

# THE WORLD SITUATION AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION

Eric Schmidt, November 2017

The world revolution must be submitted to internal causes, historically determined according to diverse class situations. At the same time, the International Communist Movement must elaborate a *general line* in relation to which each proletariat can determine the tasks it needs to fulfill in order to advance the world revolution. To take up Lenin's famous metaphor: in order to reach the center of the page, we must mark out our destination in advance.

Regarding the general line, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) characterizes it as follows, in the "Letter in 25 Points":

*This general line proceeds from the actual world situation taken as a whole and from a class analysis of the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world [...] [It] should reflect the general law of development of world history. [...] [and] bring the proletarian revolution step by step to complete victory.*<sup>1</sup>

By reflecting the *general law of development of world history*, the general line articulates the *world situation*, defined by the system of fundamental contradictions, with the advance of the *world revolution*. This articulation turns on specifying the principal contradiction in the political conjuncture. To specify the principal contradiction is more than simply to identify it: *the principal contradiction indicates the motive force in the world situation at a particular moment that is decisive in constituting a new political conjuncture*. It is a question here of grasping the contradiction within the structure that will transform the system of contradictions in order to yield novelties that will advance the revolutionary process on a world scale.

The general line is the strategic thought of the International Communist Movement. Only a vanguard party – the headquarters of knowledge and war of the proletariat in a particular country – can concretely apply the general line and realize proletarian internationalism in class situations determined on a national scale. But while the elaboration of a general line is a collective, international, and protracted process of systematizing the experience of world revolution and the world situation in order to determine the overall strategy and ideological orientation of the International Communist Movement, we can nevertheless examine the key question that we must address as a precondition for elaborating a general line, namely: *what is the principal contradiction in the conjuncture?*

To take up this question is to concretely assess the fundamental contradictions that structure the world situation from the perspective of fulfilling the central task today: growing our subjective forces within a favorable world situation characterized by an increasingly divided and weak imperialist camp.

We will therefore begin with a descriptive overview of the world situation.

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<sup>1</sup> Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement," in *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* (Peking, 1965), 5.

## **I. Overview of the World Situation**

Recent years have seen a withdrawal of imperialist states to their national borders in order to fortify themselves for the redivision of the world to come. The US capacity to maintain the imperialist camp as a unity of opposites, as a *contradictory whole* under its domination, is approaching its terminal phase.

The imperialist camp is in its essence characterized by the collusion/rivalry dialectic, of which the principal aspect today is *rivalry*. Collusion permits the collective growth of the imperialist camp, while rivalry reflects the striving of each imperialist power to expand its own influence. From the death of revisionism as a living political project of the bourgeoisie in the late-1980s up to the economic crash and ‘Great Recession’ of 2007-09, collusion was the principal aspect of this dialectic. The principal aspect of the contradiction only became rivalry once again – for the first time since the end of the protracted struggle for world hegemony between US imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism – during the course of the long depression that followed the Great Recession.

The current political conjuncture is marked by a period of sharpened inter-imperialist contradictions both *within* and *outside* the US-led imperialist bloc, which we can respectively illustrate with the aid of two examples: the US-EU alliance and the US-Russia rivalry.<sup>2</sup>

### *1. The US-EU Alliance.*

The alliance between the US and the EU – the backbone of the US-led imperialist bloc – finds itself in a political crisis. Deepening this crisis are the displacements of two key links that have historically allowed the US to maintain Europe as a secondary imperialism within a unified US-led imperialist bloc: Britain and Turkey.

Although Turkey never acceded to the EU – despite a concerted effort on its behalf by the US – it is a major NATO power that has historically mediated US domination over Europe at the military level. In the past two years, Turkey has turned towards collusion with Russian imperialism in military matters, most significantly purchasing a Russian-made surface-to-air missile system in September 2017, in part as a response to US military backing for the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) alliance, which effectively serves as the armed wing of the Kurdish national movement.

Together with the failed coup of July 2016, the massive purge of the bureaucracy and military in its aftermath, and the consolidation of executive power by Erdoğan following the April 2017 constitutional referendum, the turn towards collusion with Russian imperialism reflects reduced US military leverage over the EU in NATO in the context of the political crisis of the US-led imperialist bloc in a dependent country.

At the other end of Europe, the US-British ‘special relationship’ and the ambivalence of the British bourgeoisie towards the European supranational project from its inception have historically converged to allow the US to prevent the EU from growing its influence in an autonomous manner, enforcing a relation of vassalage over Britain and continental

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<sup>2</sup> Although we diverge from the perspective of the authors in many respects – not least of which is their characterization of the inter-imperialist contradiction as principal in the conjuncture (see below) – one can find a helpful overview of current inter-imperialist dynamics in the article, “Reconstituir el futuro en medio de la crisis del presente,” *Línea Proletaria*, No. 1, July 2017, 3-16.

Europe alike. The 2016 victory for the ‘Leave’ option in the Brexit referendum has withdrawn this key mediating link in the maintenance of the US-led imperialist bloc as a unity.

The delinking of the US from the EU does not translate into a strengthening of Europe. Indeed, the past several years have seen a process of effective disintegration of the EU itself, as uneven development between Franco-German Europe and the weaker European countries (Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Italy) was exposed and reinforced by the economic crisis of 2007-9 and its aftermath.

## 2. *The US-Russia Rivalry*

Russian imperialism is relatively weak economically and therefore relies principally on military power as its means of expansion and penetration, as did Soviet social-imperialism in the past. The US has accentuated its rivalry with Russia in part as a means of maintaining its domination of the EU in the face of the dynamic of increased EU independence, described above.

The US-Russia rivalry has sharpened considerably in recent years, in particular following the intervention of Russian military forces in the Ukraine Crisis in February 2014, and in the Syrian Civil War in September 2015. In Ukraine and Syria, the US-led imperialist bloc has either been completely powerless (Ukraine) or only partially able (Syria) to counter Russian imperialist expansionism and penetration.

In Ukraine, Russia has successfully annexed both Crimea and portions of Donetsk and Lugansk provinces without an effective response by the US-led bloc. In Syria, Russia has decisively turned the war in favor of its client, the Syrian state. The US-led bloc has replied by militarily backing the SDF. In April 2017, the US bombed a Syrian airbase in Homs used by the Russian Air Force, notifying Russia prior to the strike. Five months later, Russian warplanes bombed SDF forces fighting alongside US Special Forces in Eastern Syria.

The disaggregation of the US-led imperialist bloc – and the sharpening of inter-imperialist contradictions generally – has the system of internal contradictions in the imperialist countries as its motor. This political crisis is reflected in the emergence of semi-fascism as a political reality in the imperialist countries and beyond (e.g., India, the Philippines, Turkey). Semi-fascism has its basis in the protracted crisis of monopoly capitalism that has followed the crash of 2007. As a project, semi-fascism aims to impose a bureaucratized authority over rival fractions of the bourgeoisie in order to restore the political capacity of the bourgeoisie as a whole. This expresses what Lenin identified as one of the fundamental tendencies of imperialism: the trend of political reaction all along the line.

In most countries in which semi-fascists control the state apparatus, there has not been a complete suspension of the parliamentary framework, with its elections, free press, and independent judiciary. Semi-fascism remains merely a *project*, a tendency towards an executive manner of resolving contradictions within the bourgeoisie, as opposed to a negotiated resolution in a parliamentary framework. Nevertheless, we find several factors in the world situation that echo those that accompanied the rise of fascism in the 1930s:

1— The economic crisis of 2007-9, and the insufficient devalorization, reorientation, and redistribution of capital that followed, which has led to a persistent overproduction of capital, that is, means of production and commodities capable of functioning as capital at the former rate of profit.

2— The division of the imperialist bourgeoisie into antagonistic political factions within each country, none of which are capable of unifying the bourgeoisie within the existing parliamentary framework.

In the US, which is typical in this respect, this has taken the form of a rivalry between three principal factions of the bourgeoisie:

—the *'old' imperialist project* of US world hegemony, which has the support of most monopolies and recruits among the labor aristocracy, urban petty bourgeoisie, and organized working class;

—the *semi-fascist project* of Trumpism, which recruits among the petty bourgeoisie undergoing proletarianization, the middle bourgeoisie, the managerial petty bourgeoisie, ex-workers in formerly-industrialized regions, and a section of the labor aristocracy in decline;

—a *revived welfare-statism* that has coalesced around the figure of Sanders, and which recruits primarily among students/youth, lower layers of the petty bourgeoisie, and non-unionized workers.

3— A crisis of bourgeois ideology, with liberal humanism increasingly giving way to various identitarian ideologies in order to cement the mass bases of the rival bourgeois projects. In the US, 'intersectionality' plays this role in relation to the 'old' imperialist project, racist nationalism in relation to Trumpism, and workerism in relation to welfare statism.

To these three factors – economic crisis, political fragmentation of the bourgeoisie, and the crisis of bourgeois ideology – we must add a fourth, namely, the weakness of the revolutionary camp, itself due to the weakness of the proletariat as a class in the political sense. Indeed, the weakness of the imperialist camp is today exceeded by the weakness of the International Communist Movement.

And yet the weakness of the imperialist camp is itself an indication that objective conditions are ripening for the reconstitution of the proletariat as a social force on a world scale. Those who doubt this would do well to recall Mao's letter criticizing Lin Biao's pessimistic right opportunism after the failure of the First Revolutionary War in 1927:

*The subjective forces of the revolution have indeed been greatly weakened since the defeat of the Great Revolution. The remaining subjective forces are very small, and if one judges by form, this naturally makes the comrades (those comrades who have this way of looking at things) feel pessimistic. But if we judge by reality, it is quite another story. Here we can apply the old Chinese saying, "A single spark can start a prairie fire." In other words, our forces, although small at present, will grow very rapidly. In the conditions prevailing in China, their growth is not only possible, but indeed inevitable.<sup>3</sup>*

In order to be proletarian revolutionaries of our time, we must take up the tasks posed to us at the current step in order to *grow our subjective forces*. The steps of the revolution are fixed in the national framework, but the steps only have a sense in relation to the project of the whole – that is, in relation to the revolutionary process, whose history is structured by the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction on a world scale.

Proletarian internationalism is therefore not simply a matter of solidarity or moral support, but is part of the essence of the proletarian class project. The world scale of the revolution is in turn objectively determined by the socialization of

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<sup>3</sup> Mao Tse-tung, "Letter to Comrade Lin Biao," January 5, 1930, in *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings 1912-1949*, Vol. III, ed. Stuart Schram (London, 1995), 237.

production: the growing social division of the productive forces and their organization in the general cycle of capital. The socialization of production and the emergence of a world market determine the *common interest* of the proletariat, the practical basis of both the principle of internationalism and the organizational form of the International.

Regarding the articulation of national question with proletarian internationalism, Lenin writes, in 1916:

*The way to the common goal – complete equality, the closest association and the eventual amalgamation of all nations – obviously runs along different routes in each concrete case, as, let us say, the way to a point in the center of this page runs left from one edge and right, from the opposite edge. [...]*

*In the internationalist education of the workers of the oppressor countries, emphasis must necessarily be laid on their advocating freedom for the oppressed countries to secede and their fighting for it. Without this there can be no internationalism. [...]*

*On the other hand, a Social-Democrat from a small nation must emphasize in his agitation the second word of our general formula: “voluntary integration” of nations. [...]*

*People who have not gone into the question thoroughly think that it is “contradictory” for the Social-Democrats of oppressor nations to insist on the “freedom to secede”, while Social-Democrats of oppressed nations insist on the “freedom to integrate.” However, a little reflection will show that there is not, and cannot be, any other road to internationalism and the amalgamation of nations, any other road from the given situation to this goal.<sup>4</sup>*

In order to specify the principal contradiction in the world situation, we must analyze the world situation according to the principle of internationalism. The first step in this analysis is to periodize the world situation in light of the history of capitalism and the International Communist Movement – in Lenin’s words,

*[...] in order to ascertain as exactly as possible what distinguishes this epoch from those preceding it, and what the present situation is.<sup>5</sup>*

## **II. Periodization of the Political Conjuncture**

Five historical facts are sufficient to carry out this periodization:

- 1—We are in the imperialist stage of capitalism.
- 2—We are in the era of world proletarian revolutions.
- 3—We are in the era of the last great proletarian revolution: the Cultural Revolution in China.
- 4—We are no longer in the era of the October Cycle, which began in 1917 and ended in 1976.
- 5—We are no longer in the era of modern revisionism, social-imperialism, and social-fascism, which began in 1956 and declined sharply after 1989.

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<sup>4</sup> V.I. Lenin, “The Discussion On Self-Determination Summed Up,” July 1916, in *Selected Works*, Vol. 22 (Moscow, 1974), 346-7.

<sup>5</sup> V.I. Lenin, “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism” <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/ch06.htm>>

Let us take up each of these historical facts in turn.

*I— We are in the imperialist stage of capitalism.*

At the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the CCP in 1973, Chou En-lai remarked:

*Chairman Mao has often taught us: We are **still in the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution**. On the basis of fundamental Marxist principle, Lenin made a scientific analysis of imperialism and defined "imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism." Lenin pointed out that imperialism is monopolistic capitalism, parasitic or decaying capitalism, moribund capitalism. He also said that imperialism intensifies all the contradictions of capitalism to the extreme. He therefore concluded that "imperialism is the eve of the social revolution of the proletariat," and put forward the theories and tactics of the proletarian revolution in the era of imperialism. Stalin said, "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and the proletarian revolution." This is entirely correct. Since Lenin's death, the **world situation** has undergone great changes. But the **era has not changed**. The fundamental principles of Leninism are not outdated; they remain the theoretical basis guiding our thinking today.<sup>6</sup>*

We must grasp the historical foundation of the present according to Lenin's characterization of the specificity of the imperialist stage of capitalism:

— Imperialism is *monopolistic capitalism*, manifested in the concentration of production that has given rise to monopoly associations, the monopoly position of the big banks, the seizure of sources of raw material by concentrated finance capital (the merger of monopoly industrial capital and banking capital under the domination of the latter), the economic partition of the world market and its redivision by war, the export of capital gaining in importance relative to the export of commodities, and the territorial partition of the world.

— Imperialism is *parasitic or decaying capitalism*, in which the imperialist powers become rentier-states in relation to oppressed nations, surplus profits allow the corruption of a labor aristocracy, and there is a tendency towards political reaction all along the line – towards domination, in opposition to freedom.

— Imperialism is *moribund capitalism*, in which the fundamental contradiction of capitalism – between the social character of production and the private character of the appropriation of this production – is aggravated to the breaking point, opening a path to social revolution and the subsequent construction of the socialist transition to communism.<sup>7</sup>

In connection with the problem of periodizing the history of capitalism, is important to emphasize the third of Lenin's points: imperialism is a dying capitalism, its *highest stage*. There are no qualitatively new stages, defined by new principal contradictions, beyond imperialism. The postulation of a third stage of capitalism always indicates a revision of Marxism: for example, the claimed 'state monopoly capitalism' stage popular among revisionists in the 1970s, or its

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<sup>6</sup> Chou En-lai, "Report to the Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China," August 24, 1973 <[https://www.marxists.org/subject/china/documents/cpc/10th\\_congress\\_report.htm](https://www.marxists.org/subject/china/documents/cpc/10th_congress_report.htm)> [My emphasis.]

<sup>7</sup> Here we follow Lenin's characterization of imperialism in V.I. Lenin, "Imperialism and the Split In Socialism," *Selected Works*, Vol. 23 (Moscow, 1964), 105-6.

inverse equivalent, the claimed ‘neoliberal’ stage popular today. Both of these so-called ‘stages’ treat the bourgeois state as a neutral means, assimilated to the economic level, for socializing productive forces.

This is a profound revision of Marxism, in so far as these so-called ‘stages’ are characterized by a displacement of

(1) the contradiction between the socialization of productive forces and the development of capitalist relations of production (private social relations of appropriation) – together with the political antagonism bourgeoisie/proletariat in which this contradiction is expressed –

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(2) the contradiction that sets collective capital (the state) against individual capitals (monopolies).

The state/monopolies contradiction is taken to express the social/private contradiction. Everything takes place as if the state were external to the dynamics of capital accumulation. Just as with Kautsky’s own postulated third stage, that of ‘ultra-imperialism’ – the product of his delinking of monopoly capitalism from its political expression – the so-called ‘stages’ of neoliberalism and state monopoly capitalism both serve as theoretical justifications for right opportunism: in the final analysis, for a possible peaceful transition to socialism.<sup>8</sup>

In his book on neoliberalism, the so-called “Marxist geographer” David Harvey reassures the reader that while he might talk about the class struggle, this does not make him a communist:

*To put it this way is not to wax nostalgic for some lost golden age when some fictional category like ‘the proletariat’ was in motion. Nor does it necessarily mean (if it ever should have) that there is some simple conception of class to which we can appeal as the primary (let alone exclusive) agent of historical transformation. There is no proletarian field of utopian Marxian fantasy to which we can retire.*<sup>9</sup>

For Harvey, it is the bourgeois state – and not the broad masses – that makes history. Against neoliberalism, Harvey affirms the need to take up the task of “reversing the withdrawal of the state from social provision” and “the virtue of the Keynesian compromise.”<sup>10</sup> When grasped *strategically*, all such prescriptions in favor of public services and against privatization indicate a conception of the present as belonging to a historical stage beyond imperialism, qualitatively defined by the state/monopolies contradiction.

Against all revisionist ‘third stages’ – state monopoly capitalism, neo-liberalism, and ultra-imperialism, but also late capitalism, neo-capitalism, and Empire – we must uphold the Leninist conception of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism, the current stage of world history, in which the fundamental contradiction of the system, between the social character of production and the private character of appropriation, is exacerbated to the breaking point.

2— *We are in the era of world proletarian revolutions.*

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<sup>8</sup> Our characterization of the ‘state monopoly capitalism’ thesis draws upon the analysis of it by the Union des Communistes Français (marxiste-léniniste), “Exposé critique de la théorie révisionniste du capitalisme monopoliste d’Etat,” in *Marxisme-léninisme et révisionnisme face à la crise économique* (Paris, 1976), 58-88.

<sup>9</sup> David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (London, 2005), 202.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

During the emergence and consolidation of imperialism, from 1871–1917, the proletariat constituted itself as a class in the political sense, bearing a project of society and the state. The positive summation of the Paris Commune of 1871 – the theory of the smashing of the state apparatus, the dictatorship of the proletariat – found its point of application and transformation in the social revolution of October 1917, in which the bourgeois-proletariat contradiction was resolved in favor of the proletariat, and a new era – not of world history, but of the revolutionary process – was inaugurated. In Lenin’s words:

*We have a right to be and are proud that to us has fallen the good fortune to begin the building of a Soviet state, and thereby to usher in a new era in world history, the era of the rule of a new class, a class which is oppressed in every capitalist country, but which everywhere is marching forward towards a new life, towards victory over the bourgeoisie, towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of capital and from imperialist wars.*<sup>11</sup>

If the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat belongs to the era of the revolutionary process ushered in by the Paris Commune, the victorious October revolution establishes new universal principles that define the *era of proletarian revolutions* – above all: the leading role of the vanguard party in establishing a dictatorship of the proletariat on a national scale and the fusion of Marxism with the worker movement. The era of proletarian revolutions means that from now on, new principles can only emerge on the basis of successfully applying the principles that define this era. Failure to apply these principles can only lead to stagnation and defeat: to revise such principles is to revise Marxism itself, to become a revisionist.<sup>12</sup> They are universal, applicable to the *whole* of the world revolution, reflecting the general law of development of world history. They are in no way simply *Russian*.

The ‘era of proletarian revolutions’ thus refers to the principles established by the positive summation of the October Revolution, and has nothing to do with the existence of socialist states.

3— *We are in the era of the last great proletarian revolution: the Cultural Revolution in China.*

The inscription of the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet political reality allowed its transformation and splitting. On this basis a new principle is born: that of the continuation of the class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat. This principle finds its point of application and transformation in the Cultural Revolution (GPCR), which in turn has yielded a series of new universal principles that have as their content the correct handling of the *class-masses dialectic* – the dialectic between those who lead the revolutionary process (the proletariat organized as a political class, oriented towards the state) and those who make history (the broad masses, who increasingly manage their own affairs as the revolution is pursued and deepened).

The GPCR articulates the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction and the question of the state (*the revolution*) with new forms of mutual aid and reciprocal collaboration among the people (*communism*).

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<sup>11</sup> V.I. Lenin, “Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution,” *Selected Works*, Vol. 33 (Moscow, 1966), 55.

<sup>12</sup> “We are in the era in which defeats are sterile, in which they do nothing but verify the well-known laws of revolution; in which it is a question, in a blind fashion, of an abandonment of principles – an abandonment of the science of revolution by opportunist political leaderships of the ‘left’ (petty-bourgeois adventurism) or the right (revisionism).” Catherine Quiminal, *La politique extérieure de la Chine* (Paris, 1975), 268 [My translation].



The essential universal principle that we must draw from a positive summation of the GPCR is that the revolution must involve the masses at every step, without exception. The restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union demonstrated that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is only one moment in a protracted political class struggle that will persist until the elimination of classes and the state, until full communism. This class struggle is not simply oriented towards the question of the state, but has as its stakes the contradictions that traverse society: between men and women, town and country, manual and intellectual labor, and nationalities. Starting from the GPCR, mass criticism of the Party (or proletarian political organization) and mass control of the state become universal principles, necessary for all correct elaboration of political line (for the Party) and policy (for the state). Concretely, the passage to communism must henceforth be grasped in terms of a complex dialectic between the Party, the state, mass organizations, and the broad masses.

The revisionist characterization of the GPCR as an event that aimed to transform the ideological superstructure in order to align it with the economy and the state thus fails to grasp its essential content.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the GPCR affirms the primacy of politics over economism and ideologism alike. During the GPCR, the bourgeoisie entrenched in the Party and state was constituted as a *political* class. It was not the bourgeoisie of monopolists directly extorting surplus value from the working class, but the bourgeoisie defined politically in its antagonistic relation to the proletarian revolution. Against both revisionists who reduce the class struggle to the capital-labor contradiction and adventurists who enclose the class struggle in a spectacle of force separated from popular rebellion, Marxist-Leninist-Maoists understand the class struggle principally as the process of organizing the political unity of the people in its total combat against the bourgeoisie, where the bourgeoisie represents the political force which organizes the counter-revolution.

Today, the GPCR must serve as a living reference point for the International Communist Movement, just as the Paris Commune did for Lenin and the October Revolution did for Mao. We must continuously sum up our experiences in light of its universal principles and we must practice its lessons, both positive and negative, as we pursue the political class struggle.

We are thus not simply in the era of proletarian revolutions, but equally in the era of the GPCR.

*4— We are no longer in the era of socialist states that began in 1917 and ended in 1976.*

That we are in the *era of proletarian revolutions* means that only successful proletarian revolutions can produce new principles that enrich the world revolutionary process. That we are in the *era of the GPCR* means that if we restrict ourselves to the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction in reference to the question of the state – if we forget that it is the masses that make history and that all the contradictions that traverse society must be resolved during the transition to communism – then we will accumulate only weaknesses and defeats. However, while an era of the world revolutionary process does not depend on the continued existence of the revolutionary experiences that gave rise to the principles that define it, experiences that fall short of those principles are idle, incapable of articulating the old with the new.

The October Cycle, the era of socialist states that spanned the period from 1917 to 1976 and which included both the October Revolution and the GPCR, has now been over for more than forty years, which means *that no new universal principles of Marxism have been produced in nearly a half century*. Today we find ourselves in a period as barren as that which followed the defeat of the Paris Commune.

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<sup>13</sup> This, for example, is the revisionist Louis Althusser's argument in "Sur la révolution culturelle," in *Décalages*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, February 2010 <<http://scholar.oxy.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1002&context=decalages>>

And yet the passage from the existence to the non-existence of socialist states bears a positive aspect – in which way?

In order to seize this positive aspect, we must situate ourselves at the other end of history, in the protracted transition to communism, in which there will likewise be a passage from the existence of socialist states to their non-existence – only here what is in question is not a reversion to capitalism, but the transition to communism. The motor of this long transition through era of socialist states to communism is the contradiction bourgeoisie/proletariat articulated with the mass movement. That the *question of the state must be grasped according to the steps of the class struggle* is one of the universal principles of the GPCR.

During the October Cycle, the very existence of socialist states obscured this principle. Indeed, modern revisionism proceeded from its inversion, the notion according to which the class struggle must be grasped from the perspective of the state. For revisionists, the world revolution, which has the antagonistic contradiction bourgeoisie/proletariat as its motor, is identified with particular states – generally, the USSR. Hence the political reality of revisionist versions of ‘Maoism,’ which hold that to be a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist is to follow China.

This is why it is important to distinguish the *socialist camp*, comprised of the socialist states, from the *International Communist Movement*, comprised of communist parties. The Chinese state belonged to the socialist camp, the CCP to the International Communist Movement. Socialist states must maintain complex relations, with capitalist states, other socialist states, and peoples. Socialist states must firmly adhere to the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence, which upholds non-interference in the internal affairs of the capitalist countries. Communist parties must intervene in such countries in the most fundamental way, by resolving the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction in favor of the proletariat. If one derives a proletarian politics from the policy of a particular proletarian state, then one has already abandoned the universality of the class struggle. Indeed, one has abandoned Marxism as such, replacing the class perspective with the primacy of external causes.

The principal aspect of the disappearance of socialist states is the weakening of the proletarian pole. However, at the same time it allows us to restore the class struggle to its proper place as the *motor* of the revolutionary process as we grow our forces for the next cycle of social revolutions.

*5—We are no longer in the era of modern revisionism, social-imperialism, and social-fascism, which began in 1956 and declined sharply after 1989.*

Although modern revisionism remains a political reality in many countries, e.g., Japan, India, Mexico, and France, and although revisionist states persist in the manner of fossils in countries like Cuba and DPR Korea – in the latter case accompanied by a social-fascist state form – revisionism has ceased to be a bourgeois project with a future on a world scale. Indeed, the principal bourgeois rival to the still-dominant ‘liberal’ current made possible by the economic crisis is not revisionism, but the semi-fascist project of Trump, Le Pen, Putin, et al. While the semi-fascist current organizes its project around ascending social forces, proceeding from the aspirations of the masses in a situation of political and economic crisis, revisionism continues its long decline into irrelevancy.

Crucial to this periodization is our characterization of China as imperialist – thus, not *social*-imperialist – its decorative and intermittent Marxist rhetoric playing only a marginal role in cementing its mass base internally, fooling only the most credulous of external observers.

The disappearance of revisionism as a living project on a world scale neither strengthens nor weakens the revolutionary camp, since it concerns only the mode of domination of the bourgeoisie, and in no way constitutes a change in the relation of class forces. Its proximate effects are largely ideological.

However, while revisionism has ceased to be a social force on a world scale, it persists in the International Communist Movement in the form of the political and ideological struggle between two roads and two lines, a battle that will only dissipate with the achievement of full communism. The persistence of revisionism as an objective historical condition, together with the revolutionary experience of the mass struggle against revisionism during the GPCR, provide the basis for one of the principles that defines our era as that of the GPCR: the Party as the site of continuous splitting. In a letter to Bebel from June 1873, Engels writes:

*A party proves itself a victorious party by the fact that it splits and can stand the split. The movement of the proletariat necessarily passes through different stages of development; at every stage one section of people lags behind and does not join in the further advance; and this alone explains why it is that actually the "solidarity of the proletariat" is everywhere realized in different party groupings which carry on life and death feuds with one another, as the Christian sects in the Roman Empire did amidst the worst persecutions.<sup>14</sup>*

The growth of revisionism accompanies the growth of the proletarian pole, as its permanent shadow. When universal principles are applied to concrete reality in a particular class situation, an ideological struggle develops around the new that the summation of that application yields: does the new represent a development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, of proletarian class thought? Or does it rather represent its negation, a revision of the universal principles upheld by the International Communist Movement?

#### **IV. The Principal Contradiction Today**

Equipped with a broad periodization of the present, we can assess the political conjuncture from a class perspective by specifying the principal contradiction from among the fundamental contradictions, identified by the CCP, that structure the world situation in the historical stage of imperialism and the era of proletarian revolutions.

In *Foundations of Leninism* (1921), Stalin identified the three fundamental contradictions that structure the historical stage of imperialism:<sup>15</sup>

1. labor/capital
2. inter-imperialist contradictions: between countries and monopolist groups
3. oppressed nations/imperialism

These contradictions structure the imperialist stage of capitalism, but cannot define the world situation, nor link it to the world revolution – why? Because the contradiction labor/capital encloses the principal class contradiction at the economic level, precisely where the bourgeoisie would like to maintain it. In no way can one grasp the world situation on the basis of the general characteristics of imperialism as a historical stage. In general, it is anti-Marxist to deduce a politics proceeding from its social or economic basis.

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<sup>14</sup> Friedrich Engels, Letter to August Bebel, June 20, 1873, in *Collected Works*, Vol. 44 (London, 1989).

<sup>15</sup> J.V. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*, 1924

<<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1924/foundations-leninism/index.htm>>

In distinction to Stalin, in the “Letter in 25 Points,” the CCP identifies the fundamental contradictions that structure, not the imperialist stage of capitalism, but the *world situation* as it exists at every moment in the imperialist stage, at both the political and economic levels:

*In defining the general line of the international communist movement, the starting point is the concrete class analysis of world politics and economics as a whole and of actual world conditions, that is to say, of the fundamental contradictions in the contemporary world.*<sup>16</sup>

The fundamental contradictions identified by the CCP are the following:

1. socialist camp/imperialist camp
2. inter-imperialist contradictions between countries and monopolist groups
3. proletariat/bourgeoisie, in the capitalist countries
4. oppressed nations/imperialism

In relation to Stalin’s contradictions there is, on the one hand, the addition of a new contradiction, between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp, reflecting the dramatic increase in the number of socialist countries following WWII, and on the other hand, the replacement of the capital-labor contradiction by the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction, which frames the class struggle in the sense that Marx and Engels already had given to it in the *Manifesto*: every class struggle is a political struggle. The world revolutionary process is thus embedded in the world situation defined by the fundamental contradictions, since the revolutionary process develops according to the political class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. *The principal contradiction is the contradiction within the world situation that, at a given moment, facilitates the resolution of one of its elements, the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction, in favor of the proletariat.* The principal contradiction is the motor – internal to the world situation – that is decisive in constituting a new world situation that advances the resolution of the world revolutionary process.

We can group the four fundamental contradictions as follows:

- Those that are *static* with respect to world situation: inter-imperialist contradictions and the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp.
- Those that are *motive* with respect to the world situation: the oppressed nations/imperialism contradiction and the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction itself.

These two headings will guide us in determining the principal contradiction.

### *1. The Contradiction Socialist Camp/Imperialist Camp.*

Socialist states must practice a policy of Leninist peaceful coexistence with all of the capitalist countries, including the imperialist countries. As the CCP argues:

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<sup>16</sup> “A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement,” 7.

*The application of the policy of peaceful coexistence by the socialist countries is advantageous for achieving a peaceful international environment for socialist construction, for exposing the imperialist policies of aggression and war and for isolating the imperialist forces of aggression and war.*<sup>17</sup>

Peaceful coexistence means that there must be no direct interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Socialist countries cannot destroy imperialism itself through acts of aggression, *and therefore they cannot be motive with respect to transformations in the world situation.* The socialist camp, consisting of socialist states, can grow itself by resolving internal contradictions, by pursuing the dictatorship of the proletariat and the passage to a society without classes or a state, but it cannot *directly* modify the global relation of forces. We must always hold to the principle of the GPCR: when politics is sutured to existing states, there is always an abandonment of the primacy of the class struggle, since interstate relations are always abstract in relation to the system of internal causes.

The immediate objection to the socialist camp/imperialist camp contradiction being principal is that strictly speaking, it no longer exists. Indeed, the socialist camp only existed for a relatively short period in the October Cycle: established following both the end of World War II and the abolition of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International, the socialist camp disappeared shortly after the split in the International Communist Movement in 1961 on the basis of the historic summation carried out by the CCP and the Albanian PPSH. The disappearance of the socialist camp concerned the very essence of Marxism: the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

However, even if we modify the contradiction so that it reflects the political reality of our time – for example, so that it becomes the contradiction between the International Communist Movement and imperialism, or the camp of the revolution and imperialism – this contradiction is static from the perspective of the world revolution, as the CCP points out in its criticism of the CPSU’s identification of the socialist camp/imperialist camp contradiction as the “chief contradiction of our epoch.”<sup>18</sup> This contradiction is static, above all, because *the revolution can neither be led nor made at the international level.* This is the negative summation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International, which led failures at key moments by trying to intervene externally, from the level of the world revolution, in the national framework.

The masses must make history by counting on their own forces, country by country, nation by nation. The revolution cannot be exported. Our analysis must everywhere and always respect the primacy of internal causes.

## *2. Inter-Imperialist Contradictions Between Countries and Monopolist Groups.*

The bourgeois camp is in its very essence constituted out of diverse rivalries, both internal and external, a fact already identified by Marx and Engels:

*The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all time with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries.*<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>18</sup> Central Committee of the CPSU, “The Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China,” March 30, 1963,

<<https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sino-soviet-split/cpsu/30march1963.htm> >

<sup>19</sup> *Manifesto of the Communist Party* <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm> >

The rivalries between fractions of the bourgeoisie only intensify in the imperialist stage of capitalism. The revisionist position, beginning with Kautsky and systematized by the modern revisionism of the post-1956 USSR, is that the unity of the imperialist camp is an established fact, and so unity must be organized in defense of those states that fall outside that camp. In the current political conjuncture, revisionist parties and neo-revisionist sects alike postulate a unified US imperialist camp without contradictions – composed of the US, Europe, and Japan – outside of which there are no imperialist powers. In this way, they continue to uphold the socialist camp/imperialist camp contradiction as principal, although the reality of the contradiction they designate is that of inter-imperialist contradictions.

This revisionist position converges with the semi-fascist current, as the example of Samir Amin makes clear. In recent writings on imperialism, Amin elaborates his own third stage, that of the “collective imperialism” of “the Triad” (the US, Europe, and Japan), a version of Kautsky’s ultra-imperialism. The postulation of a unique and unified imperialism leads him to support the Eurasianist project of the Russian far right:

*Another important consequence of this qualitative transformation of contemporary capitalism is the emergence of the collective imperialism of the triad, which takes the place of the historical national imperialisms (of the United States, Great Britain, Japan, Germany, France, and a few others). Collective imperialism finds its raison d’être in the awareness by the bourgeoisies in the triad nations of the necessity for their joint management of the world.<sup>20</sup>*

*Therefore the policy of Russia (as developed by the administration of Putin) to resist the project of colonization of Ukraine (and of other countries of the former Soviet Union, in Transcaucasia and Central Asia) must be supported. The Baltic states’ experience should not be repeated. The target of constructing a “Eurasian” community, independent from the Triad and its subordinate European partners, is also to be supported.<sup>21</sup>*

In fact, as we outlined in the descriptive overview with which we began, the world situation today is characterized by a sharpening of inter-imperialist contradictions, internal and external, managed by

1— Economic competition between monopolist groups – for example, the redivision of Africa currently underway by US and Chinese imperialist interests at the expense of historically-dominant European imperialist interests.

2— Inter-imperialist wars that redivide vast intermediate zones in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, at the cost of tens of thousands of lives.

The unity of the imperialist camp is fragile, torn by contradictions that reflect both the political and economic crisis within the imperialist countries and the increasing strength of new imperialisms, and in particular China, the strongest imperialist rival of US imperialism.

Given the dynamics of the world situation, it may seem natural to specify the inter-imperialist contradiction as the principal contradiction among the fundamental contradictions that structure the world situation. The Movimiento por la Reconstrucción (MR) in Spain, for example, draws precisely this conclusion:

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<sup>20</sup> Samir Amin, “Contemporary Imperialism,” *Monthly Review*, Vol. 67, Issue 3, July-Aug 2015 <<https://monthlyreview.org/2015/07/01/contemporary-imperialism/>>

<sup>21</sup> Samir Amin, “Russia and the Ukraine Crisis: The Eurasian project in Conflict with the Triad Imperialist Policies,” *Monthly Review*, March 24, 2014 <<https://mronline.org/2014/03/24/amin240314-html/>>

*New significant expansions of powers entail a new redivision of the world, forced displacement, and – in one form or another, the inter-imperialist war. Such is today the principal contradiction and principal tendency of global politics: which the different imperialist powers and their maneuvers of position face in order to address, in the best conditions, the eventuality of another definitive upsurge ... at least if the human species is not extinguished en route, until the next redivision.*<sup>22</sup>

However, to hold that today the principal contradiction is that between imperialist powers is to abandon the class perspective, the standpoint of the revolutionary process. Like the contradiction between the socialist camp and the imperialist camp, inter-imperialist contradictions cannot be active from the perspective of the world revolution, because their resolution involves the economic and political redivision of the world, which can in no way advance the world revolutionary process. The resolution of imperialist contradictions is a violent permutation entirely indifferent to the interests of those who make history, the broad masses.

What about the argument by the MR that inter-imperialist contradictions constitute not only the principal contradiction, but also the “principal tendency of global politics”? In terms of *tendencies*, the world situation proceeds according to a dialectic between two terms:

1— the *imperialist current*, which Lenin characterizes as “in general, a striving towards violence and reaction”:

*An essential feature of imperialism is the rivalry between several great powers in the striving for hegemony, i.e., for the conquest of territory, not so much directly for themselves as to weaken the adversary and undermine his hegemony.*<sup>23</sup>

2— the *revolutionary current*, which has the revolutionary proletariat and its allies as its subject. This tendency is itself divided in turn by the CCP:

*Wherever there is oppression, there is resistance. Countries want independence, nations want liberation and the people want revolution – this has become the irresistible trend of history [...] China will never be a superpower and it opposes hegemony and power politics of any kind.*<sup>24</sup>

It is a Marxist principle that the revolutionary current is in general “the irresistible trend of history.” Marx and Engels establish this in the *Manifesto*:

*What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.*<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> “Reconstituir el futuro en medio de la crisis del presente,” *Línea Proletaria*, No. 1, July 2017, 3 [My translation.]

<sup>23</sup> Lenin, “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism” <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imphsc/ch07.htm>>

<sup>24</sup> “Joint Communique,” February 27, 1972, *Peking Review*, No. 9, March 3, 1972 <<http://www.massline.org/PekingReview/PR1972/PR1972-09.pdf>>

<sup>25</sup> *Manifesto of the Communist Party* <<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm>>

In the 1960s, in the world situation grasped in terms of tendencies – that is, the dialectic between the imperialist current and the revolutionary current – the revolutionary current was principal:

*The national democratic revolutionary movement in these areas and the international socialist revolutionary movement are the two great historical currents of our time.*<sup>26</sup>

However, although the revolutionary current is in general the principal current of history, the main trend in the world situation today is the imperialist current, the striving towards violence and reaction, which has accelerated over the past several years, internally (the growth of the semi-fascist faction of the bourgeoisie) and externally (the proliferation of imperialist wars).

This is why the overview of the world situation with which we began had inter-imperialist contradictions as its center of gravity.

In the 1960s, the division of the imperialist camp was countered by the strength of national liberation struggles, first among them the anti-imperialist armed struggle in Vietnam. Revolution was the principal historical current of the world situation at that time. The strength of the revolutionary current prevented the possibility of a new world war from being realized.

Today, when the division, and therefore weakness, of the imperialist camp is exceeded by the weakness of the current through which the masses make history, another world war presents itself as an immediate danger.

### *3. The Bourgeoisie-Proletariat Contradiction in the Capitalist Countries*

Proletarian forces organized in their parties in the capitalist countries are extraordinarily weak. The current step in the world revolutionary process is to fulfill the task of growing subjective political forces in order to inaugurate a new cycle of proletarian revolutions. The fact that this is the central task already indicates that it cannot be the principal contradiction in the world situation that advances the world revolutionary process.

To specify the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction as the principal contradiction in the world situation is to take the world situation for a *revolutionary* world situation – that is, a situation in which the current step of the world revolution is the social revolution itself: the resolution of the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction that defines it in favor of the proletariat. To take such a position today would amount to ‘left’-dogmatism, which proceeds from a failure to relate the world revolutionary process to its motive force, immanent to the world situation, i.e., to that contradiction which allows it to advance in the line of proletarian dictatorship. To specify the bourgeoisie/proletariat contradiction as motive from the perspective of the world revolution is to reason in abstraction from the development of contradictory social forces, to substitute abstract principles for a mass line.

For Marxists, the real movement, and not principles, must always be the point of departure for any concrete analysis.

In every capitalist society today – imperialist or not – the central step in carrying out the task of growing our subjective forces is that of the autonomy of proletarian politics. This autonomy has been all but eliminated today, and it can only be re-established by carefully articulating mass rebellions with the organization of a political vanguard. Any attempt to

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<sup>26</sup> “A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement,” 13.



bypass this dialectic is bound to end up in the dead-end of terrorism of the Guevarist type, which ultimately engages in abstract, symbolic violence as a reserve for negotiation, thus reducing or even eliminating the autonomy of proletarian forces and inserting them into a parliamentary or syndicalist framework. ‘Left’-dogmatism thus ends up reinforcing the process whereby demands thrown up by the mass movement are socialized, that is, given a response by the bourgeois parliamentary state in terms of social reforms with the aim of blocking the political development of the class struggle.

#### 4. *The Contradiction Oppressed Nations/Imperialism.*

The imperialism/oppressed nation contradiction is the principal contradiction of the world situation today, in relation to the current step of the world revolution, which demands we grow our subjective forces in constructing an autonomous organization and program. Today, the revolutionary proletariat must form united fronts with national movements in order to forge class alliances and cement its mass base.

The national question is transformed in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolutions: it is no longer identified with the bourgeois-democratic revolution against feudalism. In 1925, Stalin writes:

*It would be ridiculous not to see that since then the international situation has radically changed, that the war, on the one hand, and the October Revolution in Russia, on the other, transformed the national question from a part of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a part of the proletarian-socialist revolution. As far back as October 1916, in his article, “The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up,” Lenin said that the main point of the national question, the right to self-determination, had ceased to be a part of the general democratic movement, that it had already become a component part of the general proletarian, socialist revolution.<sup>27</sup>*

If Marx divided nations according to their class character, opposing the national movements of both the South Slavs and Czechs as movements of ‘reactionary nations’ in the service of Tsarism, the era of proletarian revolutions divides nations according to the relations of domination and subordination they maintain with each other *regardless of their internal class structure*. Fundamentally, what matters in the era of proletarian revolutions is the contradiction with the hegemonic imperialist states, even if certain oppressed nations are internally reactionary. And this is because there is a convergence of the fundamental contradictions in the oppressed nations that allow the proletariat to constitute broad united fronts under its leadership against the imperialist camp. This is not only possible in what the CCP characterized as the ‘storm centers’ in Asia, Latin America, and Africa, but also – given that, in the era of proletarian revolutions, the national question is not tied to the question of feudalism or semi-feudalism – in the imperialist countries themselves. Thus, Syria and Western Sahara, but also Catalonia and Puerto Rico.

Communists must strongly resist the imperialist economism of thinkers like R.S. Rao, who argues that in the imperialist stage of capitalism, national movements no longer count as progressive, both because their anti-imperialism is country-specific, unlike imperialism itself, and because their anti-imperialism is not joined with anti-feudalism. Rao writes:

*Due to both these factors, the anti-imperialist struggle generates a nationalism which is negative in its character as it does not permit the release of productive forces potentially existing within the ‘Nation.’<sup>28</sup>*

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<sup>27</sup> J.V. Stalin, “The National Question Once Again,” June 30, 1925

<<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1925/06/30.htm>>

<sup>28</sup> R.S. Rao, *Towards Understanding Semi-Feudal, Semi-Colonial Society* (Hyderabad, 1995), 122.

In his focus on the question of semi-feudalism and the development of productive forces, Rao ignores the essence of the national question in the era of proletarian revolutions: the fact that it allows the proletariat to form alliances around a popular and revolutionary program. While Rao bemoans the fact that “the anti-imperialist struggle can be joined by feudal forces and even led by them,”<sup>29</sup> the CCP writes that what makes certain regions the “storm centers of world revolution” is precisely that in those regions, those “who refuse to be slaves of imperialism”

*[...] include not only the workers, peasants, intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie, but also the patriotic national bourgeoisie and even certain kings, princes and aristocrats, who are patriotic.*<sup>30</sup>

The content of the national question is transformed according to the world situation as well as the era. Immediately following World War II, Soviet modern revisionism was as yet too weak to fully engage the US as a rival for world hegemony. This is why the CCP at the time characterized the Soviets as “lackeys” of the US. The CCP therefore urged to “unite all the forces that can be united” in an anti-hegemonic united front against the US superpower that organized the counter-revolutionary camp under its domination.

*The U.S. imperialists have thus placed themselves in opposition to the people of the whole world and have become encircled by them. The international proletariat must and can unite all the forces that can be united, make use of the internal contradictions in the enemy camp and establish the broadest united front against the U.S. imperialists and their lackeys.*<sup>31</sup>

Today, with the emergence of newly-powerful imperialist states striving for hegemony, in particular Russia and China, the imperialist camp is organized principally by rivalry and splitting. This means that revolutionaries do not have as their task to form the “broadest united front” against US imperialism. Rather, communists must form alliances with oppressed nations against *any and all* states in the imperialist camp in order to organize an autonomous proletarian pole.

National movements against imperialism in the political conjuncture divide into those that are genuinely independent and those that fall under the domination of one imperialism or another. In every concrete situation, revolutionaries must determine if a given struggle for national liberation has been instrumentalized, through the mediation of its internal leadership, by an imperialist power.

In the face of a sharpened antagonism between imperialist powers, we must again take up the slogan introduced at the 10<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the 8<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of the CCP: the slogan of *counting on one’s own forces*. This slogan must guide the central task of growing our subjective forces in a world situation characterized by increasingly sharp inter-imperialist contradictions, the dominance of the trend towards violence and reaction, and the renewed threat of world war. It is this slogan that will allow us to master the dialectic between the autonomy of the organized proletariat and the requirement of forming alliances in concrete class situations.

“To count on one’s own forces” is to maintain the complete independence of the proletarian class organization or Party within the contradictory whole. But it is also to mobilize all the forces that are at one’s disposal in order to avoid falling into relations of subordination and dependency. Moreover, by drawing the popular masses into politics, we enable them to liberate themselves. At the same time, mass criticism permits verification (or not) the correctness of our political line

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>30</sup> “A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement,” 15.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 12.

and prevents subjectivism from developing. We have said it already: we are in the era of the GPCR, whose essential principle is that the masses must at all times be involved in managing their own affairs.

In the current world situation, the imperialist current is dominant only because the revolutionary current is so weak. In reality imperialism is weak, because its force depends on arms, while its base among the people is faltering. We must organize our forces so that we are strong precisely where the enemy is weak, by relying on the broadest layers of the people, including the bourgeoisie of oppressed nations. In this way, we can reverse existing the relation of forces and demonstrate, once again, that imperialism is a paper tiger, while the revolutionary movement is the irresistible trend of world history.