

Poor Mao Zedong, who wasn't even a Maoist

This is a response to the article *Maoism is not a "label"* by comrade Ragnar Röed, which was published in Marxistiskt Forum 1/2018.

What is meant by a label?

Already the headline of the comrade's article shows that he has not understood the content of my article *Is revolution made on the basis of labels?* in Marxistiskt Forum 1/2017. He writes that I reduce "it (i.e. Maoism) to a 'label'". On the contrary, I write that the revolution cannot be made on the basis of labels, i.e. that revolutionary currents cannot be reduced to labels. What is meant by a label? A label is a sticky term; it can be true or false, or even empty and contentless. Marx commented on the French "Marxists" during the late 1870s with the words: "All I know is that I am not a Marxist." (Engels: Letter to Schmidt 1890). Why did Marx express those words? Of course, because he considered that these French so-called Marxists mainly represented a different line or they did not understand his teaching at all. Then it didn't matter that they also called themselves Marxists.

Question to Röed: Were everyone who called themselves Marxists, especially after Marx's death, also Marxists? Was everyone who called themselves Leninists, especially after Lenin's death, also Leninists? Trotsky claimed to be a Bolshevik-Leninist. Was Trotsky a Leninist at all? Is everyone today claiming to be Maoists also Maoists?

The meaning of terms such as Marxism, Leninism and Maoism is absolutely crucial

Röed asks if I oppose terms like Marxism or Leninism. That's a stupid question. Of course I do not. The core issue, the crucial one, however, is what is meant by the term Maoism. Röed writes that it was Stalin's lot to formulate Leninism as well as that it was others to formulate Maoism. It is true that Stalin summarizes Leninism in *On the Foundations of Leninism* and *Concerning Questions of Leninism*. He does so through a full presentation of Lenin's policies and theories, which are supported by source references and detailed quotes. Source references and elaborate quotes are by the way difficult to find by the Communist Party of Peru (Partido Comunista del Peru), abbreviated CPP, and its epigones regarding their interpretation of Maoism. At the same time, these two articles by Stalin express a controversy about the meaning and consequence of Lenin's theories. After Lenin's death, all the leading Bolsheviks declared themselves Leninists. Especially "Concerning the questions of Leninism" is a polemic against Zinoviev's and Kamenev's interpretations of Leninism. This

illustrates my previous point that what is decisive is the meaning of Marxism, Leninism and Maoism.

When Stalin summed up Leninism, did Lenin's political line then first become Leninism? Did Stalin add any new dimension to Lenin's political line and theories, which no one had discovered before? In what way did "Stalin and CPSU lift Leninism to a new stage of Marxism"? Wasn't that done by Lenin himself? The correctness of Lenin's political line had already been confirmed in practice by the October Revolution. Lenin's theoretical texts were already written and published. In the two quoted texts, Stalin emphasizes that he defends Lenin's positions – not that he has in any way developed them further. Did Marx become Marxist first through the care of others? Don't Marx's theories speak for themselves? In his funeral speech on Marx, Friedrich Engels mentions only two of his decisive discoveries, namely, the theory of historical materialism and the theory of surplus value, but these are sufficient to explain Marx's greatness. Both of these theories have had enormous historical significance. The same with Lenin's party theory, the theory of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism, the armed urban revolution and the alliance between the proletariat and peasants (which Stalin also addresses in the articles mentioned) and other theories.

Mao Zedong was not even a Maoist

Röed writes that "It is correct that Mao himself did not formulate Maoism" and further "Mao and the Communist Party of China (CPC) were not revisionists (thank God! – my note), but they were not Maoists either."

Poor Mao Zedong, who wasn't even a Maoist! Röed's reasoning means that Mao Zedong did not understand the full consequences of his own thoughts and that he never reached Gonzalo's, the chairman of Communist Party of Peru (CPP), and Röed's theoretical level. "Their (i.e. the CPC's and Mao Zedong's) primary task was not to make revolution in all countries, but to make revolution in China." Does Röed mean that the task of the day is to make revolution in all countries – at the same time? If so, who will lead the world revolution? In that case, it is pure and simple Trotskyism. So far, revolutions and liberation wars have taken place in country after country, not in all countries simultaneously.

Röed states that "Maybe that is why it needs someone like Gonzalo and a party like CPP to systematize and formulate the universal lessons learned from this process." But in what way have CPP and Gonzalo systematized and formulated Mao's thinking? Which authoritative text by CPP and Gonzalo can Röed refer to? My view is that CPP and Gonzalo have reduced Maoism to a set of dogmas, a catechism. At every point where PKP and Gonzalo represent a different view than Mao Zedong's, they are also completely wrong. They have not further developed Mao Zedong's theories in a single point.

Was the October Revolution really a people's war?

Röed writes that the October road "can also be understood as a prolonged people's war". "Also be understood" is an opportunistic way of expressing oneself. "Understood" by whom? Was the October Revolution understood as a people's war by the Bolshevik Party with Lenin and Stalin at the forefront? It is not possible to find a single text by Lenin or Stalin, describing the October Revolution as something other than an armed urban revolution, which first prevailed in the cities in February 1918, and later finally through the civil war that encompassed all of Russia. But of course, the prerequisite for the Soviet power to prevail throughout Russia was that the revolution had first prevailed in the cities, just as the French Revolution of 1789 first prevailed in Paris. I recommend that Röed read Lenin's *The Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat*¹ and *The history of CPSU (b)*, in particular the five-point summary. Röed states that "the 1917 uprising (no revolution? – my note) was just part of a long-running war, where the first major battles took place in 1905 and where the victory for Soviet power was first a fact in 1922". It is strange that Röed, who claims to have read *Concerning the Foundations of Leninism*, has not noted the passage about the period 1907 - 1912, where Stalin describes the retreat-tactics that the Bolshevik Party had to resort to. Both forms of struggle and organizational forms changed; instead of boycotting the duma – participation in the duma, instead of open revolutionary actions outside the duma – actions in the duma and work within the same etcetera. Not a word, therefore, about the Bolshevik Party trying to initiate some kind of people's war and surrounding the cities from the countryside. The Bolshevik Party focused its political activities on the proletariat of the Russian cities. The Russian proletariat constituted a smaller proportion of the population than in Western Europe, but on the other hand, the proletariat was much more concentrated in Russia than in Western Europe.

Question to Röed: Was the Bolshevik Party, under Lenin and Stalin's leadership, right, who led the Russian working class in an armed urban revolution and which then spread to the countryside through the alliance with the peasant class? Did Lenin and Stalin know what they were doing or had they in fact started a people's war?

The principal contradiction determines the strategy - the people's war is not universal

Mao Zedong developed dialectical materialism, especially in "On contradictions". Anyone who does not try to use – or even understand – the analytical conceptual apparatus in "On contradictions" is no Maoist. In "On Contradictions" Mao Zedong writes:

“There are many contradictions in the process of development of a complex thing, and one of them is necessarily the principal contradiction whose existence and

development determines or influences the existence and development of the other contradictions.

For instance, in capitalist society the two forces in contradiction, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, form the principal contradiction. The other contradictions, such as those between the remnant feudal class and the bourgeoisie, between the peasant petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie, between the proletariat and the peasant petty bourgeoisie, between the non-monopoly capitalists and the monopoly capitalists, between bourgeois democracy and bourgeois fascism, among the capitalist countries and between imperialism and the colonies, are all determined or influenced by this principal contradiction. ^{“iii}

Earlier in the same article Mao Zedong also writes that:

“Qualitatively different contradictions can only be resolved by qualitatively different methods. For instance, the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is resolved by the method of socialist revolution; the contradiction between the great masses of the people and the feudal system is resolved by the method of democratic revolution; the contradiction between the colonies and imperialism is resolved by the method of national revolutionary war;;... ”ⁱⁱⁱ

The CPP, RCP (Canada) and their unoriginal successors have not understood that the question of the principal contradiction is of decisive importance to the revolutionary strategy. By ignoring this aspect, consciously or unconsciously, they end up in the same camp as revisionists, Trotskyists and all sorts of ultra-leftists.

Can the principal contradiction change? Obviously.

Mao Zedong writes:

“In a semi-colonial country such as China, the relationship between the principal contradiction and the non-principal contradictions presents a complicated picture.

When imperialism launches a war of aggression against such a country, all its various classes, except for some traitors, can temporarily unite in a national war against imperialism. At such a time, the contradiction between imperialism and the country concerned becomes the principal contradiction, while all the contradictions among the various classes within the country (including what was the principal contradiction, between the feudal system and the great masses of the people) are temporarily relegated to a secondary and subordinate position.”^{iv}

The Communist Party of China and Mao Zedong were quite clear that there are only two paths to the socialist revolution, the armed urban revolution and the people's war. Mao Zedong writes:

" But this insurrection and war should not be launched until the bourgeoisie becomes really helpless, until the majority of the proletariat is determined to rise in arms and fight, and until the rural masses are giving willing help to the proletariat. **And when the time comes to launch such an insurrection and war, the first step will be to seize the cities, and then advance into the countryside and not the other way about** (my bold style). All this has been done by Communist Parties in capitalist countries, and it has been proved correct by the October Revolution in Russia.”^v

In a 1956 conversation with representatives of some Latin American communist parties, Mao Zedong warns them to mechanically copy the experiences of the Chinese revolution:

" The experience of the Chinese revolution, that is, building rural base areas, encircling the cities from the countryside and finally seizing the cities, may not be wholly applicable to many of your countries, though it can serve for your reference. I beg to advise you not to transplant Chinese experience mechanically. The experience of any foreign country can serve only for reference and must not be regarded as dogma. The universal truth of Marxism-Leninism and the concrete conditions of your own countries--the two must be integrated." ^{vi}

Incidentally, it can be stated that the CPC did not apply the people's war "all the way". A footnote to *Introducing the Communist* states:

“In the latter stage of the anti-Japanese war, and more particularly in the period of the Third Revolutionary Civil War (1945 - 49), **guerrilla warfare changed into regular warfare as the main form of armed struggle under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party** (my bold style), and this was due to the further growth of the revolutionary forces and the changes in the enemy's circumstances. The latter stage of the Third Revolutionary Civil war witnessed a further development, when operations were conducted by huge formations, which, equipped with heavy arms, were able to storm strongly fortified enemy positions.”^{vii}

These footnotes were reviewed and approved by Mao Zedong. People's war was not even "universal" in China!

In *The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement* of 1963 CPC addresses the revolutionary battles waged by the oppressed nations and the oppressed peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the struggle for the proletarian revolution in the imperialist and capitalist countries in two separate chapters . See “9. The oppressed nations and peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America are faced with the urgent task of fighting imperialism and its lackeys” respectively “10. In the imperialist and the capitalist countries, the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat are essential for the thorough

resolution of the contradictions of capitalist society” in *A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement*.^{viii} Nowhere is it argued that the strategy and forms of struggle in these areas would be identical and that the people’s war would be applicable to resolve the principal contradiction between proletariat and bourgeoisie in a capitalist country.

It is no argument that the only armed urban revolution that has succeeded is the October Revolution. Similar attempts were made in Germany, Hungary, Estonia and China. The reason why there have been no more attempts is due to both objective and subjective factors. The October Revolution took place in connection with the First World War and the successful liberation wars in China, Yugoslavia, Albania and Indochina took place in connection with the Second World War, two exceptional occasions.

The people's war has succeeded in those countries which have been subjected to imperialist aggression, with the principal contradiction being between the aggressor / occupying power and the people in each country. This applies to China, Yugoslavia and Albania during the Second World War; this applies to Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea after World War II. North Korea and the people’s democracies of Eastern Europe are special cases. If a country is subjected to imperialist aggression, the principal contradiction changes, as the aggression affects not only the proletariat but also the peasants and other parts of the petty bourgeoisie, the national bourgeoisie and even some parts of the big bourgeoisie and the landlord class. In all these countries the peasants constituted a very large proportion of the population; in China 80 percent according to Lin Biao, at least 75 percent in Yugoslavia and Albania and probably at least as much in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. In addition, geopolitical and topographical conditions, as well as historical martial traditions, play an important role. The only times the people's war, i.e. in the sense that cities are surrounded from the countryside, have succeeded in neocolonial countries without an occupying power present in the country are Cuba 1953 - 1959 and Nicaragua (1961 - 1979). It is irrelevant to this argument that Cuba later allied with the Soviet Union and that the Sandinistas were later overthrown and that the organization is now a right-wing Social-Democratic Party, although running the government.

Röed writes:

"The conclusion of this is today that there are no 'two ways' to communism, but that the road everywhere and all places goes through prolonged people's war."

This is political nonsense and an open revision of the teachings of both Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong.

In fact, I cannot see the slightest military tactical advantage of starting a people’s war in an imperialist country like Sweden, as long as the principal contradiction goes

between the proletariat and bourgeoisie. In Sweden, the farmers' share amounts to just over one percent, while the proletariat amounts to 70 percent. In imperialist countries, the power, the population and the proletariat are concentrated in cities and towns. People's war means that armed forces are gradually taking control of areas outside the cities and encircling them. Unless, from the outset, the revolutionary forces have the support of the majority, the ruling class and its apparatus of violence will very easily be able to isolate and eliminate every single liberated area. Contrary to the situation when a people is subjected to imperialist aggression, petty bourgeoisie and petty bourgeois strata will not more or less automatically position themselves on the side of the proletariat in the context of a people's war against a domestic enemy. In addition, the revolutionary forces will also have no advantage of local knowledge over the domestic class enemy. Instead, the decisive factor is to win the support of the majority of people because the situation for it is unbearable and carry out a storm attack, as the ruling class is paralyzed and no longer able to rule. There will be no shortage of weapons by the proletariat in such a situation. It is a completely different matter if the principal contradiction in Sweden changes so that it goes between the Swedish people and an attacking imperialist superpower/great power.

In fact, no communist party in an imperialist and capitalist country has ever tried to initiate a people's war, as long as the principal contradiction has gone between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. RCP's (Canada) plans are still in the drawer. If such attempts were made, these organizations would probably quickly degenerate into ultra-leftist sects in the style of the RAF (Baader-Meinhof League) in Germany, the Red Brigades in Italy and the Action Direct in France, which objectively served as provocateur organizations in the 1970s and 1980s. **I would also like to say that a party that believes that the principal contradiction between the proletariat and bourgeoisie in an imperialist and capitalist country can only be resolved through a people's war, will never ever lead either a people's war or a socialist revolution. At best, such a party will remain a playhouse.**

Question to Röed: Do you agree that Mao Zedong never advocated that the people's war could be applied regardless of the principal contradiction and situation, that is, it was not a universal strategy? Aren't the beliefs that the people's war is not universal and that it is universal (CPP's view) two completely incompatible views? Why is Mao Zedong wrong?

Why show CPP/Gonzalo respect but not Marx/Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong?

Röed considers that I lack in humility and mention the capture of the CPP Central Committee and Gonzalo in 1992 in a disrespectful way. This is nonsense.

Firstly, practice is the criterion of truth. The most important argument against reformists, revisionists, Trotskyists and anarchists is that they never have succeeded in

implementing a socialist society, or in the case of the anarchists even without a state apparatus. If a Communist Party has failed in one or the other context, it is also a sign that the ideological and political line has in some ways been wrong or incorrectly applied. That's why you can't compare Rosa Luxemburg/Karl Liebknecht, Gramsci or Bela Kun with Lenin or Ernst Thälmann with Stalin.

Secondly, the capture of the Central Committee and Gonzalo in 1992 was not the result of slipping on a banana peel or a lightning strike. It was a sign that they overestimated their own strength and underestimated the enemy, and did not take the necessary security measures. This is a typical leftist opportunistic error. In connection with the period from the February Revolution to the October Revolution, Lenin was put in safety several times, as the Bolshevik Party understood his decisive importance for the outcome of the Revolution.

Thirdly, "A political party's attitude towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfils *in practice* its obligations towards its *class* and the *working people*. Frankly acknowledging a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analyzing the conditions that have led up to it, and thrashing out the means of its rectification—that is the hallmark of a serious party; that is how it should perform its duties, and how it should educate and train its *class*, and then the *masses*. " (Lenin)^{ix}

Where is the CPP's self-criticism? When the party left in SKP^x lost the battle against the right-wing liquidators 1978 - 1980, a comprehensive self-critical review was made in SKA's^{xi} political report from 1982. We concluded that we had committed both left and right errors ourselves.

Question to Röed: Did the CPP make any mistake at all when the Central Committee and Gonzalo was captured? Which one (-s)? Or was it a brilliant move to procure a martyrdom? Why hasn't CPP published any self-criticism?

Fourthly, the comparison between communists in Norway and Sweden on the one hand and CPP on the other is absurd. Parties in imperialist and capitalist countries such as Norway and Sweden should be compared with other parties in the imperialist bloc, not with parties in neo-colonial countries or colonies. It is no coincidence that all Comintern resolutions and even "A Proposal on the General Line of the International Communist Movement" (1963) make this distinction. History has shown that it is much more difficult to carry out a revolution in any imperialist and capitalist country than a successful liberation war in a colony or neocolonial country, especially as it is subjected to imperialist aggression. Already in "Radicalism" Lenin states:

"Incidentally, apart from a number of other causes, that is why it is more difficult for Western Europe to *start* a socialist revolution than it was for us." ^{xii}

The most important difference between the situation in the imperialist bloc and the neo-colonial countries, commonly called the Third World, is that the class

contradictions are much sharper in the latter. The reason is the material living conditions of the proletariat in the imperialist countries – and that the peasant class amounts to only one or a few percent. Lenin also writes in "Radicalism":

“...for a revolution to take place it is not enough for the exploited and oppressed masses to realize the impossibility of living in the old way, and demand changes; for a revolution to take place it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. It is only when the “*lower classes*” *do not want* to live in the old way and the “*upper classes*” *cannot carry on in the old way* that the revolution can triumph. This truth can be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters).”^{xiii}

The CPP should of course be compared with other parties and movements in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The only countries that in modern times, i.e. after the Second World War, where the people, through armed struggle, have succeeded in overthrowing a domestic repressive regime without these countries being subjected to imperialist occupation, are Cuba 1953 - 1959 and Nicaragua 1961-1979. As you know, these liberation movements were not even led by Maoists. If you compare the CPP with the Communist Party of India (Maoists) and the Communist Party of Philippines (CCP) and the people's wars that they are waging, then neither of these parties has won, but they have neither been defeated. The Communist Party of Philippines has been engaged in a sustained struggle since 1968; The Communist Party of India (Maoists) represents a continuation, via various divisions and new constellations, of the 1967 Naxalbari uprising and the formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninists) in 1969. The major difference between these two parties and the CPP is that the former make no claims of being the leader of the world revolution and are not claiming to have further developed Maoism.

It does not matter that the CPP had a dominant position in 40 percent of Peru's territory for some time. The Nepalese Maoists controlled 80 percent of Nepal's territory before embarking on the parliamentary road. Only victory can confirm the accuracy of the line. As the saying goes, a miss is as good as a mile. The CPP's initial success may, in the first instance, been due to the Peruvian regime being unusually corrupt and the repression against the Peruvian people, mainly the peasants, extremely severe. This was also the case in Cuba and Nicaragua, where the Batista- and Somoza-regimes were extremely corrupt and oppressive. The CPP will not even come close to the Hungarian Communist Party, which under Bela Kun managed to lead the Hungarian working class in a socialist revolution and even establish a Soviet Republic, which lasted for just over four months, from March 21 1919 to August 6 1919. The important thing about the Hungarian Revolution today is to study what mistakes were made so that state power could not be maintained.

Röed states that anyone who criticizes CPP is arrogant and lacks humility. That's a ridiculous statement. The CPP went out with tits and trumpets and claimed to have further developed Maoism on Peruvian conditions through Gonzalo's thinking. The

PKP simply claimed the victory in advance. In addition, the party presented itself as the leader of the world revolution, even though it had not yet won in Peru. This is in both cases a manifestation of hubris. Did the Communist Party of China claim to be the leader of the world revolution in 1945, when Mao Zedong's thinking was first enshrined in the CCP's statutes, in a situation when Japanese imperialism had been defeated? Really not.

In one document from CPP 1988, "The Line to Build the Three Tools of the Revolution," which is present on the Tjen Folket's website, states:

"Chairman Gonzalo puts forward the thesis that **all communist parties in the world must be militarized** (my bold style) for three reasons:"

This is a call to all Communist parties in the world that they should be "militarized" in whatever situation. This is presumptuous left dogmatism in cubic. This call goes against Mao Zedong's attitude, which is the only correct one:

“The principle of using different methods to resolve different contradictions is one which Marxist-Leninists must strictly observe. The dogmatists do not observe this principle; they do not understand that conditions differ in different kinds of revolution and so do not understand that different methods should be used to resolve different contradictions; **on the contrary, they invariably adopt what they imagine to be an unalterable formula and arbitrarily apply it everywhere, which only causes setbacks to the revolution or makes a sorry mess of what was originally well done** (my bold style).”^{xiv}

It would never have occurred to the CCP or Mao Zedong to formulate such a concrete call for all the Communist parties in the world. On the contrary, in a 1956 conversation with representatives of Latin American communist parties, Mao Zedong discourages them from "transplanting the Chinese experience mechanically " (see previous quote). Only political fools can launch an unchanging formula aimed at all the communist parties in the world, and only fools cannot immediately realize that * this is wrong. Whoever supports Gonzalo in questions, where his view contradicts the classics, especially Lenin's and Mao Zedong's, is not only mistaken but also shows a lack of respect for them. Gonzalo, for example, falsifies the history of Russian revolution, as well as Mao Zedong's theory of people's war, which the latter never considered universal.

Is chairman Gonzalo the greatest Maoist of our time?

Röed claims that the PKP inspired the people's war in India, the Philippines, Nepal and Turkey. This must be a real exaggeration, since the people's war in both India and the Philippines started already in 1969, well before that in Peru. This means that the Maoists in India and in the Philippines were inspired by the CCP and Mao Zedong. The people's war in Nepal was started in 1996 by the Nepal Communist Party

(Maoists). Why should the NCP (Maoists) have been primarily inspired by the PKP, whose chairman and most of the Central Committee had already been captured, and not by the CCP's and Mao Zedong's theories of the people's war? The NCP (Maoists) also did not follow Gonzalo's thinking but "the path of Prachanda". In 2006, the NCP (Maoists) signed a peace agreement with the Nepalese government and the party took part in subsequent parliamentary elections. In 2009 it changed its name to the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and after a merger in 2018 it changed its name again to the Nepal Communist Party. This party is parliamentary and currently holds the governmental power in Nepal. Exactly what the party does with this government power, however, is a completely different matter. It obviously has not smashed the state apparatus and initiated a socialist transformation.

Röed states that "Gonzalo's contribution shows him as our epoch's foremost revolutionary leader, the greatest Maoist of our time". But how can a leader who has been imprisoned and who has not led the Peruvian people's war to victory be "the foremost revolutionary leader of our time, the greatest Maoist of our time"? The document "The Line to Build the Three Tools of the Revolution" claims that "Chairman Gonzalo, the greatest living Marxist-Leninist –Maoist who leads the party, **is the guarantee of the victory of the communist revolution** (my bold style)." Up like a sun, down like a pancake. Just compare the CPP with the Communist Party of India (Maoists) and the Communist Party of the Philippines, which have not been defeated, but not yet won, and whose forces control large areas of their respective countries. Surely it is a greater achievement to be able to continue waging a prolonged people's war than to lose one? Röed states that PKP's defeat is only temporary, but does not provide credible reports on which areas PKP has retaken.

Question to Röed: What texts by Gonzalo, in which he "further develops" Maoism, does Röed recommend?

On the militarization of the Communist parties

Röed states that I fall into pure speculation about what Gonzalo meant by "militarizing the Communist parties" and referring me to "other texts". Which ones? "The line to build the three tools of the revolution"? Röed tries to explain pedagogically:

"In short, Gonzalo's thesis is as simple as it is wise – a party to wage war must be organized for war."

This is just a platitude, about as wise as the party that wants to carry out a revolution must prepare and organize for revolution. But a communist party cannot always and in all circumstances organize itself for war; it depends entirely on the situation. In "A Proposal on the General Line of the International Communist Movement," the Communist Party of China writes instead:

“In order to lead the proletariat and working people in revolution, Marxist-Leninist Parties must master all forms of struggle and be able to substitute one form for another

quickly as the conditions of struggle change. The vanguard of the proletariat will remain unconquerable in all circumstances only if it masters all forms of struggle – peaceful and armed, open and secret, legal and illegal, parliamentary struggle and mass struggle, etc. It is wrong to refuse to use parliamentary and other legal forms of struggle when they can and should be used. However, if a Marxist-Leninist Party falls into legalism or parliamentary cretinism, confining the struggle within the limits permitted by the bourgeoisie, this will inevitably lead to renouncing the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.”^{xv}

”” As a result of these characteristics, the task of the proletariat's party in the capitalist countries is to, during a long period of legal struggle, train the workers and build themselves strong and thus prepare for the final overthrow of capitalism. In these countries, it is a matter of long-term legal struggle, of using Parliament as a platform, of economic and political strikes, of organizing trade unions and school workers. There, the organizational form is legal and the form of the struggle is bloodless (non-military)... ”

It is pointless to prepare for war unless the working masses are prepared to join. It is not possible to create or provoke a revolutionary situation. It creates itself when a general deep economic and social crisis arises as the result of the inherent contradictions of capitalism or because the situation has drastically altered by war that occurred during the two world wars. The group or organization imagining a revolution can be created or provoked will degenerate into an organization linked to individual terrorism, such as the RAF (Baader-Meinhof League) in Germany, the Red Brigades in Italy or Action Directe in France, which is directly contrary to the mass line. These organizations were, objectively, counter-revolutionary, their activities played the bourgeoisie in their hands, and these organizations were probably infiltrated by fascists or security services. RAF members could take refuge in East Germany, which shows that organizations were a plaything in the game between the social-imperialist bloc on one side and the western imperialist bloc on the other. Exactly how does Röed think a revolutionary organization within the imperialist bloc should prepare for war? By just talking about it?

According to Röed, Gonzalo believes that "not only the party must be militarized, but that the whole people must be armed and ergo the whole people must be militarized". Well. How does this view differ from that of Lenin and Mao Zedong? It is obvious that Röed in some way believes that Gonzalo has further developed Lenin's view, i.e. that "the Communist Party is a party for revolution" when he writes that "Gonzalo sharpens (sic!) this further by stating that a proletarian Communist Party is a party to wage war and that it must therefore be a militarized Party. ""Sharpens"? This is just phrase-mongering. **Firstly**, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party never attempted to wage a people's war, i.e. encircle the cities from the countryside, but carry out an armed urban revolution in both 1905 and 1917, i.e. first to conquer the cities and then the countryside, which they succeeded. **Secondly**, Lenin and Comintern never launched the theory that the armed urban revolution was a panacea in imperialist and capitalist

countries as well as in colonies or neo-colonial countries. This is in contrast to the CPP, Gonzales and their unoriginal backers, who claim that the people's war is universal. **Thirdly**; what exactly distinguishes a party that applies democratic centralism from a party that applies democratic centralism and which **is at the same time militarized**? **Fourthly**, Röed seems to think that a militarized party does not apply a military order structure top - down. But what does "militarized" mean? That all members from day one carry weapons? But the question of armament is a tactical issue and depends on the political situation. The Bolsheviks did not start arming the Red Guards until after the February Revolution and on the brink of the October Revolution, the Red Guards amounted to 200,000 men. **Fifthly**, Lenin writes in "The Elections to the Constituent Assembly and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat" why the October Revolution could prevail:

“On the basis of the returns of the Constituent Assembly elections we have studied the three conditions which determined the victory of Bolshevism: (1) an overwhelming majority among the proletariat; (2) almost half of the armed forces; (3) an overwhelming superiority of forces at the decisive moment at the decisive points, namely: in Petrograd and Moscow and on the war fronts near the centre.”^{xvi}

The victory was not primarily due to the fact that the Bolshevik Party was militarized, although most members actively participated in the takeover of power. Some Bolsheviks led political strikes, for example, among the railway workers. Without this support from the proletariat and the soldiers, the October Revolution would never have prevailed. Of course, the overwhelming majority of the proletariat and the soldiers were not members of the Bolshevik Party.

The concentric circles

Röed writes that the PKP's line was that "the whole party must be part of the people's army to be an integral part of the people's war". Their "masterful use of Mao's dialectical method makes their guidelines appear simple and direct". Did all members of the Communist Party of China really join the Red Army? No, some members were assigned to work in the areas occupied or controlled by the Japanese or Guomindang; some were even assigned to work under cover at Guomindang. Circumstances determined whether these members followed instructions directly from the party or indirectly via the Red Army; the circumstances also determined the extent to which they were armed.

When Röed states that PKP's line that "the whole party must be part of the people's army" is something unique, does that mean that Mao Zedong's line was that only 90 percent, 70 percent or 50 percent of the party's members would be part of the Red Army? Why else emphasize the uniqueness of PKP's line? Röed states that it is wrong if the party engages in "pure politics" and the army wages "pure war". Of course. But does this criticism affect the Bolshevik Party or the CPC? Already during the civil war of 1918 - 1920 the Bolsheviks applied the system of political commissars while that

there also were always strong Bolshevik factions within the Red Army; the same system was applied in China. If the CPC had one million members in 1945, then the Red Army's numbers were two million.

The three tools of the revolution in Russia

Röed states that I claim that the Russian Revolution did not apply the "three tools of the revolution" according to the PKP. On the contrary, I show that the three tools of the revolution, the party, the front and the army, cannot be elevated to a formula that applies in all times and under all conditions but must be applied to the peculiar conditions of each country.

The main differences between the October Revolution in Russia and the People's War in China were that the Bolsheviks fought for an armed urban revolution, which later spread to the countryside, and the people's war in China, which meant invading the cities from the countryside during the struggle against Japanese imperialism 1937 - 1945. 1945 - 1949 the principal contradiction was between the Chinese people and Guomindang, who represented the big bourgeoisie, the comprador bourgeoisie and the interests of the major landlords in alliance with US imperialism.

Röed seems to imagine that the Soviets, who were united fronts from below, existed intact from 1905 to 1917. This is nonsense. The Soviets were crushed by 1907; during the period 1907 - 1912 the Bolsheviks practiced a retreat tactic (see earlier quotes from Stalin).^{xvii} Only after the February Revolution of 1917 did the Soviets re-emerge and grow in strength until the October Revolution. The Bolshevik Party never established a united front from above as the CPC did with Guomindang 1937 - 1945, as the principal contradiction was not between the Russian people and German imperialism but between the Russian working people and the Russian tsarism and the bourgeoisie. The Russian ruling class was part of one imperialist bloc. After the October Revolution victory, representatives of left-wing socialist revolutionaries were briefly represented in the Soviet government. The Red Army was first formed on February 23, 1918, following the victory of the October Revolution. The nucleus of the Red Army was made up of the 200,000 men who had been part of the Red Guards that had emerged after the February Revolution of 1917, and of all the soldiers and officers who had joined the October Revolution from the Tsarist army, the main body of the new Red army. According to both Lenin and Stalin, the October Revolution triumphed in February 1918. Is this a myth, as Röed claims? In what way are Lenin and Stalin wrong? This victory was the very prerequisite for victory in the subsequent civil war, with the main forces of intervention being crushed at the end of 1920, although the struggle against them continued on a smaller scale until 1922.^{xviii}

Why do PKP, Röed and others have to engage in historical falsification of the October Revolution? They are aware that Mao Zedong and the CPC have never advocated the theory that the people's war is universal, on the contrary Mao Zedong and the CPC

distinguished between the path of the October Revolution and the path of the people's war. They dare not openly attack Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong, as they would then reveal themselves directly as "left"-revisionists and anti-Maoists. If reality and history do not match their dogmas, then they alter without hesitation both reality and history.

The Question about Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM)

The Communist Party of China (CCP) and the Labor Party in Albania (AAP) led the struggle against the rise of modern revisionism in the Soviet Union. From the beginning of the 1960s, a number of Marxist-Leninist groups and parties joined these two parties, thus forming an international Marxist-Leninist movement. But this movement never worked as an International, let alone with any center.

This was partly due to the CPC's experience, which Mao Zedong formulated in a speech, "The Comintern has long ceased to interfere in our internal affairs", ^{xix} 1943. The CCP received some bad advices from the Comintern, which Cominform and the Soviet Union continued to distribute. One of the last bad advices the CCP got was that the People's Liberation Army in the civil war with Guomindang 1945 - 1949 should not pursue the final battle with Guomindang but make a stop and accept a division of China into a northern and southern part. This would have just postponed a victory like in Vietnam. The arguments put forward by Mao Zedong in the speech are briefly three: 1) A united international organization cannot adapt itself to extremely complex and rapidly changing circumstances. Only national parties can make a detailed analysis of the circumstances; 2) the anti-fascist struggle on the world scale was so multifaceted that a centralized organization was an obstacle to the struggle; 3) the Chinese Communist Party had hardened in the struggle and knew best how the struggle would be conducted in China (which was later confirmed by the practice).

Therefore, after the split with the SUKP, the CPC maintained only bilateral relations with various Marxist-Leninist parties in the world. This meant that the discussions took place on an equal footing without the CPC trying to foist its views on the non-state parties. Of course, the CPC enjoyed a special prestige and influence until 1976; this was positive as long as Mao Zedong lived – see Communist Party of Sweden's campaign against Soviet social imperialism in 1974 - but negative after Deng Xiaoping's takeover of power. After the break with the CPC in 1977, AAP tried to create a kind of international with itself at the forefront, but failed.

Röed claims that the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) was not an International. But in fact, as early as 1984 ^{xx}, RIM stated that its goal was to create an International:

“At the present juncture of world history, the international proletariat has to take up the challenge of forming its own organization, an International of a new type based on Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, assimilating the valuable experience of the past.”

Furthermore the report from this conference criticized CPC:

“It also is necessary to evaluate the overreaction of the Communist Party of China to the negative aspects of the Comintern that led them to refuse to play the necessary leading role in building up the organizational unity of the Marxist-Leninist forces at the international level.”

The criticism is reminiscent of the rebels ^{xxi}who visited China's embassy in Stockholm in 1968 for guidance on how the Cultural Revolution ought to be implemented in Sweden. When the Chinese embassy staff refused to give any advice, the rebels accused them of being revisionists, tearing down curtains and leaving.

If the CPC had led a Communist International in connection with Deng Xiaoping's takeover of power in 1978, the damage would probably have been even greater than was the case. Now, however, there were parties and groups that were used to formulate a political line regarding the specific conditions in their own country and to think for themselves. The CPC also, until 1977, encouraged its fraternal parties to think for themselves. My view is that the system of bilateral relations with other revolutionary parties worked well until 1977. The meetings always took place on an equal footing, even though the two state-bearing parties, the CPC and AAP, enjoyed greater prestige and influence than everyone else.

RIM seems to have disappeared from the political scene around 2007. My impression is that the organization disappeared because various organizations in competition with each other tried to play the first violin in the organization.

The communists and the elections

Röed states that the RIM parties did not advocate principled electoral boycotts at all, but do not cite a source. The PKP boycotted the elections in Peru in 1985 and, as far as I know, never voted in any election. I believe that election boycotts can be justified for three reasons: 1) it is not possible to guarantee the safety of your own candidates, but they risk life and limb; 2) the elections are rigged and there is extensive electoral fraud, and 3) the situation is revolutionary as in the 1905 revolution in Russia, when proposals for the establishment of a parliamentary assembly served as a diversionary maneuver. In addition, as Lenin demonstrated, the elections were not even fair. It is possible that the first and /or second reason was at hand in 1985 in Peru. But from where did the idea by RIM's Swedish sympathizers' group for a 2003 boycott of the euro referendum in Sweden come (which I quote in my article)? Was it their own invention? Or was it in line with RIM's general policy regarding elections?

Lenin, Stalin, Comintern and Mao Zedong did not support the line either to always run

for elections in bourgeois democracies or to always boycott parliamentary elections. It is the situation that determines. On the other hand, they were for communists to always use all kinds of struggle, legal as well as illegal, open as well as secret. Why wouldn't voter participation be a "good tactics in today's situation"? It depends entirely on whether the parliamentary struggle is combined and based on the extra-parliamentary struggle. Most parties, which were part of the international Marxist-Leninist movement with the CPC/AAP at the forefront until 1977, did not fail because they prioritized parliamentary elections, as they had rarely won any parliamentary representation. They went down because they were not sufficiently independent in relation to the CCP and AAP.

Is there anything to learn from CPP and Gonzalo?

Röed asks the question: "But is it not of enormous importance to study Gonzalo and the CPP as well?"

My view is that PKP and Gonzalo should be studied as negative examples, mainly because the party failed because Gonzalo and most of the Central Committee were jailed in 1992, which led to the party's collapse. This was obviously a result of left subjectivist and left dogmatic errors. The party, especially its leadership, suffered from hubris and anticipated the victory. The party rose "Gonzalo's thinking" to the guiding-star even though the same thinking had not been confirmed in practice, that is, led to victory. The party has also given the appearance of acting as the leader of the world revolution, a supreme claim that neither the Communist Party of India (Maoists) nor the Communist Party of the Philippines have made.

Making the thumbs down for the CPP's policies does not in any way detract from the struggle that the Peruvian workers and peasants waged against the ruling class in Peru, which was righteous, until 1992. Maoists even supported the Afghan people resistance struggle against the social-imperialist occupation of Afghanistan from 1979, although the resistance movement was dominated by reactionaries and bourgeois nationalists.

The CPP and Gonzalo have not developed Maoism on a single point. The theory that the people's war is universal is a left-revisionist distortion of Mao Zedong's theories, despite he himself warned of this distortion. The CPP and Gonzalo falsify the history of the October Revolution and do not recognize its crucial historical significance. The CPP and Gonzalo have launched a series of remarkable theories that all communist parties must be militarized and the theory of the concentric circles, theories which are not supported by the classics. CPP and Gonzalo also claim that the three elements of the people's war according to Mao Zedong, i.e. strategic defensive, strategic equilibrium and strategic offensive, can be transferred on the course of the world revolution. Since I have already argued against this cracked and mechanical transfer in another article, "What is chairman Gonzalez' contribution to Marxism?", I will only briefly comment on this worldview. Gonzalo thus believes that the world revolution was on a strategic defensive between 1871 and 1945, strategic equilibrium prevailed between 1945 and 1980, with the strategic offensive continuing since 1980. Between

1871 and 1953 the October Revolution occurred in 1917, the emergence of a number of People's democracies in Eastern Europe after the Second World War and finally the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The socialist camp then numbered a third of the population of the world. This calls Gonzales a defensive! I have set the limit for 1953, because Stalin died this year as well as the Korean War ended that year. From 1956, the contradictions between the SUKP's revisionism and the CPC grew, which gradually led to the emergence of a social-imperialist bloc with the Soviet Union at the forefront. There was still a kind of equilibrium, as a number of colonies liberated themselves during the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the defeat of US imperialism in 1975 in Indochina. But since 1978, when Deng Xiaoping took power in the CPC and China, which has led to China now being a capitalist and imperialist country, the Communist movement and the international proletariat have been on the defensive. The struggle that various communist parties and liberation movements have waged since 1980 can under no circumstances be compared with the wave of success that prevailed until 1953.

It is almost pathetic to elevate Gonzalo into a theoretical fix star and testify to a very poor judgment. Gonzalo reduces Maoism to a catechism, full of erroneous or dubious Bible words. I do not believe in Röed's statement that PKP's almost religious language use was contingent on PKP "writing in Spanish in a Peruvian-Native American context". I mean that language was conditioned by PKP's left dogmatism and left subjectivism and that many of the leading intellectuals actually came from the Spanish-upper and middle class. It is the nature of dogmatism to simplify in absurdum and nature of subjectivism to distort the perception of reality. Even during 1968 the rebel movement in Sweden, one of the world's most secularized countries, there were religious elements. Meetings were organized to "expel the bourgeoisie from the body" (exorcism or expulsion of spirits) from the sect members and the major meetings served as revival meetings.

Röed "also cannot accept a claim that the development of our ideology stopped abruptly in 1976". There has definitely not been any development of Maoism to a fourth stage; Gonzalo's "development" is a caricature of Maoism. On the other hand, there are a number of Maoist parties and groups, mainly the Communist Party of India (Maoists) and the Communist Party of the Philippines, which have continued to fight and further develop the political line with regard to national conditions. In addition, there is still much to learn from the international Marxist-Leninist movement up to 1977, both positive and negative experiences.

Unfortunately, Röed's defense of the CPP and Gonzalo is a completely unoriginal repetition of their positions. PKP and Gonzalo represent a dead-end track, especially in imperialist countries, that discredits Maoism and does not lead to revolution.

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16/7 2018

(Published in Marxistiskt Forum nr 1/2019 in Sweden)

ⁱ Selected works, Vol. VI, p. 463

ⁱⁱ Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Volume I, p. 231 or

https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_17.htm

ⁱⁱⁱ Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Volume I, p. 221 or

https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_17.htm

^{iv} Selected Works, Volume I, p. 331

^v Selected Works, Volume II, p. 220 or https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_12.htm#p1

^{vi} Selected Works, Volume V, p. 326 or https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-5/mswv5_54.htm

^{vii} Selected Works, Volume II, p. 296

or https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_20.htm

^{viii} <http://www.marx2mao.com/Other/PGL65.pdf>

^{ix} <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/lwc/ch07.htm>

^x Communist Party of Sweden, originally Communist League (Marxist-Leninists) in 1967, was a Maoist Party founded in 1973. See

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Sweden_\(1967\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Sweden_(1967))

^{xi} Communist Worker's Party of Sweden – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Workers

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Workers_Party_of_Sweden

^{xii} <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/lwc/ch07.htm>

^{xiii} <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/lwc/ch07.htm>

^{xiv} https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_17.htm or Selected Works, Volume I, p. 321

^{xv} <https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sino-soviet-split/cpc/proposal.htm>

^{xvi} <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1919/dec/16.htm>

^{xvii} <http://www.marx2mao.com/Stalin/FL24.html>

^{xviii} History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) -

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1939/x01/ch08.htm>

^{xix} “The Comintern has long ceased to meddle in our internal affairs” –

https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_36.htm

^{xx} Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement 1984

—https://ia800201.us.archive.org/22/items/DeclarationOfTheRevolutionaryInternationalistMovement_292/DeclarationOfTheRevolutionaryInternationalistMovement_292.pdf

^{xxi} The rebels were a left opportunistic anarchistic group within the Communist League (Marxist-Leninists), consisting of some students at three universities in Sweden, who rose up in the spring 1968 and very quickly fell apart.