

(new) Italian Communist Party



Four main issues to be debated in the International Communist Movement

Communists are distinguished from other revolutionaries because they have a more advanced understanding of the conditions, forms and results of class struggle and, on this basis, they always push it forward.

(K. Marx and F. Engels - *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 1848 - Paraphrase)

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Abbreviations

CI: First Communist International (1919-1943), continued until 1956 as Comintern and in the form of relations with other Communist Parties worldwide held by the CPSU International Department

CP: Communist Party

ICM: International Communist Movement

M-L-M: Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

PRPW: Protracted Revolutionary People's War

nICP: (new) Italian Communist Party

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Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the highest level ever achieved by the science founded by Marx and Engels. It is the science of the activities with which men and women have made their history. It is the science that men and women shall now use as a guide for their activities, if they are to put an end to the catastrophic course of events imposed by the imperialist bourgeoisie to protract their social system.

Four main issues to be debated in the International Communist Movement

This document contains:

1. The issues we find to be important in the struggle to achieve a greater unity within the International Communist Movement;
2. Our positions on these issues;
3. Documents in various common languages (English, French, Spanish) where our positions are thoroughly explained.

Issues to be debated

There are four issues that we think should be discussed within the International Communist Movement:

1. The evaluation of the experience of the communist movement (first wave of world proletarian revolution and first socialist countries, crisis of the communist movement and modern revisionism, rebirth of the communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism);
2. The theory of the (first and second) general crisis of capitalism in the stage of imperialism and the connected revolutionary situation in development;
3. The regime of preventive counterrevolution established by the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries;
4. The strategy of the Protracted Revolutionary People's War.

The (new) Italian Communist Party's position on the four issues

1.

The evaluation of the experience of the communist movement (first wave of world proletarian revolution and first socialist countries, crisis of the communist movement and modern revisionism, rebirth of the communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, prospects of organization of the International Communist Movement)

1.1 The first wave of world proletarian revolution and the first socialist countries

We identify the first wave of world proletarian revolution as the one that developed during the first half of the last century, together with the development of the first general crisis of capitalism (see chap. 2 below). In short, the general crisis produces a revolutionary situation in development. This revolutionary situation follows Lenin's description¹ but the features he points out protract and progressively accentuate. Consequently, the Communist Party's (CP) duty of building the process that brings the working class to seize power is facilitated. Indeed, the revolutionary situation in development connected with the first general crisis of capitalism was marked by the seizure of power in Russia, China and elsewhere, i.e. by the creation of the first socialist countries, the destruction of the colonial system, the construction of CPs basically worldwide as well as, in imperialist countries, by popular masses' extortion of great achievements in civilization and welfare. All of the above is what, in short, we refer to as the first wave of world proletarian revolution.

In evaluating this first wave of world proletarian revolution and the history of the first socialist countries, we need to ask ourselves three questions:

1. Why, during the first wave of world proletarian revolution (1917-1976) in the first half of the last century, was the communist movement not able to establish socialism in any imperialist country?
2. Why, after an initial period of meteoric development and great victories, did the first wave of world proletarian revolution lose momentum and its role in pushing for

¹ Lenin describes the revolutionary situation with the following features: "1. the impossibility for the ruling classes to preserve their domination without transforming its forms (...) 2. an aggravation, greater than usual, of the distress and misery of the oppressed classes; 3. consequently to the aforementioned causes, a significant increase in the activity of the masses. In a 'peaceful' period, the masses submissively allow themselves to be stripped out but in stormy times they are pushed to an independent historical action, both from the general crisis and from the very same unrest in the 'upper layer' (Lenin - *The failure of the II International*) [ETN].

human progress all over the world?

3. Why did the first socialist countries, which at their peak made up a third of the world population, after an initial period of great achievements, progressively slow down, decline, until they eventually collapse or change side and anyway lose their initial role of red base of world proletarian revolution?

1.1.1. Why, during the first wave of world proletarian revolution (1917-1976) in the first half of the last century, was the communist movement not able to establish socialism in any imperialist country?

Communists are distinguished from other proletarians because they have a more advanced understanding of conditions, forms and results of class struggle and, on this basis, they always push it forward. (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 1848). When such understanding is not advanced enough, communists act blindly. That does not mean that they necessarily have a wrong line: instinct and class ties can make up for their lack of understanding. In these cases, however, communists are taken by surprise by the practical results of their own activity. But retrospectively, when considering their activity globally, both their successes in transforming reality and their failures, they can understand what the positive part of what they did was, regardless of their being initially aware of it. They learn to build on these positive experiences *consciously*, so to anticipate the practical results of their actions and accomplish more advanced endeavours on this basis. During the first wave of proletarian revolution, many endeavours of the communist movement were, indeed, accomplished blindly. This is precisely the reason why communists could neither fully reap the benefits of some of their positive actions nor they managed to generalize the application of these actions. The defeat we suffered now obliges us to re-evaluate these instances, allowing us for a more advanced understanding of the conditions, forms, and results of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The parties of the first Communist International (CI) failed to establish socialism in any imperialist country because: 1. they did not have the right conception of the nature of the socialist revolution and, as a consequence, they did not have a scientific approach to the strategy to make the socialist revolution – the Protracted Revolutionary People’s War (PRPW); 2. they did not have the right understanding of the general crisis that had been underway at the time.

They were not aware that the socialist revolution, unlike bourgeois and other revolutions occurred over the course of human history, is not something that suddenly breaks out. The socialist revolution is not something that communists must wait or get

ready for in every country by producing propaganda, mobilizing popular masses² for social struggles³, taking part in bourgeois political struggle, and organizing the working class and the rest of the masses into trade unions, mass organizations, and the CP, *waiting for the revolution to occur*. On the contrary, the socialist revolution is a process *promoted and led* by the CP, campaign after campaign, during which time the CP gains in strength and consolidates, gathers together and trains revolutionary forces, and organizes within its own ranks, as well as in the mass organizations which clump around the CP (Revolutionary Front), the most advanced elements of the working class and of other classes of the popular masses. Step by step, the CP builds, extends, and strengthens a new leadership on a vast part of the popular masses – a new power which opposes that of the bourgeoisie, a power which acts tightening its grip on the bourgeoisie and eventually supplants them, seizes power in the whole country, and establishes socialism. As a rule, this happens through a civil war, unleashed by the bourgeoisie when their back is finally up against the wall.

This process is that of *the construction of a revolution* and it is the PRPW in imperialist countries. Facing the progression of a people's war and its siege, the bourgeoisie normally reacts rousing a civil war. In imperialist countries, CPs part of the CI lacked a scientific conception of the PRPW and could not adequately respond to the bourgeoisie when they threatened or roused the civil war. CPs either retreated before the war even started (the most representative cases are France in the years of the Popular Front as well as after the Resistance, and Italy after the Resistance), or carried out the war in the wrong way and were defeated (the most representative case being Spain in the 1936-1939 period). We can draw similar lessons from the experience of Italy in the early 1920s (*Two red years*⁴), Germany, and other European countries in the 1920s and 1930s.

² By *popular masses* we hereby mean the entire population with the exception of the imperialist bourgeoisie. The popular masses are the part of the population that must *work for a living*. They live, at least partially, off of their work, i.e. they cannot live only exploiting others' work. The popular masses are the widest field that the working class should try to include into their organizing efforts as the general crisis goes on, though the popular masses include classes that are now enemies of the working class. Among the popular masses, *proletarians* are people that must *sell their labor force to live* and who get the main portion of their income from this sale. The *working class* are proletarians employed by capitalists in private corporations to *increase capital value* and produce commodities (whether it is goods or services) [ETN].

³ We here refer to *social struggles* to indicate struggles for rights, or economic struggles, carried out to force the bourgeoisie, or their government and State, to do what goes against their immediate, particular interests. Social struggles are of two kinds: 1. struggles to defend achievements in the general welfare of the population that the popular masses extorted during the first wave of world proletarian revolution under the leadership of communists; and 2. struggles to improve the living and working conditions of the popular masses [ETN].

⁴ In Italian, we refer to this period as *Biennio rosso* [ETN].

The concerned parties did not have a scientific conception of the PRPW and, therefore, lacked the understanding of their leadership role in this process, the role of the *High Command*⁵ of the working class. The awareness of being leaders of a PRPW would have led CPs to take advantage even from reformists' struggles, to exploit the antagonistic contradiction between reformists and fascists, to exploit the contradictions within the ruling class, to build the Revolutionary Front of the popular masses and the foundations for revolutionary armed forces in various countries, as soon as the right conditions were present. The awareness of being leaders of a war would have led them to give top priority to clandestine activity, to constitute themselves as clandestine parties from the beginning or, in alternative, to become clandestine by their own initiative. Instead, they conceived the clandestine activity as something of subordinate and relative importance, such as an activity awaiting or in preparation for the clash that would take place when the revolution would break out, or else they aimed this activity at unsuccessful attempts at insurrection, taken without building proper conditions. They did not have the initiative, leaving space for a pre-emptive strike on the part of the enemy. The bourgeoisie, breaking their own laws, acted by decimating the ranks of parties, arresting the main leaders, and sending them to their deaths (e.g. Gramsci, Thälmann).

Ultimately, the concerned parties held a mechanistic conception of the revolution (as something that happens due to factors external to us) rather than a dialectical materialistic conception (as something that happens due to our subjective action when it conforms to the laws of reality).

Essentially, the Russian Communist Party acted blindly, even though they generally followed a right line and, thereby, managed to seize power and build the first and most powerful socialist country – the USSR. It is only in the 1930s that the Chinese Communist Party developed the theory of the PRPW strategy. This science of a PRPW is one of the six main contributions of Maoism to communist thought.

What was the strategy of the parties in the first CI for seizing power in imperialist countries?

In fact, the CPs of imperialist countries did not have a strategy. They wavered between attempts at insurrection and waiting for a revolution to break out, which, by its nature, is impossible. They either reduced socialist revolution to an insurrection that could

⁵ The phrase *High Command* refers to the role that must be played by the CP as the organization that shall lead the working class to seize and maintain power. The CP is, therefore, the supreme headquarters of an organized force – the working class fighting for power – in a war, the PRPW. A CP can fulfil the role of High Command of the working class only when the vast majority of politically advanced workers (see note 7 below) are organized in its ranks and they morally, intellectually and practically lead the rest of the workers towards the objective [ETN].

simply be incited by the CP, or they were convinced that the socialist revolution would be brought by a revolt of the popular masses, once their material conditions had sufficiently worsened.

Now, all the insurrections incited by the CPs regularly failed. Those that were successful arose as particular battles within a pre-existing war.

As for the second case, the CP did not determine the revolt: the CP, which until then had developed mass organizations and produced propaganda, would take the lead over the revolt. On one hand, CPs supported, promoted, organized and led social struggles of the working class and those of other classes of the popular masses (trade unions). On the other hand, they produced propaganda of socialism and were involved in bourgeois political struggle, as the most leftwing of the parties involved. However, these two lines of action were separate, i.e. they were not *practically and consciously combined into a step-by-step strategy for seizing power*, they were not conceived as parts of a war against the class enemy. These two lines of action were not consciously combined to first make bourgeoisie's affairs impossible and then successfully tackle the civil war that the bourgeoisie would rouse. As a consequence, even when and where these lines of action were effectively carried out and did produce subverting results on the existing political order, they did not enable the CP to gain strong enough positions to withstand the class enemy's attack when they eventually waged a civil war against communist and popular forces.

Instead, separating social struggles carried out by the popular masses on one side and propaganda of socialism on the other side produced two opposite but complementary unilateral trends within the CP: *economism* and *dogmatism*. These two deviations prevented at the time CPs from coming up with an effective strategy for the conquest of power and persist in M-L parties *today*, acting as main obstacles to the rebirth of the communist movement.

1.1.2. Why, after an initial period of meteoric development and great victories, did the first wave of world proletarian revolution lose momentum and its role in pushing for human progress all over the world?

The first wave of world proletarian revolution lost momentum and the role it had had in pushing for human progress 1. because the communist movement failed to advance in imperialist countries, i.e. it failed to transform any of them into socialist countries, 2. because, both for this reason and for internal reasons, socialist countries declined, until the majority of them collapsed or changed side.

The leftwing of CPs and the ICM (those most resolutely dedicated to the revolutionary cause) was unable to successfully cope with their responsibilities. This allowed the rightwing (members who were more susceptible to the influence of the bourgeoisie – the modern revisionists) to take the leadership within CPs and the ICM, leading both to ruin.

Some comrades insist on believing that CPs are monolithic. This would be the only one known exception to the contradictory nature of reality, acknowledged by the dialectical materialist conception of the world. In fact, experience shows that the bourgeoisie does exert influence within the communist movement (and that, vice-versa, the communist movement exerts influence within the bourgeoisie and the clergy). In any CP, members and instances are distinguishable from each other by the fact that they are affected by this influence of the bourgeoisie to a different degree, by their varying degrees of understanding reality (contradiction between true and false), by different sensitivities to novelty (contradiction between new and old). Quantity turns into quality so that, stage after stage, in every CP, there is always a left (which pushes forward) and a right (which holds back). Normally, the two wings cooperate and complement each other, as in every movement or transformation. In some circumstances, however, the contradiction between the two rival wings becomes antagonistic. Then, the left must expel the irreducible right, otherwise the CP declines and degenerates. The science of this *struggle between two lines* in the CP is one of the six main contributions of Maoism to communist thought.

1.1.3. Why did the first socialist countries, which at their peak made up a third of the world population, after an initial period of great achievements, progressively slow down, decline, until they eventually collapse or change side and anyway lose their initial role of red base of world proletarian revolution?

Evaluation of the experience of the first socialist countries: a struggle between two lines in socialism or bureaucratic degeneration (as Trotskyists claim)?

According to some comrades, the decline of the first socialist countries was due to the fact that they degenerated into bureaucratic societies. Why did they degenerate? What can we do about it? They do not explain this, because their conception is groundless. Their argument is wrong and essentially converges with the semi-anarchist and anti-communist positions of Trotskyites. In fact, no socialist country (or CP) will be able to do without a bureaucracy for a certain period. This bureaucracy, composed of professional officers that are distinct from the rest of the masses due to their professional experience, is responsible for carrying out management tasks and other

directive tasks until, and only to the extent that, mass organizations cannot carry out these tasks themselves. A goal of socialism is to make the masses take on these tasks. However, reaching this point will require some time. It will entail the extinction of the State as an institution separate from the rest of society and that has the monopoly of violence. Put otherwise, this stage contains the extinction of class society. Once this goal is achieved, we will be living in a communist society. The establishment of socialism does not abolish at once the contradiction between those who manage and those who are directed, between intellectual work and manual labor, between organizational and executive work, between men and women, between adults and young, between city and countryside, between advanced and backward sectors, regions, and countries. These are seven major differences and contradictions that can and should be removed in every country and the world only in stages after the establishment of socialism, over the course of the transition to communism, during the socialist phase. Essentially, this follows Marx's writings in *Critique of Gotha Program* (1875). Experience clearly shows that, in the history of the first socialist countries, the socialist State and mass organizations formed two poles of a contradictory unity, and that class struggle concerned the very line with which the CP dealt with this contradiction.

Some comrades insist on keeping a wrong analysis of the first socialist countries, a sterile analysis contradicted by experience. According to these comrades, "in this new society, classes, that is, the working class and working peasantry, which are closely allied to each other, will exist for a very long time, but there will also be remnants of the overthrown and expropriated classes. During this entire period, these remnants, as well as elements which degenerate and oppose the construction of socialism, will try to regain their lost power. Hence, under socialism, too, stern class struggle will exist" (Enver Hoxha, *Imperialism and Revolution*, 1978). Experience shows a completely different course of events. In every socialist country, the restoration of capitalism was promoted by a large and prominent part of the CP. In the first socialist countries, the bourgeoisie consisted of those leaders of the CP, of the State, and of the mass organizations who wholly or partly opposed to the necessary and possible steps to overcome those contradictions. This is quite obvious, given the nature of socialist society and the contradictions which animate its development. Yet, it has not been easy to understand. The class analysis of socialist society is one of the six main contributions of Maoism to communist thought.

Therefore, the struggle in socialist society was not on the existence of a bureaucracy, issue on which Trotskyites and anarchists focus their attention. The issue was the line the CP followed. Maoism and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of the

Chinese People (1966-1976) brought this to attention. Throughout the first stage of the existence of the first socialist countries, bureaucracy, well-directed by the CP, did excellent and essential work on behalf of socialism.

The regression of the first socialist countries began with the prevalence of the right line in the struggle between the two lines in CPs, directing both the State (consisting of officials, so bureaucracy) and mass organizations. The left line opposed the right by implementing steps towards the construction of socialism. The right line, on the other hand, gave or supported bourgeois solutions to development-related problems of socialist societies. Steps towards the construction of socialism were those that would move socialist countries away from capitalist and pre-capitalist modes of production, bringing them closer to communism, i.e. changes in the relations of production (ownership of productive forces, relations between workers in the labor process, products distribution), in the other social relations (politics, law, culture, etc.), as well as changes in the conception and awareness of men and women. These steps are listed in the *Manifesto Program of the (new) Italian Communist Party*, chap. 1.7.4 (see <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>).

The left line prevailed throughout a first phase. This was: for the Soviet Union from the October Revolution until revisionists prevailed in 1956; for the People's democracies of Eastern and Central Europe from 1945 to 1956; for the People's Republic of China from 1950 to 1976. This first phase was followed by a second one, marked by the revisionists takeover of CPs and their attempts to restore capitalism gradually and peacefully (for the USSR and the Eastern and Central European People's democracies from 1956 to the late 80s, for the People's Republic of China from 1976 and still ongoing today). A third phase begun in the USSR and in People's democracies in Eastern Europe in the late 80s and it is still ongoing today. This phase is marked by the will to restore capitalism at any cost, and therefore by a violent and destructive confrontation between classes.

1.2. Crisis of the communist movement and modern revisionism

Why have modern revisionists managed to take over the leadership of the communist movement and lead it astray?

The modern revisionists have managed to take over the leadership of the communist movement because the leftwing of the CPs did not have a sufficient understanding of the conditions, forms, and results of class struggle. Parties acted blindly. The leftwing did not have a scientific understanding of the general crises of capitalism (general crisis of absolute overproduction of capital - see chap. 2 below) that typify the stage

of its decline, i.e. the imperialist stage. They kept basing their understanding on Marx's analysis of the cyclical crises that characterized the first half of the 19th century (*The Capital* Vol. 1), even though Engels, in the preface to the 1886 English edition of that volume of *The Capital*, had already pointed out that those decennial cyclical crises had been supplanted by a protracted period of depression. The leftwing had no scientific knowledge of the strategy for seizing power in imperialist countries (the PRPW). The leftwing did not have a right understanding of the political regime in imperialist countries (regime of preventive counterrevolution). The leftwing held mistaken analysis of class composition and class struggle in socialist countries.

In the period preceding World War II, the CPs in imperialist countries acted blindly. Parties kept oscillating between sectarian confrontation and opportunistic conciliation, between dogmatic sectarianism and unprincipled collaboration, between struggle without unity and unity without struggle. In general, they gave a rightist interpretation ("all through the front") of the Antifascist Popular Front line elaborated by the CI.

Since the end of World War II, the leftwing was not able to provide adequate solutions to the problems on the ground.

Facilitated by the strength of tradition, as well as by the support of reactionary forces, the rightwing of the communist movement (i.e. modern revisionists) had an easy time imposing a reformist line, whereby the CP would take up the left wing of a political alliance directed by the left leaning sections of the imperialist bourgeoisie, and the working class would give up their fight to seize power.

After the modern revisionists had taken over, the leftwing opposed them, both within and outside CPs. But their opposition was dogmatic, lacking a correct understanding of the reason behind their defeat at the hands of modern revisionists, i.e. of the reason why revisionists had had the upper hand on the leftwing, taking over the leadership of the communist movement. The leftwing only raised the banner of the restoration of M-L principles – that modern revisionists were repudiating – and denounced their betrayal of the socialist revolution cause. In other terms, *the leftwing veered into dogmatism*. This position of the leftwing destroys confidence in our cause and paralyzes revolutionary spirit. There is nothing and no one that can guarantee that sooner or later a leader does not betray, nor can anything prevent the bourgeoisie from exerting influence in our ranks. The leftwing came to adopt a conception of the world that was individualistic or even clerical in some respects, but certainly neither Marxist, nor dialectical materialist. *For individuals do not make history* – depending on the situation, they may betray or be heroically dedicated to the cause. Today's

heroes can be tomorrow's traitors, and vice-versa. Individuals change, for better or for worse. Parties change: they either progress or regress. *It is the masses, led by the CP, that make history.* The effectiveness of the leadership of the CP depends on the conception that guides it and by the line it implements. It is the struggle within the CP that prevents the influence of the bourgeoisie from growing beyond certain limits. It is this struggle that makes the conception of the world and the CP line advance, that develops the revolutionary character of the CP and its connection to the masses.

The leftwing missed some fundamental contribution of Maoism. These contributions encompass the scientific knowledge of 1. the *mass line* as a primary method of direction and work for CPs, 2. the struggle between two lines within CPs, 3. the *intellectual and moral reform* that the members of CPs must carry out, 4. the nature of classes in socialist countries, as well as 5. the strategy of the PRPW. Organizations that do not adopt Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (M-L-M) as the third and higher stage of communist thought are still missing these contributions and so are the organizations that take on M-L-M in a dogmatic, abstract, and formal way (as seen in the Italian group *Proletari Comunisti*, who nonetheless call themselves a Maoist CP).

1.3. Rebirth of the communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

The evaluation of the experience of the first wave of world proletarian revolution, as well as the strategy that CPs shall follow to promote and successfully lead the second wave of world proletarian revolution, sum up the conception of the world that we call M-L-M. The main contributions of Mao to this conception are the six ones mentioned in the article *The eighth discriminating factor* (2012) in EILE <http://www.nuovopci.it/>, translated into English, Spanish, French – see the “Texts” Section below], namely: 1. the PRPW as a universal strategy for proletarian revolution, that is to be applied following the specific conditions of each country, 2. the Revolution of New Democracy as a particular strategy in semi-feudal countries oppressed by the world imperialist system, 3. the class struggle in socialist society based on the seven major contradictions that socialist society has to deal with, 4. the mass line as the primary method of work and direction for CPs, 5. the struggle between two lines in CPs as a principle for CP's development and defense against the influence of the bourgeoisie, 6. the intellectual and moral reform of the CPs members.

1. The Protracted Revolutionary People's War

The PRPW is the strategy that we communists in imperialist countries shall follow if we are to lead the working class towards the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, begin a stage of socialist transformation of society, and contribute to the

second wave of world proletarian revolution.

2. Revolutions of New Democracy

Revolutions of New Democracy refer to the strategy of communists in neocolonial countries oppressed by imperialism, where, essentially, the bourgeois revolution (i.e. the abolition of relations of personal dependence and the prevailing of commodity production) has not yet been accomplished.

3. Class struggle in socialist society

In socialist society, the bourgeoisie consists of leaders of the Party, of the State, and of other social institutions that pave the road to capitalism.

4. The mass line

The mass line is the main method of work and direction of every CP. It combines the autonomy of the Party from the masses and the connection of the two in dialectical unity. It consists of collecting scattered and confused elements of knowledge that exist among the masses and their aspirations, and elaborating these elements. From them, we communists obtain goals, guidelines, methods, and criteria which are then brought back to the masses, so that they can take them on and implement them. At this point, the process repeats itself based on the new conditions that have emerged. All over again, scattered and confused elements of knowledge and aspirations of the masses are selected, elaborated to obtain objectives, guidelines, methods, and criteria that are then proposed to the masses, so that they can take them on and implement them. With every repetition of this process, communists' conception become richer and more concrete, and the revolutionary process moves further towards victory. Seen from another angle, the mass line consists of identifying the leftwing in each group (i.e. the part whose tensions, if implemented, will lead the group towards socialist revolution), the center and the rightwing, and of mobilizing and organizing the left so that it is able to engage the center and isolate the right.

5. The struggle between two lines in the Party

The struggle between the two lines in the Party is the principle for the development of the CP and for its defense against the influence of the bourgeoisie. The principle corresponds to the law of dialectical materialism according to which there is contradiction within everything and this is what governs development. The development of the CP is governed by the contradiction between what is advanced and what is backward, between new and old, between true and false, and by the contradiction between the interests of the working class and the influence of the bourgeoisie in the CP. The struggle between two lines is, therefore, not only a debate in the search for the right path, but also a reflection of the war between the classes

within the Party. In this respect, it is a contradiction that can become antagonistic.

To think that the Party is impervious to the influence of the bourgeoisie, or that such influence can be resolved primarily by, or solely with, organizational measures, such as instruments of control (Control Commission, etc.) or sealing-off measures (standards of recruitment, etc.), – in other words, to think that a Party is an entity that is not inherently contradictory – is wrong. Historical experience shows that this conception has not been able to prevent CPs from degenerating. On the contrary, it has even facilitated the influence of the bourgeoisie in the CPs that believed themselves to be immune.

6. Intellectual and moral reform of Communist Party members

The CP is not only the subject, but also an object of the socialist revolution. The socialist revolution and the transition to communism entail an intellectual and moral transformation of men and women, a transformation that the popular masses cannot realize *en masse*, as long as they are oppressed by the bourgeoisie and other exploitative classes. The popular masses will fulfill this transformation during the socialist stage of their history, based on their experience after the establishing of socialism. This intellectual and moral transformation will allow men and women to manage and lead their social life at the best of their knowledge and belief. It will allow them to consciously determine their own history without needing any ruling classes, any State, or CP. This transformation will create that “association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all”, as Marx and Engels wrote at the end of the second chapter of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848). Already today, within the Party school, members of the CP, by free individual decision, are carrying out a transformation of their conception of the world, of their mentality, and to some extent of their personalities, which makes them able to fulfill their role of vanguard of the popular masses, acting as mentors, educators, organizers, and leaders of the popular masses.

Some comrades objected the “theory of three worlds” to Maoism. The theory of three worlds is certainly a non-Marxist theory, which had a deleterious role in the history of the communist movement and served the rightwing of the Chinese Communist Party in promoting the introduction of capitalism in China (the “four modernizations”, etc.) and making China an imperialist power. As far as we are aware, the theory was publicly stated for the first time by Teng Hsiao-ping in April 1974, at the UN General Assembly Special Session on Raw Materials and Development. Teng Hsiao-ping, declared as a leader of the rightwing of the Chinese Communist Party, was rehabilitated in April 1973 and dismissed again by every office in the Party and State

in April 1976.

It is doubtful that Mao Tse-tung ever formulated this theory. Even Enver Hoxha did not dare say this, despite his reproaching Mao of this theory. However, even if the theory had originally been drafted by Mao, this bourgeois theory would not invalidate the positive and essential contribution that Maoism has provided to communist thought, to which that theory is completely foreign. To say that M-L-M is the third and higher stage of communist thought, does not imply that Mao, Lenin or Marx did not make mistakes, that they never formulated wrong theories or that these great leaders of the communist movement were infallible. This conception would be completely alien to dialectical materialism. The main contributions of Maoism to the communist thought are the six ones clearly illustrated in the above-mentioned article *On the Eighth Discriminating Factor* (2012). They are essential to the revival of the communist movement.

1.4. Prospects of organization of the International Communist Movement

Why does the rebirth of the communist movement progress so slowly?

The communist movement has not yet embraced the notion that the revolution does not break out on its own, but has to be built, as Engels had already stated in 1895 in his Introduction to *Class Struggles in France from 1848 to 1850*. Both at the time of the Second International and of the CI, most of the parties were waiting for the revolution to break out and engaged in supporting social struggles or produced propaganda of socialism. From these activities, two wrong tendencies arose, tendencies that still persist today as the major elements that put a check on the rebirth of the communist movement – economism and dogmatism.

We share the conception expressed by Frederick Engels, who stated that a socialist revolution cannot consist of a popular uprising that breaks out because of a combination of circumstances, during which the most advanced party seizes power. As we state throughout this document, the socialist revolution is a PRPW led by the CP through multiple campaigns, during which time the CP strengthens and consolidates, gathers and trains the revolutionary forces by organizing the advanced elements of the working class and of the other classes of the popular masses in its own ranks, as well as in mass organizations which clump around the CP (Revolutionary Front), and step by step builds, extends, and strengthens a new direction on the broader popular masses. This new power is capable of opposing the bourgeoisie by tightening a grip on them, until they are supplanted, the entire country is taken over, and socialism established, as a rule through a civil war that the bourgeoisie initiates when their back is finally up against the wall. An evaluation of

the experience of the first wave of the proletarian revolution in imperialist countries confirms this strategy for a socialist revolution.

The prospects of organization of the ICM are closely linked to the rebirth of the communist movement. This will occur by overcoming dogmatism and economism in our ranks, two tendencies that prevent the communist movement from playing the role that only it can play in the last and troubled stage of the second general crisis, in which popular masses in all countries are being dragged. *The struggle to overcome dogmatism and economism in the ICM is the struggle for its reorganization.* Efforts to reorganize the ICM, or to promote its rebirth, through means and initiatives that are solely or mainly organizational are unfruitful. The discussion that we want to bring about is part of the struggle to reorganize the ICM and found the second CI.

2.

The theory of the (first and second) general crisis of capitalism in the stage of imperialism and the connected revolutionary situation in development

The most recent and concise exposition of the ongoing general crisis that we have is the following article (*The interpretation of the nature of current crisis decides communist parties' activity*) by Nicola P., member of the editorial staff of the magazine *La voce del (n) PCI*, for the *International Newsletter* of the International Conference of Marxist Leninist Parties and Organizations. The article echoes many themes discussed in this document and link them to the phenomenon of the general crisis.

The globalization of commodity production and financial activity is an effect of the general crisis. Every general crisis has spurred on steps towards globalization, as well as produced greater political and cultural unity worldwide, world wars, etc. Absolute overproduction of capital leads capitalists to hustle as predators, each one trying to make the entire world their hunting grounds and territory of looting and robbery. This is the way the unity of the human species emerges within the capitalist relations of production. *This unity is a precondition for the communist society* of which the communist movement shall lead the construction. It entails the international nature of the socialist revolution, although this is still national in its form. The content of proletarian revolution is, in fact, inherently international: communism can succeed only as an achievement of all of humanity. But the socialist revolution is the combination of the conquest of power in single countries (carried out by the proletariat, guided by its organized vanguard) and the inception of the transition to socialism in single countries.

The interpretation of the nature of the current crisis decides communist parties' activity (article by Nicola P.)

It is very important, indeed it is essential, that we correctly understand the nature of the current crisis. In the 11th of the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), Marx says: "Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to transform it." On the other side, in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848) Marx says that communists are distinguished from other revolutionaries because they have a more advanced understanding of the conditions, forms and results of class struggle and, on this basis, they always push it forward. The *interpretation* of the

world is not the goal of us communists. Our goal is the *transformation* of the world. But people need to represent the world to themselves, in order to have a conception of what they do. The socialist revolution is not something instinctive. In *What has to be done?*, Lenin firmly teaches us that the theory that guides the communist movement does not at all arise from experience spontaneously. It has to be elaborated by communists who, for this purpose, have to use the most sophisticated tools of knowledge that humanity has. Communists bring this knowledge to the working class, who, due to the position they occupy in capitalist society, are especially predisposed to assimilating and taking it on as a guide for action. The practical communist movement can grow beyond a basic level only if guided by a revolutionary theory. Our action to transform the world, other things being equal, is all the more effective the righter and more advanced our understanding of the world is. Only with a sufficiently right understanding of the nature of the current crisis we will be able to make the socialist revolution and the second wave of the proletarian revolution will bring humanity to finally overcome capitalism and build socialism worldwide, on the way towards communism.

The way we interpret the world is utterly important to our political goals. It influences our political activity, allowing it to be more or less effective. It is therefore necessary that we communists take the time and attention needed to verify and improve our understanding of the current crisis.

Today, many communists still interpret our current crisis using Marx's interpretation of the decennial cyclical crises that characterized capitalist societies in the first half of the 19th century, as if our current situation were a repetition, but on a global scale. This attitude is one of the manifestations of dogmatism still raging today in the communist movement, and making much of its activity fruitless and its action inconclusive. The cyclical crises described by Marx in the first volume of *The Capital* are over. Already in the 1886 Preface to the English edition of the first volume of *The Capital*, Engels pointed out that the last cyclical crises of capitalism – the last crises of the nature described by Marx – occurred in 1867, and that since 1873 capitalist countries had, instead, entered into a long and painful depression, of which in 1886 no one could see the end.

The cyclical crises belong to the pre-imperialist stage of capitalism, when economic relations were characterized by free competition between many capitals. They were economic crises. They were determined by the anarchical activity of business. The solution to those crises would come from the very same economic movement of capitalist society. Falls within business also created the conditions for its recovery.

Not by chance the crises were cyclical, and these cycles lasted about a decade. As the imperialist stage began, capitalist societies equipped themselves with large-scale systems and organisms that attenuated the amplitude of cyclical fluctuations of business – the Antithetical Forms of Social Unity⁶, which Marx had already described in *Grundrisse*. On the other hand, a general crisis of capitalism also began. These are crises that have their basis in absolute overproduction of capital. Marx explains this in chapter 15 of volume III of *The Capital*. Within the existing political context, capitalists have accumulated too much capital and can no longer continue to accumulate and increase all its value by producing commodities. The political and social context must, therefore, be disrupted and replaced by another. It is only through this political and cultural upheaval that these general crises can be resolved. The solution comes neither by the anarchical movement of business, nor by economic measures taken by governments and other social institutions. Hence, the economic crisis becomes political and cultural.

The long depression mentioned by Engels in his 1886 Preface led the major powers to divide the world among themselves and introduced the imperialist stage of capitalism. Imperialism is a stage in which economic relations are no longer characterized by free competition between many capitalists. Instead, economic relations are characterized on the one hand by the dominance of monopolies in the production of commodities, and, on the other, by the dominance of financial capital over the capital employed in the production of commodities. It is the stage in which capitalism has exhausted its civilizing role and has become parasitic. In capitalist countries, the bourgeoisie is politically allied and combined with the residual feudal forces (in Europe this can be acutely seen with the Catholic Church). In the political and cultural field, the bourgeoisie has become undemocratic, reactionary, militaristic and repressive. In the colonies, capitalist forces have combined with feudal ones and have divided the world into imperialist and oppressed countries.

The first real general crisis of the imperialist stage took place in the first half of the last century. It led humanity to the two world wars and spurred on the long revolutionary situation that lasted for the entire first half of the century. All around the world, this was a period of instability for all political regimes. In its orbit, the crises spurred the first wave of world proletarian revolution that created the first socialist

⁶ According to Marx's definition the *Antithetical Forms of Social Unity* (AFSU) are institutions and procedures through which the bourgeoisie tries to manage the collective character that productive forces have assumed without abolishing capitalists' individual property and initiative. These institutions mediate between the collective character of productive forces and the surviving capitalist relations of production. Instances of AFSU are central banks, fiduciary money, collective bargaining, State political economy, social security, etc. [ETN].

countries and spread the communist movement worldwide.

One of the main reasons preventing the communist movement from succeeding in establishing socialism in imperialist countries and putting a definitive end to capitalism, is, in these countries, the CPs' inadequate understanding of the nature of the general crisis that was in progress at the time and its economic fundamentals. Essentially, despite Lenin and Stalin's discoveries and teachings, CPs based in imperialist countries, within the CI, clung onto Marx's interpretation of the cyclical economic crises that the capitalist countries had experienced in the first half of the 19th century. All the analyses of E.S. Varga, the major economist of the CI, remain within these confines. Varga describes the fluctuations in the economic movement, not the long-term general phenomenon, nor he describes the resulting political and cultural crisis, from which resolution to the general crisis comes. As a consequence, despite their large numbers, the heroism shown by millions of their members, and their historical commitment to the successful struggle against fascism, the CPs of the imperialist countries were not able to achieve their goal. The imperialist bourgeoisie managed to keep the lead over imperialist countries. Thanks to the devastation produced by the two world wars and the related social, political and cultural turmoil, the bourgeoisie could take the accumulation of capital up again and develop new large-scale commodity production for several decades (1945-1975). Instead, the propelling force of the first wave of world proletarian revolution, that had pushed for human progress, dwindled to almost extinction. Modern revisionism took the lead of the communist movement, corroding and disrupting it on a large scale. Revisionism produced a regression within the first socialist countries, brought them to a point and depend on imperialist countries, until they collapsed. The struggle that communists, led by Mao at the head of the Chinese Communist Party, fought against modern revisionism and its destructive work, did not manage to prevent the decline of the communist movement. However, regardless of this failure, the PCC's struggle against revisionism, and particularly the Great Cultural Proletarian Revolution, offer incredible lessons for those communists who are willing to learn from their experience. It is thanks to these teachings that the communist movement has been reborn worldwide, struggling against dogmatism and economism that still restrain our momentum and rebirth.

The capitalist world has entered its second general crisis since the 1970s. Capitalism could not escape the absolute overproduction of capital: it is the limit to its development, the limit inherent to capitalism itself. Capitalism is unavoidably bound to reach this limit. It took only thirty years after World War II for the bourgeoisie to find themselves facing another general crisis, but this time in the partially new

conditions created by the first wave of world proletarian revolution and its decline. The bourgeoisie has accumulated too much capital and cannot continue to accumulate and increase all its value by producing goods and services in the political and social context created during the first general crisis. The inclusion in the global imperialist system of most of the first socialist countries, particularly China and Russia, has partially changed the situation, but has not fundamentally altered the course of events. For the first time, the environmental crisis added to the general crisis of capitalism, and the two crises together determine the objective conditions in which the rebirth of the communist movement develops and the second wave of world proletarian revolution advances throughout the world. It will continue to advance, because mankind is a species provided with intelligence. During millennia of evolution, from an animal-like condition to the actual state, mankind has been able to solve all problems of survival. Today we have the material, moral, and intellectual means to both overcome capitalism, establish socialism, end the devastation produced by capitalism, and definitely improve the environmental conditions of the Planet. M-L-M is the revolutionary conception of the world that guides the rebirth of the communist movement. Only through this conception can CPs transform themselves and grow until they will be up to the tasks they must carry out.

A right and adequate understanding of the nature and causes of the new general crisis and of the conditions for its resolution is essential to form CPs adequate to the glorious duties of this phase. It is just as much essential, moreover, that we undertake a right evaluation of the experience of the 160-year history of the communist movement, and in particular of the experience of the first wave of world proletarian revolution and the first socialist countries. This is the core of M-L-M. This is why the struggle for the affirmation of M-L-M is the main aspect of proletarian internationalism. The main form of help that any CP can give to others is a contribute to the understanding, assimilation and affirmation of the right theory of the general crisis and the right evaluation of the experience of the communist movement. This allows all CPs to draw the right conclusions to build the socialist revolution in their own country, taking into account their particular context and so contributing to the common duty of the world proletarian revolution.

One of the most important universal conclusions is that socialist revolution, by its nature, does not consist of a popular uprising that breaks out and where CP, well prepared for the event, take the opportunity to seize power and establish socialism. The socialist revolution is not an event that breaks out, an event determined by worsening economic and social conditions, by the suffering imposed by the imperialist bourgeoisie on the mass of the population, by the propaganda of CPs, or

by the organization of the popular masses. Communists waiting for the socialist revolution to break out will be over and over disappointed. This is as true today as it was in the past. Some draw reactionary conclusions: they blame the masses' backwardness and cowardice, their "nature" of oppressed classes. But the real culprit is the CPs' *own* backwardness! Already in 1895, in his Introduction to *Class Struggles in France from 1848 to 1850*, Engels pointed out that, unlike the bourgeois revolution, the socialist revolution by its nature does not break out, but must be built by the CP. As Lenin and Stalin (*Principles of Leninism*) taught, by constructing large mass organizations of the working class and other classes of the masses, the Second International (1889-1914) contributed to the construction of the socialist revolution. But most of the parties in the Second International were not guided by a right conception of the world, particularly regarding the general crisis of capitalism, the protracted revolutionary situation it generated, and the nature of the socialist revolution. They expected the socialist revolution to break out rather than build it phase after phase, campaign after campaign, as a PRPW that leads to the establishment of socialism in single countries, and then, in combination with other countries, to the world proletarian revolution. They instead operated as if their sole, or at least their main task, was the mobilization of the masses into social struggles, their cultural organization, and their participation in bourgeois political struggle. They were convinced that by doing so, they were preparing themselves to "seize the opportunity" of the revolution that would break out.

In the imperialist countries, the parties of the CI (1919-1943, but actually dissolved in 1956) had a similar trajectory, although within higher levels of organization and international connection. Many CPs, especially in imperialist countries, have clung onto this conception of their duties. The experience of the first wave of world proletarian revolution has proved this to be inadequate. Economism and dogmatism are the major obstacles to the rebirth of the communist movement. In fact, what parties' leaders do not understand, the masses, and especially politically advanced workers⁷, sense in their own way – in fact, they do not join the efforts of dogmatic and economist new parties (even if these parties in all honesty claim themselves to be revolutionary, M-L or even Maoist). The masses will not follow a path that experience has already shown to be disastrous.

⁷ By *politically advanced worker* we refer to five different, and possibly overlapping, categories of workers: 1. those who embody the tendency to rebuild the CP, a tendency that can be expressed in various ways; 2. those who selflessly exercise a leading role over their comrades in economic struggles, regardless of their membership in a trade union; 3. those who in a certain way disinterestedly assume the duty of uniting and mobilizing their fellow workers to solve specific problems that they face over time; 4. those who impersonate other positive tendencies that develop among the masses, such as curiosity about politics and the world or those who want to make themselves useful, etc.; 5. those afflicted by the "pain of living" and who want to feel better, that is, those who in their current way of living cannot find a purpose and keep looking for it [ETN].

In 2008, the second general crisis has entered its terminal stage as the financial crisis began in the United States. Even in the richest imperialist countries (in the US and EU) a growing number of workers are by the millions being thrown into the street, adding to the huge mass of hundreds of millions of workers in oppressed countries, against whom the imperialist bourgeoisie has already for decades, on a large scale and in every corner of the world, been waging an undeclared war of extermination. But imperialist States cannot afford to endlessly expand unemployment benefits and other social security measures. Their budget deficit, their loans and debts further disrupt the monetary and financial system, whose instability they should be remedying, given that this stability is the condition of, and the main support to, the survival of their world. Then, the terminal stage cannot extend for long.

Given the nature of the current crisis, a solution solely based on economic measures will not suffice. It is not enough that States create conditions to give capitalists stimuli to make more profits in the production of goods, rather than through financial speculation – a solution advocated by the moderate bourgeois right. Nor it is enough that States distribute a form of monetary income to those classes that then will spend it for consumption. This solution is supported by the bourgeois left and by those communists who think that the current crisis is of the same type as the cyclical crises of the 19th century. If this were the case, in bourgeois States the general crisis of the first half of the last century should have been resolved through Keynesian policies. Unfortunately, this goes against any obvious fact.

The only way we can exit this current crisis is through a political and cultural upheaval – the creation of a different social context. Essentially, in the next future, nationally and internationally, there will be two, and only two, ways out.

1. The *revolutionary mobilization* of the popular masses led by CPs strong enough to take on this duty. By this we mean CPs that dare to think that a socialist revolution is possible, and that understand that it is the communists' duty to build it through successive campaigns, as a PRPW until the establishing of socialism.

2. The *reactionary mobilization* of the masses. As a matter of fact, the imperialist bourgeoisie and other reactionary classes are also looking for a way out to our current situation. They need it – and they have it – if we do not stop them in time. In short, the only feasible and realistic way to end the crisis for bourgeois groups who are determined to both put a stop to revolutionary mobilization and prevent the disappearance of their world, is to mobilize that part of the masses that they manage

to mobilize under their direction and throw them against the rest of the masses, in order to drag everyone into the plundering of the rest of the world: imperialist war. The imperialist war would be a mere continuation of their current politics by other means. The environmental crisis and the general crisis of capitalism combine and provide adequate excuses for the more farsighted, resolute, reckless and criminal bourgeois groups to mobilize masses against masses, countries against countries, coalition against coalition.

The interpretation we give to the crisis is therefore a decisive factor. The (n)ICP calls on communists worldwide, and in particular those in imperialist countries, to unify around a right conception of the current crisis and the duties at hand.

3.

The regime of preventive counterrevolution established by the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries

The regime of preventive counterrevolution is the system of social relations through which the bourgeoisie preserves its dominance in our country, as well as in other imperialist countries. The US imperialist bourgeoisie first created this regime at the beginning of the 20th century, in order to deal with the communist movement in the US. This regime was successful due to limitations within the American and International Communist Movement. After World War II, the bourgeoisie extended it to all the imperialist countries, as a mean to help the rightwing of the communist movement to gain and maintain leadership, taking advantage of the fact that the communist movement had given up its fight to establish socialism. The bourgeoisie will keep this regime going as long as it is effective. That is, they keep it going until it prevents the political consciousness and organization of the masses from growing beyond the point where bourgeois dominance is jeopardized. When the regime of preventive counterrevolution is not able to serve the purpose anymore, the bourgeoisie resorts to reactionary mobilization of the masses – fascism, terror, civil war, and war. Regimes of preventive counterrevolution are currently disintegrating due to the worsening of the second general crisis, the beginning of the terminal stage of the second general crisis of capitalism, the decline of the US global hegemony, and the decline of European imperialist powers. Yet, in imperialist countries the bourgeoisie's power ultimately lies on its hegemony, rather than on repression and weapons. No one can permanently rule over these countries if the workers of capitalist firms are actively resistant to the powers that be. Consequently, as CPs within imperialist countries build the socialist revolution, that is, as they promote and direct the PRPW, they must leverage both the existence of the regime of preventive counterrevolution as well as its ongoing dissolution. In short, CPs must leverage the struggle between the revolutionary and the reactionary mobilization of the masses. Which one will prevail is not yet decided. If the reactionary mobilization prevails, the objective conditions of our struggle will completely change, and we will have to adapt accordingly. It was the bourgeois left who formulated the argument that the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries has already introduced a form of “modern fascism” (as the bourgeois left is being, indeed, sidelined and vanquished). This thesis, which has been adopted by some leftist groups and even communist organizations (for example, by *Proletari Comunisti* in Italy) paralyzes revolutionary activity.

The CPs of imperialist countries must therefore understand the nature and origin of

regimes of preventive counterrevolution, both to make the right evaluation of past experience (understand the reason why we were not able to establish socialism in any imperialist country) and to rightly guide their actions today.

What are the universal features of regimes of preventive counterrevolution? In the regime of preventive counterrevolution, the bourgeoisie combines five different lines of action (five “pillars” that make all regimes of preventive counterrevolution stand).

1. Maintaining the popular masses’ cultural and political backwardness. The bourgeoisie does so by: actively spreading the culture of escaping reality; promoting theories, movements, and occupations that distract the popular masses’ attention, interest, and activities from classes antagonism, concentrating their attention on futilities (diversion); producing confusion and intoxication of the mind with reactionary theories and false news. In short, they prevent the political consciousness from rising by an appropriate and articulated system of cultural operations. In this field, the bourgeoisie recovered and revived the role of religions and religious institutions, in Italy first and foremost that of the Catholic Church. They could not limit themselves to religion, though, because part of the popular masses inevitably slips beyond its grasp.

2. Giving concessions to the socially progressive requests that the popular masses most strongly claim; giving everyone the hope to have a dignified life and substantiating this hope with some actual benefits; tying workers with financial bonds (loans, installments, mortgages, bills, taxes, rent, etc.) that put them, at any moment, at personal risk of losing everything, or anyway much of their social status, if they do not respect deadlines. With their social struggles against the bourgeoisie, the popular masses have been able to extort time and money for themselves, so the bourgeoisie had to push them to use these resources for the satisfaction of their “animal urges”. The bourgeoisie had to – and actually did – multiply the means and the forms to satisfy these urges, so to make the masses use up their spare money and time.

3. Developing channels of participation to the bourgeois political struggle that place the popular masses in a subordinate position to bourgeois parties and exponents. Popular masses’ participation in the bourgeoisie’s political struggle is an essential ingredient of preventive counterrevolution. The division of powers, representative assemblies, political elections and struggles among different parties (multipartism) are essential aspects of regimes of preventive counterrevolution. The bourgeoisie must make the masses perceive the State as their own, rather than as an instrument of the imperialist bourgeoisie. All those who want to participate in political life must be allowed to do so. The bourgeoisie, however, sets the conditions for this participation. Any involvement of the popular masses in political life must play along with the laws

set down by the ruling class. Participation cannot exceed the bourgeois social order. Nonetheless, the bourgeoisie must inevitably and most distinctly divide its political activity into two fields – a public and a secret one. The public field admits the participation of the popular masses (the “bourgeois political theatrics”). The secret field is reserved for insiders. A fundamental prerequisite for any “responsible” politician is to tacitly respect, and conform, to this division. Each of these tacit rules, however, are obviously weak points in the new mechanisms of power.

4. Maintaining the popular masses, and particularly the working class, in a state of powerlessness; preventing their forms of organization (without organization proletarians have no social force, they cannot orientate or influence social life); supplying the masses with organizations led by figures that the bourgeoisie trusts (the bourgeoisie has these organizations built in order to divert the masses from class organizations, and they do so by mobilizing and supporting priests, police officers and the like: cultural and social organizations and unions connected to the Catholic Church, USA imperialist, etc.), figures that are venal, corruptible, ambitious and individualistic; preventing the working class from forming organizations that are both structurally and ideologically autonomous from the bourgeoisie.

5. Selectively repressing communists. The bourgeoisie must prevent communists from succeeding by any possible means. They must prevent communists from gaining strength through the formation of the Party, from elaborating and assimilating a conception of the world, a method of work and knowledge building, and a right strategy. They must prevent communists from carrying out effective activity, recruiting, and establishing hegemony over the working class. The bourgeoisie must corrupt and co-opt communists and, when this is not possible, break and eliminate those that resist corruption and co-optation.

The general crisis, and especially its terminal stage, has led to a process of dissolution of the second of these universal five pillars. Moreover, the political crisis leads the bourgeoisie themselves to seriously fracture the third and fourth pillars (limitations must be placed onto the level of participation of the masses in bourgeois political struggles as contradictions grow, and anti-trade union politics must be promoted and established by owners and their authorities). The last pillar is being increasingly fractured (repression must be increasingly directed against the whole bulk of the masses, as generalized resistance to the crisis grows) under the bourgeoisie’s banner of the “war against terrorism”. Under these conditions, the effectiveness of the first of the five pillars is reduced. The conditions for developing the PRPW are improving in all imperialist countries. The strong presence of immigrant workers facilitates our work. The heroic resistance in the oppressed countries attacked by the US, Zionists, and other imperialist powers, promotes the development of the second wave of

proletarian revolution, although the struggle of the Arab and Muslim countries is still largely directed by reactionary classes and groups. The resistance of an increasing number of countries (from Latin American countries to China, from Iran to Russia) to the US imperialism and Zionist groups acts to politically weaken the global imperialist system, one still centered in the US. The US imperialist bourgeoisie is increasingly tempted to resort to their military supremacy, which is still intact. The race between revolutionary and reactionary mobilization, between revolution and war, is fully under way in individual countries, as well as internationally. In this situation, CPs, besides devoting most of their energies to building the revolution in their country, must also devote energy to the rebirth of the ICM worldwide, and in particular to the rebirth of the communist movement in the US: this is probably the only way to prevent the US imperialist bourgeoisie from continuing to form a bloc with Zionist groups and plunging the world into a new world war. Promoting the struggle to eliminate the domination of the imperialist bourgeoisie in the US is mainly the responsibility of the American communist movement, but it is also a universal duty of the communist movement. Similarly, it is mainly the Italian communist movement's duty to eliminate the Vatican and the Catholic Church, but is also a universal duty of the communist movement to do so, given the role that this residual institution from the European Middle Age plays in the imperialist world system of oppression.

4.

The strategy of the Protracted Revolutionary People's War

What does the Protracted Revolutionary People's War consist of in our country and in imperialist countries more broadly?

The PRPW is a universal strategy that has to be applied in each country according to particular laws.

As for our country, Italy, the first and most general peculiarity lies in the fact that the country is an imperialist country. Therefore, the laws that apply to the oppressed, semi-feudal and neo-colonial countries cannot be carried over. In these latter countries, war is waged in the countryside to then surround cities. The accumulation of revolutionary forces is based on the involvement and support of the peasantry, which in oppressed countries is the bulk of the population.

In imperialist countries like our own, the accumulation of revolutionary forces proceeds through the establishment and resistance of the clandestine Party and its engagement in leading the masses to form all sorts of mass organization necessary to satisfy their material and spiritual needs, join the bourgeois political struggle in order to overthrow its course, and carry out social struggles. This is until the bourgeoisie is forced to either rouse a civil war or lose power without a fight. We must work – and are working – with the prospect that we will face and win an eventual civil war. Only in this way we will be prepared for any eventuality. This is our country's equivalent of semi-feudal countries' "encircling the cities from the countryside".

The PRPW in imperialist countries begins with the foundation of the CP that shall lead it. In our country, it began with the foundation of the (n)ICP.

PRPW in Italy, therefore, does not start with armed struggle. The transition to armed struggle, namely civil war, will be in our country the transition from the first stage of the war (strategic defensive, the stage of accumulation of forces) to the second stage (strategic balance: two forces collide and contend each other over the leadership of the country).

The transition from the stage of the accumulation of forces to civil war occurred three times in our country already:

1. after World War I, in the period called *Two red years* (see note 4 above);
2. at the end of World War II, with the Partisan Resistance;
3. in the 1970s, with the Fighting Communist Organizations (*Red Brigades*).

The successes and failures of these experiences are valuable elements of knowledge for the PRPW that (n)ICP directs. These events confirm that the communist movement acted blindly, but also indicate the line that we must consciously implement.

We say that the revolution is being built and that it is not something that breaks out on its own. The construction of the revolution is the development of the PRPW. In it, a campaign follows another based on the results of the former, thus creating the conditions for higher-level campaigns (concatenation). Each campaign consists of battles and tactical operations that are combined together (synergy) or follow one another (concatenation).

The stages of the war, both in the oppressed, semi-feudal, and neo-imperialist countries, are three: the stage of strategic defensive, the stage of strategic balance, and the stage of strategic offensive. In imperialist countries like our own, the current stage is that of the strategic defensive. At this stage, the CP accumulates revolutionary forces. At this stage in imperialist countries, the battlefield is not that of armed clashes, but the spaces in which the CP attacks the heart of imperialist bourgeoisie's power: *their hegemony over the masses* – their ability to steer their conscience and direct their actions. Here the CP is stealing ground from the imperialist bourgeoisie.

The Protracted Revolutionary People's War overcomes a limit of the Communist International

Unlike the Second International, the CI took into account and had a clear understanding of the qualitative difference between social struggles for immediate benefits (chronic and inherent to any bourgeois society) and the struggle for socialism. However, the CI consistently opposed, as reciprocally exclusive elements, peaceful and violent struggle, work within the bourgeois society and work against bourgeois society, parliamentary activity and civil war, reforms and revolution, alliance and struggle, non-antagonistic and antagonistic contradictions, contradictions between the masses and the imperialist bourgeoisie and contradictions between groups within the ruling class, politics in support of social struggles and politics for revolution, clandestine and legal organization. In reality, however, these elements are unity of opposites. The strategy of the PRPW recognizes this unity, develops both terms of the unity and combine them to build the struggle of the working class to undermine and ultimately eliminate the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie and establish socialism.

1. The evaluation of the experience of the communist movement (first wave of world proletarian revolution and first socialist countries, crisis of the communist movement and modern revisionism, rebirth of the communist movement on the basis of Marxism Leninism Maoism)

Texts in English

Manifesto Program of the (new) Italian Communist Party
in <http://www.nuovopci.it/eile/en/in080619.html>

The political order of the first socialist countries
A very important issue: the political order of future socialist countries
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Es preciso distinguir las leyes universales de las leyes particulares de la guerra popular prolongada

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Four main issues to be debated in the International Communist Movement

1.

The evaluation of the experience of the communist movement

1.1. The first wave of world proletarian revolution and the first socialist countries

1.1.1. Why, during the first wave of world proletarian revolution in the first half of the last century, was the communist movement not able to establish socialism in any imperialist country?

1.1.2. Why, after an initial period of meteoric development and great victories, did the first wave of world proletarian revolution lose momentum and its role as driving force in pushing for human progress all over the world?

1.1.3. Why did the first socialist countries, which at their peak made up a third of the world population, after an initial period of great achievements, progressively slow down, decline, until eventually they collapse or change side and anyway lose their initial role of red base of world proletarian revolution?

1.2. Crisis of the communist movement and modern revisionism

1.3. Rebirth of the communist movement on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism

1.4. Prospects of organization of the International Communist Movement

2.

The theory of the (first and second) general crisis of capitalism in the stage of imperialism and the connected the revolutionary situation in development

3.

The regime of preventive counterrevolution established by the bourgeoisie in imperialist countries

4.

The strategy of the Protracted Revolutionary People's War