

# CRITIC OF “ON THE URBAN GUERRILLA”

Posted on 18. October 2019 by maosite1917

Struggle Session posted 7 October 2019 an article with the heading “On the Urban Guerrilla”. This article – though interesting on some parts – have major weaknesses which can lead to serious mistakes if not corrected.

The article starts with the following introduction:

*There is a lot of talk about the theory of People’s War, its universality and its ability to be applied to every country on earth. Contributors to the debate on both sides of the barricade will both condemn and defend the experience of the Urban Guerrilla. For a different approach to the topic we intend to go into more detail on several important European Urban Guerrilla movements. Making it clear that we hold that the only Maoist position is that People’s War is universal, for more on this topic we recommend researching the public documents from **Norway** and **Germany**.*

<https://struggle-sessions.com/2019/10/07/on-the-urban-guerrilla/>

The author deserve credit for doing an work on the topic of investigating European Urban Guerilla movements (EUG), even though the article just scratches the surface on this topic and as such doesn’t become more than a weak beginning of a work that can actually give us valuable insights which will be useful for the future struggle of the coming war for revolution in Imperialist headquarters.

The article correctly explains that the kind of ware these European Urban Guerilla movements where fighting were not the same as PPW (although there are some thing they share in common). What we need regarding study on European Urban Guerilla movements is a deeper more concrete study where we can extract general truths that will also be relevant to PPW.

## ARE THE COMMUNISTS AT THE STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE TODAY?

The article claims:

*We would of course insist that the age of strategic offensive of*

world proletarian revolution has set the objective conditions  
for revolution in every country without exception.

Earlier they have stated (without any arguments or facts) that "the age of strategic offensive of world proletarian revolution" (started) "around 1980". For everybody with some basic history knowledge on the topic – this claim seems absurd and totally contrary to historical facts (like the revisionists coming to power in Soviet and China, the degeneration to revisionism (and later liquidation) of the former western m-l parties etc. are facts totally contrary to the claim.

The source of this bizarre claim is most likely an dogmatic reading of a statement from Gonzalo (which even at that time were wrong) when he wrote in "We are the initiators" in 1980:

*Around the Second World War, the revolution entered a strategic equilibrium, leaving behind the reactionary holy alliances and their previously untouchable tormentors and enemies. With the powerful international workers' movement, the cresting waves of the national liberation movements, the development of Communist Parties, and the elevation of Marxism to the high summit of Mao Tse-tung Thought, a new situation has been created: We are entering the strategic offensive of world revolution. In the next 50 to 100 years, the domination of imperialism and all exploiters will be swept away. History cannot go backwards. In the hands of the working class, under the leadership of the Communist Parties and through the mighty force of poor peasants, the peoples war will be sustained and grow each day until overthrowing the old order. The world is entering into a new situation, the strategic offensive of world revolution.*

<http://bannedthought.net/Peru/CPP/Collections/CollectedWorksOfTheCommunistPartyOfPeru-V1-1968-1987.pdf>

And later:

*It has befallen on us to live in an extraordinary epoch. Thus it is written, mankind never had such a heroic destiny. To the people of today, to those people who breathe, struggle, and fight, has befallen the task of sweeping reaction from the face of the earth, the most illuminating and magnificent mission given to any generation. We find ourselves in this situation: The world revolution enters a strategic offensive. Nothing will prevail against it. The innumerable iron legions arise, and more and more will arise, inexhaustibly multiply, encircle and annihilate reaction.*

<http://bannedthought.net/Peru/CPP/Collections/CollectedWorksOfTheCommunistPartyOfPeru-V1-1968-1987.pdf>

We are now i 2019, so it have gone almost 40 years since this declaration of the strategic offensive. Gonzalo has long time ago been caught and put into prison and the PPW in Peru have been crushed, the former ML parties in Europe, US etc. has been destroyed of revisionism and most of them are now liquidated. Where are this offensive?

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ON AN STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE?

Mao writes during the war against Japan:

*"Japan is neither willing nor able to conclude the war at present, nor has her strategic offensive yet come to an end, but, as the general trend shows, her offensive is confined within certain limits, which is the inevitable consequence of her three weaknesses; she cannot go on indefinitely till she swallows the whole of China. "*

[https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2\\_08.htm](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_08.htm)

Mao argued that Japan would lose in the end (as they also did). But Japan were still on the offensive, as they were advancing in China.

I understand to have the strategic offensive as being the one who have the power to impose your strategy on the enemy. The other weaker part have to respond according to the strategy of the enemy.

Today the proletariat is weak because of the lack of consciousnesses and level of organization in the ruling imperialist countries.

There have been offensives in Peru, Nepal, Philippines and India (and probably more places who could be mentioned). But that doesn't mean that when we see on the world as a whole – that we are in the phase of strategic offensive. Contrary – we are in the phase of strategic defensive, even in India and Philippines where we have PPW

## CONCLUSION REGARDING STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE

To sum up – this short sentence from SS have two major faults:

1. That the world proletarian revolution are in the phase of strategic offensive today
2. That we have an objective condition for revolution in every country ("without exception") today

If there were an objective condition for revolution today, and combined with the theory about PPW as the only way of doing revolution – there are a short step to think communist should take up the arms and start fighting today. The only missing part is the subjective condition – which the article don't write anything about and as a result gives the impression that the time are ripe for starting the war against the Imperialist war machine in it's homelands. *[Correction 19/10/2019: The article of SS writes about subjective conditions elsewhere in the article. The point is that they doesn't in this context – leaving the gate open for misunderstanding]*

The most serious flaw in the article is how it does, or doesn't answer the question on when to launch PPW in imperialist countries.

## LEARN FROM THOSE WHO ACTUALLY ARE DOING PPW

So far on my study on the topic of PPW in Imperialist countries – the best text I've read is from our Indian comrades in the longer text [Urban perspective](#). \*

India is a huge country with vast urban areas, but also huge pretty modern million cities. The Indian state are powerful although probably with relatively less control on every inch of it's vast land then relatively richer Imperialist countries in Europe and America.

The experience from PPW in this country (and we can also add the experience from the Philippines) are therefore more relevant then the experiences of urban guerilla 30 years ago in western Europe.

One of the most interesting sentences regarding our topic in this text is:

*Similarly wrong understanding of laying stress on urban guerilla warfare, when there were no conditions for it, led to setback of our city work.*

### ***CPI (Maoist) Urban perspective***

This is totally contrary to the article from Struggle Sessions, which (as quoted above) states that *"objective conditions for revolution in every country without exception"*. Unless one think that PPW in Imperialist countries should be fought in the rural areas (which after my knowledge no MLM organization today are arguing for).

I find it very interesting that the experience from an advanced MLM organization actually doing PPW is that you shall not start urban guerilla warfare too early. This is something they also get back to later in the text, that urban guerilla is for later stages of the war.

In Urban perspective we also find the following:

*The arms used will depend on the situation in the area. As far as possible arms which are not normally used in the area should not be employed.*

### ***CPI (Maoist) Urban perspective***

Here we see how our Indian comrades are masterly analyzing their experience using the Marxists method of concrete analysis of the concrete situation. This is much better approach then the article from Struggle Sessions which are basing their analysis on

dogmatic reading of errors from Gonzalo and trying to press this wrong theoretical understanding on the practical reality.

## FOOTNOTES

\* <http://bannedthought.net> writes about this text:

"We believe that this is a genuine document originally created by the CPI-ML (People's War) group, probably from late 2001 or early 2002, which we think was then adopted (possibly with modifications) by the CPI(Maoist) at the time of its formation in 2004, or soon afterwards. However, this version was taken from a ruling class' web site, and therefore we can not be 100% certain that it is a genuine and fully correct CPI(Maoist) document."

<http://bannedthought.net/India/CPI-Maoist-Docs/index.htm>

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