

Communism and the Challenge of our Times

In the last few years the pace of world history has accelerated. On the one hand, the US imperialists have embarked on a world-wide crusade, promised to last for a generation, whose purpose is to violently hammer into place an even more brutal version of the imperialist order that sucks the life out of the great majority of people throughout the world. Yet this very imperialist system and the intensified measures to prop it up and enforce it are themselves giving rise to powerful new waves of discontent, struggle and revolution. It is in this spirit that the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has emphasised that we are entering a turbulent period full of both great dangers for the people of the world but also great opportunities. A chance to achieve new breakthroughs in the fight to construct a whole different kind of world, where class distinctions themselves have been surpassed and the full talent and energy of humanity is unleashed so that it can consciously transform itself and the world. No one living today will see the full flowering of the future communist society, but what women and men do today, what they live and die for, is of crucial importance for the subsequent course of history.

The vision of a communist society is not a new one. Ever since Marx and Engels first put the struggle for a communist world on a scientific footing a tremendous drama has taken place in which millions of men and women have fought to destroy the old world and bring a new one into its place. Great vic-

tories were won, such as the fleeting but glorious months of the Paris Commune in 1871, the October Revolution and the decades of building and defending a socialist state in the USSR, and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in Mao's China, which was the furthest advance yet in the fight for the classless communist future. But we know that the world imperialist system, backed by the reactionary forces in general and the weight of thousands of years of class exploitation and accompanying ideas and institutions, is a very formidable opponent. The first great efforts to carve out the communist future were defeated, and even today we are still suffering from the shocking loss of revolutionary China in 1976 when the revisionists in the Communist Party of China seized power after Mao's death and, with astonishing speed, restored the capitalist system in all its ugliness.

The question posed is whether the communist ideology, Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, will succeed in fusing with the new rising tide of revolution and ultimately be able to focus the fury of the masses on the task of shattering the political power of the ruling classes and constructing a new kind of power based on and in the interests of the immense majority of people. However much they struggle and sacrifice, without this leadership the masses will flounder, be betrayed and ultimately defeated. In one form or another the old system of exploitation will continue unless and until it is consciously targeted



and defeated by a revolutionary force armed with the most advanced understanding of society and a clear scientific vision of how to go about transforming it. Hence the need for a communist vanguard in each country and a communist international of a new type on a world scale. And hence the need for the revolutionary science of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism itself to advance.

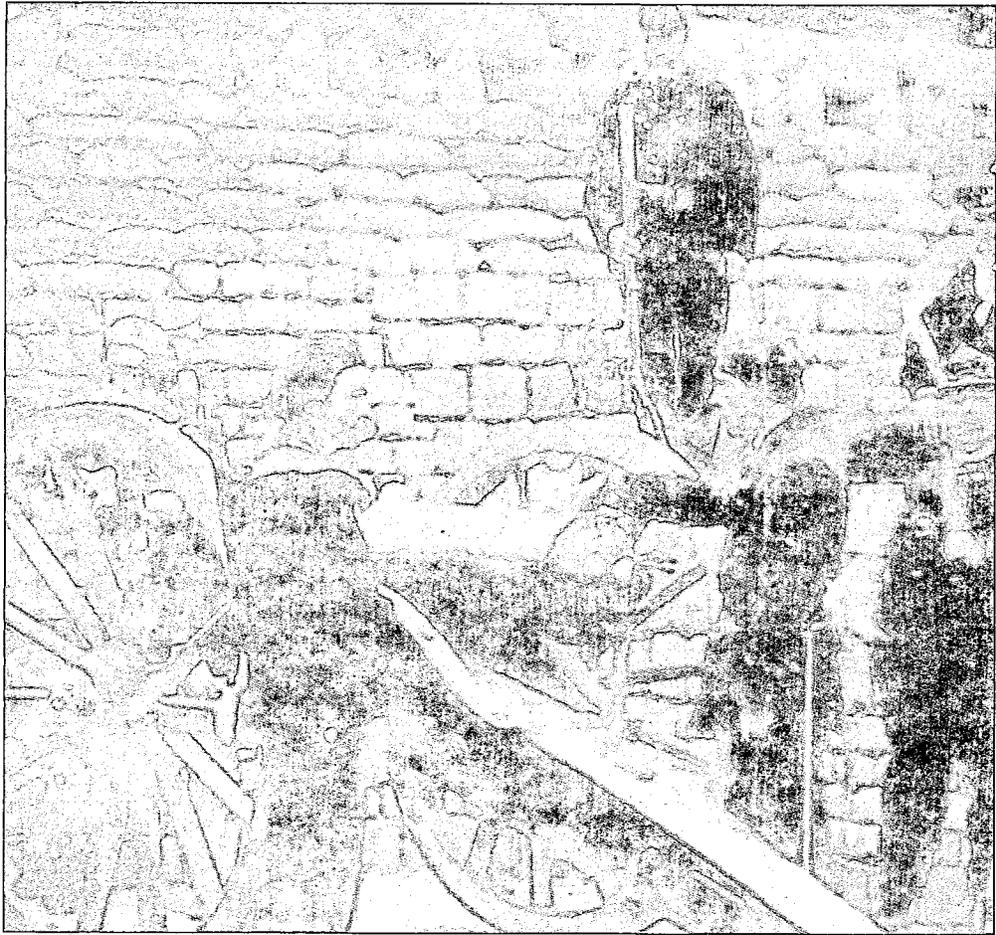
In the almost thirty years since the death of Mao the world has undergone important changes. The ideological terrain today is much different than it was during the Cultural Revolution and the birth of the Maoist movement internationally. New generations are coming forward in the fight against imperialism and reaction who have no real understanding of the whole sweep of the communist movement, of the great heights it reached and upon what rocks it temporarily crashed. The changes in the world as well as the experience in class struggle pose new questions that our science must address concerning strategy and tactics, class alliances, military line and dialectical materialism itself.

Communist ideology advances amidst a turbulent process. New understandings must overcome the inertia of past ways of looking at things, and correct and incorrect viewpoints must be sorted out. The ideas that derive from different realms of humanity's experience will be further tested and developed in the course of changing the world. This whole process is marked by what communists refer to as the two-line struggle, and through it the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) itself has and will continue to be tempered and strengthened. RIM has called for a wide discussion and debate inside and outside its ranks over the most vital problems facing the communist revolutionaries today, such as the problem of summing up the experience of exercising proletarian dictatorship (USSR and China), understanding the dynamics of how the imperialist system works, analysing the socio-economic developments that are taking place in different countries and understanding their implication for revolutionary strategy, as well as

(Continued to p. 50)



Above: Karl Marx.
Right: Paris
Commune, 1871.



Peasants join the
revolutionary army,
Russia, 1918.

Below: Lenin.





During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China big character posters flourished everywhere.

Mao Tsetung elaborated many theses on a whole series of vital questions of revolution. But Maoism is not just the sum total of Mao's great contributions. It is the comprehensive and all-round development of Marxism-Leninism to a new and higher stage. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is an integral whole; it is the ideology of the proletariat synthesized and developed to new stages, from Marxism to Marxism-Leninism to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, by Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and Mao Tsetung, on the basis of the experience of the proletariat and mankind in class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment. It is the invincible weapon which enables the proletariat to understand the world and change it through revolution. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is a universally applicable, living and scientific ideology, constantly developing and being further enriched through its application in making revolution as well as through the advance of human knowledge generally. Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is the enemy of all forms of revisionism and dogmatism. It is all-powerful because it is true.



A WORLD TO WIN 2005/31

From Long Live Marxism-Leninism-Maoism!, adopted 26 December 1993



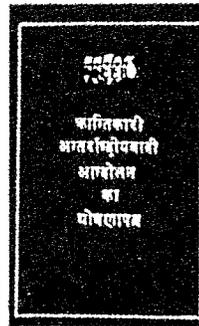
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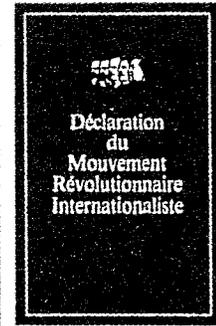
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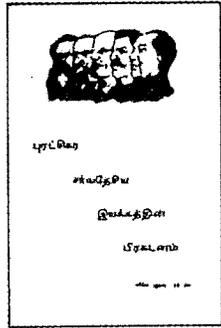
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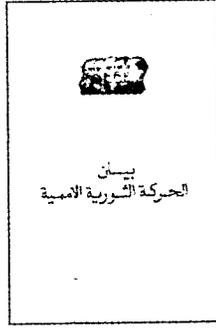
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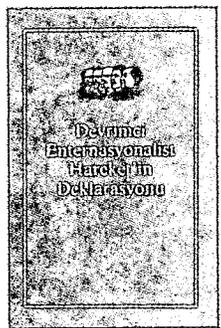
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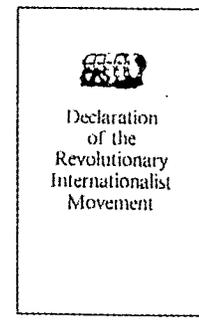
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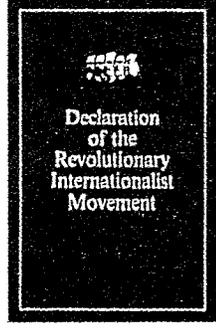
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Signatories of the Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement and Participating Organisations in RIM:

- Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist)
- Communist Party (Maoist) of Afghanistan
- Communist Party of Bangladesh (Marxist-Leninist) [BSD(ML)]
- Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) (Naxalbari)
- Communist Party of Iran (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)
- Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)
- Communist Party of Peru
- Maoist Communist Party [Turkey and North Kurdistan]
- Maoist Communist Centre of India
- Proletarian Party of Purba Bangla (PBSP) [Bangladesh]
- Revolutionary Communist Group of Colombia
- Revolutionary Communist Party, USA

In addition to the above list of those whose participation in the Movement has been publicly announced by the Committee, a number of other organisations work closely with the Movement to advance its cause and build and strengthen vanguard communist organisation.

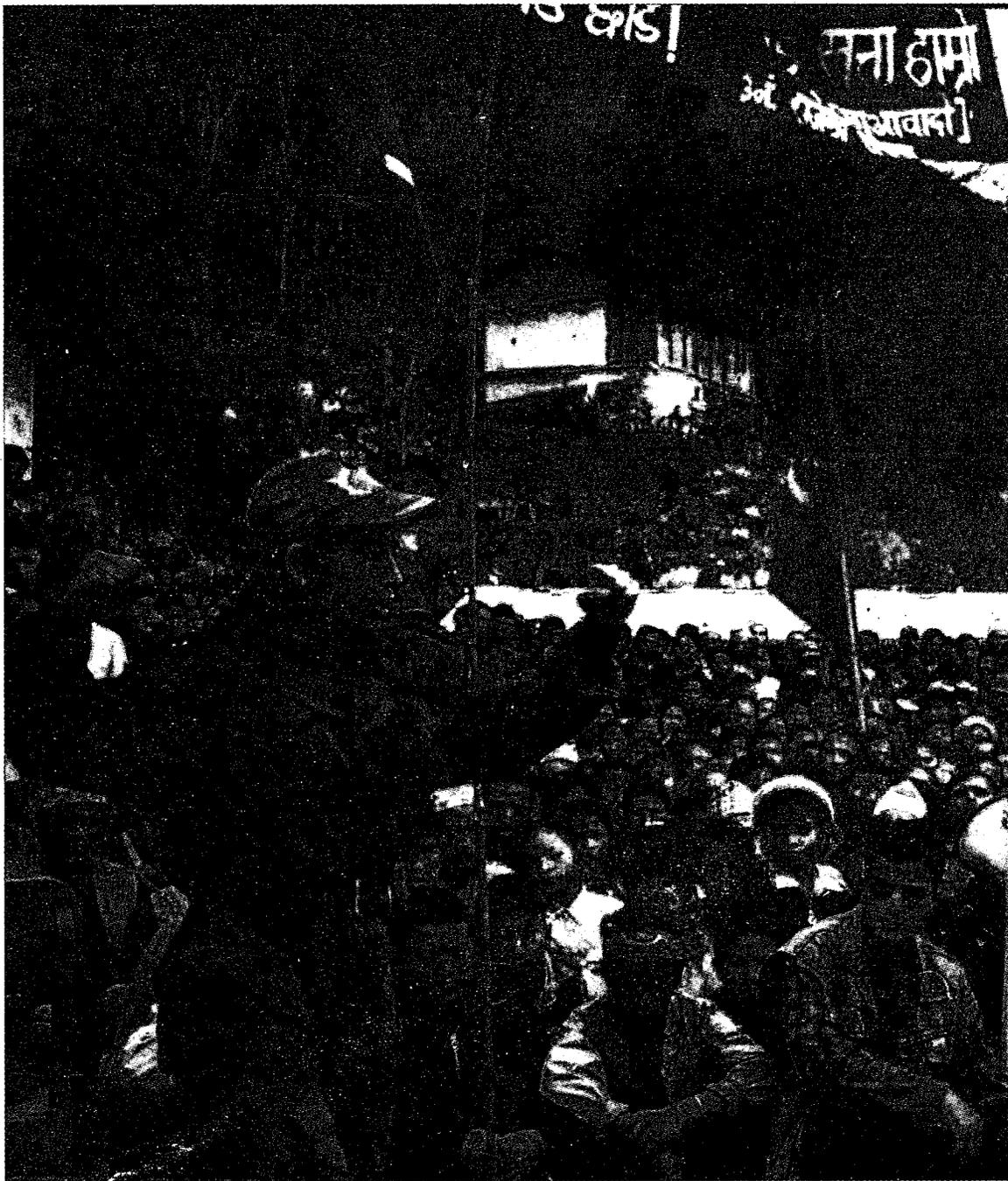
The Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has been printed in over 20 languages. Not shown here: Gujarati, Nepalese, Japanese and Kannada.

1. Punjabi 2. Italian 3. Farsi 4. Hindi 5. French
6. Chinese 7. Malayalam 8. Bengali 9. Créole
10. German 11. English (U.S.) 12. English (Indian)
13. Spanish (Spain) 14. Spanish (U.S.)
15. Spanish (Peru) 16. Spanish (Colombia) 17. Turkish
18. Tamil 19. Arabic 20. Danish 21. Kurdish

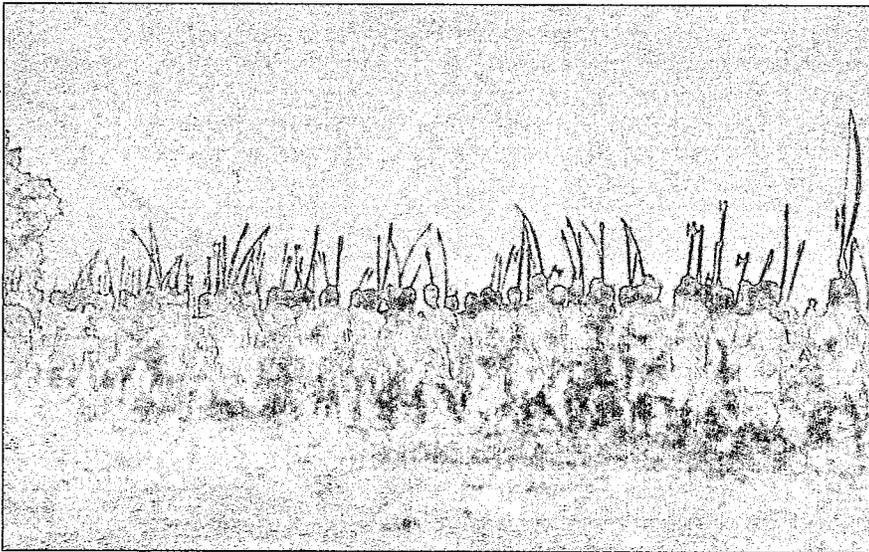


Chairman Prachanda,
Communist Party of
Nepal (Maoist)

Woman comrade gives rousing talk to masses in western Nepal.



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The Naxalbari upsurge in India began in 1967 under the leadership of Charu Mazumdar (above right) and shook the country and the region with its "spring thunder".

The emergence of new conditions has often been used as an excuse to negate fundamental principles of Marxism under the signboard of its "creative development". At the same time, it is incorrect and just as damaging to abandon the Marxist critical spirit, to fail to sum up the shortcomings as well as the successes of the proletariat, and to rest content with upholding or reclaiming positions considered correct in the past. Such an approach would make Marxism-Leninism-Maoism brittle and unable to withstand the attacks of the enemy and incapable of leading new advances in the class struggle – and suffocate its revolutionary essence.

In fact, history has shown that real creative developments of Marxism (and not phony revisionist distortions) have always been inseparably linked with a fierce struggle to defend and uphold basic principles of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

— From the Declaration of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement



Siraj Sikder — founder of the Proletarian Party of Purba Bangla (PBSP).



ABOVE: Comrades in Turkey's prisons. INSET: Ibrahim Kaypakkaya, founder of the Communist Party of Turkey/Marxist-Leninist (TKP/ML) in 1972.



Akram Yari — one of the early leaders of the communist movement in Afghanistan, killed by the revisionist pro-Soviet government.



Mao Tsetung greeting N. Sanmugathasan (co-convenor of RIM founding press conference and founder of Ceylon Communist Party [Maoist]) at Tienanmen Square in the 1960s.



BELOW: A group of Sarbedaran fighters near Amol, 1981.



Drawing of captured Communist Party of Peru Chairman Gonzalo from IEC meeting in Germany.



Communist Party guerrillas in the mountains of Ayacucho, Peru in the 1980s.



Cancun, Mexico, anti-globalisation protest.



Colombia – World People's Resistance Movement.

other important questions. We hope that our magazine can play a role in helping to provide a forum for these crucial discussions and debates and we invite our readership to contribute to them.

The Revolutionary Internationalist Movement has developed as the embryonic centre of the world's Maoist forces, by those who were able to withstand the loss of socialist China and subsequent betrayal and demoralisation that decimated most of the previous Maoist movement. RIM and the parties

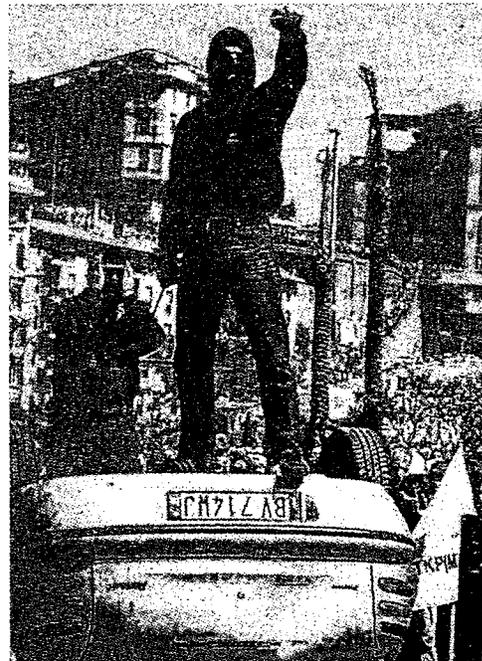
and organisations making it up have achieved a great deal in the past twenty years since its formation. But in an important sense these achievements are but a prelude to meeting the much greater challenges and opportunities that are rapidly developing today. RIM cannot stand still; it must, on the basis of raising its collective and unified understanding of our ideology, advance further in its goal of building a communist international of a new type, and it must unite with all of the genuine Maoist forces the world over in this



Los Angeles rebellion, 1992

Bob Avakian, Chairman of
the Revolutionary
Communist Party, USA

Berlin, May Day, 2001



Genoa, Italy, 2001

process as well as reaching out to revolutionary activists who are yet to be won to the liberating truth of communist ideology.

Communism remains the only hope for humanity to escape from the enslaving division of society into classes. But this lofty hope can only be realised through struggle, hard struggle, in every sphere. The international communist movement has brought forth legions of heroes who have braved imprisonment, torture and death in the face of the

enemy. Now the international communist movement must show the same courage in its merciless self-examination and its determination that its ideology remain vibrant, capable of comprehending ever more fully the rich complexity of human society and class struggle, able to reach out, learn from and unite with millions of others while fighting tenaciously to uphold, apply and win others to the ideology of liberation. ■