“Maoism” From Below[1]

Anatoli K. and Kavga
July 27, 2018



On the right opportunist, revisionist, and liquidationist, theory of J. Moufawad Paul

Classical Trotskyite critiques of Marxism-Leninism tend to frame themselves as an attack on “Stalinism” which is not actually a political tendency but a slur term used to void the teachings of Lenin via an attack on the leadership of Stalin (this is now widely accepted by postmodernist academics as well as Trotskyites). Some self-styled “Maoists” pick rotted fruit from the very same tree as Tony Cliff, Hal Draper and other Trotskyites with persistent attacks on Lenin and Stalin. Chief among these, at least in North America is the blogger and adjunct professor of philosophy J. Moufawad-Paul who is based out of Ontario, Canada. In his own words:

“Here we have a precise summation of that problem that can be called Stalinism: the monolithic party that places centralism over democracy and thus, in the anxiety of safe-guarding the revolution or even a revolutionary movement, produces dogmatism and a mechanistic approach to theory and practice.” -Moufawad-Paul (Moufawad-paul.blogspot.com, on “Stalinism” Part 2, emphasis ours)

By dismantling the above quotation we can see a sort of crypto-Trotskyite analysis. It is partially true that due to making errors related to dialectical materialism Comrade

[1] https://struggle-sessions.com/2018/07/27/maoism-from-below/

Stalin did tend to make the mistake of viewing things monolithically—including the Party and what he called advanced socialist society. This however was not a matter of understanding centralism as principle over democracy but due to negating the existence of internal two-line struggle, negating that class struggle goes on inside of the Party itself. Moufawad-Paul is here attempting to flip democratic centralism and excuse this inversion by misdiagnosing Stalin's tendency to deprioritize internal contradictions (over-determining the role of external factors) in favor of the old anti-Communist trope of "totalitarianism" in other words. All Leninism and all Maoism view centralism as principle over democracy in a unity of opposites—each requiring the existence of the other to establish particular identities. Mao explains democratic centralism thus:

(1)the individual is subordinate to the organization; (2) the minority is subordinate to the majority; (3) the lower level is subordinate to the higher level; and (4) the entire membership is subordinate to the Central Committee.

Points one and two deal with democracy, points three and four, which we have bolded for emphasis, place centralism above democracy. It must be understood that in every historic Communist Party worth remembering, the higher level is smaller than the lower level and the Central Committee is even smaller—this is centralized structure in which the whole membership, that means everyone in the Party is subjected to this centralism, making centralism the principle aspect in this unity of opposites. This is not just a question of size, but the size reflects the structure of discipline—the quantity and quality also forming a unity of opposites each lending the other its particular identity as with democracy and centralism mentioned above. The flattening of democratic centralism and the flattening of the quality/quantity contradiction are two sprigs from the same failure at dialectics embodied in Moufawad-Paul's positions and theories.

Moufawad-Paul however in both his attacks on Stalin and his insistence on the "mass party" (see struggle-sessions.com, The Criticism of Mortals) flattens out the unity of opposites, in his distortion; no aspect of a contradiction is principle and dominant. Democracy and centralism stop being a unity of opposites and start being two equals which co-exist peacefully without struggle. He is, in short, gutting the essence of the Party. He is making an error in dialectical materialism far worse than that of Stalin. Without this internal contradiction democratic centralism ceases to

function, by falsely smoothing over this contradiction he has eliminated the leading role of the Party. One no longer divides into two; for Mouawad-Paul, two becomes one.

An argument quite similar to that of Moufawad-Paul's was presented by Trotsky himself in regard to "inter-party democracy" which was his way of framing his revisionist-liquidationist politics. In practice Trotsky and his camp were extremely centralized, and the subsequent Trotskyite movement was always centered on Trotsky the person.

Nonetheless due to this ideological maneuver and rattling of "democracy" as equal to centralism or dominant over centralism, demands for "socialism from below" became the dog whistle of many Trotskyites and remains so to this day. Dressed in some Mao-speak, Moufawad-Paul has made a new-return, not to the principles foundational to Leninism but in the form of a distorted "Maoism" from below. This is evidenced by his false equalizing of the democracy and centralism, quantity and quality contradictions etc., a major issue we will continue addressing throughout the piece.

To make matters even more muddy, Moufawad-Paul claims that the false flattening of contradictions in the form of equalizing democracy and centralism—which is in reality the subordination of centralism to democracy, i.e. liquidationism — is a genuine contribution of Chairman Mao! This argument however is absent in the major works and thought of Maoists. It was made abundantly clear by those who synthesized it that MLM was not in any way a diffusion of centralism.

We are among those who accuse Moufawad-Paul of importing postmodernism into Maoism precisely because of his opposition to centralism which is taking the postmodernist diffused power analysis and using it to diffuse the Party itself. The power of the masses is centralized in the identity of the Party and this is the essence of Leninism and all subsequent theory derivative of it.

Running like a thread throughout Moufawad-Paul's blog, books, and twitter posts there is a consistent revision of democratic centralism, the Party and the question of leadership. This has finally manifested itself in the form of the now-rejected Party documents which one side of the split in Canada still uphold and implement, this of course is the side in which Moufawad -Paul's ideas see heavy currency.

The error of "diffusing" the Party comes up again in Arsenal number 9 in various places, a journal now denounced by the Party in Canada. In the article "The Mass Line and Communist Methods of Mass Work" the camp which embraces the ideas of Moufawad-Paul state:

"In short, there must be a constant dialogue between the party and mass organization, with neither overstepping the other in terms of importance".

This is anti-Party rightism with little disguise.

Yet again we see the false flattening rejection of democratic centralism in the form of communist "leadership" or precisely the lack of leadership. The mass organization and the party are here placed as equals. Furthermore, the need for the Party to intervene on the masses and fully lead them is reduced and withered down to merely a vague "dialogue" — just a discussion between equals. This is tailism of mass organizations and a rejection of the leading role and responsibilities of the Party itself. Tailist mis-

leadership reduces the masses to their spontaneity and volunteerism and robs them of their political leadership. For Moufawad-Paul and his supporters leadership is only a question of discourse.

We can think of a practical scenario where the Party must "overstep" in order of importance. In cases of state repression mass organizations have and must at times be dissolved or re-launched; they remain fairly fluid as long as the Party itself remains protected. If a single mass organization is sacrificed this is no great loss, but if the Party itself is sacrificed this is concrete step back for the whole of the international Proletariat—the Party must be the priority. In this scenario it is easy enough to see how the Party itself is far more important than any of its numerous mass organizations and that the two things, Party and mass organization, are not to be regarded as equally important. There are most often a multitude of revolutionary mass organizations and Party generated organisms, opening and shutting according to necessity but there is only ever one singular Party which leads the multitude of mass organizations, organisms and fronts. The Party in every Communist sense is not just another organization; it is the most advanced organizational expression of the proletariat and its militarized political vanguard (again the quality/quantity dialectic is at play here).

Maoists universally assert the leadership of the Party—itself a unity of opposites—over the mass movement as the correct formula. In this it is leadership which is decisive—the Party leads in all things, while the masses make history it is only with the leadership of the Party that they can accomplish the task of taking power. Power being central to MLM, it places the Party itself in the top position, a position above that of the mass movement or the Party's own mass organizations. Politics in command means the politics of the proletariat in command; the Party is the organized expression of the proletariat—its highest body and most advanced detachment. Moufawad-Paul, on the other hand, mystifies his readers with a mix of anarchism, postmodernism (detailed later on the question of "sex-work"), Trotskyism (above), and revisionism (all of the above and below). He has a lot of hats which can be switched out at a moment's notice—he is a lot of things, none of which are Maoist.

Some critical observations on the bizarre internet "supporters" of the Moufawad-Paul camp in Canada.

To get into the type of crowd that endorses Moufawad-Paul's brand of faked-Maoism we have to observe the erratic behavior and outlandish positions of social-media personalities, since we cannot find any actual endorsement for his thought from any organized Party anywhere on earth (with the dishonorable exception of pcrrcp.ca).

Individuals who claim support for the website and the people behind pcrrcp.ca (the actual website for the PCR-RCP is pcr-rcp.ca and has been for a very long time) claim that any criticism coming from anyone in the US is "chauvinism" and "wrecking" since their (always unofficial) arguments boil down to an attempt at enforcing centrism on the question of the Canadian split. Let us briefly go into how incorrect and even dangerous this position is.

In essence such a position is nothing but an argument in favor of not criticizing revisionism that exists outside of one's own country. If you are from the US, and we extend their logic, then it would also be chauvinism to criticize any revisionist group outside of the US. Following this line to its conclusion—we would then be chauvinists for criticizing Cuba or China or even the former Soviet Union. What is worse is that these allegations of "chauvinism" come from people in Canada, which is not an oppressed nation but an imperialist one itself.

While it gets very difficult to seriously take these critiques from people who view communism as something of a costume—posing online in outdated Eastern Bloc and Chinese military uniforms while holding fake weapons and claiming to be Maoists—this crew and their supporters actively use banning and blocking on social media as well as turning off comments on posts to prevent any detracting viewpoints from being made. Supporters of this clique at pcrrcp.ca have a history of propagating and testing what will become an organizational political line on the internet so that they can skirt criticism for their numerous weird ideas. Before the release of Arsenal number 9, recently denounced by the actual PCR-RCP, the views it contained were presented as the unofficial lines of the Party all over social media spaces for years. Since the authors of this article have no interest or means to engage in these social media rants in spaces controlled by these supporters we choose to bring up some of the more ridiculous examples here.

Let's engage with what some of these people are saying either online or on blogs that they run.

The simple act of supporting a Canadian organization becomes unintelligibly mutated into "wrecking":

"Tbh this recent intervention from RGA is wrecker shit. You have no place in this line struggle and your interventions only hinder unity. No one needs your opinions/ help, your interventions have only led to clouding facts and creating disunity".

Let's engage with this then as basic historical and dialectical materialists. Now by virtue of making support for one side (post-split) public the organization in question (RGA) becomes the ones responsible for "creating disunity". The fact is the reasons behind a

split—that is to say the natural process of one dividing into two, the fundamental law of opposites— is what created the disunity; that is to say the internal contradictions were primary over external factors. One cannot blame a statement of position issued almost a year after the split already took place for the "disunity".

On social media forums, especially ones that are controlled by these very same confused supporters, this sort of reasoning is consumed without interrogation. Issuing a statement of position is here stretched out of proportion to be US intervention in "line struggle". The line struggle has already resolved itself by resulting in the split of the Party. Once a split has cemented you have the choice of supporting the left proletarian line or the right bourgeois line, of supporting revisionists or revolutionaries—there is no other choice, centrism is just supporting the right in the form of concession. The only reason for refraining from comment would be to prevent an unprincipled split or not hasten an inevitable split at the expense of the revolutionary side. Supporting revolutionaries is not "wrecking", or impeding line two-line struggle, since two-line struggle is an internal Party process which ceases after splits and continues in the new form of class struggle and the struggle against revisionism outside of the party, which is always necessarily handled differently than internal two-line struggle. Pushing for unprincipled splits is in fact wrecking, taking sides after the split is not. If we consider taking sides to be an act of wrecking we reduce Maoism to a non-partisan mess and oppose international solidarity, denying support to revolutionaries everywhere who have just suffered or accomplished a split. The exact kind of flattening Moufawad-Paul is engaged in ideologically—resulting likewise in a non-partisan mess.

Once a Party has split it makes no sense for Maoists to uphold a centrist position and refuse to support either side, especially after a year has passed and ample documents have been made public. Of course there are those online supporters who engage in a sort of double standard, while they welcome support for themselves or who they support they call for everyone else to engage in centrism, silence, in essence demanding withholding support for the revolutionaries.

Everyone who criticizes me is a cult!

In a blatant display of how little regard they have for genuine international support, or the analysis of anyone outside of Canada one of the supporters of the opportunist side insists:

"It's a badge of pride to be opposed by these batshit [sic] dogmatists and their wacky cult."

The final refuge of revisionists facing criticism is to default to charges of "cultism" which have a very long tradition in anti-Communism. These online supporters take

their cue from their ideologue Moufawad-Paul who also uses the Khrushchev invocation of a cult against Stalin: "When they still believe that the crude early twentieth century conception of democratic centralism is akin to a magical formula. Here is where the cult of the leader emerges, or at least the cult of the Central Committee, and we are presented with a top-down and inflexible party structure that is haunted by the ghost of Stalinism regardless of all claims to the contrary… this (mis)understanding of democractic [sic] centralism is precisely the monolithism [sic] that we can name Stalinist–prior to over-bureaucratization, prior to the emergence of a leadership cult." (Moufawad-paul.blogspot.com)

And again in sections of his book Continuity and Rupture he repeats Khrushchev's argument:

"Historically, then, there has indeed been a problem with communist organizations declaring slavish devotion to significant revolutionary figures. The construction of the personality cult around Stalin, for example, was hallmark of a certain period".

He shifts his reckless labeling to attack the Communist Party of Peru by stating that: "The PCP eventually raised Abimael Guzman ('Gonzalo') to sainthood declaring him the 'fourth sword' of 'Marxism'. Hence, dogmatism has been inherited from the past and should be understood as a problem that needs to be overcome."

His use of scare quotes around the name of Gonzalo—that is the name the masses of Peru and the Party railed around—are in place only to insist on using the "real" government issued name. There are no scare quotes around Lenin or Stalin or Trotsky; Gonzalo exists as a thorn in the side of the postmodernist "Maoists", and as such is undeserving of a Party name embraced by the masses of people. He likewise defaults to use of the bourgeois label assigned to the PCP by calling them "Sendero Luminoso" or at best "PCP-SL", both of these variations have never been used by the Party itself and are in currency lower them and pose them as a non-Party, non-political terrorist group.

Further, Moufawad-Paul here is taking the Peruvian masses as a swarm of ignorant, mindless fools, a racist trope used against the indigenous Andean people for centuries. After all, this trope must be correct if they adored their leader and saw him as the so-called fourth sword of so-called Marxism. What Moufawad-Paul is actually asking to overcome here is ideological consolidation in favor of his own eclecticism. Here he is "rupturing" with the base history of MLM and "continuing" with a reiteration of Khrushchev. Personality Cult arguments are anti-people, because they always assume the masses must be tricked and lured into following an ideologue or movement on the basis of personality and not politics, motivated not by their abject conditions but by a shallow infatuation with an icon. It is easier for them to imagine a horde or swarm of ten million ignorant masses who have been tricked by pictures of Great Leaders rather

to imagine the masses becoming class conscious of who their friends and enemies are. Throughout history the masses themselves have embraced Great Leadership and demonstrated their politics with images that the bourgeois have always labeled "slavish devotion."

More from Continuity and Rupture:

"Indeed a strange Maoist tendency [that] has emerged in the wake of RIM's dissolution is a Maoism that, following the defeat of the PCP, uses the terminology 'Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism' and the cultish addendum 'Gonzalo Thought"'.

Gonzalo Thought is the application of universal Maoism to the particulars of Peru. It is argued to also contain universal aspects itself. It is not a "cultish addendum" but recognition of the successes of the Peruvian revolution, which, incidentally, has not been "defeated", only set back. He might as well just come out with it, that according to him Mao Zedong Thought must necessarily have also been a "cultish addendum" to the already cultish Marxism-Leninism. Principally Maoism, also opposed by Moufawad-Paul simply means that while we are Marxist-Leninist-Maoists we are Mainly Maoists—that Maoism is not just another stage, but the third and highest stage. Moufawad-Paul instead seeks to flatten MLM as well by viewing as a third stage, a rupture with but not really any higher than anything else his mind is a plateau where all things are equalized according to opportunism.

In order to not actually analyze revisionism and due to what must be bruised egos, the social media commentators and their ideologue Moufawad-Paul have to insist that anyone who disagrees with their distorted and eclectic brand of Maoism must be brainwashed (another slur popular among anti-communists)—anyone who adheres to the basic classics of MLM must be a dogmatist for not embracing his eclecticism. If your organization is not receiving international support at all, and your opposition is, it would make good sense to oppose viewing this as a "badge of pride" as the supporter quoted in the last section does.

Of course no Communist would take pride in the support of revisionism but no argument is made in the short quips of these people to ever highlight or expose any revisionism. Instead they take pride in not having support from anyone except others on social media.

To further deflect from criticism the same supporters of Moufawad-Paul insist; "I've been a Maoist longer than most of the modern US Maoist movement has been around".

Students of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution as well as anyone who ascribes to basic Marxist logic can see the glaring fallacy of this rationale. We can remember the old revisionists who invoked their participation in the Long March or their long-term Party status to defend themselves having their capitalist headquarters bombarded. This is a sad sort of veteran's mentality — resting on one's laurels all while never clearly presenting what it means to have been a Maoist, or offering any proof that you actually are one. In both official documents as well as unofficial commentary the opportunists and their supporters have dismissed any and all criticism from those in the US because there is not a Maoist Party in the US. They quip back like a wounded animal "get back to us when you have a party" as if a Party is just another form and not a product of the class struggle. These offhand dismissals reek of middle-management rationale, with no regard to essence or humility; critics outside of their metaphysical Party structure are just too far beneath them.

Mao explains this sort of rationale very well: "A comrade with a short record of struggle may shirk responsibility on this account, while a veteran may become opinionated because of his long record of struggle… All such things become encumbrances or baggage if there is no critical awareness" (Mao, "Our Study and The Current Situation", 1944). In short it is not about time in the work, but quality of work and the right revolutionary attitude which does not try and use such cheap tricks to avoid criticism, rest on laurels, or use bragging rights; Maoists do not need these things because the evidence of their character is ever-present and so they do not fear or squirm under criticism.

It should be brought to the reader's attention that in moments of debate and discussion the social-media personality (which include Moufawad-Paul and his followers) typically loses composure and control over their emotions, this is particularly inappropriate when individuals claiming to be "party-supporters" "trained by the party" are just gushing their individual opinions and emotions as substitution for an organizational line. While this does not invalidate their criticism outright it shows just how casually they view the "party" and its discipline, clearly "the party" has not "trained" them very well. A Party should be understood as a fighting organization and not merely a point of pride and deflection. In any examination the Canadians have followed US organizations in the initiation of anti-fascist work and "Serve the People" programs. The latter of which they even use the exact same name, of course the essence and methods of the program are mutated according to their ideology. The lack of a Party in the US was no obstacle for reaching out about the STP programming in unofficial and official capacities (according to sources which will remain private but are trusted by us).

With this sort of emotive impulse it is no surprise they seek hegemony over their over-valued social media spaces as if this control will somehow translate to control over the split in Canada itself. While back and forth internet discussions are generally fruitless, it is useful to unpack the thinking behind those who engage in them as an emotional outlet to deal with their political frustrations which are attached to real on-the-ground frustrations with their ability to have maintained a unified Party. Due to this coping mechanism the supporters in this case are reduced to flaunting that they "have a party" and "Americans don't". They have what they call a "party" but the existence of such, even if it were a genuine Party, is no grounds for bragging rights. No genuine internationalist would ever celebrate the lack of Party anywhere as Communism is accomplished everywhere or nowhere. We harp on this point a little but to fully dig up their opportunism.

More oddities

The supporters of Moufawad-Paul perform a sort of identity politics—those from the United States (based solely on an assigned-identity regardless of what nations they belong to in reality) are not allowed to make observations or analysis of the final split in Canada without being great nation chauvinists. All "Americans" are flattened by this shallow identitarian argument and hence the content of their positions is removed in favor of the print on their birth certificates or by coincidence of their address. Recognizing the objective presence of revisionists and revolutionaries in another country becomes a taboo intervention, somehow dividing what was already divided by internal contradictions—that is to say class contradictions. Of course, it is other indentitarians who eat this up as an example of US great nation chauvinism unable to see the essence past the form and not wanting to risk being viewed as "problematic" themselves. No one in the US is trying to lead the Canadian proletariat; in fact, the RGA communique the Moufawadites are so upset about directly recognizes Canadian Communist leadership of the Canadian proletariat and at no point tries to speak for or over them on the matter.

This is another example of the postmodernist impulse to erase the question of power and turn it simply into a two-dimensional "inter-personal aggression" based on some perceived anti-Canadian prejudice, instead of a rejection and opposition to a major deviation from MLM represented by their country's revisionists while simultaneously supporting their country's revolutionaries.

The opportunists assert that their critics avoid mentioning the allegations that their country's revolutionaries were actually the ones who disregarded democratic centralism, the same democratic centralism that had been eroded by their own ideology.

They make many online arguments which claim the revolutionaries who split were a "minority" in an effort to downplay the split. Students of Communist history would do well to recall that the when the Chinese Communists led by Mao split from the revisionists of the Soviet Union led by Khrushchev this affected the whole ICM and the only Parties in power to compose the revolutionary camp— China and Albania— were also in the "minority". This in no way lends legitimacy to the revisionists and the same must be said about Canada, even if their charges about their opposition being a minority were true. Playing such numbers games is a parlor trick which avoids ideological struggle.

"Sex-work"?

Online the Moufawadites have time and time again insisted that they are not seeking the formation of prostitution unions, that they "uphold" the document "On Prostitution" from the Party prior to the split, which states:

"Prostitution is not the ordinary sale of labor power; it is not about labor exploitation of a person, but the absolute exploitation of a person. Prostitution is not the sale and consumption of sexual services: what is sold and consumed, it is the direct domination over a person. It is this domination that is the use value of the commodity "prostitute", while for wage labor in general, dominance is rather a condition that allows the exploitation of the labor force. What the sex industry showcases and brings to the market is not only the sexual body, but also, and especially sexist violence: Prostitution being the most complete expression of this violence".

And:

> "To consider that prostitution is a job like any other, is to strengthen the notion that sexuality is a task, one of responding to sexual-needs of a man. Materialism teaches us that men and women are subject to a differentiated and hierarchical socialization. This socialization makes men see their sexuality as a necessity, something that is their due. People who enter in a sexual relation with them are doomed to meet a supposedly "natural" need—which is rather a socially constructed need. In return, the socialization of women leads them to conceive their sexuality as a response to the overwhelming desire of men, and therefore as a duty to satisfy them…with our perspective of annihilating the bourgeoisie and popular power, prostitution will inevitably be abolished."

Now let us pose these quotations next to a few from Moufawad-Paul himself:

"If we believe that sex work is a form of labour … then we should struggle for unionization and decriminalization just as we do for other workers. Nor should we treat sex workers in the way that they're treated by puritanical activists–as victims who need to be rescued from a 'sinful' existence–for the same reason we should not treat, for example, migrant workers as ignorant and lacking agency".

(Migrant workers do often lack agency, something they are keenly aware of and something they must be organized to fight for.) Mere use of the terminology "sex-work" already in and of itself makes the argument that prostitution is simply work plus sex and that prostitution unions are a worthy reform to chase after. Sex-work is a term in service of whitewashing rape; Moufawad-Paul is also actually opposing fighting the sale of women by framing prostitution as something women consent to in the first place, and that anyone who argues against prostitution is doing so from a conservative mindset based on religious reasoning. Moufawad-Paul presents no real economic or social analysis of the women who in the vast majority in the world are in fact forced into prostitution, neglecting to even take note of the majority of women in prostitution who are forced to deliver all of their earnings over to a pimp who then delegates a small portion for reproduction—making it akin more to slavery than to proletarian labor.

Finally, let us contrast this to some positions from other Maoists on the topic:

"The advocates for Legalisation demand that it be given the status of an industry and the sex must be considered similar to any type of work and prostitutes be considered as sex workers".

"Legalising prostitution is legalising violence: To describe prostitution as sex work and a prostitute as a sex worker means to give legitimacy to sexual exploitation of helpless women and children. It means ignoring the basic factors, which push women and children into prostitution such as poverty, violence and inequalities. It tries to make the profession look dignified and as a 'job like any other job'"

> "By considering women in prostitution as workers, pimps as businessmen, and the buyers as customers and thereby giving the entire sex industry recognition as an economic sector, the governments are planning to abdicate all responsibilities for providing decent employment to women. They are thus pushing more and more women into sex trade by creating the notion that sex work is like any other work."

The above quotations all come from a pamphlet titled "Prostitution is Sexual Violence" issued by the Maoists in India in the now banned New Vistas Publications and organ of the Communist Party of India (Maoist).

The Moufawadites have seriously bent the stick toward postmodernism and away from Communism in terms of their ideas regarding prostitution rebranded as "sex-work". After all they orient toward a disenfranchised clique of online supporters and college campus crowds—not toward the international or Canadian proletariat and in this they have to keep up appearances. Communists for the past two hundred years have been making analysis of prostitution and this analysis is completely voided by Moufawad-Paul and his supporters.

Alexandra Kollontai defended the position that prostitutes, far from being workers, were in fact labor deserters and should be reformed the same way other labor deserters were to be reformed. It was she who led the fight against prostitution in the Soviet Union. This "problematic" history is all voided, no doubt included in the "rupture" espoused by Moufawad-Paul and his acolytes.

On class (class struggle as the key link)

In the podcast "On Mass" Moufawad-Paul asserts several falsehoods, the first being that Marxism -Leninism-Maoism did not emerge until the mid 80s or early 90s. He gives this imprecise range in order to deemphasize the leading role of the PCP; this is one of his subtle attacks on leadership in general. Basing his politics on anti-Communism he suggest that parties before Maoism were "top-down" and "commandist" suggesting that the Bolsheviks etc. were not "kept in check by the masses". In reality this Party particularly had mass support and was beloved by the masses, the whole of the Soviet Union and much of the world being thrust into mourning when Stalin died in 1953. This whole period was guided by theory which precisely served to keep the party linked to the masses:

"The Party must be able to combine the strictest adherence to principle (not to be confused with sectarianism!) with the maximum of ties and contacts with the masses (not to be confused with khvostism!); without this, the Party will be unable not only to teach the masses but also to learn from them, it will be unable not only to lead the masses and raise them to its own level but also to heed their voice and anticipate their urgent needs."—Stalin

In the above quotation we see theorized the formula repeated by Maoists "Learn from the masses and teach the masses". Stalin would go on to state:

"The Party must systematically verify the execution of its decisions and directives; without this, these decisions and directives are in danger of becoming empty promises, which can only rob the Party of the confidence of the broad proletarian masses.

In the absence of these and similar conditions, Bolshevisation is just an empty sound."

In the above quotations from Comrade Stalin, dated 1925, the ways the Party must maintain its links with the people are made clear and it was this same text on Bolshevisation that Mao studied to formulate his very important text Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership — the text written 18 years later which would be foundational to the mass line.

Again with Moufawad-Paul we see the "personality cult" and "top down dictator" bourgeois arguments which genuinely are insulting the masses of people who accepted this Great Leadership.

What would an attack on leadership be without an attack on the proletarian's military strategy? Always willing to make concessions to the right, Moufawad-Paul states that Protracted People's War is still "debatable" in the "Maoist movement". Yet, had he actually been honest he would know that the universality of People's War has always been a basic part of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. With all his talk of "rupture" he still makes backward acceptance of the outdated Mao Zedong Thought.

After revising Communist history pre-Mao he has to move on to attack the Four, by removing the central role of class struggle and replacing it with his own prescribed left-populism:

"The Cultural Revolution lost because it was theorized too little too late. It didn't really understand the extent to the problems".

After slandering the GPCR he moves along to doubt the existence of the coup led by Deng, casually referring to the GPCR leaders who followed the teachings of Mao in the bourgeois terminology which labels them a "gang" of four. There are several big problems with this formula — first, it reduces them to four individuals rather than the top leaders of what had been the red line in the GPCR, even going so far as to state "people didn't like them in China"; this shallow analysis must be pointed out even though the context in which it was mentioned is fairly casual. Moufawad-Paul's dismissal of the Four shows a certain disdain for Maoism and a tailing of the masses. Instead of a genuine analysis he peddles cheap populism. His analysis here once more is a rejection of leadership true to the form of his typical arguments.

While capitalist restoration and the reversals in China requires its own separate piece, it must be stated that what transpired was a coup and the arrest of the Four, the leaders of the GPCR, was not due to some flippant dislike among the people. The right wing of the Party lead by Deng had managed to win deep control over the military and was able to utilize the contradiction between the Party and the Army as well as the Army and the masses to turn the Peoples Liberation Army against the revolutionary line. Not only was the right in control of large state media outlets but the Cultural Revolution

proceeded along the lines of uneven development across China and was theorized to be one of many in a wave-like motion with reiterative cultural revolutions, advances retreats, swells and calms.

Maoists in the form of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism have theorized the way out of this contradiction and solved the riddle of restoration with the Militarized Party, Concentric Construction of the three Instruments of Revolution and the Sea of Armed Masses; consequently, these are all principles foundational to Maoism which Moufawad-Paul explicitly rejects. But for the sake of keeping the coup and counter revolution in China in perspective and avoiding such casual dismissal we should look again at history.

The Four were, along with Mao, the camp who were exposing the counter revolutionary attack of Lin Biao as a rightist attack, while the other rightists (those who sought alignment with the USA instead of the USSR) Zhau En-Lai etc. portrayed Lin Biao as an "ultra-leftist". We must bear in mind that Lin Biao having been disgraced created a favorable opening for the other rightists who were opposed to him, in regards to their ability in both penetration of the military and attacking the GPCR. Since 1971 Yeh Chien-ying, a support of Zhou and notable anti-leftist had maintained control of the military and had been running a successful campaign to prevent revolutionaries from propagating their line within it. Utilizing the contradictions he could construct and independent kingdom in the PLA, which would be invaluable to the coup. This is not unlike the role of the red army under Zhukov during the Khrushchevite coup just 20 years prior.

This provided the right wing in China much stronger footing than it had enjoyed in the past years of Cultural Revolution. Here they had a recently deceased national hero in the form of Zhou, a centrist concession at the top of the party in the form of Hua Guofeng, a rehabilitated Deng Xiaoping (leading all of this from behind the scenes) and Yeh, in charge of the military who had been a strong anti-leftist and successful at blocking leftist education at the top of the military, maintaining the support of the commanders.

The bourgeoisie according to Mao emerge from within the Party because of the existence of bourgeois right unrestricted in society, which itself provides the social base of the emergence. The Party becomes the site of emergence precisely because it is the seat of power.

Without exception the bourgeois will rise from the contradictions in society due to the mode of production—which is a transitory epoch—and will emerge directly from within places of power, not limited to just the Party but also within (and in the case of China most obviously) in the People's Liberation Army. The PLA (due to fear of

external enemies making use of it) had not been bombarded in the same ways that the Party had been during the GPCR. The PLA had to intervene (sometimes in favor of the revolution and sometimes against it) on multiple occasions.

Having identified this problem, Mao was able to help get Chang Chunquiao elected as head of the PLA political education department, but most of his campaigns were preemptively blocked or frustrated by the right who knew full well they had to keep cultural revolution campaigns from reaching the heart of the PLA. The limited way in which the GPCR had to develop in the military allowed it a certain zone of movement divorced from some of the major campaigns or at the very least it created a contradiction between the Party and the military on one hand and the military and the masses on the other which would prove to be the exact place the rightists would position themselves to carry out the coup. Left-populism and even the revolutionary energy of the masses were not able to prevent the army from servicing reaction. In fact, untold numbers were mass-arrested and killed by the forces of Deng who would go on to implement domestic fascism.

We can see that the coup is anything but a simple matter, however; it actually took a great deal of analysis for Communists to make sense of it. It is far more complex and nuanced than "the left lost because no one liked them", a populist dismissal of historical materialism.

Let us dwell a bit on the charge of the Four "not being liked" and how half-baked and false this is. Chang Chunquiao was the leader of the massively popular Shanghai Commune (the highest point so far in all class struggle!); he had been selected by Mao to lead the GPCR and was already a very popular writer and journalist. He was young when recruited and viewed as a strong leftist which made him particularly beloved by the masses and hated by the right. Mao wanted Chang as a successor but knew the right would never go for it so he endorsed Hua which was a concession from both the left as well as the right, such concessions offer capitulation to the right eventually, since centrism is a form of rightism and cannot really serve the partisan nature of class struggle in favor of the proletariat.

Chiang Ching on the other hand was a household name, seen not only as the wife of Chairman Mao, but as a revolutionary in her own right. Her plays and operas were the soundtracks and backdrops to the GPCR which as we know mobilized millions of revolutionaries from among the peasant and worker masses. To suggest that "the people did not like her" is outright historical revisionism. For the first time in Chinese history the masses of workers and peasants in their millions finally had access to cultural events like plays and operas that they could attend—and they did attend them

en mass—and almost each one of these was stamped with the name of Comrade Chiang Ching; these plays and their architect were extremely popular and well-liked.

No attack on leadership would be complete without an attack on the Communist Party of Peru, so in the podcast Moufawad-Paul moves from his populist revisionism into attacking the PCP again on the basis of "personality cult" complete with chortles from the host (another of his followers) at the very mention of Gonzalo Thought, as if the specific experience in Peru is laughable to these Canadians. This is telling of their overall political line, hatred and disdain for revolutionary leaders, and the emergence of guiding thought anywhere, as well as their aversion to basic lessons from revolution. To add a twist of irony, the blind lead the blind as Moufawad-Paul and his supporter conducting the interview mention their shortcomings in evaluating history with the supporter going so far as to attribute Deng's three worlds theory to Mao himself. It's as if they are here grasping desperately for any criticism of Mao which will demonstrate to the internet how un-dogmatic they are! This is an entirely performative pandering to liberals, which seeks to offer a disclaimer with any endorsement of Communist history. Genuine Communists make no apologies for the terror; we see it as a good thing.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can ponder the old saying of the apple not falling far from the tree, as Moufawad-Paul himself was an anarchist who stumbled into Maoism and many of his most ardent online supporters and accomplices were recruited from Trotskyite backgrounds. This is not to argue that these backward ideas can never be changed, merely that they have not been in this case. Their training and past ideas have not been overcome and they let aspects of these schools compel them to revise Maoism while either claiming to articulate it correctly or improve upon its historic principles.

In consideration of the tendency to deflect and avoid discussion among the Moufawad-Paul camp we should clearly state our purpose for authoring and releasing this article. If a general body of theoretical work emerges and begins to display certain qualities and promote certain trends, once this is propagated online and in books then it becomes the property of the world to contend with. The border does not magically prevent these ideas from seeping south and influencing people in the US; theory does not stay in a bubble. So, we should also understand that theory made public which reacts upon and interacts with the movement in the US should also face critical engagement from the revolutionaries in the US. And in the case of postmodern and Party-liquidationalist theory, like that of Moufawad-Paul it should be exposed and defeated.

Our purpose is to challenge this brand of so-called Maoism put forward by Moufawad-Paul and his supporters disguised MLM. We should look at it, evaluate its content and

follow its lines to their conclusion, making an assessment and thus we should oppose it. This process is inevitable when you put your ideas into the world, you will get a response, it might not always be the praise you are hoping for or an accumulation of sympathetic Facebook likes. Sadly and predictably, every critique made of his work is responded to with charges of "cult" or "dogmatist", and this is what is to be expected even when the attack on his theory is articulated and detailed, as we have attempted to do here.

The body of work produced by Moufawad-Paul is not Maoism, and he is no expert on Maoism; he is neither red nor expert in fact. His tendency represents the accumulation of deviations which split the Maoist Party in Canada. Ideology when applied to the revolutionary situation will often express itself by accumulating in the works of individuals who stand out. This is a basic law of leadership. You will have Lenin's and Plekhanov's emerge as you will have Trotsky's and Prachanda's emerge to give a name to a general approach to understanding and articulating revolutionary or reactionary theory. Thus, the revisionist camp in Canada has found its ideologue.

When revisionists see well enough to notice that no one is interested in joining the post-Maoist movement, they intend to bring post-Maoism to us dressed as Maoism, as if we can so soon forget the early 1980s and the emergence of Maoism in the cauldron of People's War. Ideology must always undergo adjustment and improvement and this happens in the field of class struggle and the life of a Party; no one can oppose this because it is necessary. But what Moufawad-Paul represents is a retrograde rejection of leadership disguised as a forward motion. In essence a "Maoism" from below. It is the criterion of the contemporary revisionist to use self-identification as a measure "I identify with MLM, therefore I cannot be a revisionist!" of course no revisionist self-identifies as such and this maneuver only tricks the most gullible and novice students of Marxism.

The ideology expressed and promoted by this camp is like an invasive weed that has pollinated itself throughout the US (and elsewhere) and seeks to destroy the very conception of Maoist leadership and replace it with a dumbed down and flattened horizontalism between the masses, the mass organizations, and the Party. Even if it poses itself as a forward attack on post-Maoism, it is in essence backward motion and post-Maoist. The US left already being so prone to phony-progressivism finds such a flattening favorable to their palette. Canadian and US societies are both bourgeois democracies which foster this kind of ever considerate-reaction. It is not surprising that such ideology would be born from these genes and find sympathy in these conditions.

What is much harder and ultimately correct is rebellion, against the considerate-reaction. The truth is revolutionary and it is not always going to pander to what the

established legal left and academic courts wish to hear. The truth is in defense of Maoist leadership, in defense of the Party as the most advanced military organization of the proletariat, the truth is proletarian discipline. In short the foundations of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism do not need revision, as Moufawad-Paul, Avakian, or Prachanda might insist albeit from varying perspectives. Fidelity to what is foundational is not "dogma", for Marxists dogma is actually counterpoised to the fidelity to our foundational ideas, which in themselves run counter to dogma. There are creative applications of revolutionary science which necessitate breaking new ground, trying new things and always experimentation (guiding thought could not emerge from dogma for this reason)—then there is declaring open season on foundational principles and on Leninism specifically, which is an attempt to revise the vanguard Party into a watered down and eclectic mess served up in platitudes and uninspiring discourse which attempt to credit Mao himself with their ideological desertion of Maoism.