

The Immortal Legacy of Chairman Gonzalo

**Center for the Study of Marxism-
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This text appears as the Preface to the Brazilian edition of the “Interview with Chairman Gonzalo”, published in 2023 by Editora Ciências Revolucionárias and edited by the Center for the Study of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (NEMLM). The article completely unravels the revisionism of Prachanda, the traitor of the People’s War in Nepal, and clearly demonstrates the abyss that separates a great leader, which is Chairman Gonzalo, from a capitulating adventurer, and from shallow and unscientific formulations about Maoism and People’s War. Thus, it reveals one of the many reasons why the People’s War in Peru remains invincible and why Chairman Gonzalo’s contributions to Maoism are universal.

Chairman Gonzalo’s Immortal Legacy

Attacks on Marxism have always been a prologue to its new development and advancement.

— Chairman Gonzalo

35 years ago, on July 5, 1988, the newspaper *El Diario*¹, from Lima, Peru launched a special edition on news-stands with the headline: “Interview in Hiding: Chairman Gonzalo Breaks Silence”. It was the first interview with the leadership of the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) and the People’s War since the initiation of armed struggle, on May 17, 1980, which the PCP denotes as ILA80. The ordinary Sunday of Peruvians, perhaps disturbed by some blackout perpetrated by the guerrillas (who had already become part of the country’s routine, a topic on buses, and in the neighborhoods), became a date of historical importance.

At the cost of covering up the Party’s legal newspaper, the international proletariat was made aware of a summary, dictated in popular form, of the resolutions of the First Congress of the PCP. The decisive themes of the World Proletarian Revolution, its past and its future, are dealt with there.

And if, as was the case for us Brazilian Maoists, the “Interview of the Century” — as it soon became known in clandestine circles around the world — was a kind of thunderclap that announced new revolutionary storms to come, it was even more

¹This title, and its small infrastructure at the time, the early 1980s, was purchased from the “United Left”, a group of opportunistic electoral tendencies.

surprising to discover, as the documents of the aforementioned Congress came to our attention, as well as those relating to the entire trajectory of the Red Fraction grouped in Ayacucho in the early 1960s, that this magnificent document was but a small sample of a set of integral and original elaborations, which constitute what today have been consecrated as the contributions of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo.

Who Was Chairman Gonzalo?

Manuel Ruben Abimael Guzman Reinoso, known as Chairman Gonzalo, Chairman of the PCP, was born in Mollendo-Izlay. He graduated in law and philosophy from the University of San Augustin in Arequipa. A brilliant scholar, he earned his doctorate with a thesis in philosophy titled, *On the Kantian Theory of Space*, and a thesis in law titled, *The Bourgeois-Democratic State*. He joined the Communist Party between 1960 and 1961, in a grassroots committee in Arequipa, at the age of 24 or 25. In 1962, at the invitation of Efrain Morote, then rector of the University of San Cristóbal de Huamanga, Abimael moved to Ayacucho, where he would teach for several years.

By joining the PCP Regional Committee, he took part in the fight against the Khrushchevite revisionism that had infected the Party. As a result of this conflict, the opportunists, led by Del Prado,

were expelled from the organization in 1964. Abimael led the internal struggle and sought to deepen it, leading to the formation of the Red Fraction of the Party, whose fights against right-wing and “left-wing” opportunists and liquidators led to new purges.

Along with other PCP cadres, he visited the People’s Republic of China on two occasions, where he studied “at the highest school of Marxism that the Earth has ever had”, as he states in this interview. Leading the Red Fraction, Abimael called for the return to Mariátegui and the reconstitution of his Party. As head of the PCP, he applied Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought to the reality of the country and integrated it with the practice of the Peruvian revolution. Already recognized as a great leader, he became Chairman Gonzalo, led the party to its reconstitution and began the People’s War on May 17, 1980. It was in this process that he would define Maoism as the new, third, and highest stage of Marxism.

After twelve years of successful development of the People’s War, which took place within an international situation in which a new general counter-revolutionary offensive was unleashed, which corresponded to a concentrated plan by US imperialism and the fascist coup government of Fujimori for operations to encircle and annihilate the

People's War, Chairman Gonzalo was captured on September 12, 1992, along with other members of the Central Committee of the Party.

On September 24, he was presented to the Peruvian and international press wearing the striped uniform of a common prisoner and locked in a cage, with the aim of demoralizing and humiliating him, treating him as the worst of beasts. At that time, he delivered a masterful speech that continues to resonate today among communists, revolutionaries, and the oppressed throughout the world. After twenty-nine years in total isolation, with serious health problems resulting from this terrible condition, he was murdered in the most vile way by agents of Peruvian military “intelligence” — navy officers who had him in custody — in a collusion between the government of the opportunist Castillo and the North American CIA, on September 11, 2021.

Maoism and People's War

In his work, Chairman Gonzalo took stock of the first great wave of the World Proletarian Revolution, that is, the first wave of wars and revolutions from which the pioneering states of the dictatorship of the proletariat in history were born. From this, he drew and defined Maoism as a new, third, and higher stage of Marxism-Leninism, since it signified a development and a great leap forward in its three

constituent parts as a unity (Marxist Philosophy, Marxist Political Economy, and Scientific Socialism). He established:

So, simply to enumerate: in Marxist philosophy, no one can deny Mao's grand development in dialectics, centrally in the law of contradiction, establishing that it is the only fundamental law. If we outline the problem of political economy, we can say that in this field it suffices to highlight two things: one, for us of immediate and concrete importance, bureaucratic capitalism and, two, the development of the political economy of socialism. In short, we could say that it is Mao who really established and developed the political economy of socialism. As for scientific socialism, it would suffice to highlight People's War, because it is with Chairman Mao Zedong that the international proletariat achieved a complete and developed military theory, and thus gave us the military theory of the class, of the proletariat, applicable everywhere. We believe that these three questions show us that there is a development of a universal character.

Maoism, therefore, was situated in history by Chairman Gonzalo as the culminating point of the development of the scientific ideology of the proletariat up to now, although by no means definitive.² What Engels meant to Marx, and Stalin to Lenin, Chairman Gonzalo represented to Chairman Mao. If one had to summarize the entire *Interview* in a single fundamental theme, it would be this — which, in itself, would already ensure the capital importance of the study of this text for all consistent revolutionaries. The rigorous, most profound and highest synthesis of Maoism was the greatest contribution of Chairman Gonzalo and the PCP to the international proletariat, engraved in stone and blood.

A prominent philosopher, in Chairman Gonzalo the assessment of the “first attempt” is not a mere collection of facts, a poor summation of events. Much less is it disinterested, skeptical, or defeatist. Marx did not, in his time, make an “impartial” assessment of the

²“It was Marx who, by taking the idea as a derivation of matter, merging dialectics with matter, brought about the great transformation that generated the new philosophy, the complete philosophy, not in the closed sense, *that is why we cannot speak of a system, a system implies a closed circle and knowledge is a spiral*, everyone remembers what a spiral is, it is not a closed circle and neither are the circles that make up the spiral closed, nor is that certain, they are not”. (1st Congress of the PCP, our emphasis). Beautiful refutation of the dogmatists!

Paris Commune (or even, if we go back, of the Great French Revolution), nor did Lenin do so about the first Russian Revolution of 1905-1907.

We communists think in order to act (revolutionarily) in defense of our class. As Chairman Gonzalo rightly states, “... it is a problem of bourgeois ideology in the study of focusing only on analysis and not mastering synthesis as the main thing, thus not making a leap.³ This does not mean a lack of objectivity in judgment, on the contrary: it is pure idealism to try to isolate the object, thought, from the subject that thinks. Marxism demands the unity of logic and history, and when we say history we mean: classes and class struggle. Regarding the relationship between ideology and science:

I would like to emphasize this in passing: it is ideology, but scientific. However, we should understand very well that we cannot make any concessions to the bourgeois positions that want to reduce the ideology of the proletariat to a simple method, because in this way it is prostituted, it is negated.

³PCP, *On the Rectification Campaign Based on the Study of the Document Elections, No! People's War, Yes!*, 1991.

The supposed “scientific neutrality” is a categorical impossibility, pure irrationalism. In class society, everything has a class character, and therefore, ideology. It so happens that, in the case of the proletariat, and only in the case of the proletariat, as the last class in history, which Marx called the “dissolution of all classes” — because the expropriated elements of all classes are gathered in its bosom —, the coincidence of ideology and science is possible, since it is the (only) universal class, the latency of universal communist humanity.⁴

This conception, which began with Marx and Engels, is rebelled against by both the right and the left. On the right, Marxism is accused of being “ideological”, having the nerve to call

⁴“But where is the real possibility of emancipation in Germany? Here is our answer: in the formation of a class which has radical spheres, of a class in civil society which is not merely a class of civil society, of a class which is the dissolution of all classes, of a sphere which has a universal character because its sufferings are universal and which does not demand particular reparation because the wrong done to it is not a particular wrong but evil in general, which can no longer claim the historical title but the human title. (...) Finally, of a sphere which can neither emancipate itself nor emancipate itself from all other spheres of society without emancipating them all — which is, in short, the total loss of humanity — can therefore only redeem itself by a total redemption of Man. The dissolution of society as a particular class is the proletariat.” (K. Marx, “Introduction to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right”).

reactionary positivism, a mercenary apology for the current order, “science”. Supposedly “on the left,” the revisionists want to preserve only Marxist epistemology, castrating it of what is unacceptable to the bourgeoisie. Even the recognition of the class struggle — Lenin observes in *The State and Revolution* — is not enough to make someone a Marxist, if it does not extend to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It is in this quagmire that Mr. Bob Avakian⁵ sinks, whose supposed “new synthesis of Marxism” seeks to “de-proletarianize” Marxism, that is, to implode it as a class ideology — accusing what he defines as the “reification of the proletariat”, present in the classics themselves. In this way, he intends to merge Marxism and liberalism (“dictatorship of the proletariat” with “parliamentarism”), the essence of what he calls a “solid core with great elasticity”. By rejecting the class character of Marxism, and because he rejects the class character of Marxism, this renegade also rejects its scientific character, since the object of this science is revolution itself (not only in society, but also in nature and thought: in each of these partial totalities of the single material world, development occurs by leaps, that is, by revolution).

⁵The chairman of the Revolutionary Communist Party USA (RCP-USA).

Anyone who wants to know what kind of nonsense the absence of revolutionary practice in revolutionary theory leads to should try to leaf through his lengthy writings — which include a “Constitution of the Socialist Republic of the United States,” perhaps in force at Area 51 — which over time have become longer the less they have been read. On his tombstone will be written: A sad character, from Mao Zedong to Joe Biden.

Given this, one could deduce that, since Marxism is both an ideology and a science — a scientific ideology — once classes have been eliminated and society has entered communism, it would cease to be valid. Yes and no. Yes to ideology, of course; no to science, the terrain in which Marxism will continue to develop. Now, if the object of the science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the permanent revolution — omnipresent, as the Chinese comrades have pointed out — the fulcrum of its entire theoretical-political construction is the problem of Power. To use Chairman Mao’s apt expression, this is the constant — if you will, immutable — target of its arrows.⁶ To lose

⁶“When we shoot an arrow, we must aim it at the target. The arrow is to the target what Marxism-Leninism is to the Chinese revolution. But some comrades ‘shoot at the wrong target’, they shoot aimlessly. Such people risk damaging the revolution. Others content themselves with turning the arrow over and over in their fingers, exclaiming, ‘What a beautiful arrow! What a beautiful arrow!’ but they have no intention

sight of the perspective of the revolution, to renounce its effective preparation or to elude it to the intangible (even if this “eluding” is done in the form of high-sounding phrases) is to abandon and betray Marxism.

There is no “other” Marxism that is not revolutionary, with all the “horrors”, as Mariátegui would say, that result from this. Here we step on what is popularly called “the crux of the matter”. As Chairman Gonzalo said, “once a Party is constituted and, considering the concrete conditions, it must fight to shape this conquest (of power) and it can only do so through People’s War.”

Based on this, we affirm that to speak of Maoism is to speak of People’s War, and that this must be understood not only as an integral military theory — which was also established by Chairman Gonzalo — but also as a conception of proletarian power. In a word, Maoism without People’s War = revisionism. People’s War is universal, although it must be applied to the concrete reality of each country.⁷

of shooting it. They are merely connoisseurs of antiques, and have almost nothing to do with the revolution. The arrow of Marxism-Leninism must be used to shoot at the target, which is the Chinese revolution. Until this point is clarified, the theoretical level of our Party can never rise and the Chinese revolution can never succeed.” (Mao, *Let Us Rectify the Style of Party Work*, Volume III)

⁷For further information on this topic, see the article “People’s War and Revolution”, written by the Communist

It is also with this perspective that Chairman Gonzalo faces the problem of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, which is diametrically opposed to the complaints about the "crisis of communism" that have been heard, and continue to be heard, from corrupt leaders, which is nothing more than capitulation to imperialism and its attempt to equate fascism to communism as "totalitarian" orders (curiously, "1984", the anti-communist dystopia written by the Trotskyite George Orwell, seems to portray the electronic surveillance erected by senile capitalism today). Following the example of the classics — Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao — who taught us to, in the face of temporary defeats, regroup our forces and sharpen our blades for the next attack; who taught us not to confuse preparing for future battles with renouncing these battles, Chairman Gonzalo said about those events:

| All this makes us think seriously about, and understand, the problem of restoration and counter-restoration. It is not a problem for lamentation or untimely complaints, as some people try to spread. The problem

Party of Brazil–Red Fraction, published in the magazine "El Maoista", no. 1, September 2016.

is to face reality and understand it. We understand it and take up the issue of restoration and counter-restoration, which Lenin himself had already raised and Chairman Mao masterfully developed. No new class in history has ever seized power all at once, gained it and lost it, regained it and lost it again, until, amid great struggles and disputes, it managed to assert itself in power. The same thing happens with the proletariat, but it has taught us great lessons, including in socialist construction. Therefore, it is a great experience.

Yes, a grand experience, and experience is matter — it cannot be abolished or “un-invented”. Therefore, by analyzing and synthesizing the entire process of the proletarian revolution from the publication of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in 1848 until then — until the moment when his work was interrupted by his arrest in September 1992 — which led to the definition of Maoism as the new, third, and higher stage of Marxism-Leninism; by creatively applying the universal scientific ideology of the proletariat to the concrete reality of his country and his time — a creative application that resulted in Gonzalo Thought, adopted by the PCP — Chairman Gonzalo, as could not be otherwise in this case (that is, in

the case of a consistent application), contributed something new to the arsenal of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism itself and bequeathed these contributions to those who followed him and after him.

Thirty-five years after the First Congress and the publication of the *Interview*, it is not only the PCP (which is fighting to complete its general reorganization amidst the tough two-line struggle), but increasingly the International Communist Movement, which unfurls, defends, and applies them.

Chairman Gonzalo's Contributions of Universal Validity

What, after all, are Chairman Gonzalo's contributions of universal validity? It must be said, first of all, that the definition and development of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism by the PCP leadership is not the result of the arbitrary or subjective will of an individual. On the contrary, it arises from a specific need of the proletarian revolution at a given moment, not only in the Peruvian and Latin American context, but also internationally. Men make history, said Marx, and historical materialism does not deny the role of personalities in its course.

It emphasizes, however, that individuals do not freely choose the circumstances in which they act — bequeathed by previous generations — and that,

as a result, their actions will be all the more effective the more they correspond to the needs of the time. To deny the role of leaders is to break the relationship between Leaders, Party, Class, and Masses, already established by Lenin and Stalin in their systematization of the October Revolution. It is a manifestation of anarchist lordship and an anti-Party spirit.

The issue, therefore, is not to deny that a social process generates leaders — as Chairman Gonzalo points out, even a literary movement has them — but to distinguish authentic leaders from those who usurp this role to betray the class and the people. Thus, regarding Gonzalo Thought, the “Interview” points out that it “is nothing more than the application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to our concrete reality”, consisting of the Ideology, General Political Line, whose center is the Military Line, and Program.

In the Peruvian process, “this was previously called Guiding Thought; and if today the Party and its Congress sanctioned Gonzalo Thought, it is because there was a leap in this Guiding Thought, precisely in the development of the People’s War”. It is, therefore, a development that occurs in the midst of the class struggle and the struggle of two lines, whose verification in practice is crucial, as is necessary in the scientific process. Guiding Thought that identifies

with the one who unfurls, defends, and develops it. That this or that individual is such and such is accidental, but that the class generates its leaders; of these, a handful of leaders; of the leaders, one more prominent, is an objective necessity. It would be arbitrary to try to deny that matter develops by leaps and unevenly.⁸

On a world-historical level, it can be said that Chairman Gonzalo's definition of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, as the Marxism of our era, took place in a time of acute struggle between restoration and counter-restoration, a complex situation in which the proletariat lost power in its strongholds and seeks to recover it, in a life-and-death struggle against imperialism, revisionism, and all reaction. While opportunists of all stripes laid down their arms and began to reproduce the reactionary discourse of "democracy as a universal value", "crisis of

⁸In the *Interview*: "Lenin already warned us against the problem of denying leaders, as well as highlighting the need for the class, the Party, and the revolution to promote their own leaders, more leaders than leaders and the Leadership. There is a difference that is worth highlighting: leader is an organic position, while leaders and Leadership we understand as recognition of Party and revolutionary authority, acquired and proven in a long struggle, of those who in theory and practice demonstrate that they are capable of leading us and guiding us to progress and victory in the achievement of our class ideals."

communism”, or “socialism of the 21st century”, like the renegade Prachanda — when the only distinction present in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* is that between proletarian (Marxist) socialism and other petty-bourgeois, or even bourgeois and feudal socialism, Chairman Gonzalo presented a systematic assessment of the first great wave of the World Proletarian Revolution, stating that no previous social regime had achieved so much, in such a short time, and for such broad masses, as socialism. He pointed out that “we should look at the process of revolution, not be pessimistic, the transitions from one regime to another are complex, hard, and brutal”.⁹

Within this context, Chairman Gonzalo established, based on Chairman Mao’s theory of people’s war, the three stages of the World Proletarian Revolution, and characterized the current historical period as one of its strategic offensive. To skeptics or hardened empiricists, this may sound strange: how can we talk about such an offensive in the midst of the most complex period of prolonged counter-revolution since the emergence of Marxism? If there is water in the glass, let us drink it. From a philosophical point of view, Lenin already emphasized that putting things in terms of “either this

⁹III Plenum of the Communist Party of Peru, 1992.

or that” is not dialectic, but metaphysics.¹⁰

The existence and development of matter occur in the form of a unity of opposites, understood as the opposition and interdependence of a pole in the face of its negation. Not diverse in general, but specific, determined opposites, whose connection is not ideal, but concrete: this is the link that must be grasped in order to establish the quality, and also the tendency of the development of phenomena and of all things. In *On Contradiction*, following the path opened by Lenin in his seminal reading of Hegel, Chairman Mao says, regarding specific negation:

Materialist dialectics considers that external causes constitute the condition of change, and internal causes its basis, and that the former act through the latter. At a suitable temperature, an egg turns into a chick, but no temperature can turn a stone into a chick, because their bases are different. (*On Contradiction*)

Here, quite simply (that simplicity rich in content that escapes the superficial reader of Chairman Mao),

¹⁰“The usual representation captures difference and contradiction, but not the *transition* from one to the other, and *this is the most important thing*.” (Lenin, “Summary of Hegel’s book ‘Science of Logic’”, emphasis by Lenin).

we have the differentiation of opposites — always specific, always concrete — and of diverse ones. The former are conditioned, and under certain conditions, convert into each other, reciprocally; the latter merely coexist as part of the whole and their absolute friction does not alter their essence (although there is at least one point of unity between everything that exists, which lies in the fact that it is matter).

For a consistent Marxist, it is not surprising, therefore, that the strategic offensive of the revolution corresponds to a long and complex period of struggle to defeat the counter-revolution, and that the latter reacts with the famous last forces — as violent as they are desperate — that usually emerge from the dying. On this subject, Chairman Gonzalo was quite precise about not confusing strategic offensive with final offensive.¹¹

Revolution and counter-revolution form a unity of opposites — alive, real, concrete, mobile, and that devour each other reciprocally. This process is not linear, but undulating. There are upstream and downstream, there are tsunamis and

¹¹“Our position is that we are in the strategic offensive of the world revolution, we do not say that we are already in the final offensive; furthermore, we conceive that the strategic offensive of the world revolution takes place through a long process, not a short one, and, furthermore, amid great zigzags and even setbacks.” (PCP, *On the Rectification Campaign...*, 1992).

undertows, and there are even, “eventually, gigantic leaps backwards.”¹²

The important thing is that, since capitalism is not eternal, with each round the proletariat is closer to triumph, and the bourgeoisie, to downfall. This antagonism will only disappear under communism. In this, however, once political revolutions have been extinguished, there will be revolutions of another nature, as Chairman Mao predicted (and, consequently, temporary regressions and counter-revolutions in the corresponding spheres).

In the realm of social struggle, Marx had already analyzed that the revolution opens its path to the extent that it engenders a cohesive and powerful counter-revolution, in the struggle against which the party of subversion matures and becomes a “truly revolutionary” party.¹³ Lenin, speaking about the first

¹²“It is anti-dialectical, anti-scientific, and theoretically wrong to imagine universal history as a movement that proceeds harmoniously and precisely, without, eventually, gigantic leaps backwards.” (Lenin, quoted in “Dialectical Materialism”, Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1954).

¹³“In a word: revolutionary progress has not made its way through its direct tragi-comic conquests, but, on the contrary, has been engendering a closed and powerful counter-revolution, generating and combating an adversary which the party of subversion can finally convert into a truly revolutionary party.” (Marx, “The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850”).

years of Soviet power, said that the resistance of the bourgeoisie had not diminished, but had “increased tenfold” with its overthrow.¹⁴

Likewise, Chairman Mao established that in the long historical period between capitalism and communism the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will be long, tortuous, and very fierce.¹⁵ Now, if such fierceness occurs in an isolated

¹⁴“The dictatorship of the proletariat is the most selfless and most ruthless war of the new class against a *more powerful* enemy , against the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is *increased tenfold* by its overthrow (even in one country) and whose power lies not only in the strength of international capital, in the strength and solidity of the international relations of the bourgeoisie, but also in the *strength of custom*, in the strength of *small-scale production*. For, unfortunately, there still remains in the world a great deal, a great deal of small-scale production, and small-scale production constantly *generates* capitalism and the bourgeoisie, every day, every hour, spontaneously and on a massive scale. For all these reasons, the dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a prolonged, stubborn, desperate, life-and-death war; a war that demands tenacity, discipline, firmness, inflexibility and unity of will.” (Lenin, *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder*, Lenin’s emphasis).

¹⁵“The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between the various political forces, and also, on the ideological plane, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, will continue to be protracted and tortuous, and at times will even become very fierce. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its worldview, and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question of who will win, socialism or capitalism, has not really been decided.” (Mao

country (in which the seizure of power is not enough to ensure once and for all “who will defeat whom”), what logic would expect it to happen differently in the world arena? Drawing conclusions from this entire process, Chairman Gonzalo masterfully established that:

The world revolution continues to be the main historical and political tendency. They are on the defensive, but they want to show us that things are not like that. We will not believe them; we will understand if we start from the class position. The truth is that there is a general counterrevolutionary offensive and it will last several years. The strategic offensive stage lasts for decades, the general counter-revolutionary offensive will last for years, better a few than many. (III Plenum, 1992).

Indeed, three decades after the herald of imperialism, Francis Fukuyama, proclaimed the “end of history” and the “expiration of socialism,” we have seen the world shaken by the worsening of all the contradictions that exist today in the world, namely: the one between imperialism and the oppressed

Tsetung, *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*, Selected Works, Volume V).

nations; the one between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; and the one between the imperialist powers themselves, the first being the main one — as the current war in Ukraine makes clear. The prolonged wars in the Middle East, one of the symptoms of the counter-revolutionary offensive unleashed three decades ago, ended with resounding defeats for U.S. imperialism. In this context, the masses are rising up with great explosiveness and demanding a communist leadership to lead them.

We have already spoken above about the People's War as the backbone of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Here it is worth adding that it was Chairman Gonzalo who first defined its universality. He took the experience of armed struggles in Europe, from the anti-fascist war, to those led by ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom), IRA (Irish Republican Army) and the Red Brigades (in Italy). If we go back to the Russian Revolution itself, which Trotskyites and other opportunists want to present as a classic model for their preaching of "accumulation of forces followed by a culminating insurrection", Chairman Gonzalo rightly stated that "in the end, the October Revolution was not just an insurrection, but a revolutionary war that lasted several years".¹⁶

¹⁶PCP, *On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*, 1988.

And that, consequently, “in the imperialist countries, revolution can only be conceived as a revolutionary war, and today this is simply a People’s War”.¹⁷ Conversely, the great Chinese Revolution itself provided demonstrations of the universality — and unified nature — of the People’s War:

Did the conquests of large cities occur in China or not? Of course; Shanghai — thirteen million inhabitants — I wonder: in the United States, how many cities have thirteen million inhabitants? With a wonderful coordination of insurrection from within, with the prior sending of selected cadres and military commanders chosen to work in Shanghai, and with the advance of the army that was then already called the People’s Liberation Army.¹⁸

From there, we can see how ridiculous Prachanda’s position is, as he tried to pass off the so-called “fusion theory” as one of the innovations of his “21st century socialism”, when the People’s War contains within itself, by definition, the combination of siege from outside with insurrection from within. It is not

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Chairman Gonzalo, *Speech at the 1st Congress*.

only here that the approach of Chairman Gonzalo and the puppet of Indian expansionism in Nepal are shown to be diametrically opposed. Prachanda categorically rejects the universality of the People's War, even when he was acting as a revolutionary. In his Interview with *Obrero Revolucionario*, published in 2000, he says that, in imperialist countries, the task of communists is to "make political denunciations of the system, build the Party, do constant work of preparation to accelerate the development of an objective revolutionary situation and, when such a situation is foreseen, to strike a decisive blow".¹⁹

In Nepal itself, unlike what happened in Peru, the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) never used war in the cities. Thus, Prachanda said in the same place about the beginning of the armed struggle: "We considered that the cities were also important, not for armed confrontations, but for propaganda and work of that kind". This leads to a reductionist view of the People's War, according to which it is limited to the siege of the city by the countryside, when its main definition is that it is a mass war led by the Communist Party to conquer Power for the proletariat in the different types of revolutions in

¹⁹"Inside the Revolution in Nepal: Interview with Comrade Prachanda", *Obrero Revolucionario* magazine, February 2000.

force and for its defense.²⁰

This deprives the armed struggle in the countryside of having the city as its sounding board in the full sense; it makes it easier for the enemy to isolate it and, in the same way, to strike at urban labor, which, deprived of the army, becomes easy prey for the reaction; it limits the Maoist's ability to displace the opportunists from the leadership of the mass movement, since the prestige of the People's War does not find a suitable political-military correspondence in the largest workers' centers; finally, the city becomes a potential reserve of right-wingism within the Party itself, since militancy develops there relatively far removed from the hardships, and also from the profound ideological transformation that comes from direct participation in the revolutionary war.

On the contrary, the PCP's experience of urban work, which the comrades of the Communist Party of India (Maoist) recognize as "particularly successful", since "in fact, the slums of Lima were strongholds

²⁰"The People's War, as in the experience of the Chinese Revolution, when and as formulated by Chairman Mao and confirmed in the various attempts to bring it to fruition in the final decades of the 20th Century, and the beginning of the present century, is the mass war led absolutely by the Communist Party." *People's War and Revolution*, Communist Party of Brazil – Red Fraction, El Maoista Magazine no. 1.

of the revolutionaries for a long period”²¹, has always been firmly based on the principle of unitary war, which takes the countryside as its main focus and the city as a necessary complement. This is the distinguishing feature of its experience, always applied conscientiously, and which confirms the judgment that “the more People’s War, the greater the incorporation of the masses”.²²

Another decisive distinction, which is obvious if one compares the Nepalese process — which culminated in the betrayal of the revolution with the “Global Peace Agreements” — with that of the People’s War in Peru, is the problem of planning, associated with the concentric construction of the three fundamental instruments of the revolution. Here, we need to take a small step back to understand this development in its entirety.

In a seminar given to Party cadres in 1987, Chairman Gonzalo, speaking about Chairman Mao’s development of Marxist Philosophy, stated that the synthesis of contradiction as the only fundamental law of materialist dialectics does not exhaust its development by him. He then emphasized the “questions concerning freedom,” understood as

²¹*Our Work in Urban Areas*. Communist Party of India (Maoist), 2004.

²²PCP, *Mass Line*, 1988.

“consciousness and transformation of necessity, this being the main aspect.”²³

In doing so, he surpasses Hegel’s definition to which Engels refers in *Anti-Dühring*. In Engels’s words: “Hegel was the first to correctly explain the relationship between freedom and necessity. For him, freedom is having a notion of necessity,” and then adding that “...in the *knowledge of these laws*, and in the possibility provided by him of *making them act, according to a plan, in function of certain ends*.” (emphasis ours).

However, Chairman Mao was more precise, in that, seconding him, Chairman Gonzalo emphasizes the aspect of the transformation of necessity as the main one. There were many who accused Chairman Mao of being an “idealist” and a “voluntarist” for placing the emphasis of the revolution on the conscious action of the Party, its cadres, and the masses, rather than on “objective conditions” — often invoked to justify

²³“Chairman Mao states that the fundamental law is contradiction and the others are derivations. With Chairman Mao we arrive at philosophical monism; the only law. This does not imply that the system has been completed. Questions regarding freedom, on the one hand, are awareness of necessity, and the other aspect is the transformation of necessity, and this is the main one”. (Philosophy Seminar, 1987). It is noted that Chairman Gonzalo uses the term “system” here, but not in a closed sense, that is: it is not a system per se, of course, he is talking about the doctrine.

subjective paralysis and resignation. Today, the right-wing of the ICM makes the same accusations against Chairman Gonzalo and those they label as “Gonzaloites”.

It was Chairman Mao himself who said that “a plan is an ideology.” When analyzing the historical process of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Chairman Gonzalo established that

...the planning system is like a support that allows the economic process to be managed according to the interests of the class, with control of the dictatorship and moving the masses with men capable of managing society and imposing conditions on the world, planning its laws, is an expression of freedom, not puppetry” (III Plenum, 1992).

One of the particularities of the construction of the PCP was the rigorous planning with which it was approached, as well the other two fundamental instruments of the revolution that it leads (the People’s Army and the United Front/New State), always in and for the People’s War — which encompassed everything from the founding of the 1st Company of the 1st Division of the People’s Guerrilla Army to the slogan of “Building the Conquest of

Power,” passing through the Strategic plans, starting with the elaboration and execution of the Initial Plan, reaching the establishment of the support bases.

There is, up to now, no process that can compare to that of the PCP in this regard, a precise expression of that capacity to “impose conditions on the world”. Until the capture of Chairman Gonzalo in 1992, the subjective direction of the People’s War always proved superior to the subjective direction of the counter-revolutionary war, as even reactionary experts, who are not suspected of sympathy for the PCP, agree.²⁴

In the *Interview*, regarding strategic planning, the role of calculation in politics, and the concentric construction of the three fundamental instruments of the revolution, Chairman Gonzalo says:

²⁴“By preparing the political ground for its military campaign before initiating it with its first armed actions, the Shining Path not only managed to maintain the initiative from the beginning of the struggle, but also ensured that the central government would encounter considerable difficulty in its attempts to regain its advantageous position. From the beginning, the regime *has responded only to Senderista initiatives that follow its plan to the letter.*” (Our emphasis) Gordon H. McCormick, Professor in the Department of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. *From the Sierra to the Cities: The Shining Path’s Urban Campaign* (1991).

Each class generates its own specific form of war and, therefore, its own strategy. The proletariat created its own: the people's war, and it is a superior strategy. The bourgeoisie can never have a superior strategy, and there will be no strategy more developed than that of the proletariat. This is a problem of proving the military process in the world. Each class has always generated its own way of waging war and its own strategy, and the superior strategy has always won over the inferior one. The new class always has the superior strategy, and this is the People's War. The evidence shows this. There are military scholars who say: when the communists applied their principles, they never lost a war. They only lost when they did not apply their principles. Therefore, we started from this, that we have a superior strategy as a universally proven theory. Our problem was how to implement our own strategy. That is the problem, and that is where the margin for error lies. The first thing we proposed was this: not to apply the People's War mechanically, because Chairman Mao Zedong warned us that applying it mechanically leads to

opportunism and defeat. In 1980, when we decided to start, we proposed to the Party Central Committee that we should keep in mind the specific application, not dogmatism, not mechanism. These were the plans, and we started from there.

(...)

We already had the plan to wage war in the countryside and in the city. The first plan we proposed was the Beginning Plan. The Political Bureau was tasked with defining how to develop armed actions and it was the organization that presented the plan, starting with detachments in terms of military form. We fulfilled this plan in 1980. However, we must say that two weeks before starting, there was a meeting of the expanded Political Bureau to analyze how we had begun and it was concluded that something new had been born and that what was new was the People's War, armed actions, and detachments. We soon developed the Expansion Plan. This plan was longer, it covered two years, but it was fulfilled in several campaigns. It was at the end of this plan that the new forms of Power were realized, the People's Committees

emerged. At the end of 1982, the armed forces joined. Already more than a year in advance, the Central Committee had studied the entry of the armed forces and decided that it would be progressive until replacing the police forces, which would be relegated to second place, and that is what happened; it could not have happened in this situation otherwise.

(...)

In view of this, we had an expanded session of the Central Committee, very large in attendance and time, it was one of the longest, in which the Plan to Conquer Bases was established, the People's Guerrilla Army was created to respond to a force that obviously had a higher level than the police, and that was when we also raised the issue of the State/Front, among others.

Here, we can clearly see the development of the General Political Line – Chairman Gonzalo said that the PCP's strength was politics – whose center is the Military Line. After all, talking about politics is talking about Power. And, ultimately, the three fundamental instruments of the revolution (Party,

Army, and United Front/New State) serve to fulfill a single strategy, whose center and absolute command is the Communist Party. This rejects both frontism and militarism — forms of opportunism on the right and on the “left”, identical in that they deny the hegemony of the proletariat — and spontaneity, which promotes the execution of an armed struggle without direction. The point, raised since Chairman Mao, is that without planning there is no initiative.²⁵

Now, the role of the leadership is precisely this: to stay the course. What we see, on the part of Chairman Gonzalo, is a creative application, and even a development, including on a philosophical level,

²⁵“Indeed, initiative is the result of a correct assessment of the situation (ours and the enemy’s) and the adoption of correct political and military measures. A pessimistic assessment of the situation, at odds with the objective conditions, and the adoption of inactive measures that follow it, undoubtedly causes the loss of initiative and leads to a situation of passivity. On the other hand, an overly optimistic assessment of the situation, at odds with the objective conditions, and the adoption of adventurous measures (unnecessary risks) that follow it, also causes a loss of initiative and leads, finally, to a position similar to that of the pessimists. Initiative is not the natural gift of a genius, but something that an intelligent leader achieves through modest study, a correct assessment of the objective conditions, and through the adoption of correct military and political measures. Consequently, initiative is not something ready-made, but something that requires conscious effort to obtain.” (Chairman Mao, *Strategic Problems of Guerrilla Warfare Against Japan*, Selected Works, Volume II).

of this topic, the antithesis of any dogmatism. The concept applied by the CPN(M) at the beginning of the People's War in Nepal on February 13, 1996, was very different.

In the aforementioned interview with *Obrero Revolucionario* in 2000, Prachanda said that “we concluded that the process of the Beginning and the First Plan were correct, that they shook the country and this was proven in practice... Then, *one month after the Beginning*, we prepared the Second Plan.” (Our emphasis). In other words, contrary to what Chairman Gonzalo formulated and applied, of always anticipating the enemy, based on a long-term assessment — and, specifically regarding the Beginning Plan, as a link with the continuity of the People's War — in the Nepalese experience, only one month after the Beginning was the second plan prepared (in Peru, as we have seen, the War plan provided for the entry of the Armed Forces two years in advance, and this was integrated into the calculation for the beginning).

Furthermore, regarding the construction of the New Power, the then Chairman of the PCN(M) recognized that “in the beginning, we did not organize power well; it was not well planned or well thought out.” Nor was the relationship between the Party, the Army and the United

Front well established, which led to the fact that “when investigating the situation, we found that the command of the squadron was the de facto political leader... In other words, power was in the hands of the command of the squadron and not of the district or zonal secretary.” In this he recognizes that: “It was not an error of the commands themselves, but rather a problem of spontaneity, that is, *the exercise of power was not well planned nor was it debated in depth*. But, later the Party leadership debated it, and defined the issues of the united front and the new power.” (Our emphasis).

Here, there is not only spontaneity, but, in effect, a non-proletarian vision of the three fundamental instruments of the revolution and the construction of the New Power. After all, if the objective of the People’s War is the conquest of Power, its exercise must be taken as a burning issue from the very beginning. Otherwise, the leadership of the proletariat will not be assured. From a theoretical point of view, Chairman Mao had already established that guerrilla warfare and support bases constitute the core of the strategy of the People’s War.²⁶

²⁶“Without these strategic bases, there would be nothing on which we could rely to carry out our strategic tasks and achieve the objective of the war. Since the guerrilla forces are separated from the general rear of the country, one of the characteristics of guerrilla warfare in the enemy’s rear is to fight without a rear

This revision of Maoism becomes even more explicit when Prachanda states, regarding the establishment of support bases: “At a time when there is instability in India and a broad mass movement in favor of People’s War in Nepal, in addition to contradictions within the ruling class of that country, at that time we can gain bases of support, establish them and declare that we have them, that we have a government.” This is a diametrically opposed approach to that of Chairman Mao, who establishes the following as conditions for establishing support bases: the existence of people’s armed forces, the defeat of the enemy’s armed forces, and the mobilization of the masses.²⁷

Consistent with Chairman Mao, the PCP established in its Military Line, approved at the First Congress, that “Chairman Gonzalo established a system of support bases surrounded by guerrilla zones, operational zones and action points, taking into account the political and social conditions, the

guard. But guerrillas cannot maintain themselves for long or expand if they do not have support bases that constitute their own rear guard.” (Ibid).

²⁷ “The basic conditions for the creation of bases of support are the existence of anti-Japanese armed forces, the use of these armed forces for the defeat of the enemy and the mobilization of the masses of the people. Thus, the problem of the creation of bases of support is, first and foremost, a problem of the creation of armed forces.” (Ibid).

tradition of struggle, the geographical characteristics and the development of the Party, the Army and the masses.” Undoubtedly, international political conditions matter, but the decisive factor is internal, namely, the ability of the Party to maintain the initiative in guerrilla warfare and boldly mobilize the masses. Even here, before the so-called “Prachanda Path” matured — or rotted — before the world, as a new form of “Maoist” revisionism, one can already notice one of its main characteristics (a characteristic of revisionism in general): eclecticism. In this way, spontaneity, right-wingism and petty-bourgeois revolutionism appear wrapped in terminology that at first glance seems Maoist, and even similar to the developments of Gonzalo Thought, and this is precisely what makes it so pernicious.

Already here, in the approach to the bases of support, one sees the embryo of the formulation on the “globalized imperialist State”, which would have made “obsolete” the formulations of Lenin and Chairman Mao on imperialism, which was nothing more than the “theorization” that it was impossible for the revolution to win in a small country like Nepal, a harbinger of the laying down of arms.²⁸

²⁸See Prachanda’s special interview with the Janadesch newspaper, from February 2006, in celebration of ten years of the People’s War, published under the title *Unfurling the Revolutionary Flag on Mount Everest in the 21st Century*.

On the philosophical level, such eclecticism was manifested in the tacit recognition — whose formulation refers to the right-wing of the CCP — that the main thing in dialectics was the concept that “two combine into one”, as well as the emphasis that Nepalese leaders have always given to the Hegelian negation of the negation.²⁹ Only ignorance, the most obtuse prejudice or, perhaps, deliberate falsification, can claim to equate this vile revisionism with the contributions of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo.

Regarding the content of Chairman Gonzalo’s contributions of universal validity, there is still something to be said about bureaucratic capitalism. A concept that emerged in the analysis of classes in Chinese society, it was generalized by the

²⁹“We believe that in general, in the past, the International Communist Movement has not grasped the whole of this law of dialectics. In the past, our class paid more attention to ‘one divides into two’ and is doing so at present, but consciously or unconsciously, it has not understood and applied in practice as its main aspect the transformation of one aspect into its opposite... In other words, our class has practiced unity-struggle-division, not unity-struggle-transformation.” See “Letters between the RCP-USA and the CPN(M)”, published on the Revolution website. It is not seen that transformation, that is, self-movement, has as its premise precisely contradiction. Transformation, or the new, is not a third, “reunion” of the previous contenders, but the victory of one aspect over its opposite. This understanding was emphasized in Marxism by Chairman Mao.

PCP as “the capitalism that develops in nations oppressed by imperialism and with varying degrees of underlying feudalism, or even previous ones.”³⁰ This understanding is vital for us to understand the economic and social formations of oppressed nations in the revolutionary storm centers in Asia, Africa, and Latin America; it is a common basis for developing the necessary specific investigations. It serves to situate the revolutionary role of the peasantry and the weight of the agrarian question in the contemporary world. All this, with the aim of establishing precisely the goals and driving forces of the democratic revolution, and the conditions for its uninterrupted transition to the socialist revolution.

Chairman Gonzalo’s Place in History

In the early 1990s, the economic, social, and political crisis in Peruvian society reached unprecedented levels. In the 1990 presidential elections, driven by the boycott campaign carried out by the PCP — under the slogan “Elections, No! People’s War, Yes!” — absenteeism reached record levels. In the dispute between the writer Mario Vargas Llosa, a representative of the traditional right, and the previously unknown Alberto Fujimori, the typical adventurer and fisherman of troubled waters who emerges in every period of crisis (such as Collor

³⁰PCP, *On Marxism-Leninism-Maoism*.

in Brazil in 1989, both with a populist and “anti-neoliberal” speech and program), Fujimori won, counting on the support of the opportunistic left.

Once in office, he practiced what is now called “electoral fraud”: he ruthlessly applied the “Washington Consensus” prescription, in keeping with the counter-revolutionary winds of the time. Amid growing disagreements with Congress and the Judiciary, he concentrated power in the Executive Branch and governed, in practice, by decree. The military increasingly took control of the country, advised by the American CIA and the Israeli Mossad. Vladimiro Montesinos was the man behind the government’s clandestine apparatus — a sort of new Rasputin — responsible for the massacres that followed one after the other in the countryside and in the large slums of Lima and other cities.

The reaction was breaking out into state terrorism, a sign of its desperation in the face of the PCP’s powerful advance in the capital itself; power was slipping away from it, while the communists were gaining positions and gaining increasing support in public opinion. The People’s War was reaching a strategic equilibrium and what Chairman Gonzalo had predicted in the plan for the Beginning of the Armed Struggle, more than a decade earlier, was being fulfilled: bureaucratic capitalism, in deep crisis,

was maturing the democratic revolution. The crisis escalated with Fujimori's self-coup on April 5, 1992, with which the ruling classes, united around the Armed Forces, sought to free their hands from formal legality in order to deal harsher blows against the People's War. For them, it was all or nothing.

It was therefore a highly complex scenario, which confirms Marx's aforementioned passage that the revolution advances to the extent that it engenders a powerful and united counter-revolution. It would be highly erroneous to assume that Chairman Gonzalo underestimated this situation: the PCP warned in its documents about the process of reactionization of Peruvian society — an inevitable response to the advance of the People's War — and of the military coup underway. Brilliantly exposing the dialectic of the conflict between the two sides, the Leadership of the Party and the Revolution stated that:

As a consequence of a wave, revolutionary action expands further; but the waves cannot be long and sustained, especially in the cities; the reactionary counter-offensive comes. Thus, the action increases more on both sides and a fluid struggle begins in the cities. There will be many waves and the struggle will intensify, it will be

harder and bloodier; the people will become stronger and the reaction will weaken, but it will apply its abject reactionary violence more: they repress more because they are beginning to lose. Today, the concretization of strategic equilibrium is developing. *Finally, in this back and forth of the waves, there is room for a coup d'état, more time, less time; it is in our best interest that it be as late as possible.*³¹

Studying the “reactivation of fascism” in the new conditions of Peruvian society, he enriched Marxist-Leninist-Maoist theory on the subject. He said: “The old society generates fascism as an expression of its reactionization (*not the only one, since the other is the reactionary evolution of the parliamentary democratic liberal system itself: the United States, England, France, European countries*), mainly as a weapon when the revolution threatens to demolish it.”³²

As can be seen, it would be wrong to deduce from isolated passages of Chairman Gonzalo that the reactionization in contemporary times would occur only as a gradual degeneration of the old bourgeois democracy: this is one of the paths, but reaction

³¹PCP, *May the Strategic Equilibrium Shake the Country More*, 1991. (Our emphasis).

³²Ibid. (Our emphasis).

and imperialism feed, engender and, when they deem it necessary, use fascism. In their field, this is the passage from quantitative accumulation to the solution of continuity. The former, however, contrary to what the opportunists say, has its basis in the general crisis of imperialism.

It is a consequence and not a cause of the obsolescence of bourgeois democracy, and one of the forms of dictatorship of this class, adopted when it feels that power is slipping from its hands. Therefore, fascism should not be reduced to violence, as the Girondins of the workers' movement do, in order to make the workers a mere appendage of one of the factions of the dominant classes, in the united front of salvation of the old order that they always preach. In the *Interview*, Chairman Gonzalo states:

As for the problem of identifying fascism with terror, with repression, it seems to us that this is a mistake. What happens in this case is the following: if we recall Marxism, the State is organized violence, that is the definition given to us by the classics, and every State uses violence because it is a dictatorship. Otherwise, how could it fight to oppress and exploit? It could not do so. What happens, as a consequence, is that

fascism develops a broader, more refined, more sinister violence, but fascism cannot be identified as the same as violence. This is a gross error.

In addition to “wider violence,” Chairman Gonzalo establishes a series of other components common to fascism — which, in Marxism in general, and in him in particular, never excludes the study of specific, original forms — such as the denial of parliamentarism, corporatism, and ideological eclecticism, since fascism “does not have a defined philosophy, it is a patchwork philosophical positions, it picks from here and there what suits it.” Thus, the anti-capitalist preaching that appeared, for example, in the German and Italian forms, was absent from Latin American military regimes, such as those of Videla and Pinochet, to name two unquestionable examples of fascist governments — the latter made Chile, as is well known, a great laboratory for the Chicago School, and for this purpose relied on the services of its epigone, Milton Friedman. Because it is not “anti-capitalism” or “anti-Semitism”, as so many would have it, that is universal here — which is why they are absent from Chairman Gonzalo’s categorization — but rather the eclecticism (extended to the point of cynicism) of taking what suits one’s needs into one’s own hands. Not seeing it this way,

making overly restrictive readings of this complex social phenomenon, would lead to underestimating its importance today, disarming the proletariat and the masses to confront it, making them easy prey for the “ mad, vengeful cruelty ” of reaction.³³

After all, this was not what comrades Stalin and Dimitrov taught us at the 7th Congress of the Communist International. These are burning discussions, including for the ongoing People’s Wars facing fascist or crypto-fascist regimes, such as Modi’s in India or Erdogan’s in Turkey.

If, on the domestic front, Fujimori’s genocidal regime and the ongoing coup d’état corresponded to the need for absolute centralization of the ruling classes to confront the People’s War, on the foreign front, with Perestroika, a general counter-revolutionary offensive had been unleashed, convergent between imperialism, revisionism and all reaction, “to conjure up revolution as the main historical and political tendency.” With the bankruptcy of the revisionist USSR, Yankee imperialism, as the new sole hegemonic superpower,

³³In the Preface to the 1891 edition of *The Civil War in France*, Engels notes, comparing 1848 and 1871: “It was the first time that the bourgeoisie showed to what mad, vengeful cruelty it would go when the proletariat dared to stand before it as a separate class with interests and demands of its own. And yet 1848 was child’s play compared to its wrath in 1871.”

assumed the leadership of this offensive, of a general nature because “it occurs on all levels: ideological, political and economic, although the central one is the political one.”³⁴

Now, at that moment, in the very backyard of Yankee imperialism, the People’s War was unfolding in Peru, against which unequal forces were unleashed. Just as the defeat of the first Russian revolution in 1907 did not mean the defeat of Leninist tactics for the democratic revolution, which triumphed ten years later with the same essential orientation (revolutionary democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, whose organ of power was the soviets); just as the capitalist restoration in People’s China did not mean the defeat of the lessons of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, but the confirmation of Chairman Mao’s warnings; the capture of Chairman Gonzalo on September 12, 1992, and its dramatic developments, were the result and, at the same time, the climax of the general counter-revolutionary offensive that he himself had characterized and predicted.

Two weeks after his arrest, in a house in the suburbs of Lima, Chairman Gonzalo delivered the famous “Speech from the Cage,” which can be

³⁴PCP: *On the Rectification Campaign Based on the Study of the Document “Elections, No! People’s War, Yes!”*, 1991.

considered his political testament. In it, he defined his capture as a “bend in the road,” and called on PCP militants and Army fighters — whom he urged to become the “People’s Liberation Army,” in a clear reference to the growing intervention of Yankee imperialism — to continue the People’s War and fulfill the Party’s plans and goals until it seized power throughout the country.

In one of the loudest and most forceful demonstrations of communist morality ever seen in history, Chairman Gonzalo managed to speak over the heads of his executioners, addressing the Peruvian people and the international proletariat; he turned the attempt to humiliate him into a new resounding defeat for the counter-revolution. It is no coincidence that the prison guards never allowed him to speak in public again. In 2004, when, through carelessness or underestimation, the television cameras caught him live in a court session, Chairman Gonzalo stood up again and, with his fist raised, shouted Party slogans. After twelve years of absolute isolation, he demonstrated, once again, his unbreakable revolutionary integrity.

Following his arrest, a huge international emergency campaign in defense of his life was launched by the CC of the PCP and the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM). This campaign was

undoubtedly part of the reason for not executing Chairman Gonzalo, a position defended in public by Fujimori.³⁵ However, it was U.S. imperialism and its emissaries on the ground who prevented this from being done. In fact, the National Directorate Against Terrorism (DINCOTE), a police force linked to the CIA, and the National Intelligence Service (SIN), subordinate to the Army, engaged in a silent dispute over the custody of Chairman Gonzalo, in which the former emerged victorious.

The plan was born to create a hoax — in military jargon, a psychological operation — in order to “play Gonzalo against Gonzalo”. A year later, during a UN meeting, the executioner Alberto Fujimori would appear with the apocryphal “Peace Letters”, attributed to the most important prisoner of war in the world, held in complete incommunicado.

In short, the argument of the “Letters” and of some other documents presented by the 2nd Right Opportunist Line (ROL), already headed by Elena Yparraguirre (Miriam), under the strict direction of the enemy intelligence services, maintained that the correlation of forces at the international level had

³⁵The newspaper “La Republica”, dated September 29, 1992, carried the following statement by Fujimori: “I am in favor of applying the death penalty, and I know that the people agree with this.”

changed in a direction that was clearly unfavorable to the revolution (“general political reflux of the world revolution”); that, under these conditions, the revolution had no prospect of triumph; that, with the fall of Chairman Gonzalo and the majority of the CC, the People’s War lacked proletarian leadership to continue; and that, as a result of the People’s War, a change had occurred in the agrarian structure of Peru, making bureaucratic capitalism viable. In short, they attributed to Chairman Gonzalo the perfect antithesis of what he had maintained in his last speech. While he remained isolated, the capitulationists circulated through the prisons, holding “Party” meetings to defend the peace agreement, with the approval of the repressive forces.

In fact, the police machination was anchored in the nefarious — convergent — actions of revisionism, inside and outside Peru. As soon as Fujimori announced the lie, the RCP-USA, led by Bob Avakian, had the RIM Organizing Committee (CORIM) suspend the “Emergency Campaign” in order to “investigate Chairman Gonzalo’s real position,” although the PCP’s Emergency Central Committee, then under Feliciano’s leadership, rejected such an assumption.³⁶

³⁶The very tradition of the International Communist Movement, established as a norm by the International Red Aid, linked to the Comintern, establishes that one should not doubt

This was the beginning of the attempt to assassinate Chairman Gonzalo's work, accused of being "rightist" by the same hardened rightists who opposed the definition and development of Maoism forged in the People's War in Peru. When, years later, Prachanda, once free, led the betrayal of the People's War in Nepal, of which he would later become Prime Minister, the same RIM "professors" who were quick to label Chairman Gonzalo as a member of the 2nd ROL took several years to comment publicly on the episode. RIM, as an organization, died without doing so.

Sentenced to life imprisonment, the target of the most hateful smear campaign perpetrated by vile murderers whose uniforms and robes were permeated by the smell of torture chambers and mass graves, the few recent images of Chairman Gonzalo always show him in a dignified position before the judges and prison guards. The fact that he remained sane is already an extraordinary feat — he was perhaps the longest prisoner in history to be held in total isolation — and further proof of his revolutionary integrity. There is a well-known account by Ulrike Meinhof, leader of the West German Red Army Faction (RAF), of his detention in

the condition of a prisoner unless one has irrefutable evidence in this regard, especially in cases of isolation.

the early 1970s in the so-called ‘Dead Wing’ (Toter Trakt) of the maximum security prison, where the cells were sound-proofed to make the isolation even more drastic. She described:

- sensation of head exploding (the feeling that the skull is bursting, going up in the air).
- sensation that the spinal cord is being pushed up to the brain, feeling that the brain shrinks like a dried fruit.
- feeling of being plugged in all the time, of being tele-guided, feeling that sensations are escaping.
- feeling of pissing your soul out of your body, like when you can’t hold it in any longer.
- the sensation that the cell is moving. I wake up, open my eyes: the cell is moving; in the afternoon, when the sun shines, it suddenly stops. It is impossible to control the sensation of movement. It is impossible to determine whether we are shivering from fever or cold, it is impossible to determine why we are shivering — we feel cold.

Would someone who had renounced the ideology of the proletariat endure such a trial, not for one, five or ten, but for twenty-nine years? The man Abimael Guzmán was not like Galileo, who at the last minute bent his knees; but like Giordano Bruno, who, with full knowledge of the facts, carried his conviction

to the ultimate sacrifice. This was consummated on September 11, 2021, when the opportunist, Pedro Castillo, supported by Movadef (Movement for Amnesty and Fundamental Rights, led by the capitulator Miriam), presided over his execution as head of the old Peruvian state.

If one last proof were needed of his irreconcilable position towards the 2nd ROL, here it is. Aware that the tomb of the greatest communist of the time would become a destination for tributes and celebrations, the Peruvian Congress hastily approved a law, valid retroactively, to cremate and disappear his body. Against the thought he bequeathed to new generations, however, all their lies and ammunition (sweet or steel) are powerless: Gonzalo's thought is immortal.

Speaking at Marx's grave, Engels said that his comrade "was the most hated and most slandered man of his time." His preaching, sustained for forty years, of the triumph of the proletarian revolution seemed, in the eyes of his "fellow travelers," distant at best; mistaken at worst. The fruits of his predictions would bear fruit in the 20th century. Today, we can say that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, with the contributions of universal validity of Chairman Gonzalo ("the most hated and most slandered man" of this time) is the Marxism of

the era of the People's Wars, when the crisis of the decomposition of imperialism has reached an unprecedented stage; of the all-out struggle against revisionism of all stripes; an era in which imperialism will be swept from the face of the Earth by the World People's War.

Under its auspices, the International Communist Movement stands up to lead the new great wave of the World Proletarian Revolution that is underway. As in every social process — and this is true of Marxism itself — there are those who see it first and go ahead; there are those who remain undecided, waiting “to see is to believe”; and there are those who oppose the advance. Ten thousand years from now it will still be this way. Therefore, there is no need to curse; we must work. Despite the attacks and disbelief, what is true persists, makes its way and triumphs: the broad path of history proves this.

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