhered to Mao Zedong Thought. But as we have stated, adhering to the understanding put forth by the Communist Party of Peru, Mao Zedong Thought and Maoism is not the same. As the party writes:

"Nevertheless, while Marxism-Leninism has obtained an acknowledgment of its universal validity, Maoism is not completely acknowledged as the third stage. Some simply deny its condition as such, while others only accept it as 'Mao Tse-tung Thought.' In essence, both positions, with the obvious differences between them, deny the general development of Marxism made by Chairman Mao Tse-tung. The denial of the 'ism' character of Maoism denies its universal validity and, consequently, its condition as the third, new, and superior stage of the ideology of the international proletariat: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism,

principally Maoism, that we uphold, defend, and apply."

In the *International Line* of the Party, they write:

"In 1980 the PCP launched the People's War based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought; it is in the applying and developing the People's War that the PCP has advanced further in the comprehension of Maoism as the third stage of Marxism. Hence, at the Second National Conference held in May 1982 the Party agreed that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was the third stage of Marxism. Thus, the PCP was the only party in the world in the vanguard of the defense of Maoism, and assumed the task of struggling for the unity of the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists of the world so that this ideology be the command and guide of the Peruvian and world revolutions."

And this line also elaborates on the historical development of Maoism. Let us not make this a discussion about what was a "real" Maoist party in 1982. Let us just say we agree with the Communist Party of Peru, and state as a matter of fact, that "the PCP was the only party in the world in the vanguard of the defense of Maoism".

We acknowledge that the Communist Party of Peru by no means was alone in adhering to Mao Zedong Thought. When the Communist Party of the Philippines was reconstituted in 1968, they stated in the preamble:

"The integration of the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought with the concrete practice of the Philippine revolution is the highest task of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The Communist Party of the Philippines is a revolutionary party of the proletariat that draws lessons from all previous revolutionary struggles of the Filipino people and from the great teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong. It is in stride with the advance of the theory and practice of the world proletarian revolution guided by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought."

In 1968, this was a correct and bold statement. But Maoism was yet to be synthesised as the third and higher stage of proletarian ideology. Even though the Communist Party of Peru state in their 'International Line' that they, and others, were just waiting for the Communist Party of China to make this synthesis and claim themselves.

In 1991, a couple of decades later, the chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines does not mention Mao Zedong Thought in the article "Reaffirm Our Basic Principles and Carry the Revolution Forward". He only mentions Marxism-Leninism, and writes:

"The advanced level provides the Party members with a comprehensive and profound knowledge of materialist philosophy, historical materialism, political economy, scientific socialism and the

world revolution as taught by such great communist thinkers and leaders as Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and Ho. This provides us with the most extensive and deepgoing understanding of the basic principles of the proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship."

In the latest program of the Communist Party of the Philippines, they uphold Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as universal, but also write that they:

"...learns basic principles from the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Ho and other great communist thinkers"

This seemingly eclectic approach to theory is concerning. Also, we do not know what is the universally applicable contributions of Ho Chi Minh, or why he is elevated to the level of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao. This is not a known or acknowledged position of Ho Chi Minh in the International Communist Movement. When we refer to Gonzalo, we can answer why we do so, even though we are not experts in Gonzalo Thought by any means. But we at least have a rudimentary understanding of what is Gonzalo Thought and what is specific to this theory.

Why does Belisario mention Ho – and also Le Duan and Bo Vo Nguyen Giap – when he speaks of the military theory of people's war? What did they contribute to this theory? The war of national liberation in Vietnam was of immense importance. But how did this elevate the

theoretical body of people's war? In Giaps words, Vietnam differed from China in being a small country and a direct colony, but we have not investigated this thoroughly. If Belisario or others could tell us what lessons of Vietnam is different or new compared to China, and then has been applied in the Philippines, we might stand corrected.

Further, Belisario is again offended on behalf of others, this time the Communist Party of the Philippines when he writes that "Mao Zedong Thought was already repeatedly and correctly described as the acme of Marxism-Leninism in the current world era" and that the "CPP has been assiduously building itself and achieving victories in people's war on the basis of MLM since then", but we hold that there is a qualitative difference from applying Mao Zedong Thought, and to fight to bring Maoism into command of the world proletarian revolution. This is not a competition! It is not about who gets a medal. But we cannot understand our ideology if we are not precise and clear.

Right Opportunists Expose Themselves

Belisario writes:

"It is laudable if indeed in 1982 Gonzalo was the very first to transcribe Mao Zedong Thought to Maoism. It is another matter whether his supposed 'synthesis' of Maoism would surpass the summing up by his own loyal Chinese comrades. By itself, the transcription from Mao Zedong Thought to Maoism is not a great achievement. Marx berated

Paul Lafargue in 1883 for using the term Marxism for revolutionary phrasemongering against the struggle for reforms. Even then, Karl Kautsky popularized the term Marxism and subsequently used it to deny the Marxist character of Lenin's theory and practice which he termed as Leninism."

Neither we nor the Communist Party of Peru claim "transcribing Mao Zedong Thought to Maoism". What we discuss is content, not form. The form should match the content, but the ism-character of Maoism is not a question of transcribing. What is important is content, not the word, as is stated by the Communist Party of Brazil (Red Faction) in their document "Combat Liquidationism and unite the International Communist Movement under Maoism and the People's War" where they write:

"It is not enough to recognize that Maoism is a third stage, a correct definition of its content is necessary, without a correct definition of its fundamental elements, there can not be a correct application."

This is what is important. This is what this discussion is about. Is the theory of people's war part of the fundamental elements of Maoism, as the Communist Party of Peru stated, as the Communist Party of Brazil (Red Faction) is stating, and as is stated by the parties and organizations of Latin-America initiating the unification of the International Communist Movement under Maoism?

Belisario and Sison does not agree, and resort to sinister attacks, slander and mockery to get this point through to us and all others. They now stand exposed.

On the Contributions and Great Leadership of Chairman Gonzalo

Belisario writes:

"To differentiate 'Maoism' from 'Mao Zedong Thought' is to nitpick and invent a false distinction. Even Gonzalo used the phrase Mao Zedong Thought until 1982. Whichever term is used, we certainly have no need for the dubious genius of a Gonzalo to 'comprehend' or 'synthesize' or canonize or reinvent it anew for the world's benefit. He could not have added to the achievements of Mao himself after his death in 1976. It is pure nonsense to make it appear that the continuous significance and consequentiality of Mao's theory and practice depend on the words of Gonzalo."

Again dripping with venom, Belisarios stance is clear; there is no difference between Mao Zedong Thought and Maoism, and it was fully understood by the international communist movement way ahead of 1976. To further synthesize and understand, in Belisarios view, adds no value. The contributions of Mao must then simply be a summation of all his writings and efforts, or maybe the synthesis acknowledged by the Communist Party of China before the death of Mao. We do not agree, as we have made very clear.

Belisario writes:

"As dogmatists and sectarians of the worst kind, they use such expressions as 'Gonzalo is the greatest after Mao', sounding like evangelists who proclaim Jesus is the Lord. Mistaking struggle mania for revolutionary struggle, they are quick to throw invectives and do not really engage in a serious substantive debate. 'Gonzalo thought', as painted by Kinera, is not ideology but IDOLOGY."

We do not find the word "idology" in the dictionary. Maybe the word Belisario is looking for is Khrushchev-Pravda's "idolatry", which they slung against the Communist Party of China and their leader Mao Zedong? Belisario is not quoting us, but we adhere to the understanding of Gonzalo as the greatest living communist. Maybe the position of Belisario is that Sison is the greatest? Or maybe he is of the opinion that there has been no greatest among great communist leaders since the death of Mao? We do not know. It is the way of the right opportunist not taking a clear position.

Our position in this question is the logical conclusion from adhering to the understanding of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, as it was made clear by the Communist Party of Peru and Chairman Gonzalo. It has nothing to do with religious metaphysics, when we uphold a communist leader to be great. The role of the Communist Party of Peru has been of great significance far from the Andes where they hoisted the red

banner of Maoism in 1980. We acknowledge them to have advanced Maoism to its, by now, highest level. To hide this acknowledgment would be cowardice.

Belisario writes:

"Kinera and his fellow dogmatists and sectarians are incapable of recognizing the egotism, immorality and arrogance of certain leaders who wish to proclaim their universal greatness even before winning the revolution in their own country and who actually brand their own theories and practices with their own names, like Gonzalo Thought, Prachanda Path and Avakian's Synthesis (to proclaim himself the great leader of the new wave after MLM)."

Belisario, and his promoter Sison, would then equal the traitor Prachanda and the tragic figure Avakian with Chairman Gonzalo. Falsely he claims Gonzalo to proclaim himself a leader of a wave after Maoism, even though Gonzalo repeatedly states Gonzalo Thought to be Maoism applied in the Peruvian revolution and thus part of the third stage, not a fourth one. Belisario calls egoism, immorality and arrogance, since the people's war in Peru has not yet won victory in the whole of Peru, but failing to mention that the guiding thought of Mao was acknowledged before the victory in 1949. Was this egoism and arrogance? Further on, he does not engage the reasoning made by the Communist Party of Peru, when they explain the relation between guiding thought and a great leader, and the understanding of the historical law

that every revolution must produce a guiding thought and a great leadership, to be victorious, and that is is, in essence, about the concrete application of the universal Maoism on the concrete revolution.

Belisario equates Prachanda Path to Gonzalo Thought on a very superficial basis of their names. If we try to look into the essence of Prachanda Path its right opportunism is not only contrary to Gonzalo Thought. But it applies the same forms of right opportunist trickery as Sison and Belisario does. Under pretext of applying revolutionary theory to the particularities of a country, they give cover for right opportunism. And they only use the particularities to turn revolutionary struggle into legalism and reformism.

Opportunism is eclectic, and as such it does not take the same pride in its history. It dishonestly uses the achievements great communists of the past like Marx, Lenin and Mao, as well as people shedding blood for the revolution today, only as a way to put themselves in a better light. Always weaving it into their argumentation so as not to reveal the sinister attacks on the revolutionary movement they are committing. Great communists like Gonzalo build upon the great achievements and innovations of communists before them and the struggles of the masses, it is a necessity that it is so. But the opportunists have the option of eclectically rejecting the counter-revolutionary role it has played throughout history, even condemning parts of it. But if we use maoism to reveal the essence of right opportunism then it puts

Prachanda Path and Belisario in the same camp, whatever Belisario claims.

And further, as the avakianists attack Maoism and negates it with their "new synthesis", as Prachanda negates every fundamental principle of Marxism with his integration in the reactionary state, this is by far not the case of Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru. And, contrary to the avakianists, the synthesis of Gonzalo Thought is not elusive and thus impossible to grasp. It is stated quite clearly in the documents of the party itself. While getting avakianists to explain the concept of Avakians "new synthesis" is opening up for a nonsensical mush.

And even further, to compare Avakians "achievements" to the people's war of Peru would be laughable, if it did not display a cynical contempt of the shed blood of the masses and their party and leadership, which is alien to any communist and should provoke nothing but anger. Prachanda's liquidation of the glorious people's war of Nepal is in this matter greater than Avakian, but also more reactionary and criminal. This traitor with his diplomacy, negotiations and parliamentary cretinism should serve as a concrete warning of where the path of right opportunism and eclecticism leads. The problem was not the form of 'Prachanda Path', but the right opportunist content. We don't give a damn about who is the most arrogant or most humble. If Khrushchev had lived in a shack tending to his humility (bear over with this fantasy for one moment), he would still be the greatest traitor of his time and a criminal in the eyes of the international communist movement.

Both in defence and offence, Belisario fails to differentiate. He fails to differentiate between great leaders, and he fails to differentiate between great criminals. And sometimes he confuses them altogether. It is nothing new. It is the way of right opportunism.

A Black Attack on the People's War in Peru

Belisario writes:

"Let us focus on the idol of Kinera. Gonzalo may be praised for founding the PCP (Sendero Luminoso) in 1969 under the guidance of Mariategui and Mao Zedong Thought. But despite his belief that people's war can be started at the drop of a hat, Kinera does not take Gonzalo to task for being a slaggard, starting the people's war only in 1980 (eleven years after the PCP-SL founding), so different from the CP of the Philippines being founded on December 26, 1,968 and starting the people's war on March 29, 1969 (three months after the CPP founding)."

Again, one wants to ask who is this Belisario? Who came up with such a paragraph? It is impossible to engage such writing in a serious way. It shows nothing but contempt for the very real blood that has been shed, both in the Philippines and in Peru.

For the honest reader, we emphasize that the main question is not when to start, but to start. And before starting, it is about defining, contrary to not defining. That

is, to pose the question correctly and make the first steps towards preparation.

Belisario writes:

"Despite his gross failures at building the united front as a political weapon from 1969 to 1992 , Gonzalo may still be praised for engaging in the building of the Party and the People's Guerrilla Army up to late 1980s when without respect for the facts of the revolutionary armed struggle he invented the illusion of "strategic equilibrium" and proceeded to seek a "Left" opportunist short cut to victory through urban insurrection. Inasmuch as he abhors stages, Kinera can praise Gonzalo for disregarding the probable stages in the development of protracted people's war as previously defined by Mao. But Gonzalo is a gross violator of Mao's teachings on protracted people's war."

Again, Belisario writes of people's war as a yankee writes movie reviews, with the complete discontempt of the real lives and real blood, and also of the real dangers, hardships, leadership and organization. The claim of a failure to build the united front, does not correspond with reality and the large number of mass organizations and people's committees generated and led by the party. How could they wage such a war without it? It would be impossible.

The stage of strategic equilibrium was real, as indicated by the yankee congress debating the people's war, the direct

involvement of Yankee imperialism on the highest levels and the Fujimori coup of 1992. New York Times in March 22 of 1992, wrote:

"In Congress, the State Department, the Organization of American States and private research and human rights organizations, the sense is growing that the astonishing momentum being shown by the Shining Path rebellion in Peru is the toughest post-cold war policy test on the horizon for the Western Hemisphere. 'Put out of your mind the F.M.L.N., the Sandinistas, the M-19 of Colombia and other South American insurgencies,' Bernard W. Aronson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, told a recent Congressional hearing. 'Sendero Luminoso is in a category by itself.'

When Mao defines where the strategic defensive ends and the strategic stalemate begins, he writes:

"The second stage may be termed one of strategic stalemate. At the tail end of the first stage, the enemy will be forced to fix certain terminal points to his strategic offensive owing to his shortage of troops and our firm resistance, and upon reaching them he will stop his strategic offensive and enter the stage of safeguarding his occupied areas."

This is the 'tipping point' of these two stages. We do not act as if we have studied the people's war in Peru in all its aspects, but to us it does not at all seem like Chairman

Gonzalo was wrong to understand the transition from strategic defensive to strategic stalemate. At least, if Belisario claim it is so, he should really explain why. At the stage he mentions, the old state was in crisis in Peru. This is known to all experts. The people's war was raging in all parts of the country. The new power controlled almost half the country. There was armed actions in the whole country. The activity was simmering also in Lima. The Yankee imperialists discussed the matter on congressional levels, deployed forces in Peru and president Fujimori made a coup to fight the people's war more efficiently. It seems very much the enemy of the old state was entering a stage mainly 'safeguarding' their areas, and thus the stage of strategic stalemate or equilibrium.

On the Sinister Claim That Gonzalo Has Capitulated

Belisario writes:

"After his capture in 1992, Gonzalo was quick to capitulate [sic] to the Fujimori regime and become a Right opportunist by offering peace negotiations and peace agreement with the regime, causing costly splits among the members and supporters of the PCP-SL. Since then, the infantile Maoists have made a blanket denial of Gonzalo's capitulation and Right opportunism despite subsequent manifestations of the truth since 1993, such as his public TV appearance, confirmation by his wife and testimonies of his lawyer who visited him weekly. On this basis, RIM started to become critical of Gonzalo's behavior."

Our position is one with the position of the International Communist Movement, as in the statement "In defence of the life of Chairman Gonzalo, hoist higher the flag of Maoism!" of 2018:

"There are those that until now insist on spreading the counterrevolutionary hoax (that Chairman Gonzalo is the head of the opportunist, revisionist and capitulationist right opportunist line.). They argue with what was stated by traitors ('he told me' or 'he embraced me' and other gossip), with what is controlled by imperialism and the psychological warfare of the reaction ('courts' and 'filtered' videos). Anything that comes from whoever wants to throw mud at Chairman Gonzalo supposedly has to be taken very seriously, has to be 'analyzed' and has to break our heads to enter into a discussion 'whether or not it is him'. They are wrong, because they do not understand that 'the debate' has already been closed, the communists have already taken a position and the matter is settled: It was demonstrated that Chairman Gonzalo has not denied the Party Unity Base of the PCP for a moment. He is the Great Leader of the Party and the revolution, the greatest living Marxist-Leninist-Maoist on the face of earth, keeping on struggling to transform the concentration camp of Callao Navy Base into the most Shining Trench of Combat of the People's War. What corresponds is to defend his life with People's War. 26 years have already passed in which Chairman Gonzalo could not directly

communicate with the Party or the ICM; 26 years of absolute isolation, this is what it concretely is. That imperialism, the reaction and revisionism will continue to plot intrigues is clear, the contrary would be that they have changed their nature (a thesis of the disciples of the sacred Avakian, which is impossible), but we must not allow that these intrigues stop the advance of the communists."

The Maoist Communist Party of France writes, on this question in the article "To defend the life of Chairman Gonzalo is to defend Maoism!":

"One year after Chairman Gonzalo's arrest in 1992. In 1993, Peru's Chairman, Alberto Fujimori (now imprisoned for crimes against humanity, responsible for a genocidal policy against the revolutionary movement, including the forced sterilization of thousands of indigenous women accused of procreating communists!) presented false letters of peace attributed to Gonzalo and soon after, counterfeit videos (this was evident to all communists and was revealed later by the secret services). The entire international Maoist movement led an intense campaign for the release of Chairman Gonzalo after his arrest. All requests by prominent progressive personalities to visit Chairman Gonzalo were rejected."

We add, on our own note, that it is a matter of principle to us, not to accept any capitulation from comrades in the hands of the enemy. We will view all such messages as

false. If we did not, this would place an impossible burden on the movement, to sort out what is true and what is false, as long as our comrades are in the sole hands of the enemy. Secondly, it would place all our prisoners of war in immense danger. If the enemy knew the movement to accept such statements, they would apply all types of pressure on the prisoners. Parties and organizations who accept such "capitulation" should be prepared to bear an enormous responsibility. They might end up with blood on their hands and heavy weights of responsibility on their shoulders.

In the final report of the bourgeois so-called "Truth and Reconciliation Commission" (TRC), even these lap dogs of the old state admit the torture practices of the police:

"The TRC concludes that the fight against subversion reinforced pre-existing authoritarian and repressive practices among members of the police. Torture during interrogations and undue detentions, which had been frequent in addressing common delinquency, acquired a massive character during the counter-subversive action. Additionally, the TRC has established that the most serious human rights violations by military agents were: extrajudicial executions, forced disappearance of persons, torture, and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The TRC particularly condemns the extensive practice of sexual violence against women."

The TRC admits massacres and other atrocities, and the massacres of heroic fighting revolutionaries in the prisons is well known to us and will forever be remembered as the 'Day of Heroism'. Just to put emphasis on the character of the old state, we quote the bourgeois Human Rights Watch who writes:

"In 2015, the government created a national registry of victims of forced sterilizations committed between 1995 and 2001. More than 5,000 victims had been registered at time of writing."

In this context, Belisario states "Gonzalo was quick to capitulate to the Fujimori regime and become a Right opportunist". And by quick, he is referring to a year in solitary isolation, in a cell defined as 'spartan' by the butcher-president Fujimori himself, his to be wife and several comrades in other cells, in the hands of the same torturing enemy. And this filth is being promoted by the ILPS chairman and NDFP advisor José María Sison.

Against Empiricism, Subjectivism, and Dogmatism

If we move from Belisarios criticism to summing up the main problem of his right opportunist method, we want to address his empiricism, which in essence is anti-Maoist. It is basic Marxism that practice is principal in the contradiction of theory and practice. Knowledge develops from practice, this is principal. But this should not be understood as putting no emphasis at all on theory or rational knowledge. It is basic Maoism that "from the

particular to the general", but this is but the first of two processes whereas the second is "from the general to the particular", as Mao explained in 'On Contradiction'.

A one-sided emphasis on the particular, on the 'concrete socio-economic characteristics', on the 'objective conditions', on the 'revolutionary situation', does not develop rational knowledge from the practice. It does not do what Mao describes like this:

"Thus cognition always moves in cycles and (so long as scientific method is strictly adhered to) each cycle advances human knowledge a step higher and so makes it more and more profound."

Chairman Gonzalo also addresses this question when he states:

"Pay attention to analysis and synthesis — these are two aspects of a contradiction and synthesis is the principal one. Analysis allows us to break down and set elements apart in order to achieve a better understanding, but this is only one aspect. It is not, nor can it ever be, the entire process of knowledge. It requires its other aspect — synthesis. It is synthesis which enables us to grasp the essence of knowledge. If there is no synthesis there is no qualitative leap in knowledge. Synthesis is the decisive aspect, the main aspect, the one which enables the formulation of objective laws."

Belisario and Sison end up short-wiring the whole Marxist cycle of knowledge, when they refuse to work seriously with the question of what is general, what is universal. Belisario boldly declares, in defiance tho the whole Marxist method:

"these communist leaders did not set out to 'synthesize' a 'universally applicable theory'"

And he pretends there is an antagonistic contradiction between such synthesis (a word he puts in squeremarks, as if he even question the mere concept of synthesis!) and the "concrete analysis of concrete conditions' and carefully applied theory".

This is a total rejection of the Marxist theory of knowledge, a serious error, and ends up as a blatant rejection of the entire body of work produced by the great communists Marx, Lenin, Mao – and Gonzalo.

And at the same time, there is hardly any concrete and precise socio-economical analysis in the articles put forth by Belisario and Sison. All this talk of concrete analysis of the concrete situation is simply replacing such, and not followed by such. The empiricist error thus transforms into dogmatism. We see this when Belisario eclectically handpicks quotes from Lenin's 'Left-Wing Communism', without even a sentence on the concrete socio-economical situation and the historical context in which it was written. Neither does he address the context of this work in relation to the subjective forces, where this pamphlet was part of Lenin's struggle against anarcho-syndicalism,

national bolshevism and different "anti authoritarian" factionalists and splitters in Russia, Germany and Britain in 1920, a situation where Marxism had won the most advanced proletarians and the task at hand was to combat factionalism and, as Mao said, 'raise the level of the intermediate'. This is a concrete situation that has not been replicated in the imperialist fortresses for many decades. Or does Belisario really believe we are in a similar situation in imperialist Europe 2019, as Lenin and the communists of 1920?

But in the end, what the pamphlet on 'Left-Wing Communism' absolutely is not, is a critique of people's war theory as the universally applicable military theory of the proletariat...

Neither Belisario nor Sison seem interested in solving any problems. They seem focused on inventing new problems and making the least amount of real investigation. They thus again discard the Marxist theory of knowledge, where Mao states that to investigate a problem is to solve it. They criticise others for dogmatism and phrase-mongering, but they themselves have little other than empty talk to present. They attack form, person and words, instead of bringing real matters to discussion. They talk about concrete analysis, but replace any analysis with hollowed out phrases and nasty words.

Again, Belisario and Sison is totally embedded in empiricism in this matter, that is the matter of proletarian military theory and universality of people's war. They are

subjective and one-sided. And this transforms into dogmatism at the first theoretical obstacle.

It is good that they expose themselves. But it is of no use if this is not acknowledged and understood in the International Communist Movement. The wrecking ways is dangerous if one let them get their foot inside the door. We will learn this lesson and be vigilant in the future.

TO DISCARD PEOPLE'S WAR IS TO DISCARD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION - PART II

Ard Kinera, Red Flag editorial group

25 September 2019

"Chairman Mao emphasized that we must always be concerned about revisionism because it is the main danger facing the world revolution. So we also take into consideration the situation outside our ranks, since any rightist tendency in the Party, expressed in attitudes, ideas, approaches, and positions of a rightist nature, has to do with ideological processes, with the repercussions of the class struggle, and the campaigns of the reactionary State, with the actions of revisionism itself in our country, with the counterrevolutionary activities of imperialism, especially the contention between the two superpowers, and the sinister role of revisionism on a world scale."

Chairman Gonzalo, In the El Diario Interview of 1988

This is the second part of a longer article. In dividing into two, we tried to focus the first part on issues of burning importance, and place most secondary issues in this second part. We also put some paragraphs here that deal with issues that have been addressed earlier by Ard Kinera or other Maoists.

All the references to the article as a whole is attached to both parts.

People's War Was Not Synthesized by Marx or Lenin

Belisario writes:

"Marx and Engels had long developed this theory on the necessity of armed revolution by the masses of toiling people led by the working class, further clarifying the need to smash the existing bourgeois state machinery and establish a dictatorship of the proletariat in order to pursue and complete the socialist revolution. (...)

So, yes, in this sense, there should be no debate about the universal applicability of people's war in all countries ruled by the big bourgeoisie and its reactionary allies. Had Kinera kept his polemics within these bounds, about 'people's war' being the equivalent of 'armed revolution,' then there would be essentially no debate on the question.'

This is certainly true. But the point is, people's war was not developed, not synthesized by Marx or Lenin, but by Mao – and later made part of the definition of Maoism by Chairman Gonzalo. If people's war did not mean people's war, as understood by Mao and then Maoists, but simply was another word for something else, then yes, Belisario would be correct. Then, there would be no debate. And also, there might not even be Maoism.

Maoism was understood in the furnace of people's war in Peru. Without people's war, no Maoism – and no Maoism without people's war.

Communist Party of Peru writes in "On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism", part of their "Fundamental Documents":

"The People's War is the military theory of the international proletariat; in it are summarized, for the first time in a systematic and complete form, the theoretical and practical experience of the struggles, military actions, and wars waged by the proletariat, and the prolonged experience of the people's armed struggle and especially of the incessant wars in China. It is with Chairman Mao that the proletariat attains its military theory; nevertheless, there is much confusion and misunderstanding on this issue."

We understand perfectly clearly, why Belisario and Sison prefer to attack us instead of addressing the CPP and Gonzalo directly. But wouldn't it be more honest if they did? Or if they answered the documents of the 'El Maoista', of the Maoist Parties and Organizations of Latin America, or the Communist Party of Brazil (Red Faction)? No, they prefer directing the articles against us – while the attack in reality is against the red line put forward by these great Parties and Organizations. It is transparent why they do so, and comrades should make a note of this. To be blunt, they do so because they think this is a good tactic. One more of their special so called tactics.

On the other hand, the contradiction is still made very clear. Belisario is promoting a right opportunist line.

On Strategy and Revolutionary Situations

Belisario writes:

"However, Kinera glosses over two important corollaries to this fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism. First, his arguments assume (even though not directly) that a revolutionary situation currently (or perennially) exists in all countries. Therefore all communist parties (CPs), if they are truly engaged in revolution, must adopt a corresponding military strategy and place armed struggle on their practical work agenda. And second, he insists that the Maoist strategy of protracted people's war is applicable to industrial capitalist countries."

To clear this "misunderstanding"; we simply adhere to Chairman Mao and Chairman Gonzalo. As Mao stated, the main tendency of our time is revolution. This is the era of proletarian revolution and the demise of imperialism. As stated in the "International Line" of the Communist Party of Peru:

"In the current situation and in perspective we have entered the strategic offensive of the world revolution, within the '50 to 100 years' in which imperialism and world reaction shall be sunk and

we shall enter the stage when the proletariat settles into power and establishes its dictatorship."

Every act in this era, for the communist, is conducted for the people's war. Our position is not that there is a permanent revolutionary situation in each and every country. But it is our position that the revolution in all countries take form of people's war, and is part of the Proletarian World Revolution. The military theory of the proletariat is not a strategy for a revolutionary situation, it is a theory that is integral part of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It is simply the sole and only military theory of the Proletariat, on which all revolutionary strategy must be based.

Communists must indeed place armed struggle on their agenda, both in theory and practice. It cannot wait for the revolutionary situation to appear. First it must be defined, then prepared, then initiated and then developed – in each and every country.

Chairman Mao and the People's War

Contrary to the obscure and subjectivist distortions of Belisario, there is no coincidence in the term 'Maoism'. Chairman Mao was the great leader who developed the guiding thought of the Chinese revolution, and through it he developed Marxism in its three realms; philosophy, economy and socialism. And he developed the theory of people's war. These are objective facts that are also acknowledged by bourgeois military theorists, like Thomas Marks, as Kinera wrote in an earlier article.

They do not propose that Maos works as only relevant to insurgency in semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries. Instead, their position mirrors, from the bourgeois side, the position of Maoists, that hold people's war to be universal, or "unavoidable" when the question of revolution is raised. In this question, it is of no relevance if this was fully grasped by Mao himself in 1938. Firstly, because Mao lived on for almost 40 more years, and in these four decades, he led the victory in the people's war of China, the socialist construction and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. He led the charge against modern revisionism in the form of Khrushchev, and was recognised as the leader of the International Communist Movement. And Mao Zedong Thought inspired countless Parties and Organizations all over the world, and more than a few revolutionary wars.

How these four decades formed or inspired Mao's thoughts is yet to be studied by us. It is obvious that the first letters to the revisionist leadership of the Soviet Union in the great polemic, differs quite a bit from the last ones. Also the letters on Togliatti and Thorez shows what great lengths the Chinese leadership went to in the struggle to maintain unity, while fighting right opportunism in the movement. There is development, and this development culminated in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and an all out war on revisionism and capitalist roaders. We do not have the full picture of the development in the military thought of Mao, from 1938 till the peak of Cultural Revolution thirty years later. But it must have been some leaps in his understanding. Any

how, Maoism as synthesized by the CPP and Chairman Gonzalo, includes the military theory of Mao as an integral part and as being universal. What the bourgeois yankee Thomas Marks understand, Belisario does not, people's war is the theory of insurgency, it is the military theory of proletarian world revolution and its two currents; the national liberation movement and the proletarian movement.

As the Communist Party of Peru writes in "On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism":

"A key and decisive question is the understanding of the universal validity of people's war and its subsequent application taking into account the different types of revolution and the specific conditions of each revolution. To clarify this key issue it is important to consider that no insurrection like that of Petrograd, the anti-fascist resistance, or the European guerrilla movements in the Second World War have been repeated, as well as considering the armed struggles that are presently being waged in Europe. In the final analysis, the October Revolution was not only an insurrection but a revolutionary war that lasted for several years. Consequently, in the imperialist countries the revolution can only be conceived as a revolutionary war which today is simply people's war."

As the reader might notice, the Party does not refer to a quotation of Mao to argue the universality of people's war,

but it argues reality. It sums up the experience of the national liberation movement and the proletarian revolution in the light of Mao's theory. It points out the fact that there has been no – lacking a better word – "Petrograd style" of revolution since the Russian revolution, and – importantly – they understand also this revolution as people's war, lasting several years. They refer to the armed struggles of Europe, like the Irish armed struggle still being waged, as something to be considered in understanding the universal validity of people's war. We do not want to fall into some kind of empirio criticism, like Belisario later does, but still remembering the words of Mao in his article *On Practice*:

"Marxists hold that man's social practice alone is the criterion of the truth of his knowledge of the external world."

Belisario goes on explaining Sison and denouncing People's War in imperialist countries:

"Sison's point is that in the highly urbanized and other highly developed areas of capitalist countries, under current conditions when there is no full-scale war and revolutionary crisis, a people's army that launches tactical offensives with no sizeable mass base (at least equivalent to rural guerrilla bases in countries such as China and Vietnam) will be hard-pressed to counter-maneuver, employ guerrilla tactics, retain initiative, and hit back at the enemy's weak points, and much less be able to consolidate and expand their bases."

We hold this statement to be falsified by the Irish Republican Army, waging such a guerilla war for many decades against a British imperialism not under conditions of full-scale war and revolutionary crisis. The statement is simply proven wrong by "man's social practice". Further on, as we have referred to before, there is experience of armed struggle in most imperialist countries, both during war and fascism, and not.

Further on, many semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries are today highly urbanized. The communications of such countries are highly developed today compared to rural China in 1938. Still, the people's war continues in the Philippines, India, Turkey and Peru. In Nepal, the people's war raged for ten years and engulfed 80% of the country, from 1996 to 2006. This in small country situated between two hostile giants (China and India). Even though the people's war was betrayed by the leadership who entered parliamentary cretinism and succumbed to bureaucratic capitalism, it proved the universality of people's war again. We mention here five countries distinctly different from China of 1938.

From Specific to Universal, From Particular to General

Further, we must point out, that what is a specific characteristic of one revolution, might later become acknowledged as universally applicable. One such example we find when Stalin writes about the strategy and tactics of the October revolution. Here, he points out two specific characteristics, the first being:

"Thus, the undivided leadership of one party, the Communist Party, as the principal factor in the preparation for October — such is the characteristic feature of the October Revolution, such is the first specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October."

Would not this become an integral and universally applicable part of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism? We claim it is, and that this is understood and acknowledged by every maoist. In this text of Stalin, we see how he with greatness elaborate on this specific characteristic of the Russian revolution, different from the experience of the Paris Commune, but this "characteristic feature" was then replicated in China and in all other people's wars later on. What was applied as specific has been proven universal. This is an example of the Marxist spiral of knowledge. From the practice to theory to new enriched practice to new enriched theory. What Stalin present as a specific characteristic in this text from 1923, he includes in his writing of the synthesis of Marxism-Leninism, the second and higher stage of Marxism, in the eternal article "Concerning Questions of Leninism" written in 1926:

"Lenin uses the word dictatorship of the Party not in the strict sense of the word ('power based on the use of force'), but in the figurative sense, in the sense of its undivided leadership."

Stalin does not here talk about Leninism as specific for Russia, but define it like this in "The Foundations of Leninism":

"Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular."

Make note of how unapologetically Stalin not only says theory, but also tactics. Stalin cannot be a great Communist in Belisarios view, since such only "carefully applied theory to grapple with the specific characteristics of their own countries and solve concrete problems of their own revolutions" and "did not set out to "synthesize"" a "universally applicable" theory on how to wage armed revolution".

Stalin writes in "The Foundations of Leninism":

"Some say that Leninism is the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to the situation in Russia. This definition contains a particle of truth, but not the whole truth by any means. Lenin, indeed, applied Marxism to Russian conditions, and applied it in a masterly way. But if Leninism were only the application of Marxism to the conditions that are peculiar to Russia it would be a purely national and only a national, a purely Russian and only a Russian, phenomenon. We

know, however, that Leninism is not merely a Russian, but an international phenomenon rooted in the whole of international development. That is why I think this definition suffers from one-sidedness."

The development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism follows the principles of the cycle of knowledge as described by Mao in *On Contradiction*:

"These are the two processes of cognition: one, from the particular to the general, and the other, from the general to the particular. Thus cognition always moves in cycles and (so long as scientific method is strictly adhered to) each cycle advances human knowledge a step higher and so makes it more and more profound."

The concrete application is the particular and the summing up of experience, systematizing it and making a synthesis is to find what is general, what is universal, and thus to advance human knowledge.

Stalin continues:

"Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular."

One gets the notion, Belisario and Sison are amongst those who believe the process of developing the Marxist theory of universal laws and of tactics and strategy of the proletarian revolution in general, was finished sometime around this writings of Stalin. Belisario admits that:

"The basic principles of armed revolution by the proletariat and other allied classes were further elaborated by Lenin in his many works."

But he does not grant Mao the same status. In other words, the principles of armed revolution has not been developed further since Lenin, or at least since Stalin synthesized these. If Belisario even recognise Stalin's synthesis of Leninism. If so, Belisarios article on "the so called universality of people's war" should be the perfect occasion to at least mention the universal contributions of Mao in the area of revolutionary war. But when given the opportunity, Belisario uses it only to make Mao "one of many", in the company of three Vietnamese leaders and José Maria Sison. Sison himself, in the texts of 'Philippine Society and Revolution' (1970), says:

"The fundamental strategic line of fighting for national democracy as the first stage in the longer-term struggle for socialism had still to be firmly grasped by the Philippine Left, almost fifteen years after the 1949 victory of the Chinese Revolution led by Mao had overwhelmingly reaffirmed the universal validity of Lenin's revolutionary strategy for semicolonial, semifeudal societies."

And:

"The Philippine Revolution is today illumined by the great universal truth of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought."

These are the words of Belisario's promoter Sison nearly 50 years ago. How does this compare to the writings of Belisario and Sison today? And, our point here is not to focus on the content, but the method.

On the other hand, today Sison salutes the Bolivarian government in Venezuela, upholding Chavez and Maduro. So it seems people's war and new democracy is not universal in the semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries either in his opinion. Not any more.

What Revolutionary Parties in the Imperialist Countries Apply Electoralism Today?

Belisario writes, after some juvenile slander:

"In short, Kinera disdains the work in reactionary trade unions and bourgeois parliaments that Lenin (in 'Left-Wing' Communism and other works) had so patiently explained as important part of revolutionary tasks during a non-revolutionary period."

Again, Belisario does not argue facts, when he argue. As he simply refer to Mao, he now simply refer to Lenin. Why is this thesis of Lenin in 1920, true in 2019? The

point made of Chairman Mao and Chairman Gonzalo is that our era is not the same as in 1920, they claim this is the era of sweeping away of imperialism. And Gonzalo states it is the strategic offensive of the proletarian world revolution. In this era, we have eight decades more experience since Lenin wrote his book against the infantile disorder of "Left-Communism". Just as we have six decades more experience since Mao's main work on protracted war. Have we not learned anything from this experience worth summing up?

On the one hand, Belisario claim all the classics wrote almost purely for their own particular and specific situations. On the other hand, he treats what they wrote – but only arbitrarily – as some dogma never to be questioned. What a gymnastics performance! Yes, we disdain the practice of the "proletarian revolutionaries" of Belisarios, "patiently accumulating strength", because we know too well what this coded words really mean. But Belisario does not mention these patient revolutionaries. Who are they? Which parties and organizations in the imperialist countries does he have in mind?

We know which "revolutionaries" are engulfed in elections and trade unions run by the social democrats. We do not believe for a second that they are really paving way for proletarian revolution. They willingly give their names, pictures and addresses to the class enemy. They do not study military theory. Ask them Belisario, what tactics and strategies they have for revolution, and they will only present tactics of gathering votes. And most of them does not even succeed very well in this.

Let it be clear that our disdain is not for the heroic fighters and cadre of the Communist Party of the Philippines, even though we disagree with the line of Sison and the line of participation in elections. We have nothing but the utmost respect for their sacrifice and wish their struggle to succeed. We also respect all comrades that disagree or have questions in these matters. We are not to arrogant to see where we come from, what errors we have made ourselves, and our shortcomings. But we have no respect for the parliamentary cretinism of the legalist left of the imperialist countries. This is a comfortable choice in our countries. It is the path of least resistance, but it does not lead to revolution. The decades have spoken, their practice is known. They are being integrated into the reactionary state, or they are withering away of old age.

Belisario writes:

"Sison's remark about not seeing 'any Maoist party proclaiming and actually starting' PPW in imperialist countries was obviously to show that truly serious Maoist formations in these countries see such course of immediate action as not viable for now. Kinera's response to this is dishonest and disingenuous: he basically challenges Sison to publicly reveal 'any Maoist party not adhering to the strategy of People's War and being of such quantity and quality' (note that he dropped the word "protracted"). This is a cunning trap."

It is no trap, it is simply asking for some direct and honest talk. What Parties and Organizations does Belisario and

Sison support in the imperialist countries? Preferable "Maoist", not adhering to the universality of People's War, of some quantity and quality, and doing patient parliamentary and trade union work? If there is such a party, it should be easy for Belisario to remember or promote it. Where is it?

On Tactical Unity and Bolshevik Bank Robbers

Belisario writes:

"He simply condemns it as 'the totally dominating strategy' of practically all Left forces in Europe, including those that 'adhere to Mao Zedong Thought' (but not Gonzaloites). This shows that Kinera is a hopeless infantile sectarian who cannot even derive good points of tactical unity with other revolutionaries and progressives who do not kowtow to Gonzalo Thought."

Belisarios point, if there is one, is lost to us. We do not define anyone as "gonzaloite". It is simply a derogatory term. Why should we seek "tactical unity" with those who find us infantile and speaks of "your dear Gonzalo" and similar ways to mock Chairman Gonzalo? By all means, mock us all you want. But the slander against Gonzalo speaks volumes to what kind of dark agenda Belisario is pushing. We have no problem uniting in alliances and fronts with most people we have some disagreements with. But in the two line-struggle, when we struggle over revolutionary theory, we do not make "tactical unity" with right opportunism. We don't blur facts for tactical

purposes. We are not debating the basis of unity for a single street protest, but the general line of the international communist movement.

Belisario writes:

"Kinera thus dishonestly conjures an illusion of a continuous PPW in a capitalist country. He conveniently forgets about the years of reaction (1907-1910) when the revolution was in full retreat, and the years of revival (1910-1914) when the Bolsheviks pursued tactics combining illegal work (but not yet armed struggle!) with the 'obligatory utilisation' of many legal channels including winning seats in the reactionary parliament."

In 1907 and the years after, bolshevik armed groups did many actions in Kaukasus, amongst them robberies and attacks on reactionaries. Is this not armed struggle? Was it only in Kaukasus such actions took place? Lenin and Stalin was linked to one of the largest heists in contemporary Europe. Not armed struggle? The Bolsheviks waged both legal and illegal struggle, also armed struggle, in 1904 and 1905, also in the period of reaction and war, and from 1917 to 1921 it was insurrections, civil war and national liberation war. Is it dishonest to view this as protracted people's war? To view it as protracted, and not a quick insurrection after prolonged accumulation of forces? We do not see the dishonesty on our part.

On the Industrial and Non-Industrial Proletariat

Belisario writes:

"Kinera claims that '[those] employed in public or private services ... outnumber the industrial proletarians in most imperialist countries.' He must be reminded that the modern industrial proletariat includes such service workers, insofar as their class situation is most analogous to industrial workers."

This Belisario writes to defend Sison's words in the matter. This is not a central issue in our text, but if they want to not create confusion, they could simply say proletariat, and not "industrial proletariat".

In his own class analysis of the Philippines, Sison writes:

"The proletariat refers principally to the industrial workers and secondarily to other wage-earners." and "The industrial workers are in land, water and rail transport; mines and quarries; logging areas and lumber yards; sugar, coconut and abaca-stripping mills; public utility plants; food processing; beverage plants and breweries; tannery and shoe manufacturing; textile factories; printing presses; merchandising firms; chemical and drug factories; soap and cosmetic factories; oil refineries; flour mills; cement plants; pulp and paper manufacturing; scrap metal and steel processing

plants; and several other enterprises and industrial lines."

Thus, in the Philippines Sison makes a distinction in the proletariat, between industrial proletariat and "other wage-earners". But in the imperialist countries, the whole of the proletariat is industrial? And we are the confused ones?

Again, this is not a principal question of this debate, but Belisario should really learn to pick his battles. Of course service workers are proletarians, and part of the modern proletariat which was born in the industrial revolution. But to us it does not make sense to define all proletarians as industrial workers.

Belisario tends to start shouting when he is arguing a weak point. He writes:

"Apparently, Kinera automatically excludes from the industrial proletariat those sizeable working masses employed in major service firms in transport and storage, communications and media, health, and so on. There is no such class as 'service proletariat' mechanically separate from the modern industrial proletariat, as if they are boxed off from the intense class struggles and the aspirations for socialism."

Apparently, Belisario is a charlatan. We argue no such point against the service proletariat being part of the proletariat, that is the modern working class. We have never claimed there to be a class distinction between

different proletarians. The proletariat is one class. But, as Sison did when analysing the classes of the Philippines, and Mao in his analysis of the classes in China, we acknowledge there to be different strata and sectors of the proletariat. We do not in any way think this sectors to be boxed off from each other. The stratification is more important than the sectorisation, that is, the division between upper, middle and lower strata is more important in our view, than the different areas of industries and work of the proletarians. But for the sake of clarity, it makes little sense to claim hospitals and shopping malls to be 'industry'. To be clear – there is only one class, but we would hold that insisting on calling our class the industrial proletariat, and not simply the proletariat, could be quite confusing. We again hold, that the most important point to emphasize is that the imperialist countries are imperialist, not that they are industrialized.

The Workers' Militia of Sison and Trotsky

Belisario writes:

"But here Kinera turns ballistic again. He argues about 'strict gun laws in Europe' (which of course was not Sison's point). He also wrongly associates Sison's ideas with the creation of Russian workers' militia (which emerged in the extremely revolutionary situation of 1917 and certainly was not just Trotsky's idea but incorporated into the Bolshevik program). The Red Guards were a creation of the Bolsheviks and the masses, not Kinera's idol Trotsky."

When people reads emotions into the texts of others, it is often a case of "what the heart is full of, spills out of the mouth". The text of Belisario is full of "Kinera goes ballistic" and such claims. It splices up the text of Belisario, but the one coming off as "ballistic" is himself. How he ends up in making Trotsky an idol of ours, he does not try to explain. But when we firstly referred to Trotsky, we referred to something concrete, namely the "Transitional Program" of his "International". Here the trotskyites wrote:

"A new upsurge of the mass movement should serve not only to increase the number of these units but also to unite them according to neighborhoods, cities, regions. It is necessary to give organized expression to the valid hatred of the workers toward scabs and bands of gangsters and fascists. It is necessary to advance the slogan of a workers' militia as the one Serious guarantee for the inviolability of workers' organizations, meetings and press."

This was not proposed for Russia during the revolution as Belisario is talking about, but as a part of the proposed general line of the international workers movement and program of the Trotsky conspiracy. We were reminded of this, when we read Sison's first article, where he wrote:

"It is therefore possible to organize proletarians with firearms as sporting gun clubs, as community self-defense organizations and as voluntary security for public events and structures. But of course it is

unwise to make displays of armed groups of people and at the same time provocatively declare themselves in opposition to the capitalist state, its army and police."

What Trotsky recommended in 1938, is qualitatively just the same as Sison puts forward. Even the examples mentioned is quite similar. The nature of the 'Transitional program' was one of centrism and reformism. It merges two stages into one transitional stage, and merges two types of program, the long term and the short term, into one. It is an error typical of trotskyism.

Our position is that this line does not apply for most imperialist countries today. For the most part, armed militias should not be built in the open, even disguised as legal organizations who do not "provoke" the capitalist state, army and police. There might be local or national specific characteristics that makes this the correct path, but we would recommend the principles of clandestine work to apply in these matters. In general, revolutionaries should learn how to handle guns, but the question of organizing the masses militarily and arming them, is not mainly a question of forming militias or "sporting gun clubs" and "self-defence organizations". If such a movement truly is led by the communists, to do so in the open or semi-openly is in itself a provocation. We hold that communists should absolutely be open with our intent, with our program, strategy and goals, but our organization must be clandestine and secret. This is sometimes inverted by right opportunists, who hide their

intent but present their organization for the enemy with no real measures of secrecy.

Again, Belisario does not quote our text, but claim we confuse Trotskys proposal with the Red Guards of the Russian revolution. The trotskyist ‘Transitional program’ we referred to, had nothing to do with the Russian revolution. But we uphold that the similarity with Sison’s paragraph is striking.

On Serve the People and the Right-Opportunist Line

Belisario writes:

"Kinera and his group Tjen Folkdet [sic] lack self-awareness and self-criticalness. Since 1998, which is more than twenty one years ago, they have not advanced from a pre-party formation and have not become a revolutionary party of the proletariat or a Communist Party to lead the proletariat and people in any kind of armed revolution. Their protracted talk about PPW has not yet proven to be any different from the illusion of the social democratic and other reformists about the protracted evolution of capitalism to socialism."

Firstly, the text signed Kinera was not from a group. Kinera supports the Maoist movement of Norway, and thus the movement of Serve the People – Communist League (Tjen Folket), but the articles is no more statements from this group, than the texts of Sison or Belisario is statements of the Communist Party of the

Philippines. The claim that Serve the People are not self-aware or self-critical is baseless. In a statement from 2018 "On the ongoing struggle against a rightist line in Serve the People", the League wrote:

"The rightist line in the organisation has gradually appropriated the word 'Maoism', but it has never practiced Maoism. It has only in word, but not in action, dedicated itself in serving the people. On the contrary it has shown itself to be a manipulative opportunism and through and through revisionism. With this we declare that we have broken with this line and are in the process of correcting our own faults and developing our work in accordance with the interests of the proletariat and the proletariat's own ideology: Maoism."

When Serve the People was founded, it was as a Marxist-Leninist Mao Zedong Thought group. It did not from the beginning uphold the universality of people's war. Maoism and people's war was adopted in 2008 in the program of the league, but still it was not defined as in the synthesis of Maoism developed by the Communist Party of Peru and Chairman Gonzalo. In fact, most of the life span of Serve the People, the line of the leadership majority seem quite close the line of Belisario. Thus, the "criticism" from Belisario of Serve the People not advancing from pre-party formation is like lifting a stone and letting it go on his own feet. The main obstacle of further development of Serve the People, was exactly the line opposing Gonzalo thought and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism.

Never have a Maoist from Norway claimed to be in the forefront of world revolution. It is true there is no protracted people's war under Maoist leadership in Norway, or any other imperialist country. But again, where is the revolution due to protracted legal preparations? And what is the theory that has been applied by the most organizations for the longest time? Honesty in this area will make it very clear, that the adherence to people's war as the sole path to liberation, is new in comparison.

The principal problem of the communist movement in the imperialist countries is the danger of right opportunism. Right opportunism in the form of reformism and social patriotism, and often disguised in the "imperialist exemptionalism" claiming the path to revolution must be bloody and violent in the third world, but one of protracted legalism in the imperialist countries, eventually and only in theory, ending in some kind of rapid revolution. In the question of the main contradiction in the line struggle, in the struggle between left and right, there is no question where to put Belisario and his promoters.

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