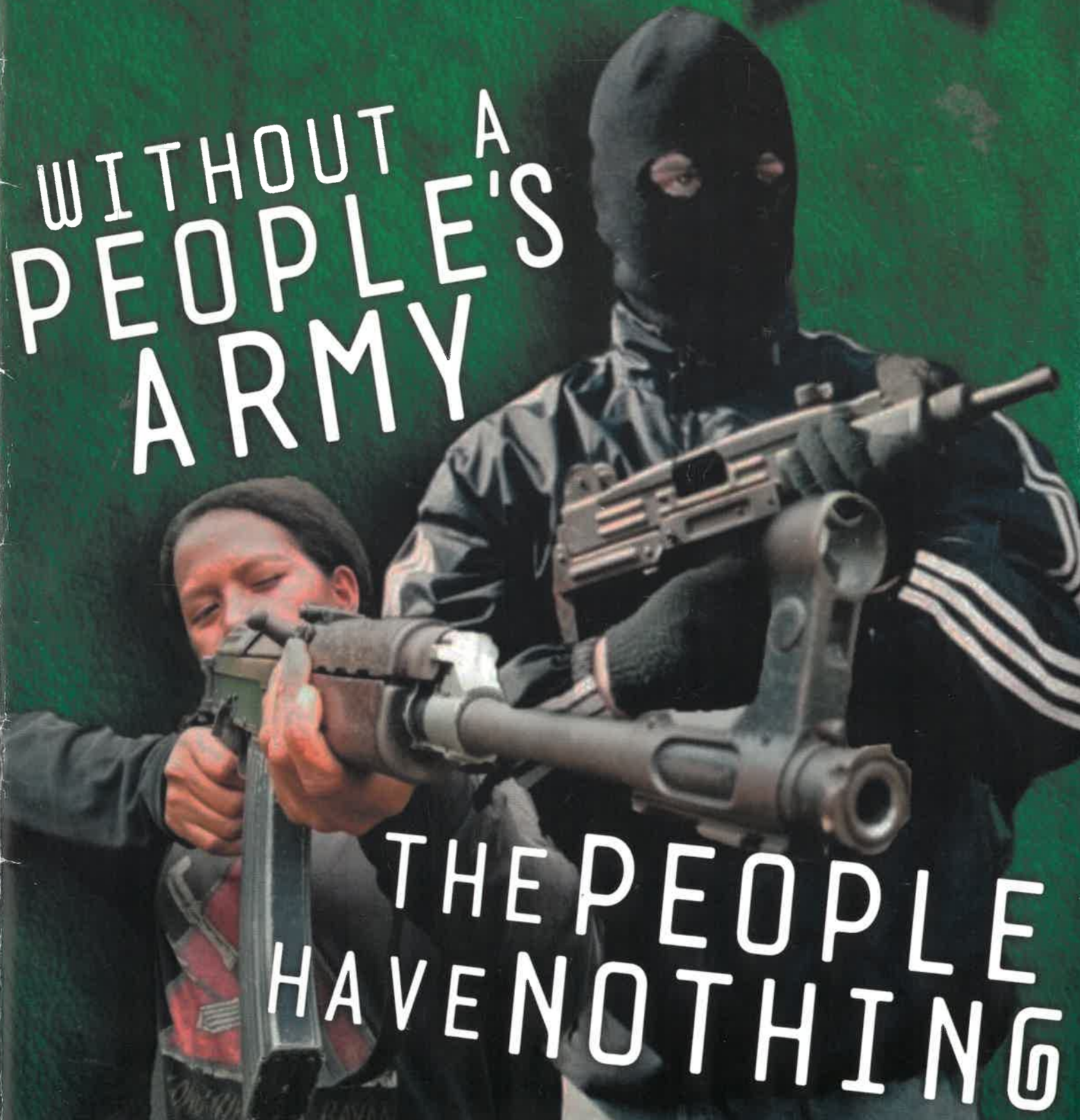


# AN GHIRIAN DI-HEARG

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2 € 3



WITHOUT A  
PEOPLE'S  
ARMY



THE PEOPLE  
HAVENOTHING



# Editorial

Few of those inspired by Marxism will have failed to have heard Marx's pronouncement that *'history repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce.'* In recent weeks, the TV channels and print media are showing scenes of a Chinook rising in defeat from the roof of the US embassy in Kabul, echoing a similar scene 46 years ago in Saigon. Once again, the most powerful imperialist nation on earth has been revealed as a paper tiger.

That the US has been defeated, this time not by a revolutionary force overwhelmingly supported by its people, but by a reactionary feudal army that had formerly been its client is significant. Savagely bitten by its own attack dog however, the US and its pilot fish remain a threat to mankind.

Hiding behind the arrogant façade of a thing they call 'western democracy,' the disparate components of imperialism, Ireland a lowly hanger-on, mourn this latest loss to its ruling classes. But democracy under imperialism is also a weapon to be used against the working classes of the nations where it manifests. Through the meaningless scribbles on ballot papers every five or so years, the Irish population are subjected to a constant groundhog day of hope and anticipation, turning to disappointment and an eventual return to a square one to be lectured that they must leave decisions to their 'elected representatives.' Next time, they are assured, it will be different. It is a wilful policy to keep the general population away from issues that rightly concern them, reminding us of Plato when he said, *'One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.'* And such inferiors in Ireland maintain the capitalist system here in the interests of big business.

It has often been observed that the capitalist will sell you the rope you use to hang him with and this quite accurately presents the destructive impulses of the system. In the face of a worldwide pandemic, two of the largest producers of COVID-19 vaccines have hiked their prices up by a quarter in their latest deals with the European Union. Pfizer is currently offering a single dose of its vaccine for €19.50 – which is €4 higher than the last deal it struck with Brussels. Meanwhile, Moderna has raised the price of its own vaccine to €21.50, which is up from €19. The data, which was obtained by the Financial Times, showcased the vast profits that the two companies are currently making on the jabs. Pfizer is currently on track to make \$33.5 billion in revenues this year alone, while Moderna is forecast to make \$19.2 billion.

With an imperialist-created environmental crisis gathering storm upon the horizon, now more than ever it is necessary to grasp the thorns of resistance in the pursuit of a new world. The forecast is clear; the earth will not be saved by the current world order. Now more than ever the world needs revolution. And in the here and now, Mao Tse-tung's military theories of Protracted People's War has charted a path to a new world that is not only better, but is not doomed to die.

In 1848, Karl Marx wrote of how a spectre was haunting Europe, the spectre of communism. Now today, that spectre still lurks in the shadows, its presence wilfully decried and unacknowledged by turn. But Maoism has carried Marxism beyond the walls of Europe where it now threatens to surround the imperialist citadels. As Mao himself once said, *'So many deeds cry out to be done, and always urgently; the world rolls on. Time presses.'*

**As we go to press, news is coming out of the death of Chairman Gonzalo. This is sad news for the oppressed masses of the world at this time. While we must mourn the greatest Marxist-Leninist-Maoist to live into the 21st century, we should also celebrate that he lived, bestowing upon us his immortal contribution to the science of proletarian revolution.**

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# The Environmental Struggle is a Class Struggle

Time and again the masses have looked in disgust at a particular issue, at an injustice or something which causes them suffering, and they have risen as one to end it. War, hunger, women's oppression, national oppression – these are injustices which horrify us and which we will do anything to stop. Yet we have risen up against war in our millions, for example when the West invaded Iraq, but the war went on. For centuries Irish men and women have risen up to rid this island of imperialism yet imperialism remains and our nation is divided. The women's movement has been powerful and its successes many, yet the patriarchal oppression of the masses of women has been left fundamentally untouched. Given this, the question must be asked: upon what basis have these issues arisen? From where does war, hunger, imperialism and patriarchy emerge? It is clear that, though these glaring issues make our blood boil and our hearts cry out for justice, we cannot view them singularly or in isolation from everything around them. War, hunger, colonialism and patriarchy emerge from class society – today capitalism, a socio-economic system that serves a minority who lust for wealth. In their drive for profits the capitalists go to war to increase their access to markets, labour and resources; hunger is widespread as we must sweat for capital in pursuit of the bare necessities of life; imperialism oppresses and divides nations in order to exploit their land and people for super-profits; women are forced to work for free at home or for less than men in the workplace – and all this to keep us divided and warring amongst ourselves. All of these injustices emerge from the capitalist system and it is the capitalist system that must be targeted – that is, it is the domination of the capitalists against which we must direct all our hatred and passion in order to bring about the political and economic control of the masses and do away with these horrors. As Comrade Ajith recently wrote from an Indian prison, we must *'bring together all streams of opposition into a mighty torrent.'*

## The Ecological Crisis

Ecological breakdown, the climate crisis, mass extinction – this too has its roots in capitalism. Scientific research suggests that, without a rapid and dramatic transformation of the global economic system, human civilisation will likely collapse within the coming decades

due to temperatures rising at an ever-accelerating rate, collapsing food chains, submerging countries under water and rendering vast swathes of the earth uninhabitable due to extreme heat. In order to maximise their wealth not only must the capitalists exploit labour to the maximum degree but they must also ruthlessly exploit nature to the same cruel extent. The urgent necessity of socialist revolution stands out like never before – as the capitalist class seized power from the outdated feudal nobility, the working class must now seize power from the capitalists who are driving us off a cliff.

For the vast majority of humanity's existence and development the contradiction between ourselves and nature was non-antagonistic, mutually beneficial. Only with the emergence of class society did this contradiction begin to become antagonistic. As humans became productive enough to produce more than they needed (primarily due to the emergence of agriculture over ten thousand years ago) the possibility emerged of a minority setting itself apart from and living off the labour of others. Taking various forms this minority has sought to increase the exploitation of labour in order to accrue more wealth and power for itself – whether it be slave-owners, lords or capitalist exploiting slaves, serfs or workers, this principle holds true. The exploiting classes have demonstrated no reluctance about condemning their fellow humans to a life of misery, tedium and suffering for millennia, so why should they care about condemning nature to destruction?

Marx criticised the utopian socialists for dreaming up schemes for a classless society but with little to no strategy or understanding of how to get there. Likewise many well-meaning scientists and environmentalists have presented detailed plans on how to move towards ecological sustainability, though generally misunderstanding how the exploiters in control of society operate. They make appeals to 'everybody' – 'we're all in this together', 'we all need to come together as we all live on the same earth', etc. This ignores the domination of the monopoly capitalists who make immense profits from the labour-intensive extraction of natural resources and the waging of wars. For decades the capitalist class has known the trajectory the planet is on if they keep poisoning and polluting her on such an immense and ever increasing scale – and they have suppressed that information while production for profit has expanded and environmental destruction has grown more

intense. Capitalists primarily think about their short-term profits, and any individual capitalist knows that if they aren't as unscrupulous and ruthless as their competitors then they will be overtaken and go out of business.

In the face of rising discontent some monopoly capitalists have taken to dressing up their profiteering and environmental destruction in the shroud of 'green solutions' – always individualist and consumerist in nature. But the hopes of everyone owning an electric car and solar panels will solve nothing – it's a clear example of the capitalist class utilising a crisis in order to open new markets for their commodities and encouraging further exploitation of labour and nature. Those who believe this crisis will be resolved by Elon Musk sending children into mines for lithium and cobalt are living outside of reality.

The only transition to a carbon neutral economy which capitalism is proposing would also overheat our atmosphere in the process given its reliance on yet more destructive resource extraction. Yet there is not even the political and economic will for this 'solution' – for example, trillions of dollars are set to be spent in the oil and gas industry over the coming years and hundreds of pipelines are currently in development.

*'Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.'* (Marx) It is not enough that we desperately want to resolve this crisis – the saying 'the road to hell is paved with good intentions' has perhaps never been more true. Without a scientific analysis of the situation our good intentions will come to naught. The fundamental contradiction in human society, that is, the division of our species into classes, must be tackled in order to resolve the climate crisis – for it is this division which has brought about the crisis. But how do we resolve this contradiction? The contradiction between exploiter and exploited has been proven over many centuries and millennia to be an antagonistic contradiction – it cannot be handled peacefully through discussions and agreements. Power must be taken from the exploiting classes and the masses must rule. With power in the hands of the people we will have no need of war or hunger or any form of oppression – and certainly no need of a dead planet. But how do we achieve this?

### People's Wars Are Saving the Planet

The leading revolutionary struggles of our time, led by Marxist-Leninist-Maoist forces, are the single most effective force against the destruction of our planet. Over the past thirty years there have been significant people's wars led by communist parties in Peru, Nepal, India, Turkey and the Philippines. Guided by scientific socialism these movements have shaken the world. In Peru (in the '80s and 90s) and Nepal (in the mid-90s and '00s) these parties came close to seizing power, dominating the majority of the countryside and based principally among the poor peasantry.



*The New People's Army, led by the Communist Party of the Philippines, is in the frontlines in protecting and defending the environment from imperialist plunder and destruction.*

Emerging from among the most oppressed, these Maoist movements have organised the masses to build alternative structures of state power and armed the masses to defend themselves against the onslaught of the reactionary forces. Like the struggle for the Irish Republic between 1916 and 1923 the embryo of a people's state is formed within the people's war which aims to expand and deepen the power of the masses in order to overthrow the state led by the capitalists and landlords in the service of imperialism.

India's people's war, led by the Communist Party of India (Maoist), has found its base among the Adivasi peasantry of central and eastern India. These tribal peoples have been entirely neglected by the Indian state since its foundation in 1947 – they have been systematically displaced from their lands in their tens of millions and massacred in order to make way for the exploitation of the natural resources on their land. Like the 26 Counties, India is a semi-colonial country and its comprador bourgeoisie, collaborating with international finance capital, has opened wide their country for exploitation. Backed by Britain, Germany, the US, China and other imperialist powers the Indian armed forces are unleashing untold violence on their own citizens in their greed for coal, bauxite, iron, aluminium and other minerals. As the Irish were forced from our land with hunger and violence to make way for cattle-farming, the poor of India are being displaced by the same genocidal methods for mineral exploitation – and British imperialism remains a driving force.

Comrade Ajith has said:

*'... the Adivasi peoples are making control of land, resources and society a reality through struggle. This is an immediate fight to end the exploitation, the oppression of the aggressive movements of big business and the state. But even more important, it is the long-term struggle where a different kind of living is projected... Sustainable development; people-friendly education; emancipation of women; the cessation of domination and plunder by*

*foreign and Indian exploiters; a new culture that rebuilds the Adivasi traditions anew... all of this is being created by Adivasi peoples who are despised as "primitive" by the so-called mainstream of society. The "backwards" are teaching the "forward".*

Already CPI (Maoist) dominates vast swathes of India. The coming victory of the people's war on a country-wide scale will not only be a major advance for the Indian people but also for the future of our planet.

Communists in Brazil are at the forefront of the struggle to defend the 'lungs of the earth', the Amazon rainforest. Due to immense deforestation, intensifying each year, the Brazilian Amazon has become a net emitter of, rather than a sink for, carbon emissions. While the European Union drones on about taking the climate crisis seriously out one side of its mouth, out of the other side it's been trying to push through a major trade deal with Brazil that will further promote the destruction of the rainforest to make way for beef and cash crop production. The increasing destruction of the rainforest is one of the key triggers that could push the ecological crisis into a death spiral, prompting run-away global heating. The necessity to overthrow the comprador bourgeois-landlord state of Brazil stands out with existential urgency. In a recent article, the Communist Party of Brazil (Red Fraction), who have been organising the rural masses into the Poor Peasants' League, emphasised an essential point about the *'land-grabbing, land concentration and the fires that devastate the... Amazon'*:

*'It is not the peasants... and indigenous people who are devastating the forest, but rather the thieves of unoccupied public lands who are appropriating that territory... [T]o pretend to discuss an "environmental issue" separate from the agrarian-peasant question is to favour the reaction – and, in the end, the devastating latifundia... to shout "fire in the forest", but to remain silent in the face of the criminalisation of the peasants... [and] the acute class struggle in the countryside, is a logical incoherence and a political crime.'*

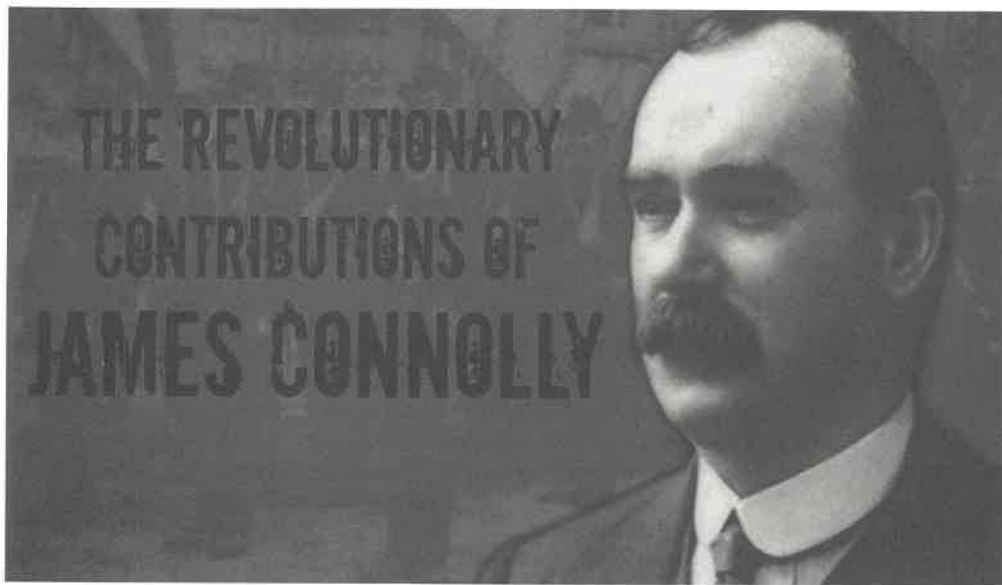
They write that the *'vast deserts of green monocultures clash objectively with the interests of almost all other social classes' – this is the lever by which Brazil will be transformed.* Only people's war against the minority of exploiters can place the masses back in charge of their relationship with nature in order to preserve and expand the rainforest.

A far cry from the 'solutions' offered by the imperialists at the expense of the global oppressed masses, the only genuine solution lies with them. The oppressed masses make up the vast majority of the world's population and only they are capable of seizing power from those who have pillaged and tortured our beautiful earth – the imperialists and their allies. The fight against the climate crisis cannot be reduced to a moralistic appeal to the better judgement of



our exploiters, begging them to not destroy the planet they've already tried their best to destroy – nor can it be detached from a scientific understanding of the imperialist system and a coherent strategy to transform it. Do not believe their lies about 'overpopulation' or 'human nature'. This is a shallow attempt by the imperialists to implicate us in their crimes. If anything we are overpopulated with capitalists and it is the heartless nature of that class which has us in this mess. The struggle for ecological justice is a class struggle, plain and simple. The most advanced detachments of the international working class are the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist communist parties leading or preparing for people's wars, the only means of seizing power from those who condemn us to misery and death and rob us and our children of a future.

Elections and petitions won't save us – only people's war and socialist revolution will.



**It is difficult to summarise the importance of James Connolly to the Irish struggle for national liberation and socialism. It is a testament to his importance that almost every political tradition in Ireland attempts to claim him for their own, even while misunderstanding or misrepresenting what he stood for.**

Connolly was the first to analyse the history of Ireland from a Marxist, historical materialist perspective, particularly in his classic *Labour in Irish History*. Here Connolly laid out the struggles of the Irish working class and peasantry against imperialist domination and colonialism over the course of several centuries, as well as their frequent betrayal by other classes. From this Connolly came to the conclusion that only the Irish working class was capable of delivering Irish national liberation, the other classes inevitably capitulating and collaborating with imperialism. He argued that the fight for Irish national liberation was inseparable from the struggle of the Irish working class for socialism stating that *"The cause of Ireland is the cause of Labour, the cause of Labour is the cause of Ireland"*.

To Connolly we can also attribute the creation of Irish Socialist Republicanism, Marxism applied to the unique conditions of Ireland not merely in terms of analysis but in practice. While Marxism was a key component of Connolly's thinking, he also situated Socialist Republicanism within the Irish radical tradition, going back to the progressive bourgeois ideology of the United Irishmen and Robert Emmet, and the socialism of James Fintan Lalor and the Fenian Brotherhood. In contrast to those who advocate peaceful transfers to socialism, Connolly saw that force was vital if an

Irish Workers Republic was to be established, and was clear-sighted in seeing the State as an instrument of bourgeois class rule, just as Lenin had.

Connolly also saw the necessity of building Irish organs of the working class, parties and trade unions that were not dependent on England in any way, to stand for Irish working class interests. His famous controversy with the Unionist socialist William Walker is the clearest example of Connolly's thinking on this point. Many political groups in Ireland claim to uphold the legacy of Connolly while refusing to stand for complete separation from Britain as he did, as well as pandering to the same Orange ascendancy as Walker. Connolly foresaw the partition of Ireland for the disaster it would be in sowing division in the working class. But unlike so many of his supposed successors he never accepted the need to pander to the Protestant working class. In the pursuit of Irish liberation and socialism Connolly founded the first Irish proletarian party, the Irish Socialist Republican Party, and was a key figure in the newly established Irish General Workers and Transport Union. And Connolly went beyond only political separation from Britain, seeing also that the colonised people of Ireland needed to reconquer their country through the revitalisation of their culture.

However, if we are also to identify Connolly's most important flaws, we can point to his ultimate failure to create a political party that could survive his death and endure as a radical organ of the working class in Ireland. Those parties and unions that Connolly founded ultimately either dissolved or betrayed the working class and the cause of Irish national liberation in his absence. We can also see a trend of syndicalist thinking in his writing, owing to ideas that were prevalent in Western Europe and North America before the Russian Revolution.

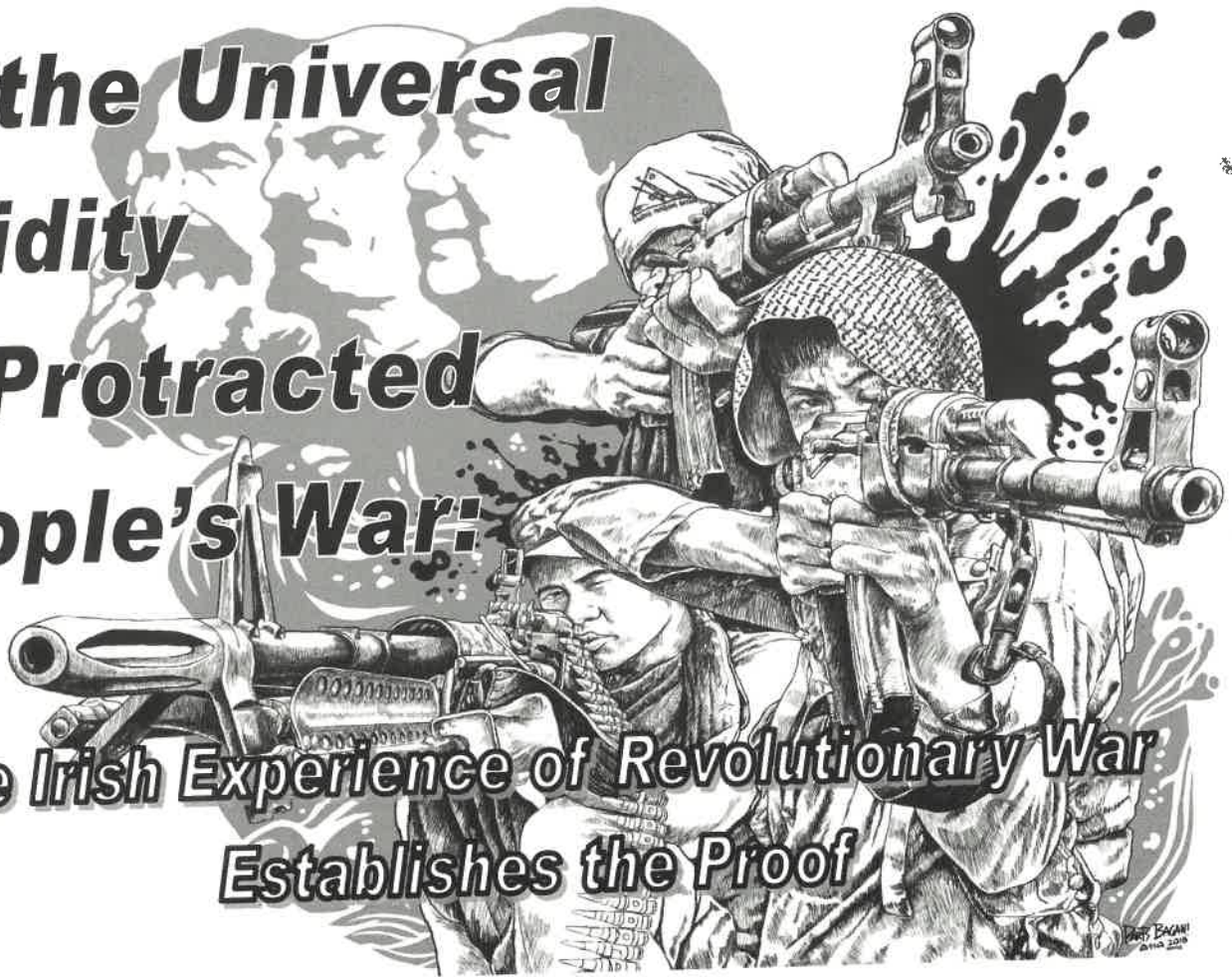
As well as political parties and trade unions, Connolly also founded the first formal military organisation of the working class in Ireland. The Irish Citizen Army was forged in the furnace of class struggle that was the great 1913 Lockout, when the Dublin Metropolitan Police was unleashed on the working class of Dublin. The ICA formed to train and defend the workers against these vicious attacks by the bourgeoisie. This same force was trained in street tactics and in forming barricades by Connolly, and played a key role in the urban combat of the 1916 Rising. In this Connolly sharply differentiates himself from the many socialists who see armed struggle and the struggle for national liberation as distractions.

Far from being a figure of merely Irish renown, Connolly also belongs to the international proletariat. In America and in Scotland, Connolly was at the forefront of working class struggles through his trade union work. In contrast to the vast majority of revisionist socialists across Europe, Connolly joined Lenin and Luxemburg in opposing the vicious imperialist bloodshed of the First World War. Despite the best attempts of revisionists and Trotskyists to slander Connolly as falling into narrow minded nationalism, Connolly saw the struggle for Irish sovereignty and the struggle for international revolution as complimentary. When Connolly united with the Irish Volunteers to strike a blow against the British Empire in 1916, he saw this not only as a blow for Irish liberation, but for the international proletariat being slaughtered senselessly across the globe. The best traditions of Irish republicanism have been similarly internationalist in outlook.

In his contribution to working class organisation in Ireland, in his analysis of Irish history, his contributions to the military strategy of the proletariat in Ireland and so much more, Connolly remains unparalleled. In Peru, it was said that the Communist Party followed the "Shining Path" of Jose Mariategui. It can also be said that a true Socialist Republican organisation follows the Shining Path of James Connolly.

# On the Universal Validity of Protracted People's War:

## The Irish Experience of Revolutionary War Establishes the Proof



*"Weapons are an important factor in war but not the decisive factor; It is people, not things, that are decisive,"- Mao Zedong, 'On Protracted War'.*

*"Chairman Gonzalo, reaffirming himself on the universal law of revolutionary violence, takes up the highest military theory of the proletariat established by Chairman Mao: People's war, which is universally valid and is applicable in all types of countries, in accordance with the conditions of each revolution. The world people's war is the principal form of struggle that the proletariat and the oppressed peoples of the world should launch to oppose imperialist world war. His point of departure is that people's war is a war of the masses and can only be accomplished by mobilizing the masses and relying on them."- Military Line, General Political Line of the Communist Party of Peru.*

*"The Irish Republican Army cannot be beaten because it is a People's Army recruited from an oppressed People who will fight until oppression ceases"- Óglaigh na h-Éireann*

### Introduction

The question of the universality of Protracted People's War is one of the most important questions for the International Communist Movement (ICM). It is a question that has become a hot topic of debate for communists and an important two line struggle is raging in the ICM on this issue. While no communist can disagree with the universal law of revolutionary violence, differences have emerged on its application.

At its heart, the question on the universal validity of Protracted People's War, meaning the question on whether People's War is applicable in all countries in accordance with the specific conditions of each revolution, is a great line of demarcation between the red line and the right opportunist line, between revolution and revisionism.

The arguments in support of the universal validity of Protracted

People's War have already been decisively put forward by Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru, by the Communist Party of Brazil- Red Fraction, particularly in 'People's War and Revolution', by comrades in Germany writing in Klassenstandpunkt, notably 'People's War - The Sole Path to Liberation' and by comrades in Norway, in a series of articles published on Tjen Folket Media. The arguments mentioned above comprehensively set out the Universality of Protracted Peoples War, the Military Line of the International Proletariat.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to add to the mounting weight of proof of this question by demonstrating the universal application of Protracted People's War, through an outline of the Irish Experience of Revolutionary Violence from 1969 until today, particularly the protracted nature of the Revolutionary Armed Struggle waged by Irish Republican Revolutionaries in an urban environment.

It is now increasingly clear that more and more of the International Proletariat, particularly the Revolutionary Youth are recognising Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the third and higher development of Proletarian Revolutionary Science, the science of Marxism. There can be no argument against Maoism as the leading Revolutionary Ideology in the world today, as it is the ideology leading the world's only actual existing revolutions, the People's Wars in Peru, India, Turkey and the Philippines, influencing the Revolutionary Armed Struggle in Palestine and inspiring the constitution and re-constitution of militarised Communist Parties in Latin America, North America and across Europe. Red Salutes to all Maoist Cadre and Red Fighters engaged in this Work!

*"Experience in the class struggle in the era of Imperialism teaches us that it is only by the power of the gun that the working class and labouring masses can defeat the armed bourgeoisie and landlords; in this sense we may say that only with guns can the whole world be transformed" Mao Zedong- Problems of War and Strategy*



### What is Protracted People's War?

Protracted People's War (PPW) is the universal military line of the International Proletariat, developed by Chairman Mao during the course of the Anti-Japanese War in China. Mao utilised PPW to lead the Communist Party of China and the Chinese Masses to victory in the Chinese Revolution, the second successful World historic socialist revolution in 1949.

Mao explained that PPW was the strategy through which the revolutionary forces could move from their beginning as small and weak to becoming big and strong by "mobilizing the masses and relying on them" and leading the revolution to victory. In this way, through People's War, the revolutionary forces can defeat an enemy that seems big and strong, but in fact is weak and a "paper tiger" because the enemy does not have the support of the masses or the ability to mobilise them.

Mao laid down a number of important factors for the waging of a Protracted People's War. Firstly the People's War must be led by a fighting Communist Party, because the party must always command the gun. Secondly, that the party must build a People's Army to wage the revolutionary war and mobilise the masses for People's War. Thirdly, that a United Front is built around the Army as the organ of New Power. Together, Mao asserted that the Party, the Army and the United Front are the three instruments of revolution for the waging the PPW for the seizure of power.

Mao outlined that the PPW has three stages: the Strategic Defensive, the Strategic Stalemate/Equilibrium and the Strategic Offensive.

PPW begins in the strategic defensive. In this stage revolutionary armed actions are carried out to raise the flag of People's War and to win the support of the masses. In this stage guerrilla warfare is the primary mode of waging revolutionary war. During the strategic defensive the People's Army builds its strength by actively combating and resisting the forces of reaction and the enemies off the people, and in doing so, begins to mobilise the masses. In this stage the Communist Party and the People's Army begins to build the broad united front in the face of the reactionary offensive.

Mao defines the second stage as the strategic stalemate, more commonly described as equilibrium. During the course of the PPW, the revolution has now begun to amass support and has begun to establish base areas and to construct the organs of new power. The primary method of warfare has shifted to mobile warfare but guerrilla warfare is still an important feature. At the same time the strength of the enemy has been significantly weakened in the eyes of the people, who more

and more come over to the side of the revolution. As new power grows the enemies power base becomes confined to the big cities, with rule in the old way no longer possible. At this point in the war, the opposing forces are coming to a more equal position of power. Neither can defeat the other at this point, but at the same time cannot be beaten either. In this phase the party continues to build the People's Army as the primary organisation and the United Front around the Army for the seizure of power through the final offensive.

Mao asserts that the final stage of the PPW is Strategic Offensive. The strength built by the revolutionary forces in the preceding stages can now be unleashed in a counter offensive, manifesting itself in a strategic offensive until victory. The masses are mobilised to defeat the old crumbling state and New Power extends across the country. The primary method of warfare remains mobile warfare but positional warfare, and in particular positional attack

will take on new importance.

It is obvious, from any reading of the stages of PPW that the strategy follows the laws of Revolutionary Warfare and is therefore applicable in all countries in accordance with the concrete conditions.

Mao therefore developed the universal military line of the International Proletariat, Protracted People's War, in the course of the second successful world historic socialist revolution.

### Peru

While it was Chairman Mao who first developed the strategy of PPW, it was Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru that proved its universal validity.

Following the experience of Chairman Mao and the Communist Party of China, Vietnamese revolutionaries, led by Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguveg Giap took up the banner of People's War and led the Vietnamese masses to victory, first against French Imperialism, the Japanese and then decisively against US Imperialism, raising high the banner of PPW before the International Proletariat,

In 1969, the newly reconstituted Communist Party of the Philippines established the New People's Army and initiated a Protracted People's War that continues to this day, and is estimated to hold power in 33% of the Country.

While these new experiences of Protracted People's War have contributed greatly to our knowledge and experience of revolutionary violence and revolutionary warfare, they did not prove the universality of PPW because critics lined up to say it was an 'Asian phenomenon' or attempted to write the theory off as a 'peasant uprising', not applicable to other parts of the world.

Such criticism was dealt a critical blow on May 17 1980, when Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru launched a PPW on the other side of the world. Following the laws of People's War laid down by Chairman Mao, the PCP asserted that "*the beginnings were modest, almost without modern weapons. Combat was given, it was advanced and it was built from the small to the large and from the weak material and initial fire came the great turbulent fire and mighty roar that grows, sowing revolution and exploding into even more impetuous People's War.*"

From a small symbolic beginning, burning ballot papers high in the Andes Mountains, the People's War in Peru grew to become one of the most important experiences in Proletarian History.





*Irish Republican Army*

The experience is of such importance, because during the prosecution of the People's War, in 1982, Chairman Gonzalo first synthesised Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a third and higher stage of Proletarian Revolutionary Science. By 1988, chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru, had proved the universality of PPW, asserting in the decisive document 'On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism' that, *"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 its universal validity and consequently applicability, taking into account the different types of revolution 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 anti-fascist resistance and guerrilla wars in Europe during World War II, as well as the armed struggles being waged in Europe today and 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"*. [Our Emphasis]

In demonstrating the universal validity of Protracted People's War, and confirming it as the military line of the International Proletariat, Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru made it clear that People's War could not and should not be applied mechanically or dogmatically, but would be shaped in all countries to meet the "different types of revolution and the specific conditions of each revolution"

The important revolutionary law that demonstrates that People's War is universally applicable and is tailored to the specific conditions in each country is all too often ignored by opponents of the Proletarian Military Line. In ignoring this revolutionary law, the opponents of PPW in reality are firstly, rejecting Mao as the originator of a universal Proletarian Military Line and secondly, rejecting Gonzalo as the synthesiser of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

This revolutionary law established by the Communist Party of Peru rubbishes the idea that a PPW can only be carried out in a semi feudal or semi colonial country, as is the accusation so often put forward by revisionists, demonstrating that they have failed to understand the fundamentals and the essence of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

By launching a Protracted People War in Peru in the 1980s, at a time

when international commentators were predicting the defeat of Communism, Chairman Gonzalo and the Communist Party of Peru comprehensively established the universal validity of Protracted People's War and established Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the third and higher stage of Proletarian Revolutionary Science and as Communism in the modern era.

In building the PPW to the height of the strategic offensive before the bend in the Road, Chairman Gonzalo significantly developed and deepened the laws of PPW, establishing that:

- PPW must be led by a militarised Communist Party of the New Type
- The three instruments of revolution should be developed through concentric construction
- Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is universal because it is true.

### **Marxism- Leninism-Maoism**

At the root of the two-line struggle in the International Communist Movement on the question of PPW is in fact a two-line struggle between those who hold high the banner of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism and those who cling to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, refusing to recognise Maoism as a third and higher stage of Marxism.

Revolutionaries who uphold Marxism-Leninism-Maoism accept the universal validity and applicability of PPW, whereas those who still cling to Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought reject the universality of the Proletarian Military Line, instead adopting a strange form of third-worldism, advocating People's Wars in semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries, and peaceful accumulation of forces and even parliamentary cretinism in industrial countries at the imperialist centres.

This position fails to understand the laws of revolutionary warfare, which as outlined above demonstrate that revolutions must be applied to the specific conditions in each country and in the modern era revolutionary war can only mean People's War. Failure to understand that PPW is universal and can be applied in all countries in accordance with the specific conditions is a dogmatic and mechanical attempt to apply the great lessons of the Chinese Revolution only in semi-feudal and semi-colonial countries. Yet our critics themselves label those who uphold the universal validity of PPW as dogmatic!

The red line in the International Communist Movement therefore is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism upholding the universal validity of PPW. Those who cling to Mao Tse-tung while rejecting Maoism as a third and higher development of Proletarian Revolutionary Science, hold a revisionist and right opportunist line that must be combated and corrected to unite the International Communist Movement behind Maoism and PPW.

This line struggle in the International Communist Movement recalls a struggle between Lenin and the economists and should be viewed in a similar light. Writing in the immortal 'What is to be Done?' Lenin stated *'It is only natural to expect that for a Social-Democrat whose conception of the political struggle coincides with the conception of the "economic struggle against the employers and the government", the "organisation of revolutionaries" will more or less coincide with the "organisation of workers". This, in fact, is what actually happens; so that when we speak of organisation, we literally speak in different tongues. I vividly recall, for example, a conversation I once had with a fairly consistent Economist, with whom I had not been previously acquainted. We were discussing the pamphlet, Who Will Bring About the Political Revolution? and were soon of a mind that its principal defect was its ignoring of the question of organisation. We had begun to assume full agreement between us; but, as the conversation proceeded, it became evident that we were talking of different things. My*

Fighters of the Turkish Communist Party/Marxist-Leninist



*interlocutor accused the author of ignoring strike funds, mutual benefit societies, etc.; whereas I had in mind an organisation of revolutionaries as an essential factor in "bringing about" the political revolution. As soon as the disagreement became clear, there was hardly, as I remember, a single question of principle upon which I was in agreement with the Economist!*

The differences between Maoism and Mao Tse-tung Thought today are as sharp as the differences between Lenin and the economists then.

Because we now understand that the Line Struggle in the International Communist Movement is in reality a struggle between Maoism and Tse-tung Thought, which today often erroneously tries to hide its revisionist line by describing itself as Marxism-Leninism-Maoism because it prefers the syntax, it is worth expanding on what it is we mean by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a third and higher stage of Proletarian Revolutionary Science.

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism was first synthesised by Chairman Gonzalo in 1982 in the fire of the Protracted People's War in Peru. The 'Fundamental Documents' of the Communist Party of Peru asserted, 'It is with the People's War that we have understood more deeply what Maoism implies and we have taken up the solemn pledge to "Uphold, defend, and apply Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism!" and to work relentlessly in helping to place it as leader and guide of the world revolution, the always red and unfading banner that is the guarantee of triumph for the proletariat, the oppressed nations, and peoples of the world in their inexorable, combative march of iron legions towards the golden and always brilliant goal of Communism.'

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism has then been synthesised by Chairman

Gonzalo as a third and higher stage of Marxism, but Maoism has not yet been universally accepted or reached the hegemonic position once held by Marxism-Leninism.

Maoism's recognition as a third and higher stage of Marxism was greatly strengthened by the establishment of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement in 1984. Accepting the Universal Validity and application of PPW, the RIM added great weight to this position with its statement 'Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on December 26, 1993, declaring,

*'Hundreds of millions of proletarians and oppressed masses of the world are increasingly propelled into struggle against the world imperialist system and all reaction. On the battlefield against the enemy they search for their own flag. Revolutionary communists must wield our universal ideology and spread it among the masses to further unleash them and organise their forces, in order to seize power through revolutionary violence. To accomplish this, Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties, united in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, must be formed wherever they do not exist and existing ones must be strengthened in order to prepare, launch and carry through to victory People's War to seize power for the proletariat and the oppressed people. We must uphold, defend and, most importantly, apply Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.'*

This remains the task of Revolutionary Communists today.

#### **The Myth of the 'October Road' and the Peaceful Accumulation of Forces**

One of the main arguments put forward by those who fail to recognise the universality of PPW is that the so-called 'October Road' is the only method of revolution in the industrial countries. By this the revisionists mean that a revolution in an industrially advanced or an imperialist country can only be achieved through an insurrection during a revolutionary situation and until then, communists should wait and instead build through the peaceful accumulation of forces, working through 'legal' means, in this case upholding 'bourgeois legality.' They further advocate that communists should engage in electoralism and parliamentary cretinism during this peaceful accumulation of forces as they wait for a revolution that is never coming.

Mao asserted that the revolutionary war begins in Strategic Defensive, not in the peaceful accumulation of forces. Lenin, the great architect of the October Socialist Revolution stated, 'Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will never live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is.'

The myth of the 'October Road' and the 'Peaceful accumulation of Forces' is a revisionist line favoured by right opportunists. This line is un-Marxist and fails to understand the material reality of the Russian revolution. The Great October Socialist Revolution was not just an insurrection that fell from the sky. The Russian Revolution was in fact a protracted struggle, led by a fighting Communist Party, that was engaged in a Revolutionary Armed Struggle from the 1905 Revolution and continued as a clandestine, underground organisation engaged in both legal and illegal work, in accordance with the specific conditions in Autocratic Russia, continuing Revolutionary Armed Actions until the Victory of the Revolution in 1917 and continuing them during the Russian Civil War after the Revolution to defend and establish Socialism.

The Russian Revolution is more in line therefore, with the strategy of PPW, than it is with the revisionist and disproven insurrectionist model.

This demonstrates that Chairman Mao made a world historical contribution to Proletarian Revolutionary Science when he developed and synthesised the line of PPW and that Chairman Gonzalo made a world historical contribution to Proletarian Revolutionary Science when

he synthesised Marxism-Leninism-Maosim and proved the universal validity of PPW.

## Ireland

*'Any man who objects to every plan of armed resistance that is proposed, while h produces none or no better of his own, or any man who tells you that an act of armed resistance- even if made so soon as tomorrow- even if offered by ten men- even if offered with men armed only with stones- any man who tells you that such an act of resistance would be premature, imprudent, or dangerous- any and every such man should at once be spurned and spat at. For remark you this and recollect it, that somewhere, and somehow, and by somebody, a beginning must me made; and that the first act of resistance is always, and must be ever, premature, imprudent, and dangerous'. - James Fintan Lalor*

*'However it may be for others, for us of the Citizen Army there is but one ideal - an Ireland ruled, and owned, by Irish men and women, sovereign and independent from the centre to the sea, and flying its own flag outward over all the oceans. We cannot be swerved from our course by honeyed words, lulled into carelessness by freedom to parade and strut in uniforms, nor betrayed by high-sounding phrases. The Irish Citizen Army will only co-operate in a forward movement. The moment that forward movement ceases it reserves to itself the right to step out of the alignment, and advance by itself if needs be, in an effort to plant the banner of freedom one reach further towards its goal.' - Commandant General James Connolly*

*As for the armed actions in Europe, we have seen protracted armed struggles. They are an expression of objective reality. Therefore, the task is not to condemn them, but to understand, study, and analyse them to see how they are an expression of the fact that there is also a revolutionary situation in old Europe. And beyond that, that there are those who have taken up arms, understanding that that is the only way to seize Power. This is a powerful blow to revisionism, because in Europe itself, considered to be one of their bastions, revisionism is beginning to be abandoned. Regardless of the level reached, and the problems that remain to be solved, this is undeniably an important advance.*

*In some cases, the national question is involved, as in Ireland. In other cases, the issue of how to make their revolution is raised. We believe that these struggles must be studied seriously. The problem is in understanding what their ideology is, what politics guides them, what class they serve, and how they approach the question of the superpowers. We believe that they deserve a lot of attention, especially when there are organizations that propose taking up Mao Tse-tung again, or that are starting to raise the need for a Party, or indeed that the armed struggle alone is not enough. We must look at this as a new awakening and understand that they might make a lot of mistakes when you get right down to it, who doesn't? But they themselves will sum up lessons from their errors, as they are doing, they will advance, grasp Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and form Parties that wage people's war in accordance with the socialist character of their revolution and in accordance with their specific conditions' - Chairman Gonzalo.*

Speaking during his 1988 interview with El Diario, Chairman Gonzalo correctly noted the significance of the Revolutionary Armed struggles in Europe and specifically, the Revolutionary Armed Struggle in Ireland as demonstrating the universal validity of PPW.

The criticism that People's War is not universal because it cannot be applied in a modern industrial country, and would be crushed by the forces of reaction there, does not stand up to the reality of the experience of Revolutionary Armed Struggle in Ireland, an armed struggle that continues today, despite hitting a bend in the road in recent years.

## Fighter of the CPI (M)



The experience of Armed Struggle in Ireland and particularly the ongoing armed actions against British Imperialism in Ireland comprehensively and decisively demonstrates the universal applicability of PPW.

Ireland is a colonial and semi-colonial country, an island nation on the western periphery of the European continent. Although Ireland is a colony and semi-colony it is also a modern industrialised country, which gives it specific material conditions that are useful for demonstrating the universal validity of PPW.

Ireland is both a colony and a semi-colony because it is illegally and forcefully partitioned by imperialism. British imperialism maintains a direct military occupation of 6 Irish Counties in the north-east of the country. The remaining 26 Counties are administered by a semi-colonial parliament in Dublin on behalf of British, North American and European Imperialism, who exploit and oppress the Irish working class and rob our wealth and resources.

Since the ruling class of England first invaded Ireland in 1167, every generation of Irish people since have engaged in revolutionary violence and protracted armed struggle, particularly guerrilla warfare against imperialism, amassing a great wealth of knowledge and experience of the theory and practice of waging revolutionary war.

In 1969, the Irish Republican Army, that was established in 1916, launched a new revolutionary armed struggle for national liberation, to drive out British imperialism.

While this revolutionary armed struggle was not a PPW, it was a protracted guerrilla campaign, and a war of the people, particularly the people in British occupied Ireland.

While the Revolutionary Armed Struggle was able to develop base areas in rural counties such as South Armagh, Fermanagh and Tyrone, more importantly, through armed struggle revolutionary base areas were established in the urban centres, particularly in Belfast and Derry, the two key cities in British occupied Ireland. The establishment of such base areas proves the universal applicability of PPW to all countries, in accordance with the specific conditions.

These revolutionary base areas in the urban centres were established in the Working Class ghettos of Belfast and Derry, where the revolutionary army could operate openly by relying on the people and with their support, vast areas of working class Belfast and Derry became no-go areas for British Imperialism.

With regard to the Irish experience of revolutionary violence, the above quote from Chairman Gonzalo is more important than might be first realised. Chairman Gonzalo, from his deep understanding of Proletarian Revolutionary Science, accurately predicted that through the waging of revolutionary armed struggle, revolutionaries would *'sum up lessons from their errors, as they are doing, they'll advance, grasp Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and form Parties and wage people's war in accordance with the socialist character of their revolution and in accordance with their specific conditions'*.

This grasping of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and a reappraising of the Irish Revolutionary Armed Struggle took place in Ireland at the height of the revolutionary violence. During the 1980s, while Chairman Gonzalo was first synthesising Marxism-Leninism-Maoism through the leading of the People's War in Peru, IRA prisoners in British prisons in Ireland and Britain were taking up, studying and beginning to apply the teaching of Chairman Mao to the specific conditions of Ireland.

An important group of IRA commanders, operating mainly in the border areas, but with support from the guerrilla fighters in other areas, began to apply the military teachings of Chairman Mao and began to develop a strategy of moving revolutionary violence in Ireland from revolutionary armed struggle to PPW. This group of IRA cadre came to the conclusion that for their strategy to be successful, it would necessitate a break from the reformist leadership of the Provisional IRA and Sinn Féin, and to establish new organisations to lead a People's War.

These IRA cadre began to implement the move towards People's War from around 1986, particularly in the border region but there was support in the urban bases too. The guerrilla warfare tactics chosen successfully drove British Crown forces from the countryside and towns into the barracks in bigger towns and cities. Both the reformist leadership of Sinn Féin and the British Imperialist government realised the threat posed by the PPW to their plans for a 'peace process' and British Imperialism moved to systematically assassinate the IRA Cadre between 1986-1988.

Despite the assassination of these cadre, the revolutionary armed struggle in Ireland continued at a height unknown in other European countries right into the 1990s when the reformist leadership of Sinn Féin entered into a pacification process in partnership with British Imperialism, which resulted in a major bend in the road for the revolutionary armed struggle. Yet despite this, British imperialism has still been unable to crush the national liberation struggle and revolutionary armed actions continue to this day, though at a much lower ebb.

On investigation of the Irish experience of revolutionary violence, even a brief investigation, such as the one above, it can be comprehensively established that PPW is the universally applicable

Proletarian Military Line.

A PPW in an industrial country can take the form of the revolutionary armed struggle in Ireland, establishing base areas in the urban working class communities and encircling the centres of power from there. Under this form of PPW, applied to the specific conditions of an industrial country, the urban war is primary and will be supported by rural base areas, instead of war in the countryside being primary as is the case in under-developed countries.

To conclude, a final note on the Irish experience of revolutionary violence. The revolutionary armed struggle in Ireland has continued to be unsuccessful because it is not a PPW. The armed struggle has continued to fail because it is not led by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism or a Militarised Communist Party of the new type, waging a People's War for the seizure of Power.

For the war for national liberation and socialist revolution in Ireland to be successful, it must be led by a militarised revolutionary organisation of the new type, one that upholds MLM and organises and mobilises the masses through People's War.

Only then will Ireland's long revolutionary struggle be successful.

### Conclusion

PPW is the universally applicable Proletarian Military Line, valid in all countries in accordance with the specific conditions. This has been comprehensively and decisively demonstrated by the experience of revolutionary violence in Peru and Ireland. It is time for the International Communist Movement to unite behind People's War and to constitute or reconstitute militarised Communist organisations to launch and lead them.

Those who disagree with this course of action should give up the pretence and be honest about their motivations. The real struggle going on in the International Communist Movement is the struggle between revolution and revisionism, between a vibrant Marxism-Leninism-Maoism on the one hand and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought on the other. Maoism is a third and higher stage of revolutionary science and is Communism in the modern era. PPW is the path to victory for the World Revolution. This is the universal truth that must be grasped and taken up by the International Communist Movement and implemented in all countries in accordance with the specific conditions of each country and of each revolution.

As Chairman Mao teaches, *'We stand for active ideological struggle because it is the weapon for ensuring unity within the Party and the revolutionary organizations in the interest of our fight. Every Communist and revolutionary should take up this weapon.'*



# American Cultural Imperialism and Ireland



**As imperialist-in-chief Joe Biden was inaugurated, Irish media attention was squarely aimed towards America. RTÉ provided live coverage and commentary of the inauguration. Biden's 6<sup>th</sup> cousins (one of them a Fianna Fail councillor, naturally) were interviewed and photographed with tricolours and American flags. It remains to be seen whether the positive media frenzy will last as long as that around Obama, but the issue of fawning coverage and obsession with America goes far beyond our pathetic fourth estate.**

Irish people increasingly see their lives as mediated entirely through perceptions of America. The important differences between Ireland and the United States are elided in favour of a vague common understanding of being part of the "Anglosphere", which is really another word for being within the sphere of American imperialism and its ideological hegemony. Irish culture is perceived as backwards, an embarrassment from a bygone era befitting Ireland's status as a backwater. Even our fascists have become more American, as Gemma O'Doherty waving around the Free State constitution like a crazed Tea Party member indicates.

We can see the effects of this in our own political movements. Political consciousness, particularly among petit bourgeois radicals and student activists who spend a great time on social media, is not being inspired by conditions in Ireland and the very real challenges Ireland faces, but rather primarily by events in America which are studiously observed through a vast array of movies, YouTube videos, podcasts and monitoring of social media. Any media by and for Irish people is inevitably drowned out by this tide of Yankee content. This is also true of the relationship many have with Britain. The defeat of social democratic electoral projects like that of Bernie Sanders and Jeremy Corbyn had a clear impact on many despite having no real bearing on the material reality of Irish life. Keeping track of these events becomes something closer to a spec-

tator sport. The endless lockdown has only intensified this problem.

The most popular political mobilisation in terms of numbers in 2020 was not around a purely Irish matter but rather showing solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in the USA. Attempts were made to link the issue of racial discrimination with institutional racism against migrants and refugees in Ireland, particularly the Free State's evil imprisonment of asylum seekers through Direct Provision. This however was not the primary draw for the majority of those who marched to the American embassy. This is not to say that solidarity with the oppressed black masses of America is a negative thing, on the contrary it is a good sign in many ways. It is however a sign that issues facing America can be a bigger motivator for Irish people than issues facing their own country. The lack of support and even hostility of most Irish people to the family of George Nkencho, also murdered by the police, being something of an indication.

Reformist political organisations like People Before Profit have seized on this unhealthy obsession with America rather uncritically. You only must examine the programme for their Marxism Festival to see over half of the events featured a speaker from America or were about American concerns. This is of course a result of their overall tailist approach to political matters, but also an orientation towards the better off sections of the Irish working class, professionals and students. A connection is made between the Irish working class and the masses in America, but mostly absent is any analysis of American imperialism beyond military intervention. That Ireland itself is exploited by American multinational corporations is largely avoided, these vultures being identified as vaguely capitalist but rarely imperialist. This is often accompanied by denial that Ireland is any kind of semi colony, sometimes going so far as to claim the Free State is an imperialist state.



*Andrea McKeivitt, Louth FF Councillor and Biden's cousin.*

Even more negative is the presence of quasi-NGO anarchist organisations such as MERJ (Migrants for Economic and Reproductive Justice), who have adopted an American political framework on race and discrimination and transported it to Ireland wholesale. Only minor cosmetic adjustments are made to consider the oppression of white skinned minorities like Irish Travellers. Otherwise the focus is squarely on haranguing Irish people for perceived privilege while ignoring the historical oppression Irish people have faced for centuries. This extends even to abusing non-white activists who disagree with their analysis as race traitors. Naturally the continuing occupation of the North of Ireland is rarely mentioned, nor the vicious sectarianism that leads to giant bonfires draped in flags declaring the intent to Kill all Taigs. Partitionism is the norm in these circles, as they are totally enmeshed in liberal and Free State ideology despite claims of radicalism.

The obsession with American concerns has also been a major boost to the cause of revisionist ideology in Ireland. On the right and the left there arises the claim that the Irish people historically have been complicit in imperialism and slavery. That the majority of "Irish" people complicit in the slave trade were part of the Protestant ascendancy and a bourgeois class carefully fostered and protected by British imperialism is conveniently ignored. Rather the aim is to be as self-flagellating as possible in declaiming "Irish privilege" as if there were no difference between the white population of America and most Irish people. The benefits that Irish peasants in Ireland received from their cousins becoming part of the settler colonial processes in America are abstract at best.

It would be unfair to say that the Irish obsession with America is a recent issue of course. The large-scale immigration to North America over the past century and a half, and a sense that the USA has been benevolent towards Ireland, has meant that among some working-class Irish people there is a romantic image of America. You only have to look at the crowds that flocked to see John F Kennedy on his visit here among other examples. What's more, being steeped in American culture was seen by some as a way of avoiding the more negative permeation of British culture. It is however undeniable that the Internet has allowed a closeness with the USA for young Irish people like never before.

Irish people are quick to oppose military adventures by America,

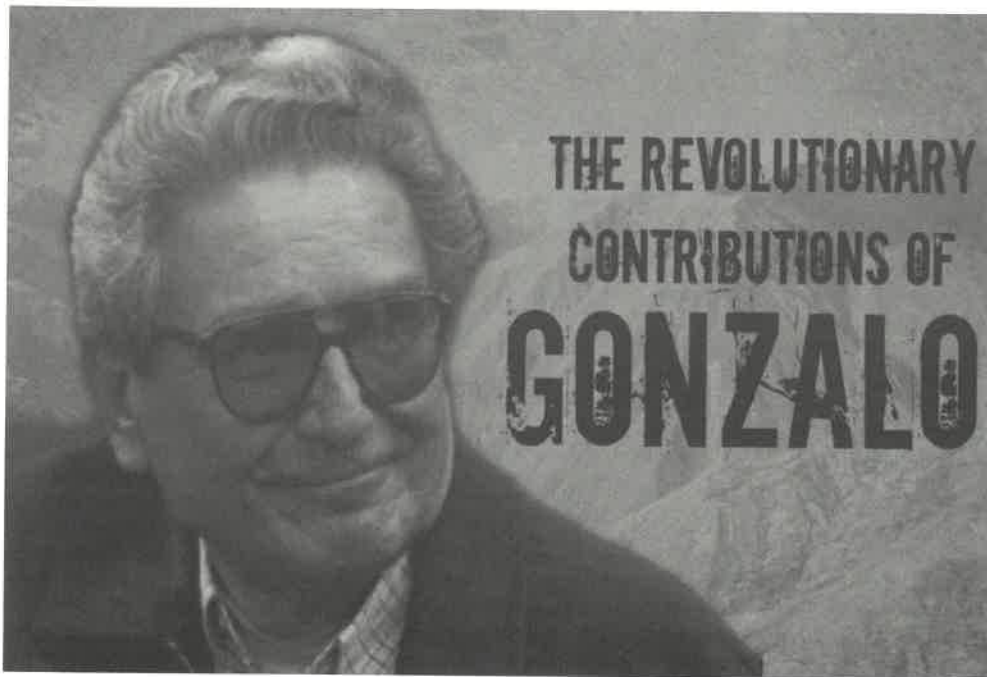
and yet slow to recognise the cultural, economic and political domination of most of the planet including Ireland by US imperialism. The antics of a Donald Trump or George Bush serves as a welcome distraction for the garrison class, who can gesture vaguely towards the US and say "well, at least we aren't as bad as these eejits". The flipside of this is that US imperialists representing the Democratic Party and the more liberal wing tend to get a pass. A lighter hand is the best that can be hoped for from the imperialist hegemon. This is not always the case however, and there were some sections of the Irish establishment sympathetic to Trump, or at least willing to extend the benefit of doubt as they would to any American overlord. As always, the Irish garrison class needs to hedge its bets to remain friendly with whoever comes out victorious stateside.

The Young Irelander Thomas Davis, in discussing the Irish language as a national language, argued that "A nation should guard its language more than its territories--'tis a surer barrier, and more important frontier, than fortress or river." Decades of neglect by Free State administrations have broken down that barrier even further, providing little obstacle to the penetration of Anglo-American cultural imperialism in Ireland. A revitalised Irish language provides one avenue of resistance against the negative impacts of the Anglosphere.

Marx argued that the ideas in capitalist society are the ideas of the ruling class. It is then appropriate to say that the ideas in Ireland are not entirely those of the Garrison Class which administers Ireland on behalf of imperialism. The "native" Irish bourgeoisie is mostly weak, and those endeavours that prove successful are inevitably bought out by foreign competitors. The real ruling class of Ireland is the American, British and European capitalists which dominate North and South through their political, economic and cultural influence. Leinster House is their intermediary. Any movement that ignores this reality is doomed to failure in the long run as the contradiction between the Irish people and imperialism sharpens.



*Sycophantic Mural of Joe Biden in Ballina, Co. Mayo*



Abimael Guzmán, better known to the world as Chairman Gonzalo, is recognised as the greatest Marxist-Leninist-Maoist today. The leader of the Party, the Revolution and the Protracted People's War in Peru, it is Chairman Gonzalo that first synthesized Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a third and higher stage of the science of Proletarian Revolution and elucidated that it is principally Maoism today that provides the exploited and oppressed people of the world with both the ideological weapon and concrete revolutionary strategy for victory. From his shining trench of combat in an underground cell at Callao Naval Base Peru, Chairman Gonzalo remains a revolutionary inspiration and his immortal contributions must be studied and understood by all genuine Communists today.

While Chairman Mao first devised and proved successful many of the theories contained today in Maoism, it is Chairman Gonzalo who proved Mao's great teachings to be universal by applying them to the conditions of the Protracted People's War in Peru and demonstrating that the developments of Marxism made by Mao and as synthesised in Peru, represented a third and higher stage of Marxism. Explaining this process, Chairman Gonzalo wrote in 1988 that *'In the furnace of class struggle, the ideology of the international proletariat emerged as Marxism, afterwards developed into Marxism-Leninism and later Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Therefore, the scientific ideology of the proletariat, is all-powerful because it is true, has three stages or landmarks in its dialectical process of development: 1) Marxism, 2) Leninism, and 3) Maoism. These three stages are part of the same unity which began with the*

*Communist Manifesto one hundred and forty years ago, with the heroic epic of the class struggle, in fierce and fruitful two-line struggles within the communist parties themselves and in the titanic work of thought and action that only the working class could generate. Today, three unfading lights are outstanding: Marx, Lenin, and Mao Tse-tung who, through three grand leaps have armed us with the invincible ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, which today is principally Maoism.'*

#### **On the Universal aspects of Chairman Gonzalo Thought**

Through the synthesis of Maoism as the third and higher state of Marxism, and in leading the Protracted People's War in Peru, Chairman Gonzalo produced a guiding thought for the application of Maoism to the specific conditions in Peru, which is known today as Gonzalo thought. While Gonzalo was clear that Gonzalo Thought was specific to Peru, since the 1980s it has become clear that there are universal aspects to the Gonzalo thought that have developed through the People's War and are applicable everywhere. These include the universal principles of guiding thought, of the need for a Militarised Party of the New Type, of the Concentric Construction of the Three Weapons of Revolution and of the theory of Jefetura or Great Leadership.

**1) Guiding Thought-** Chairman Gonzalo has demonstrated that in all revolutions, the heat of class struggle leads to the development of a guiding thought specific to the conditions of that country and of that revolution. In Peru, the guiding thought of the revolution is Gonzalo thought. While guiding thought has existed in Marxism since the beginning, it was chairman Gonzalo that has named it, developed our understanding of it and demonstrated that it is a universal feature of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. In the 1988 document, On Gonzalo Thought, the Communist Party of Peru explains the importance of guiding thought as follows, *"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."*

**2) The Militarised Communist Party-** developing the principle of the Party of a new type, Chairman Gonzalo has outlined that Communist Parties must militarise to lead the People's War for the seizure of power. Protracted People's War is the military line of the proletariat, generated by the universal science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and it is a principle of Maoism that the party must command the gun. *'Concretely, it resolves the issue of building the Party around the gun and that it is the heroic combatant who is leading its own construction, the Army and the Front.'* Therefore only a militarised party can lead the People's War. Chairman Gonzalo has made this clear in the General Political line of the Communist Party of Peru, where he outlines three reasons that Communist Parties must militarise. He explained, *"First, because we are in the strategic offensive of the world revolution, we live during the sweeping away of imperialism and reaction from the face of the Earth within the next 50 to 100 years, a time marked by violence in which all kinds of wars take place. We see how reaction is militarizing itself more and more, militarizing the old States, their economies, developing wars of aggression, trafficking with the struggles of the peoples and aiming toward a world war, but since revolution is the principal tendency in the world, the task of the Communist Parties is to uphold revolution shaping the principal form of struggle: People's war to oppose the world counterrevolutionary war with world revolutionary war.*

*Second, because capitalist restoration must be prevented. When the bourgeoisie loses Power, it introduces itself inside the Party, uses the army and seeks to usurp Power and destroy the dictatorship of the proletariat to restore capitalism. Therefore, the Communist Parties must militarize themselves and exercise the all-round dictatorship of the three instruments, forging themselves in people's war and empower the armed organization of the masses, the people's militia, so as to engulf the army. For this reason, Chairman Gonzalo tells us to "forge all militants as Communists, first and foremost, as fighters and as administrators"; for that reason every militant is forged in the People's War and remains alert against any attempt at capitalist restoration.*



*class struggle, teaching with deeds, with these types of actions as the principal form of struggle in the People's War."*

**3) Concentric Construction-** Linked to the idea of the Militarised Party to lead the People's War, is the idea of the Concentric Construction of the three Instruments of Revolution, the Party, the Army and the United Front. Concentric Construction is the idea that the three instruments are built around each other, with the party at the centre, the army built around the party as the principal form of organisation and the front for mobilising the broadest masses to build new power. The General Political Line of the Communist Party of Peru states, 'The concentric

*Third, because we march toward a militarized society. By militarizing the Party, we complete a step toward the militarization of society which is the strategic perspective to guarantee the dictatorship of the proletariat. The militarized society is the sea of armed masses which Marx and Engels spoke of, that guards the conquest of power and defends it once conquered. We take the experience of the Chinese Revolution, of the anti-Japanese base at Yen-an, which was a militarized society where everything grew out of the barrels of guns: Party, Army, State, new politics, new economics, new culture. And in that way we develop war communism.*

*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 non-military work in order to centre 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*

*construction of the three instruments is the organic fulfilment of the militarization of the Party and in synthesis it is summarized in what Chairman Gonzalo teaches: "The Party is the axis of everything, it leads the three instruments in an all-round way, its own construction, it absolutely leads the army and the new State as a joint dictatorship aiming toward the dictatorship of the proletariat."*

Concentric Construction ensures the building of the Revolutionary forces based on the principle that 'the Party is the highest form of organization, the army is the principal form of organization and the Front is the third instrument, and these three instruments are to seize Power by means of revolutionary violence.'

Through Concentric Construction, the Party is not only the Political leadership of the Revolution, but also the Military Leadership with Party Cadre playing a leading role in the Army and the Front. It is only in this way, through the principle of Concentric Construction, that the Party can become the recognised leadership of the masses and the revolution.

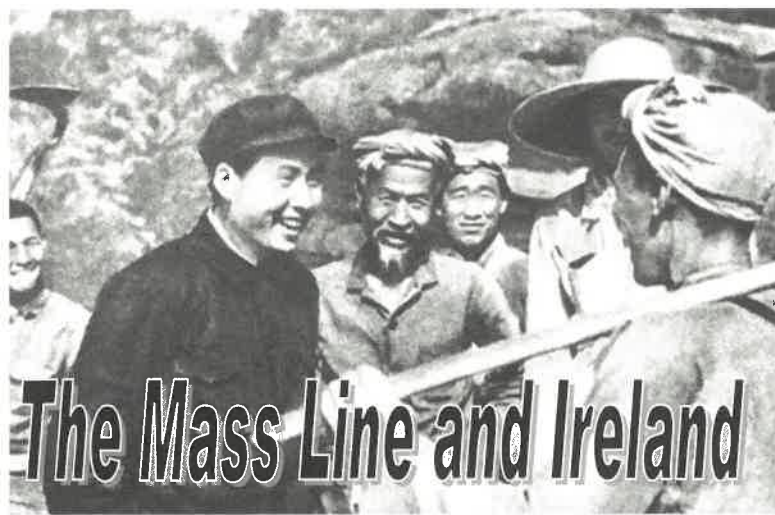
**4)- Great Leadership/ Jefatura** - It is a Maoist principle that the People are the makers of world history, but Chairman Gonzalo has shown that the Revolution is always guided by a group of undisputed leaders that are the embodiment of the revolution and the will of the masses. These leaders have been steeled in the class struggle and make great sacrifice for the revolution. These are the great leaders of the revolution. It is from this group that the guiding thought of each revolution will emerge in accordance to the specific conditions in each country and each revolution. Chairman Gonzalo explained this universal principle during the world famous 'interview'. He said, '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 Tse-tung, and his comrades Kang Sheng, Chiang Ching, Chang Chun-chiao, among others. All revolutions are that way, including our own...it is necessity that generates leaders, and a top leader, but just who that is is determined by chance, by a set of specific conditions that come together at a particular place and time. In this way, in our case too, a Great Leadership [Jefatura] has been generated. This was first acknowledged in the Party at the Expanded National Conference of 1979. But this question involves another basic question that can't be overlooked and needs to be emphasized: there is no Great Leadership [Jefatura] that does not base itself on a body of thought, no matter what its level of development may be."*

Providing great clarity on this principle, Chairman Gonzalo continued that it is in no way linked to the Cult of Personality. The Cult of Personality is 'a revisionist thesis that in essence takes aim against the proletarian dictatorship and the Great Leadership [Jefatura] and Great Leaders of the revolutionary process in order to cut off its head. In our case it aims specifically at robbing the people's war of its leadership. We do not yet have a dictatorship of the proletariat, but we do have a New Power that is developing in accordance with the norms of new democracy, the joint dictatorship of the workers, peasants and progressives. In our case they seek to rob this process of leadership, and the reactionaries and those who serve them know very well why they do this, because it is not easy to generate Great Leaders and Great Leadership. And a people's war, like the one in this country, needs Great Leaders and a Great Leadership, someone who represents the revolution and heads it, and a group capable of leading it uncompromisingly. In sum, the cult of the personality is a sinister revisionist formulation which has nothing to do with our concept of revolutionary leaders, which conforms with Leninism.'

The immortal contributions of chairman Gonzalo can be seen and understood by all. Through the synthesis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the demonstration of the Universality of Protracted People's War and the conceptualisation of the principles of Guiding thought, the Militarised Communist Party, Concentric Construction and Great Leadership, Chairman Gonzalo has made a world historic contribution to the science of Proletarian Revolution, applicable in all countries, at all times in accordance to the specific conditions of each country and each revolution.





The Mass Line was simply summarised by Mao in the principle of "from the masses, to the masses".

**Who are the masses? The masses in this case are the most revolutionary sections of Irish society, especially the working class but also oppressed sections of society like women, Travellers, gender minorities, migrants, the lower end of the petty bourgeoisie and so on.**

A communist organisation is one that is largely united by coherent ideas. For example, Irish Socialist Republicans is united by Socialist Republicanism, as an expression of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. On the other hand the working class and most of the Irish people have contradictory ideas. Many of their ideas taken as a whole are correct and can be built upon, but there are also the ideas they have inherited from the ruling class, including reactionary ideas like racism, sexism etc. Therefore we need to take the best ideas and build on them, while discarding and looking to challenge the ideas which are wrong.

The first step of this process is first of all to investigate the classes and sections in society, and identify those elements which have revolutionary potential. In Ireland we can clearly see that the working class is the primary revolutionary force in society.

Once this is done we begin to gather the various ideas of the people, taking from the masses, seeing what their fears and hopes are, what they identify as the key problems in society and so on. This can be done any number of ways, such as through knocking on doors, conducting surveys, investigating previous data gathered about a geographical area etc., but the closer the direct and sustained contact with the masses the better.

In this process we don't dismiss people for having confused ideas or even reactionary ones. For example, many Irish working class people have a healthy contempt for Loyalism. This is a positive, as Loyalism is one of the most reactionary forces in the country. At the same time there are those who hate Loyalism who are also sectarian, in that they hate Irish Protestants. This attitude is ultimately reactionary and should be combated, but in doing so we should be clear that the attitude of hating Loyalism is fundamentally correct.

When we have gathered the necessary information, we can then sort through what is correct or incorrect in the ideas of the masses. We synthesize what is best about these ideas into a concrete political line and policies which can be presented to the people. This line isn't merely the product of our own imaginations or pet theories but the real political expression of the ideas of the masses. These concentrated ideas are then propagated and spread to the masses through our propaganda and mass work.

As it is presented to the masses, there will be feedback and responses to the political line, more ideas will be thrown out which can then be used to further refine our politics. The mass line is not a one and done process, but a continual circular process where our line becomes stronger and the political level of the masses is raised.

This process can be applied not only the masses as a whole but to people in a certain area, within mass organisations and even within our own revolutionary organisation to ensure that the political level of the rank and file is raised and that the leadership do not grow complacent.

There are two major errors that can be made: left deviation which manifests mostly as commandism, and right deviation manifesting as tailism. Commandism is where revolutionaries are going too far ahead of the masses, where they try and force through ideas that the masses aren't ready for,

sometimes against their wishes and undemocratically. Tailism is where revolutionaries are falling behind the real consciousness of the masses, merely following what the masses already believe rather than trying to raise their level.

The vast majority of electoral organisations don't attempt to raise the political level of the people, rather looking to pander to their worse impulses and their current consciousness. A single minded focus on trade union or everyday struggles without injecting a higher political consciousness, or what Lenin termed economism, is another common right deviationist mistake that involves tailing the masses.

Every revolutionary organisation that has been able to gain traction among the people will of course have implemented something that approximates elements of the mass line, consciously or not. It would not be possible for example for the IRA to have been as successful as it was in 1919-1921 and 1969 onwards if the IRA as an organisation was not taking into account the wishes and desires of the masses and acting accordingly, as well as being rooted in the working class, small farmers and other oppressed classes of Ireland. Conversely, we see those decades in which the Republican movement was most out of touch with the consciousness and everyday lives of the Irish people as being when the movement floundered, as in the 1940s.

What sets the mass line apart is that it is a more concrete attempt to provide a method of leadership and of developing our politics, as opposed to vaguer notions about listening to the masses, "meeting people where they are" or being "in touch" with the people. Even bourgeois governments "listen to the people" on occasion through the use of polling and constituency meetings with voters. Fine Gael are very in touch with the desires of their wealthy and bourgeois supporters which allows them to act in their interests. Most political organisations develop their ideas largely based on their biased perception of what the people want, but no organisation can attract any supporters without at least representing the interests of a class or classes in some respects.

The mass line's foundation rests, as does most Marxist theory, on the assumption that it is class struggle and thus the masses that make history. Contrary to elitist conceptions of politics, Marxists should not believe that they have all answers and merely need to provide them to the working class in order to grow and be victorious. Republicans in particular have been guilty of this, believing that principle alone would be enough to bring victory. The assumption should always be that while Socialists and their organisations may have a theoretical understanding, this is nothing compared to the vast knowledge of the people in their millions, and the experiences of exploitation and suffering that shape that knowledge.

When we look at most Irish socialist republican groups historically, the primary error has generally been left deviation, manifesting as single minded militarism and commandism. When Republican organisations have sought to correct these errors they've tended to swing sharply in the other direction, abandoning any militancy and radicalism and adopting a host of right opportunist errors, particularly tailism, economism and electoralism.

This is in large part because the focus has never been on carefully and systematically creating a political line. Very often Republicanism has been framed as not being political at all, and that to be political means to embrace electoralism and reformism represented by constitutional Nationalist groups like Fianna Fáil, Sinn Féin or the SDLP. It was said in Maoist China that left opportunism is "rightist in essence". We can see this quite clearly in how certain Republican groups have switched so rapidly from one set of errors to another, from single minded armed campaigns to sitting in parliament.

If our own ideas don't draw from their experiences then we're doomed to failure or irrelevancy like so many cultish and dogmatic Marxist groups historically. Socialist Republicans shouldn't be content to be caretakers of secret arcane knowledge that is kept away from grasping mortal hands.

This isn't to say we won't make mistakes, of course we will. As our political line develops inevitably we will make errors, going too far to the right or too far left at times, but that's an unavoidable part of the process and nothing to be ashamed of.

Left and right deviations are like Scylla and Charybdis, two sea monsters on either side of a strait as our ship sails through. We can see ships wrecked by both over the centuries dotting the shoreline for miles and the proud names on the boughs. We can pick through the wreckage, maybe salvage what we can on the way. Some of those shipwrecks may be hulking, intimidating. But the mass line is like our compass, and if it's properly read and we adjust course accordingly there is no reason why Socialist Republicans cannot steer and be steered by the masses to long awaited victory.

# Revolution is a primitive thing, don't you think?

A revolution can be described as 'A forcible overthrow of a government or social order, in favour of a new system' (Oxford English Dictionary, 2020). A revolutionary movement often uses guerrilla warfare as a component to the revolutions birth. The guerrilla warfare as defined by Oxford English Dictionary (2020) is the 'engagement in or the activities involved in a war fought by small groups of irregular soldiers against typically larger regular forces'. Guerrilla warfare as it pertains to its physical and material elements is in itself a very primitive form of warfare (Griffith, 2017). Guerrillas themselves, the soldiers of the guerrilla force, are ill-equipped and often have little to no support financially or militarily in comparison with state forces or their oppressors. They lack the technological aid of their enemy and the advantages that that brings with regards to weaponry, communications, and intelligence. Guerrilla warfare is often used by an oppressed people against their oppressors who generally have a stronger better organised and equipped military presence.

As explained by Brigadier General Griffith, USMC (Ret.) (2017), in the technological sense, guerrilla warfare is primitive. This is to say that with regards to weaponry and other technological considerations, the guerrilla army lacks the resources to engage a regular army in conventional warfare and, therefore, must adopt non-conventional tactics in order to achieve its end goal. In effect, this means no navy or air support. The lack of financial support from state funding means a lack of support for the family of the guerrilla who may be captured or killed. Furthermore, in many cases, a lack of uniform, weapons, communications, and intelligence technologies also becomes apparent. Where a normal soldier in a state military may enjoy having two or more weapons at their disposal the guerrilla army would have to ration ammunition and weaponry for operations. Kramer (2005) explains that a lack of financial resources has been an issue with previous national liberation movements that have utilised guerrilla tactics both during operations and through recruitment.

Revolutionary organisations must endeavour to ensure communications are kept secret and encrypted, otherwise interception of said intelligence could spell catastrophe for the organisation. In comparison, their counterparts often possess their own communication channels with substantial resources to back them. Whaley (1967) described the communications between most revolutionary organisations pre-1967 as simple and unpretentious. He explains that most have used paper communications such as letters and written notes. In addition, the nature of written notes and letters as a form of communication invariably leads to a much slower relay of commands and intelligence within the organisation which could potentially prove fatal for operatives in the field and in terms of broader strategic development also. This shows the lack of resources to use radio and other technologically advanced forms of communication. This lack of resources, however, is an indicator and expression of the class and state of the people waging these revolutions. In other words, it is a true reflection of the conditions of the people leading these revolutions.

The absence of a uniform has opened the door for oppressing forces to label guerrilla fighters as illegitimate or in some cases criminal. As the law of war states that those without uniform must be considered as civilian and therefore cannot engage in warfare or be engaged upon (Pfanner, 2004). Pfanner also explains the importance of military uniform with regards to the perception of the public, that it shows status and rank and that uniforms themselves are regularly designed to make the soldier appear broader and taller to the general public and to their enemy. The British government used this clause in order to criminalise the IRA and INLA in their quest for Irish national freedom which then led to the dirty protest and ultimately the hunger strikes of 1980 and 1981.

In conclusion, as regards the material aspect of all warfare, guerrilla warfare is very primitive as it is a reflection of the people who engage in it. Due to the lack of financial resources, a revolutionary organisation is reduced to scrambling for the means to wage war effectively and with a relative chance of success. This is

not an insult to guerrilla armies. Rather, it is an objective observation.

We have now investigated the material and physical aspect of revolution, with particular emphasis to the chosen form of warfare by the people, guerrilla warfare. However, as Mao Tse-tung (1961) illustrates, it is not the only form of revolutionary warfare though it is an instrumental part of the puzzle. It explains the primitive nature of guerrilla warfare, that it is a direct result of the lack of financial aid due to its affiliation with the working-class people of the nation. This article will now move to investigate the metaphysical side of guerrilla warfare, winning the hearts and minds of the people that allows the guerrilla organisation to operate as effectively as possible. Essentially understanding the metaphysical essence of guerrilla warfare as it has been successfully and unsuccessfully used in past revolutions, how it has been implemented and used as a means of resistance towards a tyrant.

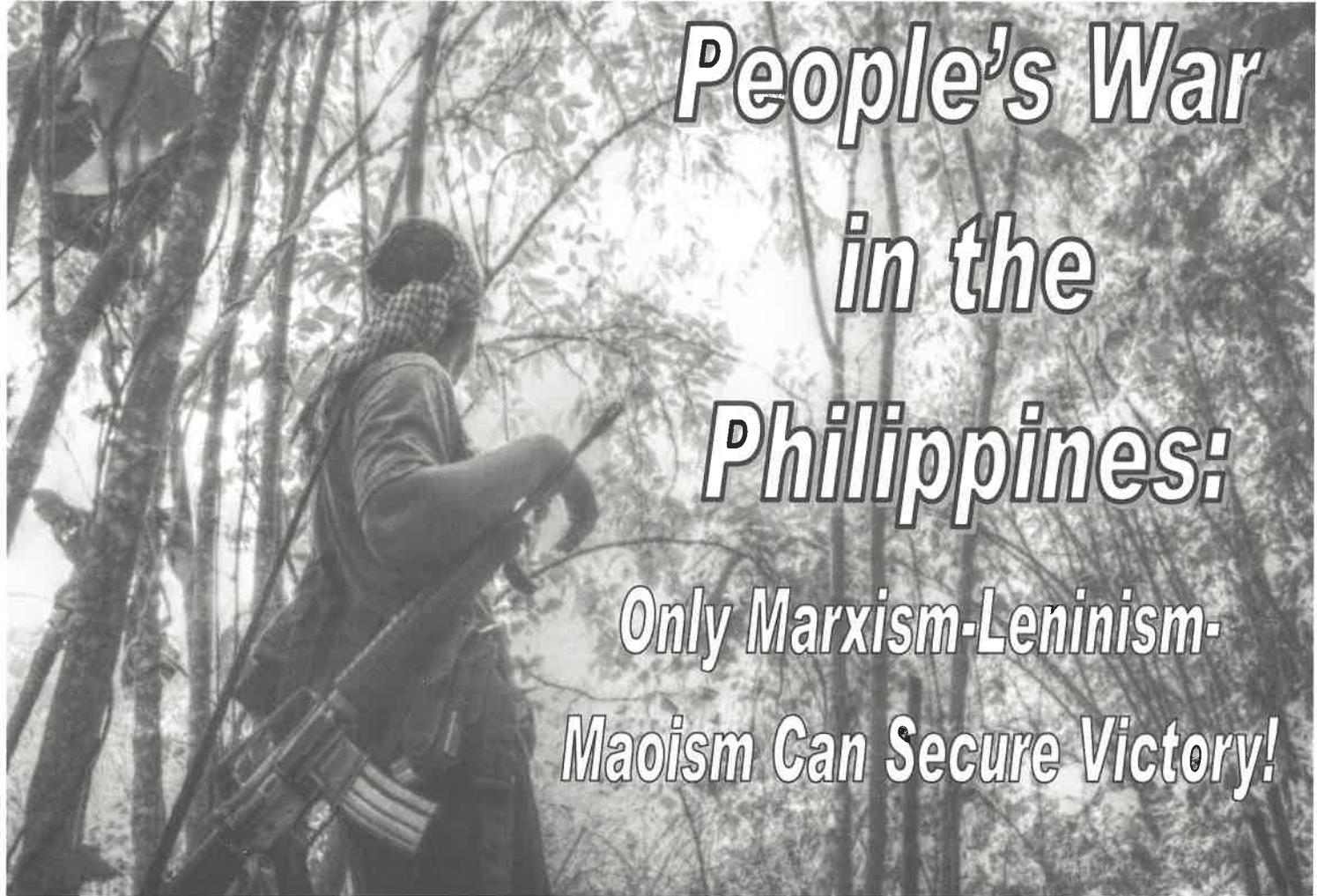
As it pertains to its metaphysical dimensions, Griffith (2017) contests that guerrilla warfare is not so primitive. He explains that the guerrillas themselves are not only trained in the art of warfare but also highly politically educated in comparison to their imperial counterparts. He goes on to explain that this emphasis on political education would be shunned by the U.S. military hierarchy as it would complicate the training; in other words, it would raise too many questions they would rather not answer. In the case of revolutionary fighters' terrain, cultural awareness and sensitivity are also advantageous tools to use as well as political knowledge of the landscape and its inhabitants (Mao, 1961). This much is evident within the Irish context, where the oppressing force, the British government and its agents, could not come to terms with the Irish mentality nor could they acquire a deeper understanding of its peoples' motivations and cultural particularity. In essence, they could not reason with the Irish as they neither knew nor understood them as is evidenced in the words of Winston Churchill who lamented '*we have always found the Irish a bit odd, they refuse to be English*'. This ignorance, however, is not unique to the British. Indeed, you may find it a common trait with oppressors and those whom they oppress.

Furthermore, Mao (1961) explains that a revolutionary guerrilla military campaign without political steering will ultimately be defeated. In agreement with Mao, Griffith (2017) explains that with the political education the guerrillas themselves become extremely motivated and loyal to their cause and thus the political education is the strength within the movement. Hanley and Millar (2009) elucidate as to how the IRA after the rise of socialism within the Irish republican movement in the early 1960s understood the need for political education and immediately began educational schemes throughout their ranks. In contrast, this was not the case during the Irish Tan War of 1919-1921, as is demonstrated in General Tom Barry's book *Guerrilla Days in Ireland* when he describes their training camps but neglects to mention anywhere about political education or training. This, in the author's humble opinion, contributed to a kind of political naivety whereby a counter revolution was not only allowed to take place, but also was facilitated and implemented by those who fought so fiercely for Irish freedom. "*Without patriotic political education a soldier is only a potential criminal*" Thomas Sankara.

This link to politics, particularly Marxist politics, can also be viewed as a link to the people. It hints at a higher purpose, to not simply seize power for selfish reasons but for the common people. The movement must develop a didactic that will arouse the people to its aid. Mao gave metaphors to the roles that guerrillas and the people play within the context of the revolution. He described the guerrilla as fish and the people as water; without water, the fish cannot move, it cannot eat, and it cannot fight. Therefore, the guerrilla is entirely dependent on the people as opposed to a regular army that may not need the full support of the population in order to achieve its objective.

*"Those who want to undertake guerrilla warfare are criticized for forgetting mass struggle, implying that guerrilla warfare and mass struggle are opposed to each other. We reject this implication, for guerrilla warfare is a people's warfare; an attempt to carry out this type of war without the population's support is a prelude to inevitable disaster. The guerrilla is the combat vanguard of the people, situated in a specified place in a certain region, armed and willing to carry out a series of warlike actions for the one possible strategic end — the seizure of power. The guerrilla is supported by the peasant and worker masses of the region and of the whole territory in which it acts. Without these prerequisites, guerrilla warfare is not possible."* - Che Ernesto Guevarra 1963

In conclusion, guerrilla warfare may not be an overriding prerequisite in staging a successful campaign for freedom, but without it a revolution may become lost. Without the holistic development of the soldier and thus the guerrilla ranks we may not only see the formation of a counter revolution but also gangsterism and other activities that further oppress the working people. Guerrilla warfare is the warfare of the people, carried out by the people and should be treated as such without criminalisation and disdain. TÁL.



# People's War in the Philippines: Only Marxism-Leninism- Maoism Can Secure Victory!

**The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) leads one of the oldest People's Wars in the world, having begun the Revolutionary armed struggle for Communism on March 29 1969, with roughly 60 Guerrilla fighters, and 35 weapons. Today the New People's Army, armed wing of the CPP, is said to have close to 10,000 fighters and control over almost 33% of the territory in the Philippines. The Revolution in the Philippines is one of the most advanced in the world and must therefore be studied closely by serious revolutionaries internationally, analyzing its history, theory, and practice to see what is universal but also to learn from that movement's mistakes.**

Before beginning this analysis, the author would like to send solidarity to the Communist Party of the Philippines and to the New People's Army, especially to the red fighters in the field, risking life and liberty for Communism. While the purpose of this article is to highlight and support the People's War, it will not shy away from the need for criticism of the ideological position of the CPP leadership in exile or the perceived move to a right opportunist line. Such criticism is important because new generations all over the world are becoming interested and mobilizing because of the immortal science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. In this regard, Chairman Mao has stated the need for active ideological struggle within the Communist Movement to combat wrong ideas. It is therefore important that we always struggle for the correct ideological line in the International Communist Movement.

The Communist Party of the Philippines was established on December 26 1968 by Jose Maria Sison and 12 Revolutionary Cadre. At the time Sison and his comrades were members of the old Communist Party of the Philippines, founded in 1930, and had come into a two-line struggle with its leadership. The group around Sison had become deeply influenced by the teachings of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the revolutionary example of the Communist Party of China. The old leadership of the 1930 party had become revisionist and took the line of

following the Soviet Union. At first the revisionist leadership attempted to placate the revolutionary cadre by inviting Sison to write an organizational report, but when the recommendations of this report were rejected, the split was inevitable.

On December 26, 1968, chosen to coincide with the birthday of Chairman Mao, the young revolutionaries held a conference for the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines under the guidance of Mao Tse-tung Thought. The conference concentrated on combatting modern revisionism in the Communist and Revolutionary Movement of the country and on writing a new constitution and a number of policy documents including 'Rectify Errors and Rebuild the Party' and issuing a program for a democratic revolution in the Philippines.

The new party began in earnest to apply the teachings of Mao to Philippine Society, which Sison and his comrades categorized as a semi-feudal, semi-colonial country and in applying Mao's teachings on New Democracy, argued that the Philippine proletariat must ally with the peasants and lead a democratic revolution first, leading to the Socialist Revolution. With their ideological line clear, the party cadre began to reach out to the revolutionaries of the previous generation and particularly the communist guerrillas from the HUKBALAHAP that had fought against the Japanese invasion of the Philippines during World War II. Sison had success reaching out to this group, particularly the remnants of the people's army led by Bernabe Buscayano, and the New People's Army was established under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines on March 29, 1969.

The NPA was to be the principal form of organizing for the CPP and it began the armed struggle to implement the CPP's objective of New Democratic Revolution, quickly spreading in the countryside. The NPA set about organizing the masses for victory through the strategy of Protracted People's War as outlined by Mao, with a rural guerrilla campaign being the primary method of warfare, operating from



*The New People's Army*

Guerrilla bases in peasant communities.

By April 1973, the CPP established the New Democratic Front as the Maoist United Front for People's War in the Philippines, completing the requirement outlined by Chairman Mao that there are three magic instruments for the revolution, the Party, the Army and the United Front. The New Democratic Front was now the public face of the revolutionary movement in the Philippines, issuing a 12 point program to win mass support.

Although formed in 1969, the first tactical operation of the NPA did not take place until 1974. For its first operation, the NPA ambushed a Philippine army scout patrol at Calbiga and seized their weaponry. With the introduction of martial law in the Philippines in the early 1970s, the CPP and NPA saw their ranks swell considerably, with thousands joining the revolutionary movement against the Marcos regime. While the CPP received support in the beginning from China, since the mid-1970s the main source of resources for the People's War has been by liberating them from enemy hands, with the NPA now very skilled at weapons raids across the country.

Today the Communist Party of the Philippines has seen down six puppet leaders of the country and are currently engaged in an all-out fight against the fascist regime of Rodrigo Duterte. Common tactics by the NPA in this struggle include regular ambushes of the regime's forces and outposts, but also a targeting of the multi-national corporations that the regime allows to rob the resources of the Philippines. Today the NPA is operating an impressive 120 guerilla fronts in at least 71 of the Philippines provinces, a feat they could not do without the mass support of the people, something that is deserving of the support of all revolutionaries worldwide.

### **Ideological Development**

By the 1980s, Chairman Gonzalo and the communist Party of Peru were demonstrating that the theory of Protracted People's War is universal and joining the CPP on the field of the international People's War, with Chairman Gonzalo establishing that Maoism is a third and higher stage of revolutionary Marxism and that communism today is principally Maoism. These universal teachings of Chairman Gonzalo are systemized in the Revolutionary Ideology of the Proletariat, Marxism- Leninism- Maoism.

Jose Maria Sison was captured and imprisoned in 1977 and held for nine years. Sison was therefore unaware of these ideological developments in the International Communist Movement and while in prison continued to develop the ideology of the CPP on Marxist Leninist lines, while at the same time referring to it as "Maoism".

Following his release from Prison, Sison became the leading figure and chief political negotiator for the National Democratic Front and of its

linked international organization, the International League for People's Struggles. While the leadership of the NDP, particularly those around Sison claim to be 'Maoist', they do not recognize the world historic ideological development of Maoism by Chairman Gonzalo, arguing against such a development and instead continue to advocate a form of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought, refusing to recognize the theory of Protracted People's War as universal, and refusing to acknowledge Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as synthesized by Gonzalo in Peru, as the third and higher stage of Marxism. This gross ideological deviation on the part of Sison and the leadership around him has led them to occupy a right opportunist position in the International Communist Movement today, arguing falsely against the possibility of People's Wars in Western Countries, demonstrating a real lack of an understanding of revolutionary Maoism and instead promoting the accumulation of forces through the long slow revisionist engagement in bourgeois elections. Within the Philippines, while the People's War continues, the ideological opportunism of the Sison leadership has led to a situation where the revolutionary movement constantly seeks ceasefires and peace negotiations with the reactionary regime, recently arguing that the People's War is for Peace, not Communism.

It is important here again to stress that the author supports the ongoing People's War in the Philippines and the Red Fighters, but this author strongly believes that there must be an attempt to separate the rightist ideological line of Sison, who has lived in political exile in the Netherlands since 1987 set apart from the red fighters on the ground. While the CPP continues to uphold the work of Sison and he is very clearly the father figure of the movement, we have no way of knowing how much support there is for his current revisionist line in the revolutionary movement of the Philippines, particularly among the frontline fighters. Therefore, this author believes this article should now move to a criticism of Sison and the leadership around him that should not be read or interpreted as a criticism of the CPP or the NPA.

### **A Criticism of Jose Maria Sison**

Jose Maria Sison represents a rightist line that continues to uphold Mao



*Jose Maria Sison*

Zedong Thought and attempts to conflate it with the universal revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Sison fails to recognize Maoism as a third and higher stage of Marxism as demonstrated by Chairman Gonzalo, and therefore fails to understand the ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

In a 2014 interview, Sison stated that, *‘There is no difference in content between Mao Zedong Thought and Maoism. When the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) used the phrase Mao Zedong Thought in 1969, all the major theoretical and practical achievements of Comrade Mao were encompassed. They are also encompassed in the word, Maoism, used by the CPP since the early 1990s. The phrase Marxism-Leninism-Maoism evokes continuity and advance. The appearance of the word Maoism is symmetrical to Marxism and Leninism.’*

Here, Sison is erroneously claiming that there is no difference between Maoism and Marxism-Leninism and demonstrating that he fails to understand the importance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a new and higher stage of the revolutionary science of the proletariat. German Comrades have highlighted the revisionist nature of this position in issue 16 of the magazine *Klassenstandpunkt*, outlining categorically that *“If both had the same content, we would not need two terms, then we could also speak of Lenin thought or Marx thought, but we just don’t do that, because Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a closed system. And the question of “ism” means precisely that systematization and its closed development in all three components of Marxism to a higher level and to a higher truth and not merely individual contributions, as the concept “thought” implies in this case. The CPP (Communist Party of Peru) summed this up in 1988 as follows:*

*While Marxism-Leninism has achieved recognition of its universal validity, Maoism is not fully recognized as a third stage. While some reject it as a whole, others tend to recognize it only as “Mao Tse-tung thought.” And in both cases, with the obvious differences between them, they essentially negate the contribution to the general development of Marxism, made by Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. To disavow Maoism’s “ism” character is to deny its universal validity and, consequently, to deny its status as the third, new, and superior stage of the ideology of the international proletariat: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, which we uphold, defend and apply.”*

The Joint Statement of the International Communist Movement on September 24 2018, marking the anniversary of Chairman Gonzalo’s inspiring speech from the cage went further, explaining that *“The problem in the ICM does not lie, mainly, in the fact that Maoism is not formally recognized, but in how some understand it, that is why the importance of starting from who defined Maoism as the new, third and superior stage of our ideology: because only starting from the scientifically established by Chairman Gonzalo is that we can understand Maoism as a unit, as a harmonious system. If it is not part of what was established by Chairman Gonzalo, he falls into eclecticism, opposing appointments, but not understanding ideas. If we understand this, we can understand the reason why there are not a few Parties and organizations that have been stagnating for longer periods of time and do not make leaps in their processes, while those who are most committed to learning from Chairman Gonzalo, in general, they are advancing, mainly in qualitative terms, but also in quantitative terms. Those who rush to put labels we advise them to open their eyes to the material truth instead of being exalted by their imaginations.”*

It can be seen from the above examples then, that there are clearly two different positions being put forward in relation to Maoism, the Red Line as upheld by those who recognise the achievements of Chairman Gonzalo and the Right Opportunist Line, upheld by Sison and his supporters who cling to Mao Tse-tung Thought, leaving those fighting



*Fighters of the NPA*

the People’s War on the ground in the Philippines caught in the middle.

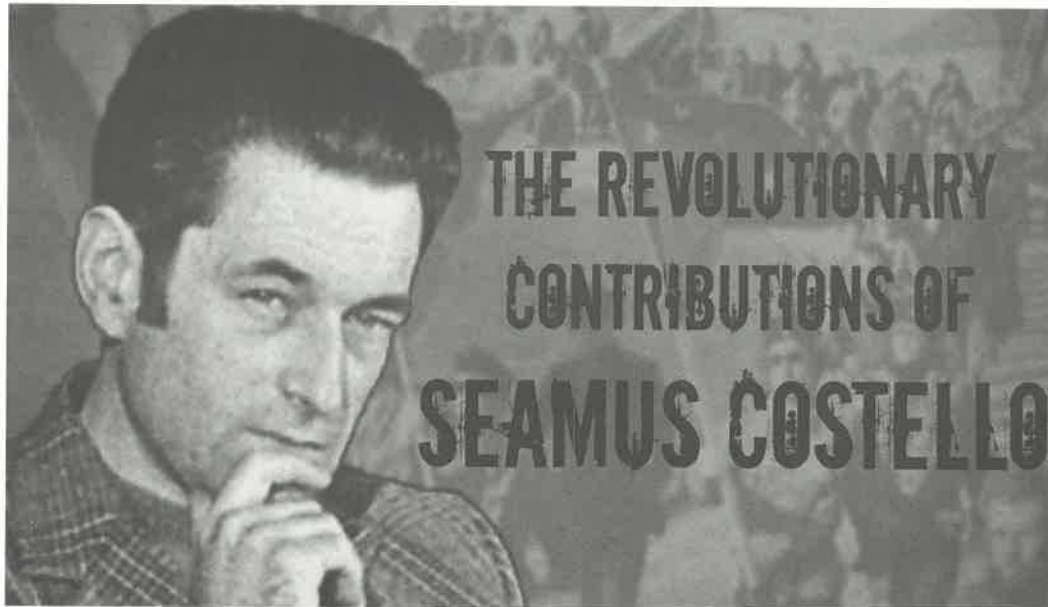
This criticism is important because revolutionaries must not stay silent and allow the movement in the Philippines, one of the most advanced in the world, go the route of the RCP-USA or the revolutionary movement in Nepal.

#### **Towards Victory in the Protracted People’s War in the Philippines**

Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the third and higher stage of the science of proletarian revolution and it is the ideological weapon of the proletariat that will lead the Protracted People’s Wars to the capture of power and Communism. Despite the revisionist line being put forward by some leading figures in the Philippine movement, the People’s War there is still one of the most advanced revolutions in the world and is deserving of the support of all communists and all revolutionaries. Maoism understands that there is always two lines within a revolutionary movement and the revolutionary line must always be struggled for. Chairman Gonzalo has explained that this is *“an expression of objective reality. Therefore, the task is not to condemn them, but to understand, study, and analyse them to see how they are an expression of the fact that there is also a revolutionary situation... And beyond that, that there are those who have taken up arms, understanding that that is the only way to seize Power. This is a powerful blow to revisionism... Regardless of the level reached, and the problems that remain to be solved, this is undeniably an important advance... They themselves will sum up lessons from their errors, as they are doing, they’ll advance, grasp Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and form Parties and wage people’s war in accordance with the socialist character of their revolution and in accordance with their specific conditions.”*

Understanding Maoism as a revolutionary science, this article concludes on a note of revolutionary optimism for the People’s War in the Philippines. By grasping Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the third and higher stage of Marxism and by forming a militarised Communist Party to lead the People’s War, the revolutionaries in the Philippines will be successful. But first they must win the struggle against revisionism and in this they must be supported by all revolutionaries and the International Communist Movement.

Victory to the People’s War in the Philippines!  
Victory to the Communist Party and the New People’s Army!  
Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!



Seamus Costello joined the IRA and Sinn Féin in 1955 aged 16. The following year he commanded a flying column in South Derry during Operation Harvest or what became known as the Border Campaign. His natural leadership skills and youth earned him the nickname "The Boy General". The IRA's campaign was built on the assumption that once British Army positions were attacked along the border regions that the Irish people would rally for a united 32 county Irish Republic free from British imperialist interference. With Costello as commander in South Derry, his unit were involved in numerous operations involving the destruction of bridges and the burning of Magherferret courthouse.

He was arrested in Glencree, Co. Wicklow in 1956 and was sentenced to six months imprisonment in Mountjoy jail. When he was released he was interned immediately in the Curragh by the Free State regime. Famously Costello called his time interned as his "university years" and it was there that he studied the Chinese and Vietnamese revolutions and saw how a small army with a just cause could develop and overcome a more powerful enemy. Costello recognised that the Border Campaign failed not as a result of lack of support (Sinn Féin had four TDs elected to Leinster House on an abstentionist basis) but failed as a result of lack of popular engagement. Not just concentrating on theory, while interned Costello was a member of the prison escape committee which successfully broke Ruairi O Bradaigh and Daithi O Conaill out of the Curragh internment camp.

When Costello was released he began to implement strategies that he had learned from the Chinese and Vietnamese experiences in his native County Wicklow. He began to create a base area, becoming involved in the Trade Union movement, establishing tenants associations, historical societies and anti-austerity campaigns. He was central to the opposition to the visit of the racist Springboks to Bray, Co. Wicklow and was central to the opposition to the privatisation of local beaches at Brittas Bay. He was elected to Bray urban district council and Wicklow county council. In Wicklow he successfully established a *United Front*

of organisations which included the then Irish Workers Party. At the same time Costello remained a member of the IRA's army council, its highest ruling body and its adjutant general. Thus Costello was in the process of developing what Mao called the "three magic weapons".

Nationally Costello remained a figure of huge importance being a public face for the Republican movement. In 1966 he delivered his famous Bodinstown speech which marked the leftward trajectory of the Republican movement. Certain traditional physical force republicans were wary of this leftward drift as they believed it would result in the watering down of the military side of the movement with its focus on political matters. While there were reformist elements in the movement beginning to have an influence Costello finished his 1966 oration with the following: *"The lesson of history shows that in the final analysis the robber baron must be dis-established by the some methods that he used to enrich himself and retain his ill-gotten gains, namely, force of arms. To this end we must organise, train, and maintain a disciplined armed force which will always be available to strike at the opportune moment."*

In 1964 Costello on behalf of the leadership of the Republican movement went to the embassy of the People's Republic of China. It requested help for the "Irish struggle against British imperialist rule and to establish a democratic people's republic". The Republican movement made three further approaches requesting military aid, help with training for guerrilla warfare and coaching for IRA members in the use of printing presses for the distribution of propaganda materials. It is not known how much assistance exactly was given.

In 1969 Costello remained with the Official Republican movement when it split. He was the vice president of Official Sinn Féin (OSF) and the Directory of Operations of the Official IRA (OIRA). When the Official movement began to degenerate into reformism and call a ceasefire in 1972 Costello remained within the movement and pursued a two line struggle believing that splits only furthered the enemy's interests. As a result of his principled opposition Costello was dismissed from the OIRA and suspended from the OSF.

Costello understood that the political situation in Ireland in the early 1970s had developed into an all-out confrontation against British imperialism in Ireland and that the consciousness of the people had developed into

a revolutionary phase. While the Official republican movement had begun to believe that only uniting the Catholic and Protestant working class could bring an end to British rule in Ireland, Costello understood that the fundamental issue of British interference in Irish affairs was the fundamental reason for a divided working class. Only when British rule was ended could the Irish working class unite.

Costello stated that any engagement with the Protestant working class could only be done in a principled manner, and that revolutionaries could not shy away from their stated objective of a 32 county Socialist Republic in order to appease loyalism. While the Official republican movement abandoned the national question in order to gain support in Unionist protestant areas Costello derided them for being "ring road socialists". In other words, economist opportunists who abandoned the revolutionary national question.

In December 1974 the Irish Republican Socialist Party was formed by republicans, socialists and trade unionists with Seamus Costello as Chairperson. On the same day a revolutionary army was established. Costello was its Chief of Staff. It was called the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and later called the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA).

Costello derided the Official Republican movement for being counter revolutionary, revisionist and pro-Moscow. However even with these criticisms of the leadership of the Official Republican movement Costello and the IRSP promoted the concept of the anti-imperialist broad front and realised that rank and file activists and volunteers on the ground continued to work together in opposing British imperialist forces in Ireland. Almost immediately the Official Republican movement having previously lost territory and support to the Provisional Republican movement began to attack the IRSP seeing it as a threat to its hegemony in certain areas. Six people were killed during this feud. Following the death of Brendan McNamee a truce was declared between the OIRA and INLA. However in 1977 Costello was assassinated by an OIRA gunman and Ireland was robbed of one of its finest revolutionaries.

Costello's contribution to the revolutionary struggle for national liberation and socialism in Ireland was important in that he steered a revolutionary course during a time of heightened contradictions in a partitioned Ireland. He differentiated between the antagonistic contradictions and the non-antagonistic contradictions amongst the people. His revolutionary line was that the national and class struggle were one and the same at a time when the Provisional republican movement concentrated solely on the national question and the Official republican movement concentrated only on the social question. He emphasised a principled engagement with the Unionist protestant working class and always the pursuance of a revolutionary political line. The assassination of Costello by the Official republican movement robbed Ireland of one of its greatest revolutionary leaders and shows the murderous contempt reformists have for revolutionaries.

# When the Andes Roared

## Part 2: Days of Heroism

By 1985, the flames of revolution that had been raging in the Peruvian Department of Ayacucho had leapt to Puno. New guerrilla fronts now extended the length of the country along its mountain spine from Cajamarca in the North to Puno in the south as well as to the cities along the coastal plains in the west and in the eastern jungle highlands. Attacks, involving more and more guerrilla ambushes of army units, many motorised, were on the rise. The main mobile forces of the People's Guerrilla Army (PGA) moved from village to village, mobilising the masses to attack semi-feudal land relations in the countryside through land seizures and overthrowing the feudal power. Ultimately the situation in Peru had provided fertile soil for the only fruit left to the masses, that of revolution.

But to the world beyond, little was being said. Senior journalists in London and New York had on separate occasions told Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) activists that they would not be allowed to report anything that would interfere with the blackout of the Communist Party of Peru/Partido Comunista del Peru (PCP)'s nature and its real aims. Commonly referred to as a 'Messianic Inca nationalist organisation,' it was policy to avoid its declaration of MLM, commentators preferring to relegate Maoism to the revolutionary era of China. The mass mobilisation of peasants and workers in Peru therefore were supposedly due to 'terrorist intimidation.'

Fidel Castro, in an interview in the Madrid newspaper El Pais (January 1985), warned that, 'a social outbreak could occur in Latin America, where there are large masses of peasants, workers, students, intellectuals and middle strata in an increasingly desperate situation. One would have to be blind not to see that... Look at Peru: What will Alan Garcia find when he receives the presidential sash? An insupportable economic situation, insoluble social problems and guerrillas in the mountains; nobody can explain the increasing activity of these guerrillas because nobody knows very well what Sendero Luminoso thinks, what it is and what it wants.'

Castro, of course, was well able to read and could easily have analysed the PCP programme, but was deemed perhaps to be feigning ignorance.

With such wilful refusal to engage with the realities of the PCP as a revolutionary organisation and its programme, the tired clichés that carelessly attributed massacres, homophobia, drug-dealing and messianic fanaticism to Peru's Maoists was all that would be said.

As the PCP itself stated, 'The Communist Party of Peru, a Marxist-Leninist-Maoist party, a communist party rebuilt in the fight against revisionism, including within its own ranks, a party of a new type to seize

political power for the proletariat and the people, assumed its role of carrying out revolutionary violence with the initiation of the armed struggle on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1980, and with this the protracted process of the class struggle of the Peruvian proletariat and people has taken a qualitative leap: The continuing political struggle went over to revolutionary warfare, with armed struggle as the main form of organisation... In this way our party cast off the dead weight of more than 50 years and overcame the shameful and rotten electoralism imposed upon the masses, and began to write the peoples real liberation with dynamite and lead, ...'

"Ideology, having the correct political line, is everything," said Gustavo Gorriti, a Peruvian journalist who has written extensively on the PCP. "If the guerrillas wanted modern weapons, the cocaine Mafia would provide them happily as a means of diverting attention from their own operations. Sendero doesn't want them. They like to quote Mao: 'If we don't have men or rifles but have the correct line, we'll get men and rifles. If we have men and rifles but don't have the correct line, we'll lose both.'"

Under the strategy of Protracted People's War, the new state was continuing to grow within the old as the PGA expanded its territorial influence. Various forms of revolutionary power had emerged. The first People's Committees had appeared towards the end of 1982, when landlords and local authorities were overthrown, the new structures arising out of committees established by the peasants to divide the seized harvests, the organising of collective planting for future harvests, and the functions of the new political rule.

As well as the People's Committees, there emerged People's Power Reorganising Committees in areas where the government had returned to overthrow the revolutionary forces. There were also clandestine People's Committees and People's Power Organising Committees in areas where the reactionary elements had been cleaned out but the military still operated. These structures reflected the twists and turns of the war. The PCP called such areas, 'The essence of People's War', the People's Committees establishing embryonic forms of the new revolutionary state power that was to come.

Party units within the PGA ranks carried out agitation, propaganda and organisational work, recruiting into the guerrilla formations. When the mobile forces moved on, they left behind party units whose task was to help establish and consolidate new People's Committees and organise mass organisations, from village militias and locally based units of the PGA to recruiting the most advanced peasant activists to become party members.

In 1984, the party had launched the campaign 'Begin the Great Leap' to 'seize power piece by piece' in the countryside, constructing revolutionary base areas and linking up village-level People's Committees that were designed to be the organs of the new state. The PCP brought forward the slogan, 'Strengthen the People's Committees, develop the base areas and advance the New Democratic People's Republic.'

In response, the government increased the number of armed forces fighting the PCP from 29,000 to 45,000. It also intensified its policy of moving peasants into 'strategic hamlets', to break the influence of the People's Committees. The PCP however had stepped up operations to open up new zones of guerrilla actions, stretching down the mountain backbone of the country from Cajamarca in the North to Puno in the South. This made it more difficult for the military to concentrate its forces in Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac.

Rural Andean agriculture was concretely semi-feudal, with three characteristics, described by Mariategui as land, serfdom and *Gamonalismo* (rule by local despots). Such a system maintained itself by condemning two-thirds of the population to hunger. Survival therefore required an increasingly militarised and bureaucratic state.



*Alan Garcia Perez*

There were however more proletarians in Peru than there had been in China, the PCP recruiting Quechua speaking miners from the mining region of Cerro de Parco and extending operations into the cities.

The centre of economic and political power, containing a third of Peru's population, Lima was a crucial area for propaganda, sabotage, recruitment and the consolidation of a support network. Gonzalo said of Lima, 'As the capital, Lima allows for actions of great impact [because they produce] an immediate sharpening of contradictions in the heart of the reaction.' The PCP organisation for Lima was one of the most powerful regional committees. Known as the 'Metropolitan Committee,' it was set up before the initiation of the PPW and was divided into six sub-committees in charge of different zones. Also responsible for intelligence gathering and infiltration of ministries, left-wing parties, labour unions and the military, the committee used 'Action Groups' that carried out bombings, arson, sabotage, graffiti, etc and used 'Special Squads' for assassinations and more technical sabotage.

Chairman Gonzalo explained: 'Here we already have a difference, a distinctive feature; it is both in the countryside and the city. We feel that this has to do with specific situations of ours. For example, Latin America has proportionally larger cities than other continents do. This is a fact about Latin America that cannot be ignored. Just look at the capital of Peru, which contains a high percentage of the country's population. We thus feel that the city cannot be set aside and that the war must also unfold there.'

The PCP further explained, 'The middle-classes are the intermediate classes, including the national bourgeoisie and the upper layers of the petit-bourgeoisie, the so-called "emergent classes." Is the wealth in their hands? No, it is in the hands of the big bourgeoisie, with its comprador and bureaucrat factions, the big bankers, industrialists, merchants and real estate tycoons who control the ownership of the means of production, along with the biggest imperialists interests also concentrated in Lima. It is the economic power of these classes and of imperialism which is being obscured.'

J.A. Torres of the Estructura Economica de la Industria Peruana (Economic Structure of Peruvian Industry) appears to concur, 'Perhaps the most significant conclusion to be drawn from a structured analysis is the high degree of control that foreign enterprises still possess in the extractive and industrial sectors of the Peruvian economy. Furthermore, a simple quantification of the level of foreign investment in the country would not give a correct picture of the degree of control foreign capital exerts over the economy. That control has been substantially strengthened due to the strategic character of this investment, since the most important enterprises in each industry are foreign-owned, and since the majority of these enterprises are subsidiaries of large multinational corporations.'

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1985 also saw the emergence of Alan Garcia as an electoral successor to President Belaunde and as a servant of imperialism, the big bourgeoisie, and feudal landlords. This class dictatorship had been maintained either through military rule or through elected so-called constitutional governments. Thus the Peruvian state, governed by the civilian or military, elected or not, were nothing more than ruling class cliques that took turns exercising dictatorship over the masses.

Fifty years in opposition had left the American Popular Revolutionary Alliance (APRA) unsullied by the requirements of power, and Garcia had promised a 'return to the principle of authority,' against the 'dogmatic totalitarianism' of the PCP. Garcia also declared that he would bring about a 'nationalist, democratic and popular state, a state for all Peruvians.'

Unprecedented in its vigour and expense, Garcia's campaign was backed and advised by the French Socialist Party and by a US advertising agency. Portrayed as an 'alternative to violence,' the ruling class hoped that the election of an opposition candidate would persuade the masses away from revolution. To this end, Garcia utilised populism, declaring his intention to carry out 'a revolution within a revolution,' as one of his advisors, the well-known Trotskyite Hector Bejar had called it.

The Velasco junta that had seized power in 1968 through a military coup, had introduced 'land reforms' that turned some large feudal estates in the mountains into state-run cooperatives that were themselves often administered by feudal elements. These mainly benefitted better-off peasants leaving the mass of peasant families with little or no land. Feudal relations and oppression remained, and the Garcia government enlisted a number of Velasco-era government officials who called for Velasco-style mass organisations under government and ruling class control and hegemony. An example of these was the provincial assemblies of all the local populations, run by the landlords, priests and local officials. The PCP denounced these structures as corporatist and fascist, linked to bureaucrat-capitalism, calling instead for continued armed land seizures from landlords and cooperatives.

Throughout, the PCP was engaged in a series of political and military campaigns against the election fraud. The first campaign relating to the election was to 'win political space' through arms, putting forward its clear alternative. All parties were therefore forced to define themselves in relation to the armed struggle so that the revolutionary process became the central issue in the country.

Two roads had then been presented to the masses, the PCP calling upon the people, 'Don't Vote, step up guerrilla warfare to seize political power for the people!' Striking military blows against the electoral apparatus, and indeed Garcia's new government, the PCP also increased its operations in the cities, including spectacular bombings and blackouts. On the night of June 8<sup>th</sup>, a parked car filled with dynamite blew up in front of the Presidential Palace. In a further twist



of the knife, the car in question was found to have been recently stolen from Peru's Attorney General.

On April 14<sup>th</sup>, according to the chairman of the Armed Forces Joint Command and the Interior Minister, on Election Day the state mobilised 85,000 troops from the three branches of the armed forces and 70,000 police, to protect polling stations. There were tall tales in the media of guerrillas cutting off the index fingers of those that voted as Peruvians were required to place a fingerprint on the voters' records to show that they voted. No photographic evidence was ever produced.

There were also widespread reports of the army pressing the population to vote APRA and statistics showed that those that were registered but did not vote, or that cast invalid ballots, added up to 3,479,204 (34.86 percent of those eligible), according to the Department of the National Elections Registry. When the votes came in, Garcia claimed that he was "elected by the votes of the absolute majority of Peruvians."

The PCP was less than impressed. 'So who was defeated? APRA, the armed forces, the electioneers and the organisers of this electoral farce, for in short, APRA could not get more than a third of the votes, and so was far from the 45.7 percent attributed to it on a national level by the JNE, and obviously very far from the 50 percent plus one vote required to win.'

The Peruvian constitution however, required that the President be elected by 50 percent of electors plus one. Consequently, the popular rejection of the elections caused problems as APRA failed to reach the constitutionally required number of votes. The constitution therefore required another run-off election within thirty days. Such a prolongation of the already crumbling structure of governance did not suit the ruling class.

To facilitate an APRA victory, Lima mayor Alfonso Barrantes of the Izquierda Unida, or United Left Coalition (IU), who had a reported 21 percent of the vote, withdrew from the race. On conceding defeat, Barrantes announced, "The people voted in their majority for the APRA party, and this is why I went to congratulate Dr Alan Garcia and to tell him that the IU does not want to stand in the way of his taking office."

Therefore the Electoral Commission illegally discounted its own figures for blank and spoiled ballots, the National Elections Board declaring that Garcia had got the majority of valid votes. The Commission justified its actions as being designed not to give the PCP, 'a new occasion to show their violent hostility to all popular consultations.' Garcia himself suggested, 'Let's not shake up democracy too much.'

Barrantes, on one of his countless trips abroad (this time to Venezuela) in May said, echoing Reagan's pronouncements on revolutionary resistance, 'Shining Path will fail... the results of the April 14<sup>th</sup> elections and the mass turnout were the best rejection of terrorism.'

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During Garcia's presidential inauguration in 28 July, the entire downtown of Lima was closed off to unauthorised civilians, with 20,000 armed men standing guard. In spite of this, Lima was blacked out for four days, the Presidential Palace, the Armed Forces Joint Command and the Prefecture of Police all being hit by car bomb explosions. The new government was immediately forced to launch its own brutal war against the revolution, although it proved reluctant to make public its much-touted 'new strategy to fight subversion.' There followed massacres in such areas as Huanbo, Huaychao, Iquicha and Sacsamarca.

The week following the inauguration, seven peasants, including a pregnant woman and a young boy, were seen being taken away in an army truck from the village of Pucayacu, in the Huanta region. A short

while later a hidden grave was discovered containing their mutilated corpses. Such events had become so common in the 29 provinces under direct military control that even the press in Lima had begun referring to 'a genocide'. Garcia sought to distance himself from the atrocities being carried out under the state of emergency. On the eve of his appearing before the UN General Assembly, Garcia fired General Enrico Praeli, accusing him of keeping, 'the reality of the anti-subversive struggle secret from him.' Praeli was of the Belaunde era so was easily scapegoated, the rest of the command tending to support Garcia. Praeli had also previously criticised the unconstitutional nature of Garcia's election victory.

Whole areas were systematically attacked and terrorised. In August 14<sup>th</sup>, the village of Llocllapampa, in Accomarca, that had suffered repeated military incursions, was the site of one of the worst massacres of the civil war. In the destruction, most of the able-bodied escaped, but the old and children were left behind. Many of the women and girls in the village were raped before the survivors were herded into several buildings that were set ablaze. A two year old child was thrown into a fire in an act justified by one of the perpetrators, US trained Second-Lieutenant Telmo Hurtado, because, 'at that age they [the indigenous inhabitants of the highlands] are already terrorists.' Some of the survivors made their way to Lima and in this way news of the massacre was leaked. Garcia instructed parliament to call on two generals to respond: Sandhurst-trained General Wilfredo Mori in charge of the Ayacucho region, and his superior, General Sinieso Jarama.

Initially it was denied that troops had been in the area or that there had been a massacre. Parliament declared itself satisfied, but, several hours later, the television evening news showed mass graves in Accosmarca with 69 corpses, including 22 young children being disinterred. Garcia's newly-appointed head of the Armed Forces Joint Command then issued a communique admitting that there had been an army patrol that killed 40 peasants, putting the blame on Second-Lieutenant Hurtado. Mori asked to retire and Jarama was transferred from his job.

Garcia however, as constitutionally supreme chief of Peru's armed forces had met many times with the Joint Command to discuss crushing the revolution. It was also observed that the army could not make helicopter incursions into the countryside without anyone knowing. Reports followed, indicating that the Accomarca massacre was just one of a number of 'search and destroy' operations carried out in the Ayacucho area during August. Shortly afterwards, six people from a village near Llocllapampa were also killed; perhaps due to their being witness to the massacre there.

In another nearby village, an elderly couple were shot and chopped up, military type tracks being later found outside their home. These killings came in conjunction with army efforts to force the rural population in the revolutionary areas into military supervised strategic hamlets. Accomarca had once had a population in the 6,000s. A month later it was virtually deserted.

In neighbouring Huancavelica, a school teacher who had previously testified on military abuses to a European human rights commission was arrested and murdered.

According to the report, 'Violence against Women in Peru's Armed Conflict,' presented by the US-based group Human Rights Watch in 1992, it was charged that violence, rape, and humiliation of the masses was widespread at this time. The Peruvian military consistently used rape as a pacification tactic. Soldiers would separate the people of an area that were being searched by gender, and in front of the men, or in nearby buildings, the women were raped repeatedly. This shamed and violated the women and emasculated the men. The legislation that had established the emergency zones (EMZ) gave jurisdiction for all disciplinary actions to the military, essentially granting legal sanction for crimes committed during pacification.

As part of this organised white terror, there were numerous torture centres under the control of the army in the 'Los Cabitos' barracks in the city of Ayacucho, in Totos in Cangallo, Qoisa and Pichari in La Mar, and under the control of the Navy in Huanta. In the Totos camp, the torture was especially brutal and sadistic. As of July 1983, prisoners there were forced to dig graves more than three metres deep before being tortured and killed, some being buried alive. The 'missing' amounted to thousands of people but the exposures and protests came up against the official silence that denied or ignored the suits brought against it.

According to the PCP, *'Its immediate precedent was the sinister policy of 'disappearances' carried out by the 1970s Argentine military government that bathed its people in blood and even more ignominiously made tens of thousands 'disappear.' A similar policy is being carried out here, also feeding on the poorest masses, above all peasants, who are not reported missing because of lack of any documentation or because of the restrictions and persecutions their families face, but who undoubtedly make up the bulk of the thousands never found. They lie wrapped in the shadows of as yet undiscovered graves or in clandestine cemeteries in the many concentration camps, together with the remains of other exemplary sons and daughters of the people, of the class and of the revolution.'*

In September 25, Garcia's War Minister, Jose Flores announced that 400 villages had been turned into strategic hamlets run by 'Civil defence committees' as part of its efforts to pacify the rural population.

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It was in 1986 that the PCP launched the 'Gold-Sealed Finishing Stroke of the Great Leap.' This laid the foundation for the Fourth Military Plan: To develop support bases. These were advanced in the Peruvian mountains and were principally centred in Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac. By the end of the previous Third Military Plan in late 1986, the PGA had conducted 28,621 actions, in all but two of the country's 24 Departments, the government acknowledging that the PCP had become entrenched in five central and mountain departments.

That February, due to a state of emergency in Lima, Garcia addressed an outdoor celebration of his party's founding in Trujillo, a coastal city in Northern Peru. *"Sendero Luminoso made a strategic mistake,"* he declared. *"If they had expanded into the 'Andean Trapeze'" – the departments in the south-central and southern Andes – "we would have had much bigger and more serious problems. Perhaps the subversion would have won overwhelming victory... Now it's too late."* As Garcia deigned to give military advice to the PCP, a car bomb blew up a nearby bank. Two APRA party offices and six embassies were hit on the same day in Lima.

During the February curfews, 38,111 people were detained and four people shot by night-time patrols. Tanks lumbered through the city streets as a series of government buildings were attacked with car bombs. A few days following Garcia's speech, a peasant uprising broke out where Garcia said it was impossible, in the southern department of Puno; a department the size of Belgium high in the Andes and bordering Lake Titicaca, Bolivia and Chile.

There followed major guerrilla-led attacks on co-operatives in Puno in February and March, the PCP pledging to 'turn Puno into another Ayacucho.' The PGA attacked the administrative buildings of co-ops, the peasants moving in to take the land. As word spread, the PGA would often find peasants waiting for them on mountain passes to ask them to visit their villages. The district governor was shot in February, and in Azangaro, the largest town in the central region of the department, the PCP posted a list of fifteen top officials and merchants that had to leave town on threat of death.

The PCP was known to recruit heavily amongst highland Indians and

had the highest proportion of women commanders in Latin American guerrilla history. Now it was making closer ties with the miners, an important part of Peru's proletariat. The Minister of Mines and Energy, in March, claimed that the PCP had led workers in armed clashes during a strike of 17,000 workers at the state-owned Centramin Mines in the department of Pasco. At the same time, three thousand strikers with their wives and children had set off on a five day 'sacrifice march' across the mountains to win support for higher wages.

Actions had stepped up along coastal areas, in the cities, especially Lima, and also in the jungle highlands and the cities there. Attacks throughout the country increased in quality; involving ambushes, destruction of strategic hamlets, land invasions, sabotage, armed propaganda, agitation and selective annihilation.

In Ayacucho, the PCP struck blows at the Armed Forces anti-guerrilla bases (According to a statement by the Minister of War, there were seventy of these). June 7<sup>th</sup>, Army Day, the ceremonial pledge of allegiance, presided over by Garcia was sabotaged by explosive charges, one of them only 20 metres from the reviewing stands. In spite of the state of emergency and the weight of police and military deployment, the revolution could, it seemed, strike anywhere.

The PGA was organised in detachments in the cities, and platoons, companies and battalions in the countryside, always under the double command system, one political and the other military. Guided by the slogan, "develop the companies and strengthen the platoons aiming for battalions," the revolutionary army was built upon Lenin's thesis regarding the people's militia and its three functions as police, army and administration.

The Central Committee of the PCP summed up, *'Thus the war was not conceived in terms of one single region but in terms of simultaneous through uneven development in several regions, with one of them principal (which one that is could change according to necessity), all within the framework of a strategically centralised and tactically decentralised plan.'*

At the very heart of the regime however, a new front had been opening up and was developing rapidly.

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The most secure part of any regime is within its financial centres, its places of government and its prisons. During his presidency, Belaunde had moved many hundreds of captured revolutionaries to three main prisons in Lima to counter the PCP 'jailbreak line'. By the end of 1985, 974 PCP prisoners were facing terrorism charges. However, PCP policy meant that fighters should turn wherever they were incarcerated into a front line of combat. The initial plan to move the prisoners to the Callao jails of Santa Barbara and Lurigancho just west of Lima and the off-shore rocky penal colony three miles off the coast known as El Fronton (recently renamed San Juan Bautista), had involved brutal beatings and the death of one prisoner.

The Pabellón Azul (Blue Pavilion) at El Fronton housed 160 inmates. The Lurigancho prison (officially San Pedro penitentiary), located in one of the most populous districts in Lima, held 124 prisoners in the Industrial Pavilion and at Santa Bárbara, 64 inmates were held. The PCP prisoners occupied special areas, separate from other prisoners and worked to liberate the space they were held in seeking to minimise the state's control. They could not however, avoid the ferocity of the state responses as the prison massacre of October 1985 proved. Neither did the prisoners' ability to gain control of their accommodation mean that they enjoyed comfortable lives, or were free from violence and harassment. The water was often cut off for weeks at a time and beatings, tear gas murders of prisoners were not uncommon. On one occasion six were shot dead and thirty others wounded. After the October rising, delegates of the PCP and prison authorities agreed to

honour the July 1985 accord of 24 points, signed by the previous administration.

Comrade Inez explained, *"The political prisoners of the Communist Party of Peru have years of experience with the repressive apparatus of the old Peruvian State and have drawn many lessons in order to resist and continue fighting, even under worse conditions. Because of this, and in accordance with what the Party and Chairman Gonzalo have taught us, we convert the black dungeons of reaction into shining trenches of combat."*

Highly disciplined, the prisoners considered prison a field of political struggle. They lived communally beneath giant portraits of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Gonzalo, painted with materials smuggled in by their relatives. Visitors to El Fronton and Lurigancho were struck by the prisoners discipline and cleanliness. Slogans were chanted while prisoners stood in military squares, or paraded beneath vast murals depicting the People's War. The library at Lurigancho was found to contain not just Marxist classics but also such works as Robert Louis Stephenson's *Treasure Island*, Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, as well as various philosophical works. Painting, poetry and literature were part and parcel of the disciplined life of the prisoners. In each jail, the prisoners set up an art workshop that included poetry, music, theatre, drawing and painting. Art was smuggled out of the prison and printed with the support of *Bandera Roja*, an underground publisher in Lima.

The El Fronton island prison had become an embarrassment to the government, due to the determined activities of the 400 suspected revolutionaries kept there. Here they continued to engage in education and training for the future. A typical daily schedule involved, two hours physical fitness starting at 6.00am. Breakfast was cooked by a rotating team of prisoners before morning production work with rotating tasks including clothes washing, ironing, cleaning and producing revolutionary paintings and crafts. Food brought in by family members was communalised and malnutrition was fought against using socialist principles. Afternoon study involved basic political education, including such works as Mao's *Six Military Essays*, together with advanced study for those that were interested. Free time allowed the prisoners to read newspapers and watch TVs that had been donated by relatives until bed-time.

Non-political prisoners would often attend Communist-led schools to study the classics of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, drawing many to become militants. This type of prison-based mass work not only improved the fighting capacity of those incarcerated but increased the influence of the Party. The director of the Peruvian magazine *Equis X* Julio Cabrera Moreno, an infamous democratic journalist, revealed: *"It has been proved that, from the beginning, a large number happened to be there though they had nothing to do with the Communist Party of Peru (Sendero Luminoso). But in prison, driven by the tortures and the*

*continuous abuses, they started upholding the dogmas of Sendero Luminoso"*.

Where gangsters once ruled, and prostitution, drugs, and gambling were the only pastimes aside from forced labour, the prisoners were transformed, the prisons becoming places of military drills, criticism and self-criticism, parades, plays, and the small crafts workshops that produced items smuggled out by family members.

Near the end of his time in office, Belaunde had begun proposing the removal of prisoners to be scattered to other prisons around the country. The prisoners however claimed that this was a plan to isolate them so that they could more easily be liquidated. On taking control, Garcia promised to fulfil this plan.

In July 1985, simultaneously with nationwide actions by the PGA, the revolutionaries held in El Fronton, and Lurigancho and Callao on the mainland, seized control at dawn in simultaneous uprisings to force the authorities to recognise their political status and allow them to administer their own affairs. At Lurigancho, the prisoners seized a guard as hostage. At Callao, the women grabbed six prison employees, temporarily taking over the whole prison. On the island of El Fronton, across the bay, the men also took control, seizing an automatic rifle. The prisoners then dug themselves in, throwing up barricades. After four days, prison authorities were forced to give in to their demands.

Garcia responded in September, firing the head of the prison system that had signed the agreement. His successor declared the agreement invalid due to the prisoners 'having used force.' Three days before the prisoners were due to celebrate October 7<sup>th</sup>, the Anniversary of the PCP's foundation, guards were sent into Lurigancho where 300 revolutionary suspects had been confined. Thirty prisoners died when they were buried alive, another four dying by bullets. In response to this massacre 6,000 common prisoners elsewhere in Lurigancho came out and fought prison authorities. Gunfire and clouds of smoke emanated from the prisons for days afterwards. On October 31<sup>st</sup> 1985 the APRA government relented, signing the agreement it had repudiated.

Stinging from the publicity that was issuing from the Lurigancho Massacre, the APRA government staged a 'mass surrender of Senderistas' in La Mar Province, Ayacucho. It was however, later revealed as a hoax. According to *La Republica* (October 25, 1985), in an interview carried out with an army lieutenant, *'The officer himself, when interviewed by this correspondent, explained that the hundred or so people involved, including men, women and children, did not come to the Armed Forces bases at Corazan-Pata and Llochegua of their own free will, but rather were rounded up by the marines in the high mountain ranges and were then taken to these camps. When Lieutenant 'Anibal' was asked if they were carrying arms when they surrendered, he said no'.*



*The Island Prison of El Fronton*

Back in the prisons, in response to government preparations to destroy them, the prisoners launched a campaign called 'Expose and Resist,' declaring their resolve to resist the transfer to the maximum security Miguel Castro Castro jail in the Lima shanty town of Canto Grande. In November the prisoners denounced the government's 'genocidal plan' and filed an appeal against the Naval Minister, which was found to be 'well founded' by a civil court. A week later, El Fronton inmates informed a judge of rumours that they were to be transferred to Canto Grande, where prisoners would be forced into separate cells.

This culminated in January 15<sup>th</sup> 1986 when a clash between family members and the Civil Guard led to the killing of one of the relatives, and the wounding of 20 others. This forced the Minister of Justice to declare, "*There will be no transfer to Canto Grande because the prison is not for terrorists.*"

By mid-1986 Garcia had revived the idea of sending the prisoners to Canto Grande and/or transferring them back to prisons in the emergency zones under military rule. In April, Navy Rear Admiral Ponce Canessa, a commander of the marines, who had been in charge of counter-insurgency operations for the Joint Command had been shot by the PGA. The military now spoke openly of taking revenge in an attempt to restore morale. A letter sent by the prisoners to Equis X (19 May 86) warned that a massacre was being planned by the military, '*in order to deal a mortal blow to the revolution and the class. They want to take vengeance on the prisoners of war; they are planning to commit genocide against us to pay off their blood debt*' for the rear admiral. Lawyers for the prisoners denounced the government plans to the press, the New York Times revealing how '*Officers told of a premeditated plan to mow down every last Sendero captive.*'

The military clamoured for the death penalty as it was impossible, they claimed, to re-educate a Senderista by putting them in jail. This call was popular in many quarters including with the Attorney General. Newspapers churned out the falsehood that the prisons had become the PCP's central planning centre. On May 1986, the prisoners in Lurigancho released a statement denying that they were digging tunnels and stating that such claims were to prepare public opinion for massacres to follow. They accused the prison authorities of not sticking by the deal signed the previous year, a claim complicated by the fact that the El Fronton director had been assassinated in Lima by the PGA four days previously.

Across Peru the People's War was developing, striking hard in Lima itself and government policy towards captured revolutionaries should be seen within this framework. An intensification of systematic provocations against the prisoners in violation of the agreements extracted from Belaunde and the APRA government, recognising the prisoners' 'special status' and acknowledging their rights under international legislation, increased tensions between the two sides. These rights had been won and defended through firm struggles against affronts that included naval incursions at El Fronton and reconnaissance flights over the prison. Parliament had approved a law stipulating that prisoners should be transferred to areas where they themselves were from. Garcia postponed this plan however, waiting it appears, for the best moment for another massacre.

That same month, the streets of Lima were thronged with international dignitaries, journalists, politicians and foreign heads of state, crowding hotels and restaurants in anticipation of the Seventeenth Socialist International Conference, being held that year in Latin America for the first time. Missions from forty countries were in Lima, twenty-two of the delegations representing their governments. Several Prime Ministers had cancelled due to security concerns but former West German chancellor Willy Brandt was helping raise the profile of the conference. Garcia saw the Socialist International as a way to announce his own vision of centre-left social democratic politics.

The problem of the revolutionary prisoners remained the fly in Garcia's ointment however, and a reckoning squatted upon the horizon.

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At 6.00am on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June, prisoners at the three jails rose up in unison, seizing hostages and weapons. The morning sun fell upon a slogan, stretching across El Fronton's walls, 'Finish off the Great Leap with a Gold Seal,' referring to the final stages of the PCP's Great Leap military strategy to win revolutionary base areas.

Issuing their demands, the prisoners called upon the Garcia government to abide by the agreements signed the year before. The prisoners presented the authorities with a 25-point petition that included demands ranging from ending abuses and mistreatment inside the prisons to halting the 'disappearances.'

As soon as the rebellion began Garcia called an emergency cabinet meeting that included top military commanders of the three armed institutions, the Joint Command, deciding to 'restore the national order.' It was decided that the Republican Guard, the branch of the police in charge of the prison system, would play a role. The government also called together a government-sponsored 'Peace Commission' as the Joint Command prepared to send in its forces.

Garcia, reeling from the attacks in the cities and mounting numbers of police casualties, entrusted the armed forces with retaking control, instructing them to put down the rebellion, rescue the hostages and transfer the prisoners to Canto Grande. Peruvian Vice President Luis Alberto Sanchez would later claim that the prisoners refused to negotiate due to '*an almost religious obedience to a new fanaticism.*'

The Peace Commission then was a standing government commission created in September 1985 but with no negotiating power. At Callao their representatives failed to dissuade the women. At Lurigancho, during the stand-off, the Commission waited thirty minutes outside the prison, with no response from the warden and eventually gave up without even getting to speak to PCP representatives. When they arrived at El Fronton, navy commandos from San Lorenzo were already taking up positions on the island. State attorneys, judges and prison authorities had also been blocked by security forces in their efforts to carry out real dialogue, requested by the Fronton prisoners themselves.

The women prisoners were held in a converted house facility called Santa Bárbara which held about sixty-four female guerrillas in Callao, Lima's port city. Under the control of the air-force, the police entered via the roof while simultaneously blowing two other entrances with dynamite. The women fought back with improvised weapons and were met with gunfire. The inmates held out until the following morning, two inmates dying and six others wounded in the assault. A government statement announcing Santa Barbara's recapture said that inmates had used weapons and high explosives. The survivors were beaten and forcibly transferred to another prison.

At Lurigancho, the mutiny started when a penitentiary agent was taken prisoner at 6.00am. Around 2.00pm, military commanders were notified of the government decision to send in the army.

The order to attack was given to Army General Jorge Rabonel Portilla around 8.40pm. The Republican Guard were to execute the plan, and an army unit, CEC 501 was in support. The director of the prison asked for a written order but was told to leave such formalities aside. The Republican Guard and troops arrived at 9.00pm and around 10.00pm the plan was formed to have CEC 501 open holes in the Pavilion walls to allow access for the Republican Guard.

The operation started around 12.30am. The fighters had built fortifications in their cell block, fighting with home-made munitions and a very small number of captured weapons. The TV news showed



*The Battle for El Fronton Begins.*

the PCP red flag flying amid the smoke from the prison walls, the transmissions eventually being cut off due to 'technical difficulties.' The combined force of the army and Republican Guard pressed on their attack, using dynamite on cell block walls. Army explosives and anti-tank shells blew a hole in the cell block shortly after midnight and tear gas canisters were thrown inside. The prisoners, returning fire, began to sing and chant slogans.

At 1.40am, Colonel Cabezas, commander of the Republican Guard anti-subversive unit, arrived. More powerful explosives finally opened a huge hole. When the Republican Guards under Lieutenant Jorge Loyola Felipe entered, they were attacked with improvised weapons, two Republican Guards being wounded. Eventually, the encircled rebels were forced to surrender, the survivors being dragged out with hands on their heads. There were already 30 prisoners dead when the survivors left the pavilion, their hostage being mistaken for a rebel and also violently beaten. At this point the surrendered inmates were systematically executed by the Republican Guard squad. The order came from Cabezas himself and, according to Republican Guard Félix César Romani Yactayo, *'The officers that shot against the interns that were lying on the floor were about 15 to 20, including Republican Guard and army personnel.'* The officers in charge appeared to believe that the use of force and the mass slaughter would not be questioned and that they were going to get away with it. Republican Guard Marti Antonio Rimapo Jiménez, later said that he heard one officer say *'just do it, we are protected by the government.'* Sometimes the prisoners were shot in groups of five. One was asked the whereabouts of Chairman Gonzalo, before being shot. By dawn not one of the 159 fighters was left alive. The government later admitted that around a hundred had been killed in this way.

The sounds of battle had carried throughout Callao and relatives and supporters that had gathered outside the prisons to protest fought with police, some also being killed. Control had again been established over Santa Barbara and Lurigancho. Out in the Callao Bay the fog was rising, obscuring the island prison of El Fronton. A brutal battle was raging amid the devastation and the rubble and was not about to end.

Since 1984 around 400 prisoners had been crammed into El Fronton's

two-storey 'Blue Pavilion' where they received no healthcare and had limited access to clean water and edible food. Outside visitors, usually women and children were subjected to humiliating inspections and were forbidden to bring in food, water or medication. At times they were fired upon and stopped at sea by the Peruvian Navy, or taken back to the naval base and detained overnight. Military helicopters often overflowed the Blue Pavilion, soldiers sometimes throwing rocks at the jail atrium, or aiming their weapons. Several days before the uprisings, the authorities had cut off the water, light and food. As one survivor recalled, *'We ate only dried seaweed and crude little animals that we fished ourselves.'*

At 6.00am, the prisoners, using the word 'Puka,' the Quechua word meaning 'red' as the code word for 'attack,' took three Republican Guards hostage seizing their G3 rifles, a revolver and a FMK-3 sub-machine gun. No longer prisoners, the Maoists dug their trenches where the state was at its strongest and now, unbroken and defiant, they readied themselves to return to the vanguard of the revolutionary war. Here the regime found itself confronting an armed contingent of the PGA. The prisoners raised the red flag and plunged back into the People's War, singing their song, 'We are the Initiators.'

By 2.00pm a group of marines that had arrived by speedboat and helicopters, overflowed the island. At 2.30pm the Peace Commission arrived and spoke to the rebels through an amplifier, calling on them to surrender. Soon afterwards the prison governor, a judge and a public prosecutor accepted the prisoners request for authorities to join the relatives and lawyers to form a 'unitarian commission.' The inmates gave a petition consisting of 26 points that included 'protection against the new genocide that the government and the marines pursued against the prisoners, better living conditions, improvement in the status of 'political prisoners' and support for social struggles in Peru. Soon however, the Deputy Home Secretary Augustine Mantilla, known to be an organiser of several paramilitary death squads, arrived on the island, instructing the armed forces on behalf of the government to 'restore order.' Admiral Luis Giampietri of the navy and 400 marines prepared to go into action.



*Last Stand in the Tunnels: 'Hold hands, this is how we choose to die.'*



The first military attack began at 5.15pm with, helicopter-mounted rocket launchers, heavy machine guns, grenades, bazookas, mortars and 81mm anti-tank guns being brought up, supported by naval artillery. Two rockets were launched to open a hole in the pavilion but the rebels were well-protected by internal structures that they had built, returning fire. The rebels sang and shouted slogans throughout in what was clearly an uneven battle.

Frogmen demolition teams placed plastic explosive charges that blew open a hole in the Fronton cellblock after three shells had failed to produce an effect. A second charge brought down part of the building at 6.00pm. The exchange of fire continued. At 8.00pm, more army and Republican Guards arrived, the prisoners fighting on, still singing as the roof and walls crumbled beneath a vast cloud of dust.

The prisoners continued to give no ground as large holes were repeatedly blown into the walls of the Blue Pavilion, the prisoners blocking the gaps with their beds and other furnishings as they fought back with crossbows and slings, taking metal bars from their beds and improvising home-made explosives and indeed improvised flamethrowers. When artillery fire began to destroy the kitchens some prisoners entered the tunnels, or 'respirators' to hurl home-made explosives at the marines. The wounded were passed back through the trenches, a PGA sniper silencing one of the artillery pieces.

A letter by a PCP combatant, written on the 19<sup>th</sup> and smuggled out captured the fervour of the revolutionaries. *'They can crush us into a thousand pieces, but they cannot break our Communist morale... We are willing to die... Our class morale is at stake. We have to defend it, and we will do it with blood, pain and tears...As a combatant of this heroic Shining Trench of Combat that has tenaciously resisted the bombings of the reactionary genocidal armed forces, [I have seen how they] disgrace our national heroes. They are brave to kill and cowards to die.... I reaffirm my commitment to our revolution, to world revolution with the blood of our people and of our combatants, with the blood of our Communist comrades that runs in streams, overflows and overthrows the old and generates the new.... I will never see their faces, their smiles again, but they live within my heart. I will be the bearer of their ideals. They are mine and belong to our people. I will follow your examples: to fight for our people, to serve the people wholeheartedly, without any personal motive, with total personal disinterest.'*

The onslaught continued until 3.00am, when the guns fell silent and the *Fuerza de Operaciones Especiales* (Special Operations Force) took charge under Rear-Admiral Luis Gianpieri and at some point, these forces were themselves replaced by marines under Rear-Admiral Vega Llona.

At 6.00am the final assault began. Artillery pulverised the Blue Pavilion walls, the marines approaching the Pavilion at 8.30am firing and throwing grenades. As the building was levelled, the remaining fighters withdrew underground and into the 'bronquios,' the 'respirator' tunnels. In the brutal nocturnal struggle, survivors later described the carnage in which inmates were decapitated, or had lost arms or legs. In the suffocating atmosphere of the confined spaces, the prisoners fought on. One detachment attempting to find a way out, dug their way towards an exit, the marines collapsing their tunnels with explosives so that all but one of the fighters were killed. One survivor said later, *'Each bullet that went through our bodies inflamed us with more class hatred.'*

Deputy-Minister Mantilla came to a decision, and the order was given to demolish the remains of the Blue Pavilion. Several powerful explosions were heard and the building collapsed burying the living and the dead. A government communique later reported *"an unknown number trapped or buried in tunnels, at least one of which led to the sea."* In the mid-afternoon, according to the navy, twenty-eight inmates surrendered. The uprising was over.

It was around 2.00pm when captured survivors and two of the hostages were brought out. A third hostage had been killed by friendly fire. As the prisoners began to leave the pavilion, they were ordered to lie on the floor. Some of them were then removed for execution. Witnesses said later that those that looked like leaders were among those selected. Some were found in the tunnels and shot or stabbed. According to Jesús Mejía Huerta, who miraculously survived, those that were executed were thrown into ditches, doused with fuel and burned.

Prison doctors were refused entry and navy doctors ignored the prisoners, treating only the marines and police. Officially there were 34 survivors. The other 117 were dead, 90 of them executed after they surrendered. The authorities were to claim that three marines were dead, and five wounded. The bodies of most of the victims were never returned to their relatives for burial being secretly buried in several cemeteries around Lima. Only four of the 97 bodies recovered from El Fronton were identified.

According to the historian Carlos Aguirre, this was *'the deadliest massacre of political prisoners in Latin American history.'* The Peruvian state had imposed the peace of the dead and the corpses that lay within and beneath the ruins of two penitentiaries seemed to remain defiant. Smoke and dust could be seen for miles as the authorities surveyed the devastation. According to Simon Strong, a Peruvian naval officer was heard to say, *'With 5000 like these, we would have won the war against Chile.'*

The enormity of all that had happened was settling upon those that had carried out the Garcia regime's commands. At Callao, the PCP women could be seen thrusting their heads out between the bars of their cells to chant, over and over, their ringing condemnation:

*'La sangre deramado jamas será Olvidada – 'This blood that has been spilt shall never be forgotten.'*





**Jiang Qing, more commonly known in revolutionary times as Chiang Ch'ing, was born as Li Yunhe in Zhucheng, Shandong Province in 1914. She joined the Communist Party in 1933, and was sent to Shanghai where she became a stage and film actress (under the name Lan Ping) and worked with the Shanghai Work Study Troupe, teaching at a workers' night school.**

But Chiang wanted to develop cultural works more closely linked with the revolutionary struggle and so after a few years in Shanghai she asked to be sent to Yanan, the revolutionary base area. She arrived in Yanan in 1937, and it was here that Chiang met Mao.

Mao himself believed that art should serve the revolutionary cause, and it was on this common ground of art to serve the people that Mao and Chiang fell in love. Their marriage in 1938 gave Mao a deeper understanding of art and literature, but Mao's enemies inside the party opposed the union. Mao and Chiang were determined however and the Political Bureau of the party finally consented on condition that Chiang refrain from political activism.

Although Chiang was a revolutionary in her own right, she became the target of gossip; as even within the revolutionary ranks there were men who held to feudal ideas and were appalled at the idea of a strong revolutionary woman. Mao's strongly anti-feudal sentiments against the custom of family fiefdoms becoming centres of power prevented him from personally promoting Chiang within the Party but she served as Mao's personal secretary in the 1940s and was head of the Documentary Film Unit of the Propaganda Department in the 1950s.

In February 1966, Chiang was appointed cultural advisor to the PLA and also to a Cultural Revolution Group set up within the army one year later, eventually forming the revolutionary alliance known as the "Gang of Four" that were to initiate some of the most progressive innovations within art and production seen in any society. At the Ninth Party Congress in 1969 Chiang was elected to the Communist Party Politburo of the Central Committee.

Chiang Ching also became identified with the youth and when the Red Guards first emerged she defended and encouraged them. As First Deputy Head of the CRG, those given the task of

leading the Cultural Revolution, she attended seven of the eight mass Red Guard rallies in Beijing. Chiang Ching also gave support to the workers when they seized power from 'capitalist-roader' party leaders, encouraging workers in the takeover of the Trade Union Federation in December 1966, one of the first of such seizures.

Chiang understood that one of the characteristics of socialist society was that classes and class struggle will continue; old ideas and practices persisting after the revolution. She condemned mainstream culture as promoting the ideas, practices and habits of the exploiting classes in a "theatre of the dead" and went boldly into the theatres and ballet troupes, speaking directly to performers and inciting them to criticize "bourgeois art" and party leaders that promoted it. Chiang said:

*"Our operatic stage is occupied by emperors, princes, generals, ministers, scholars and beauties, and on top of these, ghosts and monsters... There are well over 600 million workers, peasants and soldiers in our country, whereas there is only a handful of landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements, Rightists, and bourgeois elements. Shall we serve this handful, or the 600 million? The grain we eat is grown by the peasants, the clothes we wear and the houses we live in are all made by the workers, and the People's Liberation Army stands guard at the fronts of national defence for us and yet we do not portray them on stage. May I ask which class stand you artists take?"*

In developing a method for creating modern plays, she was the first to suggest the "three-in-one combination," made up of three components; that of leadership cadres, playwrights and the revolutionary masses, including representatives from the army. These made up the new-born centres of power, setting up revolutionary committees that carried out the process of struggle-criticism-transformation. This method was to be used as a model for the Revolutionary Committee, the new form of leadership organization developed during the Cultural Revolution.

Chiang's revolutionary model operas took up topical political themes in modern dress, even though they used many of the artistic elements of classic opera and she oversaw the revising of revolutionary heroines into new scripts where women threw off the stifling yoke of the past. Peking opera had its roots in centuries-old folk art, but it was a product of feudalism and reflected an elite class in society. The feudal tradition of male actors impersonating women was also eliminated. Such works as "Red Detachment of

Women" were then performed not only by big professional companies, but by all kinds of smaller amateur groups in the cities and countryside.

But Chiang consistently advocated attacking and overthrowing the enemy ideologically and politically, calling for restraint with her well-known slogan, "Attack with reason, defend with force". The violent clashes that had been occurring was an expression of the sharpening class struggle, workers fighting in the streets when seizing power from the municipal committees in at least eight different provinces in early 1967. The PLA was also called in to assist the workers and Red Guards in these seizures, helping to restore order.

Shortly before he died on September 9th, 1976, Mao, concerned about the rising strength of the revisionists, called on revolutionaries to "Help Chiang Ching raise the red flag". Acting quickly however, the revisionists, with Hua Kuo-feng at their head, mounted a military coup d'état and arrested the Gang of Four and their supporters within a month of Mao's death. Revolutionary China had been defeated.

At the historic 1980-81 trial, the Four were charged with plotting an armed rebellion in Shanghai against the coup d'état, Chiang being denounced as an aspiring empress, the revisionist's own bourgeois rule being dependant on demolishing revolutionary heroism. Claiming that her ambition was personal, they probed her marriage, searching for scandals, since for them a woman's merits were reliant on her individual relations, especially with men. She was also accused of sending Red Guards to ransack the homes of writers and performers in search of letters, photos and other materials from her early career in Shanghai. Chiang was defiant:

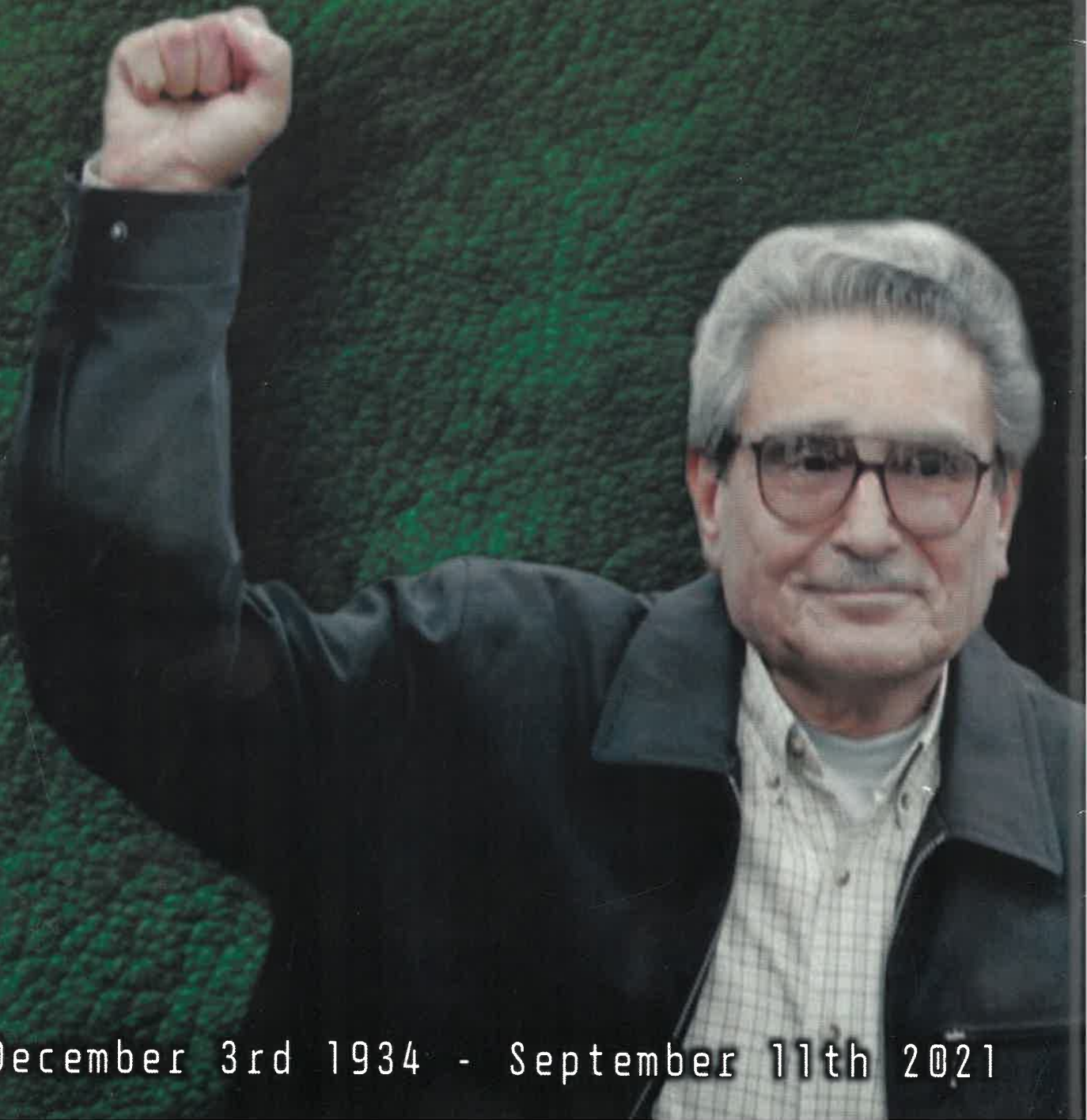
*"You have power now so you can easily accuse people of crimes and fabricate false evidence to support your charges... It is not I but your small gang who is on trial in the court of history."*

On conviction, Chiang was held in the centuries-old prison of Quin Cheng. When she refused to cooperate, she was denied food or exercise, or was beaten by guards. Much of this time she had no right to speak except under interrogation and she wrote on her cell wall, 'I am not afraid of death.' Though initially condemned to death, her sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in 1983. After fifteen years of incarceration, Chiang reportedly took her own life in May 1991.

But her memory remains. For ten long years in the GPCR, great strides were made by the forgotten and downtrodden, breaking new ground for the international proletariat so that revolutionary science was developed to a qualitatively new level, that of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought. In his poem, Ode to the Plum Blossom, Mao provided a fitting epitaph to the comrade he was forced to leave behind him:

*Wind and rain escorted Spring's departure,  
Flying snow welcomes Spring's return.  
On the ice-clad rock rising high and sheer  
A flower blooms sweet and fair.  
Sweet and fair, she craves not Spring for herself  
alone.  
To be the harbinger of Spring she is content.  
When the mountain flowers are in full bloom,  
She will smile, mingling in their midst.*

FOREVER IN THE HEARTS  
OF THE WORKING CLASS  
**CHAIRMAN  
GONZALO**



December 3rd 1934 - September 11th 2021