Enemies of the Communist Party of Peru

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"Once again I repeat that I am not an impartial, objective critic. My judgments are nourished by my ideals, my sentiments, my passions."

- José Carlos Mariátegui. Lima, 1928.

We open with this quote from Mariátegui to showcase without question that we are all imprinted with a class bias. We are biased in our advocacy for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the ending of exploitation, the ending of classes and a Communist future. We are biased in the sense that we are committed to the promotion of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism and defending it from cretins of all kinds. We are not alone in our bias. The enemy for all their huff and puff surrounding "objectivity" in history do so only in the sense to preserve the existing order. In the case of Senderologists, or those bourgeois academics dedicated to the "study" of the People's War in Peru led by the Communist Party of Peru (PCP), their bias is towards discrediting the most powerful and influential People's War since 1949.

The Peruvian People's War and Latin America

The People's War led by the PCP marks a radical turning point breaking with the traditional model of Latin American armed struggle that has its origins in the Cuban Revolution and ends with the Sandinistas and Chapultepec Peace accords that mark the end of the civil war in El Salvador. This period of revolution is characterized by a form of romanticism and promotion of the guerrilla as the vanguard of revolution.

According to Fidel Castro and Ernesto "Che" Guevara this "foco" would inspire the peasant masses to take arms and victory crowned with an urban insurrection in the countries of Latin America. With the emergence of the PCP a new model emerged, one that was more dangerous than the last in its stressing of ideology and politics. The construction of the PCP and all its instruments were constituted as a "war machine" in its own words. At the center of the PCP was its guiding thought that informed all its political and military decisions. The revolution was methodical and

scientific as opposed to "guided by great feelings of love". [1] In fact the People's War in Peru made a sharp break with the principles of Che Guevara who stated:

"One should never try to start a revolution against an elected government, for the populace will not turn in a revolutionary direction while electoral alternatives remain an option and retain an appeal."

In the period leading up to the initiation of the People's War on May 17, 1980 the International Communist Movement was in disarray. Chairman Mao had passed away just a few years prior, his four closest comrades had been routed and the Cultural Revolution was ended by the revisionists headed up by Deng Xiaoping. It is from this context that makes the emergence of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism so meteoric. The need to discredit such a revolution and its vanguard are of the utmost importance to the international bourgeois order and imperialism.

The Capture of Chairman Gonzalo

For the Peruvian bourgeoisie the year 1992 was a dark one. Apart from economic crisis, attacks on the old state by the revolution had increased to the point that many observers abroad had begun to suggest the possibility of a victory for the PCP. The Rand Corporation that year published a report that stated the possibility that the revolutionaries could surround and lay siege to the capital [2]. In July of that year, an armed strike paralyzed the city. The PCP declared that it would negotiate nothing except the government's surrender and in August launched the VI Gran Plan Militar which declared the "consolidation of the strategic equilibrium". Most Senderologists at this time were projecting a new offensive that was to coincide with the October elections to congress. Some were projecting military defeat of the bourgeois government by a revolutionary movement which had inflicted more

casualties, controlled a greater percentage of territory and was approved in opinion polls by a greater percentage of citizens than the FMLN in El Salvador. [3]

Almost unexpectedly on September 12, 1992 agents of DINCOTE police unit captured Gonzalo and two of the three Politburo members and a cache of the party's archives. By the end of the year 19 out of 22 of the members of the Central Committee had been captured. Within 12 days of this event Gonzalo and other party members were tried and sentenced by a military tribunal under draconian laws not recognized by the international community, which were promoted under the autogolpe of Fujimori. [4]

In an attempt to humiliate him, the Fujimoristas presented Gonzalo before the world in a cage where Gonzalo then called forth on supporters to carry out the VI Gran Plan to completion, by the end of December the PCP had reorganized itself and began to carry out this plan into action. [5] The Old State was rocked with attacks from all sides and various committees were formed in Peru and abroad to "Defend the Life of Chairman Gonzalo".

A few weeks after the one year anniversary of Gonzalo's capture Fujimori read a letter at the United Nations supposedly from Gonzalo asking to open peace talks with the government. Shortly thereafter he read a second letter reiterating the calls for peace talks supposedly from Gonzalo which justified negotiations as needed to "preserve strengths". This after a series of escalated attacks following the capture.

Both letters were accompanied with widespread disbelief from militants and denounced as forgeries. The following weeks on television the Old State released

another form of propaganda this time in footage allegedly to be Gonzalo, except remarkably thinner and with dyed hair that began to read the letters. Even those senderologists that believed this to be authentic were suspicious of brainwashing and psychological torture. [6] Senderologists and the Old State in seeking to discredit the PCP spun the myth that there was a "two line struggle" over the "peace letters":

"Internal documents of the terrorist organization reveal that the factional struggle between those who support the peace agreement and those who support Feliciano is ending with a clear victor: Abimael Guzman". [7]

However as El Diario pointed out in a criticism of the Committee of RIM (CoRIM) to view a police plot and a two line struggle is an entirely different matter altogether:

"It is an ideological and political error not to differentiate between a police plot and a two-line struggle. What is the gist of the 'peace letters'? Where and how were these concocted? The 'peace letters' were fabricated in the offices of the Intelligence Service of the Peruvian state (SIN). These letters did not originate in any Party organism, nor are these the product of any internal process of debate within the Communist Party of Peru. It is an error to hold, as the leaders of RIM do, that this is 'a two-line struggle within the ranks of the Communist Party of Peru'. The authors of these letters are functionaries of SIN, police agents, high-ranking army officers, and specialists from the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). A police plot is not the same thing as an inner party struggle. The fact that some capitulators have participated in the elaboration and distribution of this montage does not make this a two-line struggle within the PCP." [8]

Regardless, the confusion engineered by the Old State had a desired effect. That is to sow the seeds of doubt among militants who had been waging a war for liberation

for 13 years prior. All sorts of dirty tricks and tortures had been utilized and Chairman Gonzalo continues to remain isolated from the world and the press in the Callao military base unable to speak to the masses. The sole purpose of these tricks is to strangle the People's War and to confuse its supporters and actors. Nonetheless Chairman Gonzalo has transformed the Callao Naval base prison into the most shinning trench of combat as the world's greatest living Communist and foremost prisoner of war.

The Right Opportunist Line and Other Deviations from Maoism

Not far behind the Old State are their running dogs from the "Left" who are united in mission to also see about the ending of the People's War in Peru. We are referring principally to the Right Opportunist Line (ROL) represented by MOVADEF and the Avakianites represented by the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP, USA) as well as the abstractionists in the Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan (CmPA). Each of these rightist forces seeks to carry forward their own line in order to promote their own variant of revisionism and deviation from Maoism.

For the ROL of MOVADEF it is primarily a capitulationist nature. The ROL seeks to carry about the conclusion of the people's war and register itself as a legal party as well as push for amnesty for those imprisoned in the People's War by the Old State in Peru. The maneuverings of the ROL seek to do the work for the Peruvian National Intelligence Service (SIN) by promoting the "authenticity" of calls to surrender which allegedly originate from Chairman Gonzalo.

In every advancement of the masses there exists a two-line struggle within the liberation movement that is generally characterized through those who are satisfied with the reforms that have been given and between those which seek to trek on in the revolutionary road and carry on ever closer to the mountain tops until they reach it's peaks. This is as true in Peru as it is in any part of the world.

The RCP, USA's motivation to portray Gonzalo as a capitulationist come part and parcel with the desire to promote the figure of its own chairman: Bob Avakian and its "New Synthesis of Communism". This promotion of Avakian and the New Synthesis had a disastrous effect on the International Communist Movement (ICM) and led to the breaking up of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) due to its deceitful attempts to impose Avakianite revisionism on the international communist movement.

The questions regarding the discrediting of Gonzalo by the Avakianites is not simply a question of personality but of political ideology. For years in RIM the RCP, USA had rejected the universality of protracted People's War which was first brought forward by the PCP. Instead the RCP, USA promoted an insurrection line that would lead to civil war in the United States of America, much in line with what happened post-1917 in Russia. In the RCP's view "the launching of the revolutionary war depends on the eruption of a revolutionary crisis in society."[9] This is of course is nothing more than a "wait and see" approach that characterizes revisionists of every stripe who stand opposed to the possibility of waging a People's War in the imperialist nations.

The RCP, USA was also criticized by various RIM parties for its insistence in viewing Marxism-Leninism-Maoism not as an integral whole and qualitative leap in Marxism but dependent on "Leninism as a bridge" that was a tonic for the supposed

eurocentrism of Marxism and "nationalism" of Maoism. The RCP, USA in its adherence to "crisis theory" is tied up with its insistence of a third world war which is present in much of its published and documented propaganda. RCP, USA in casting aside eurocentrism adopts American exceptionalism by placing the success of the world revolution to be hinged on the imperialist nations especially the United States. In Conquer the World? The International Proletariat Must and Will Avakian says this much:

"In the West—and I am talking about the West in terms of the imperialist countries, including the Soviet Union—it's proven to be more difficult in this period to make revolution than in the East, the East being the colonial and dependent countries in what's been called the 'third world.' But it's also proven to be extremely difficult to lead and maintain revolution where it can be and where it has been more readily made, and there's no easy way out of this.

Of course, if we succeed in making a qualitative breakthrough (which it would be) in seizing power in one (or more) of the imperialist citadels, that would in fact be a new leap forward for the international proletariat and would create new freedom, although we should have no illusions that making revolution in an imperialist country means that the proletariat when it comes to power will inherit that country and its productive forces as they were, for example, five years before the revolution began—and probably the world war too." [10]

This stands in contrast to the PCP which posed the principle contradiction in the world as imperialism. The RCP, USA thus in centering crisis theory and by defacto the United States as principle in the proletarian revolution has developed from a perverted and incomplete view of Maoism and can never be counted as a Maoist Party.

In a statement released by the CmPA on June 17, 2018 [11] we see the rejection for an emergence of a guiding thought in the course of revolution for an abstraction of

Maoism, it fails to apply the general to the particular and that in doing so each revolution will have guiding thoughts unique to their national conditions.

"At this moment claiming a further evolution of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism is baseless, whether these claims are the revisionism of 'Prachanda Path' and 'Avakian's New Synthesis' or the deviationism of 'Gonzalo Thought.' Our Party has always emphasized that premature assertions such as Gonzalo Thought, Prachanda Path and the Avakianite New Synthesis are historically responsible for the collapse of RIM."

Here the oft repeated and erroneous claim is made that Gonzalo Thought and even Prachanda Thought were viewed by its proponents as a "further evolution of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism". The C(m)PA correctly views the Avakianites and their "New Synthesis" as taking up this claim, as they do so themselves, but nowhere does the PCP ever claim that Gonzalo Thought is universal to all nations, or that it is the ideology of the Eight organizations in Latin America that they cite. They can bring up no citations in their statement to back up these claims. Here is what the PCP states about Gonzalo Thought:

"[R]evolutions give rise to a thought that guides them, which is the result of the application of the universal truth of the ideology of the international proletariat to the concrete conditions of each revolution; a guiding thought indispensable to reach victory...Without Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, Gonzalo Thought cannot be conceived, because the latter is the creative application of the former to our reality... It is the application of the Peruvian revolution; hence Gonzalo Thought is specifically principal for the Communist Party of Peru and the revolution it leads."[12]

Gonzalo himself addresses the particularity of Gonzalo Thought to Peru further:

"Gonzalo Thought is none other than the application of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism to our concrete reality. This means that it is principal specifically for our Party, for the people's war and for the revolution in our country, and I want to emphasize that. But for us, looking at our ideology in universal terms, I emphasize once again, it is Maoism that is principal." [13]

Nothing more can be clearer. The PCP viewed Gonzalo Thought as a guiding thought applicable to the concrete conditions of Peru, not as an "evolution" that goes beyond Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as the CmPA claims.

Their motivation in seeking to attribute a universality to Gonzalo Thought that it does not claim is motivated in part by their desire to peddle the historiography that it was RIM and not the PCP which synthesized Maoism, it is also motivated by the desire to refound RIM based on abstract Maoism of which include the likes of the opportunists kicked out of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Canada, and the Maoist Communist Party of Italy. In a 2011 statement the CmPA stated as much in that neo-RIM would be based on:

"Marxism-Leninism-Maoism—and only Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, and nothing less and nothing more than that—in the present situation is the ideological weapon of the international communist movement. (By nothing less we mean "post MLM" "Marxism" or "Marxism-Leninism"; by nothing more we mean the formulations that have been added like "thought" or "path" or "new-synthesis".)" [14]

CmPA here once again in not so subtle language rejects the concept of a guiding thought. That is it rejects the application of MLM to the particular conditions of a

nation, for that is all a guiding thought is. They conceive of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism as a mere abstraction since without a guiding thought it cannot be applied in revolution. The CmPA are no amateurs as their movement is one of the oldest in the ICM, they are well aware of the writings of Chairman Gonzalo enough to critique it as a self-proclaimed "evolution" of MLM. This distortion which cites no sources is then a deliberate fabrication, one that is motivated to impose themselves, like the Avakianites, as leaders in the International Communist Movement.

Senderologists

An academic discipline in Latin American studies emerged in the 80s to late 90s that sought to grapple with factors that led to the launching of the People's War in Peru. It was unfathomable for bourgeois ideologues to comprehend how a revolution gained steam after the ending of a military dictatorship. How could this happen? This was the key question that was asked by Senderologists. Carlos Ivan Degregori (who would come to head the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) in his book How Difficult It is to Be God peddled the myth that the PCP had practiced an authoritarian relationship as it related to the indigenous peoples, as an explanation for its continued existence for decades.

How Difficult it Is To Be God itself stands in contradiction to other Senderologists who were forced to admit the popularity of the PCP in the countryside as well as Lima. Degregori posits the entrance of the PCP into the cities as a result of the growing ronda campesino death squads that were supposedly "pushing" the revolution out of the countryside. While Degregori rejects the attributed millenarianism that most senderologists such as Gustavo Gorritti, David Scott Palmer, Lewis Taylor and Cynthia McClintock attribute to the PCP he does so out of

an accusation that the PCP was not popular with the indigenous communities of the Andes:

"Sendero's principal potential social base in the countryside was the rural population of people who were no longer peasants and were de-Indianized while the more Indian and more peasant populations seemed less susceptible to Shining Path influences." [15]

Degregori's work in discrediting the popularity of the People's War is not without debate even among senderologists much less Maoists.

It should also come as no surprise that many of these bourgeois ideologues were explicit enemies of the PCP such as David Scott Palmer who was expelled for being an American imperialist when he taught at the University of San Cristobal de Huamanga along with Chairman Gonzalo in the 60s. Others such as Gabriela Tarazona-Sevillano who was an actual judicial prosecutor in the Peruvian judicial system from 1984 to 1986, are a glaring example of Senderologists in the strict service of reaction. Anyone who would claim that the Senderologists are truly "objective" narrators of the events that unfolded in Peru would be hard-pressed to reconcile their commitment to bourgeois "democracy" and their integration in the Old State with covering a revolutionary movement which would have inevitably put them to the fire.

Others such as Cynthia McClintock were forced to acknowledge the popularity of the PCP and that it enjoyed more support from the population than the FMLN did in El Salvador. In one poll conducted in Lima in 1991 47% of respondents believed that the PCP "punishes the corrupt". [16] In a separate poll conducted a few weeks after the capture of Gonzalo 20% of respondents felt "compassion" for him.

McClintock commented that polls were never conducted in rural areas where support for the PCP and Chairman Gonzalo was even "greater".

The attempt to portray the PCP as an indiscriminate killing machine by comparing it to the Khmer Rouge comes from the likes of Ton de Wit and Vera Gianotten who lived in Ayacucho working in a rural development program sponsored by the Dutch government. It also comes from the American Senderologist Ronald H. Berg whose research was backed by the Organization of American States. These claims are contradicted by the polls cited by McClintock in which Lima residents perceived the movement as punishing only the corrupt. As well as David Scott Palmer who explicitly rejected the comparison to Khmer Rouge and the use of indiscriminate violence by the movement.

After the capture of Gonzalo and the establishment of the so-called Truth and Reconciliation Commission headed by Degregori, much was spun to portray the PCP as a bloodthirsty organization that led to the deaths of 70,000 people, half of which are attributed to the PCP. What is not mentioned in these liberal humanitarian reports is the crimes for those "civilians" that ranged from collaborators with the police and Marines, cattle thieves, wife beaters or other rural tyrants. These nuances are left out of course as they serve the ideological justification that rebellion is wrong.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission monopolizes legitimate justice and violence to be only dished out by the bourgeois state, at no point in the commission was a representative of the revolution given equal place, in spite of the Commissions posturing condemnation for the Fujimori government.

Portrayals of the PCP

Portrayals of the PCP range from sympathetic (in an albeit liberal bourgeois way) such as the documentary People of the Shining Path, which showcases many cultural aspects of the movement in songs and cultural performances, testimonies from guerrillas in the Popular Guerrilla Army (EGP), testimonies from intellectuals and political prisoners. The documentary You Must Tell the World... similarly portrays a pro-People's view of Chairman Gonzalo and the international support he garnered from all over the world including from Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu Jamal.

Others however portray PCP in a barbaric manner such as the film The Dancer Upstairs in which the movement is shown utilizing children as suicide bombers. The movie even portrays the revolutionary movement in the film putting up signs that quote the Nazi Herman Goering. The film Escape From L.A. is even more shameless. In this film a PCP leader brainwashes the President's daughter and threatens to invade the United States with a third world army. The two portrayals here coincide with one another and are a glimpse at the polarization the PCP had on the world in much of the 80s and 90s. For the masses of the world the PCP was an inspiration to them. It proved that revolution was possible while phony communism was on the retreat in most of the world.

The influence of the PCP on Latin America sparked a red scare in the region with groups affiliated with the PCP popping up in countries like Colombia, Bolivia, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Chile and Ecuador. In Chile the assassination of Jaime Guzman, Pinochet's chief ideologue, was suspected by the Chilean police to have been carried out with the assistance of Peruvians affiliated with the People's War. [17]

In Mexico according to Peruvian intelligence a Peru People's Movement (MPP) was formed in May 1988 to commemorate the memory of murdered prisoners from the PCP. Material aid to the People's War came from sympathetic Mexican unions, universities and other institutions. Across the ocean in Europe support networks for the MPP were also formed in Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Greece, Switzerland, The Netherlands, The Canary Islands, Great Britain and even Soviet Estonia. [18]

To Defend the PCP is to Defend Maoism Itself

The People's War in Peru led by the PCP and its Chairman Gonzalo constitute the most advanced revolutionary movement up to this point. It is a revolution which not only gave us synthesized Maoism but continues to light the world as an undying torch whose mantle is taken up by the very best comrades in Latin America especially Brazil and Mexico. The slanders and distortions of the positions of these comrades while simultaneously defending Gonzalo in mere words constitutes an attack on his brightest pupils and legitimate successors.

The Maoists of the world reject the abstract Maoism which fundamentally rejects Great Leadership, the universality of protracted people's war, concentric construction of the three instruments, the militarization of the Party and the emergence of a guiding thought in the course of a revolution. These questions are fundamentally important to come to a concrete realization of Maoism that the PCP exhibited brilliantly. Maoists also reject the myth of the capitulation of Chairman Gonzalo and reject any discussions of peace talks with the Old State as a manifestation of a right opportunist line. The revolution must only accept the unconditional surrender of the Old State to the New Power.

There can be no centrism on this question, the laws of contradiction dictate that this question will inevitably come to fore in the International Communist movement and we are declaring ourselves partisans in representing the left line that must impose itself on revisionism and rightist deviation which compose a danger to the success of global revolution. Revisionism and rightist deviationism threaten to lead Communists down the road to bourgeois legalism and parliamentarism as well as to armed revisionism.

As a result we declare our unconditional support to the world proletarian revolution, the imposition of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, the complete and utter destruction of imperialism and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. All of these taught to us by our teachers the Communist Party of Peru and its Chairman Gonzalo, the world's greatest living Marxist-Leninist-Maoist.

Article by Agustín

Notes

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