Navigating the Canadian Split[1]

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"However, among these different Parties and organizations, there are different understandings about the content of Maoism. We reaffirm that in synthesis there is no leap in the process of knowledge about Maoism by them. It is not enough to recognize that Maoism is a third stage, a correct definition of its content is necessary, without a correct definition of its fundamental elements; there cannot be a correct application." (Communist Party of Brazil (Red Fraction) Central Committee, "On the Criticism of the Communist Party (Maoist) Afghanistan to the Joint Declaration of May 1, 2018")

Introduction

The publication of this article will without a doubt earn the ire of the two main Canadian groups that claim fidelity to Maoism, both of which operate under the exact same name. We do not expect this article to be at all controversial in the US, where there has already been a lot of discussions and many are already won over to the positions expressed. The organization that we will call pan-Canadian has no real support in the US. While they might influence some US opportunists, even this is marginal at most. On the other hand, the group we will call the Montreal-based PCR-RCP has had some support in official statements from the former or current Red Guards projects namely

[1] https://struggle-sessions.com/2019/05/24/navigating-the-canadian-split/

in Austin. By evaluating the political lines of both organizations, we can navigate the split and understand more deeply that all support is critical support.

There are major incorrect ideas on both sides that are obstructing the march of Maoism in Canada, and as a theoretical journal we wish to dissect good from bad from a theoretical perspective, hoping that our work is found useful in Canada—and at the very least, we hope to help further solidify positions among US Maoists. We concern ourselves with two things: the first is charting the political lines behind the split; the second is preventing bad political lines from seeping into the US movement. Beyond that, this article should serve as another tool in the arsenal of principally Maoism, which has taken the US Maoist movement. Let it march north, so that all the Americas become guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism.

This text is purely in the interest of ideological and theoretical debate, of struggling for clarity on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism. We present it as internationalist struggling for unity around this clarified conception of Maoism. That being said, we do not claim to have a deep practical knowledge of particular conditions unique to Canada, so this limits our exploration to what we consider to possess universal value—mainly ideology. As one of our closest neighbors, the Maoist movement in Canada concerns us greatly, and the duration of their organizing, displays of street militancy etc. have allowed the movement in that country to influence the US movement, sometimes negatively. So we deliver this analysis with humility and a genuine hope that it takes root among militants in Canada, who we hope to see take up the call to reconstitute, or reconstruct, the Party in that country as a militarized Maoist Party, a call no one is exempt from. The call to do so is not given to any one organization; it is a general call to be taken up by all Maoists per the instruction of Chairman Gonzalo. Our point of departure is that due to our proximity and the public nature of their positions, the correct thing to do is to make a public assessment.

History of overlooking internal contradictions, liberalism

In their document "*We Are the Continuators,"* the Montreal-based PCR-RCP, which stands as the historic leadership of the Party, details the history of the split. There is little from the other side that goes back so far, giving so much detail. They state,

> "The clique [of pan-Canadian opportunists] is composed of a group of activists who rallied the Party in 2010, amid the G20 in Toronto and the Canadian Revolutionary Conference of the same year, in the same city. Their now defunct

> organization, the 'Social Revolution Party,' worked as a tumor, developing within half a decade into a particularly damaging cancer for our Party."

This was published publically in August of 2017. The document only details the struggles around the previous Party congress, which means that there is a solid 6-year period that shows no indication of organized two-line struggle. The fact that a tumor could exist and go malignant over a period of half a decade without being detected is hard to believe, and that they would be called a "cancer" only after the split is indicative of a failure to grasp internal contradictions. The political lines issued by the pan-Canadians have been well documented. They have maintained regular public articles, and their main ideologue, Joshua Moufawad-Paul (JMP), has released numerous books, all of which are a negation of MLM and some of which have been criticized in our journal (see "In Defense of the Mass Line," "The Criticism of Mortals," "Maoism from Below," and "Revolutionary Optimism"

Evidence that internal line struggle was neglected is present in the fact that one of the practical issues taking place just before the split was at an event where JMP was speaking on his worst book, *Continuity and Rupture*. Since then, the Montreal comrades have taken the correct course of action and thrown out all copies of the book. Are we to assume they had never read it prior to the split? This is not likely. They had never considered it revisionist enough to prevent its presentation at one of their controlled spaces, and their action was only in hindsight. In good faith we can assume they did struggle against this book from the moment it was published, but there are no facts to support this assumption, and no claims that such a struggle took place from either side. Nor is there any reason we can think of for why, at this point, if it did occur, Montreal would have since been reluctant to mention it.

What is far more realistic—considering the claim that for half a decade they considered the pan-Canadian opportunists a tumor in their Party and yet promoted this book themselves—is that the major disagreements with it did not come about until after the split and antagonisms mounted. If the book was worth trashing after the split (it was), then it was worth opposing *before* the split, and this fact must not be ignored. Before the split, the book was treated as correct, and the opportunists were able to control the majority of the content of number 9 of *Arsenal* (their theoretical journal) without any meaningful opposition. The fact that tempers flared at the book-signing had nothing to do with the revisionist nature of the book itself. No debate is reported, just the physical confrontation at the bookstore.

Maoism holds that internal contradictions are principal, and that "we stand for active ideological struggle" ("Combat Liberalism"). The fact that the Montreal-based PCR-RCP was unaware of, made light of, or ignored these contradictions for *half a decade*

reveals that they were not properly grasping dialectical materialism and two-line struggle, or perhaps they were just not applying these organizationally. Even after the fact, we are presented only with partial disagreements and superficial grievances. Both sides of the split had to be engaged in the type of liberalism that accepts *unprincipled peace*, since both accuse the other of having *always been bad*. Maoists understand that revisionism rises inside the Party, that this is universal and inevitable, and that we must understand and carry out the proper methods for combating and defeating it before a right-opportunist line can fully develop. Chairman Gonzalo explains it thus:

"*Chairman Mao emphasized that we must always be concerned about revisionism because it is the main danger facing the world revolution. So we also take into consideration the situation outside our ranks, since any rightist tendency in the Party, expressed in attitudes, ideas, approaches, and positions of a rightist nature, has to do with ideological processes, with the repercussions of the class struggle, and the campaigns of the reactionary State, with the actions of revisionism itself in our country, with the counterrevolutionary activities of imperialism, especially the contention between the two superpowers, and the sinister role of revisionism on a world scale."* ("Interview")

Having established that revisionism will continuously develop inside the Party, in accordance with the laws of dialectical materialism—and that it is an internal contradiction activated by external conditions—he gives instruction on what we can do to deal with this problem:

"*So the Party prepares us and we raise our guard. And thus by waging a firm and farsighted two-line struggle among the people—because I repeat, there is no right-opportunist line— we can avoid the emergence of a revisionist line. What we've said may be misinterpreted, but it's necessary to say things plainly and teach the people. The Congress has armed us and demands that we: look out for revisionism! and combat it relentlessly! wherever it should present itself, beginning with preventing and combating whatever form it might take within the Party itself. And in this way we will also be better armed to fight revisionism outside our ranks and on a world scale. This is one of the most important points of the Congress."* ("Interview") The above quotations are rich in lessons, of which we must draw out only a few here. The emergence of revisionism is directly the product of failing to wage a firm and farsighted two-line struggle among the people. Here, "among the people" captures quite an important insight. Unless the two-line struggle is carried before the masses in creative applications of Maoism, *the left will fail to impose itself upon the right* and class-conciliatory lines and actions will spread and rise. This important lesson is gleaned from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. We can conclude that it was and always is a major mistake to be conciliatory towards revisionism, that revisionism must be firmly understood as the main danger to Communism, and that it must be implacably combated as such.

While it is correct to applaud the decision of the Montreal-based PCR-RCP to do away with the publication *Arsenal* number 9, it is also correct to understand that this was neglected for too long. This mistake must necessarily be due to mistaken ideas in the Party; if these ideas are corrected, it will more fully liberate the revolutionary impulse of the Canadian proletariat. One divides into two, and splits are not always a bad thing. What is important is that through two-line struggles, splits become more favorable to the revolutionary side and don't result in a stalemate, as is the case in Canada.

History of incorrect ideas

While it is true that political degeneration accumulates over time, a sober evaluation of the ideas in the documents published by the PCR-RCP and their supporters shows that incorrect ideas were always present and even at the forefront. The majority of the incorrect ideas that are presented consist in essence of the ideology of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, which was a loose and eclectic understanding of MLM—and in particular the liquidationism passed off as MLM upheld by the Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan (CmPA), which was highly influenced by the New Revisionism of Bob Avakian back when he shamefully called himself a Maoist.

In 2007 the PCR-RCP issued a defense not only of Prachanda's clear revisionism but also of CoRIM [dominated by Avakianites]:

"Many romanticized the revolution in Nepal, seeing images of armed fighters and acts of open rebellion, and praised the CPN(M). But the recent tactics applied by the Maoist party and the appearance of new images, such as Prachanda no longer a charismatic mysterious revolutionary leader but shaking hands with Prime Minister Koirala, have disappointed them. Their narrow militaristic and romanticized vision of revolution prevents them from understanding that both kinds of activity are part of the same process, and that this process in and of itself always remains essentially political." ("Nepal: Revolution at a Turning Point")

They attacked the early critics and insisted that these critics were speaking not from a theoretical ideological adherence to MLM but rather from a lack of experience. This opportunist line exposes a bad tendency within Canada to defend the indefensible on the basis of their international relationships. They failed in 2007 to use MLM to analyze the developments in Nepal that signaled revisionism, and instead held them to be the nuances of actual revolution. By attacking only the source of the criticism and not engaging with the *criticism itself*, the Canadians once again diverged from Maoist principles and failed to notice internal contradictions.

The above error manifested itself in practice when a year later the PCR-RCP held a solidarity demonstration in Montreal in front of the US embassy in solidarity with what

they called the "Nepalese People's Republic," which indicates not only support for the revisionist line in Nepal (in actuality in the ICM) but even a confused implication that Nepal had successfully carried out its new democratic revolution. We have not had access to any self-criticism on this past position which they no longer hold, but it should not surprise our readers that the PCR-RCP has signed a joint May 1st statement in 2019 with the revisionist, Kiran-led group Communist Party of Nepal (Revolutionary Maoist)— after all, the PCR-RCP has been supporting this faction since early 2013.

It has already been detailed in the *Struggle Sessions* article "Maoism from Below" how JMP has opportunistically presented a thesis of "rupture" while totally conflating MLM and Mao Zedong Thought in his book *The Communist Necessity*. By moving the date of the synthesis of MLM to the establishment of RIM in 1993, JMP ignores the emergence of MLM in Peru in 1982, a whole decade before the RIM statement. His rupture is with Leninism, and he uses ideological eclecticism to negate the new ideas the Peruvians included in the only genuine synthesis of MLM.

Both their support for revisionism in Nepal and their denial of the original synthesis and actual content of MLM offer more general insight into the ideas that have been operational for some time within the Canadian Maoist movement. In the now-denounced *Arsenal* number 9, there is an article on Party militarization that supporters of the pan-Canadian faction claim was authored by the "old" leadership in Montreal. In this article, the question of Party militarization is liquidated fully, and the anti-Leninist specter of the "personality cult" is invoked. The argument in summary is that all Parties that wage PPW are already militarized—this line reveals a complete lack of research on the topic, considering that militarization of the Party was put forward in the work of Lenin and Mao and completed by Gonzalo. The former Red Guards Austin put it this way:

"In the recent issue of Arsenal, the theoretical journal of the now divided PCR-RCP, they have an article on 'militarization of the party and concentric construction.' We feel that this article has made several mistakes. Its first mistake is to claim that these are just inevitabilities in the process of People's War. What would follow this thesis is that every Party engaged in PPW must have accomplished militarization—this is demonstrably false and is the same sort of error as concluding that Mao Thought and MLM are the same thing. We would agree that a militarized Party is indeed needed to ever develop People's War past the stage of the defensive, but we would be fools to agree that all who wage war are structured alike in this way." (Towards the Sea of Armed Masses")

It is impossible to treat militarization as only consequential and not as necessity. The superficial flattening of contradictions and unprincipled definition of Maoism is the cause of this thinking.

Founded on false unity

The Montreal-based PCR-RCP is correct to address the errors of *rapid expansion* through the Revolutionary Student Movement, which populated the Central Committee with academics and postmodernists. Even though they identify this after the fact, it is a highly useful lesson. By overfocusing on quantity with no regard to the quality, the Party attracted people who in no sense should be considered Communists, people who dispense totally with the example of Bolshevization.

This error, however, was not a new invention of the opportunists who dominated the Central Committee and compose the pan-Canadian faction. It was in fact the very same error the Montreal comrades committed when recruiting the Ottawa group half a decade prior to begin with it was but the wage of their own opportunist sins of unprincipled growth. In both instances, the Party was eager to expand on the basis of quantity at the expense of quality (again neglecting dialectical materialist analysis on the unity of opposites). They followed the course of unity without proper ideological struggle and consolidation, the course of accumulation of branches at the expense of training proper cadres. This had serious organizational consequences, but in essence it is a political error, akin to the negation of Leninism posed by JMP.

Instead of a long struggle for ideological unity on the basis of genuine MLM, which is always mainly Maoism—the comrades settled for a weak unity on the basis of eclectic "Maoish" ideas and with no clear definition mistook postmodernism for Maoism for half a decade.

The Montreal comrades at least recognize this (partially) as an error and have spoken out against it, expressing regret that they did not notice sooner the nature of their opportunist clique: "It is with great displeasure that looking back on this we have come to realise how, early on in their short history with the RCP, they undertook to assimilate Protracted People's War (PPW)—the most complete and verified revolutionary strategy in the history of the world proletariat—to a grotesque concept of their own invention, the 'Popular Action Movement (PAM),' enough to cause any revolutionary worthy of the name to vomit." ("We Are the Continuators")

This remains only a superficial diagnosis, and it lacks proper introspection, failing to go all the way and take ownership of the initial error that allowed opportunists to achieve a majority, or at least parity, in their Party. Their ideological unity was built on sand, due precisely to a dogmatic, outdated, and eclectic conception of Maoism. The split was in essence the only fruit that could be harvested from such methods of expansion. Partially identifying the error, and stopping short of identifying their own outdated conception of Maoism, our Montreal comrades make a mistake with

serious consequences, not only for their own ability to survive but also for the Canadian proletariat.

They make no mention in the self-critical parts of their documents that the "Maoism" they unified with the opportunists around was never ideologically consolidated and never adhered to MLM as synthesized by the PCP and Chairman Gonzalo. They upheld MLM as the third and highest stage, but never upheld its content. The split itself becomes something of a Hail Mary play, they can either choose to consolidate around Maoism proper or continue with their eclectic Maoish views.

As for the pan-Canadians, there is less of a chance that organizationally they can be at all aware of these mistakes, because more than anything they negate MLM and turn it not into a dogmatic past conception of Maoism but instead into postmodernist pop-activism, a hybrid of some of Avakian's worst ideas mixed with whatever trash is in vogue on campus.

Importation of postmodernism and existing liquidationism.

It must be stated that most activists attracted to Marxism in imperialist countries come from a liberal college campus background, and they are predisposed to liberalism. While postmodernism is anti-Marxist in the sense that it is in opposition to the Enlightenment (which gave impulses to both classical liberalism and Marxism), post-modernism seeks to penetrate both Marxism and liberalism like an ideological botfly. Liberalism is more susceptible due to its desire to appear progressive and its tendency toward populism, the fact that it is hollow in comparison to Marxism. Thus, postmod-ernism on "the left" actually challenges liberal hegemony. Classical liberalism is dying out to postmodernism, due to the fact that it is to reasonable, rational and relies too much on fact to be of great use to contemporary imperialist society, postmodernism, the great counter revolutionary divider is more suited.

We can understand that without a massive effort of ideological transformation, most well-meaning young activists will take postmodern positions not only as "common sense" but even as a measure of progress. Postmodernism in its process of overtaking liberalism as the hegemonic ideology of the bourgeoisie has gained for itself large sections of the intelligencia and middle classes, from there it begins through culture to penetrate the working classes.

It is to appeal to this large base that the right-opportunists have adopted postmod-ernism and have launched their attacks on Marxism. They know that to go against the tide of postmodernism would cost them immediate numerical support. The US strand

of postmodernism is so common among college-educated liberal arts students that to transform them would require a degree of resources and effort that would prevent rapid expansion. Furthermore, for a right-opportunist accepting postmodernist ideas as common sense progressivism is an ideal way to avoid revolutionary action and developing proletarian ideology.

Postmodernism inside the Canadian Maoist movement is not the cause of the issues—this is not to say that it does not cause issues of its own, but rather that it is a *symptom* of the rightist line in the International Communist Movement that both sides of the Canadian split tend toward. This rightist line in first world conditions is susceptible to the botfly. We identify this deeper error as liquidationism.

The conception of Maoism espoused by the CmPA (and their international collaborators) has been ever-present on both sides of the Canadian split. This ideological mistake has informed much of their practical approach to the Party concept, to expansion and organizing. The Communist Party of Brazil (Red Fraction) has recently issued a great document against the position of the CmPA, which also applies to the Canadian situation. We can quote here from an unofficial translation (the document has not officially been made available in English):

> "To be good teachers it is necessary to be good students before. Diligently doing homework is a wise attitude to be able to give opinions or advise with reason and knowledge. But just like Avakian, the CmPA does it in an opportunistic way, trying to take advantage of the blows of reaction and revisionism and decree the end of the People's War in Peru and the invalidity of Gonzalo Thought."

The position that the PPW in Peru has ended, and that the decisive moment in this end is the capture of Gonzalo, has long been the position of the Canadians. This position is nothing other than an attempt to push an MLM without Gonzalo—that is, a hollowed-out MLM that negates important aspects critical to the third and so far highest stage of Marxism. Many of these liquidationist theories were paired with postmodern niceties in the works of JMP long before the split, but they are found in official Party documents as well.

Superficial arguments as to why they split

As the smoke has cleared a little bit, we can begin to get a better bearing on the conditions that led to the split. We can see practical manifestations of the internal contradictions. All of the allegations of violence and sectarianism can now be seen as

a *consequence* of their differences, rather than the *cause* of their differences. Therefore it is incorrect to claim that violence was carried out against "the left" by Montreal.

We understand that bourgeois ideology (including revisionism) dominates "the left" in imperialist countries and that "the left" will inevitably at times come into violent contradiction with those upholding and applying proletarian ideology, even partially. Opportunists have latched onto these small scale conflicts—and still do—as evidence to support their claims of sectarian madness, malice, transphobia etc. etc. anything to avoid being exposed in two-line struggle.

It must also be noted that May 1st of 2019 has offered some evidence that the fighting ability of both PCR-RCP organizations has been diminished and that their ability to organize successfully, independently of "the left," is called into question. At the root of this is political line and its application to the present conditions. Nothing combative was witnessed *anywhere in Canada* outside of Montreal. This is nothing new and has been a historical trend with a few noteworthy exceptions (regarding the pan-Canadian ability to, with the help of the "left" physically confront fascism).

This May 1st however was a retreat for the Montreal comrades, who were not able to prevent the police from confiscating their flags and had mustered so few to attend their demonstration that they hardly had enough hands to hold their one, oversized banner. We have no interest in lambasting the comrades or joining in the calls to kick them when they are down—on the contrary, we offer criticism in honest support for their objective and hope to see their advance in reorganizing the Party. Nonetheless, all action is propaganda, and they have shown a bad working method that provides ammunition for their enemies, who are also the enemies of the Maoist movement in the US. In place of their usual impressive display of prowess on May 1st, we saw only a small handful of militants, taking the mostly symbolic but ultimately disembodied action of burning road markers, with no sign of the masses in neither participation nor approval.

To center this in ideology and politics, we must point out that *both* factions of the Canadian Maoist movement signed the same international May Day statement, with the same name and no visible demarcation between the two—indicating that they both unite with the rightist and centrist line internationally. This external orientation or inclination has necessarily been caused by internal conditions, the same conditions that have decreased Montreal's ability and kept the pan- Canadians from taking up any large militant action or May 1 or any other time.

The whole Maoist movement in Canada suffers a setback and we must remain clear in our support for its total reorganization.

Only for those who are willing grasp principally Maoism, the correct path can be discerned. Nothing is impossible.

The gender and prostitution question

Two topics that received a lot of attention in the split were the questions of gender and prostitution. While the Montreal comrades come closer to a materialist position, both factions are wrong on this topic. Both proclaim adherence to something they call "proletarian feminism," but neither presents us with scientific, theoretical parameters of what this is. The matter for US Maoists is simple enough: Marxism already answers correctly all of the questions that feminism seeks to answer, and there is no need for the category "proletarian feminism." This is not to argue that there is no need to articulate and organize into existence the Marxist position on the women's question, but rather that Marxism is sufficient to do this and it does not need to add anything called "feminism" to accomplish this.

To make matters more complicated, both use the term "proletarian prostitutes," with the pan-Canadians using the term "sex worker" as interchangeable with "prostitute" depending on whom they are speaking to. In class terms, we insist that both of these are wrong, that *there is no such thing in the world as a proletarian prostitute*: the prostitute's relationship to production is not proletarian. This is not to say that there are not proletarian women who engage in prostitution to supplement their incomes, but these women are either principally proletarian or principally something else, and one aspect of their identity is principal over the other. This is in accordance with the Maoist definition of identity found in Mao's work "On Contradiction."

While several pan-Canadian ideologues, including JMP, have argued that prostitutes should be "unionized," Montreal opposes this while uniting with the incorrect idea that there can be proletarian prostitutes. Both avoid political economy when analyzing this matter and both engage in superficial speculation. This is already detailed in the article "Political Economy and Prostitution," available in our journal.

Montreal, when attacking the postmodernist line, insists correctly that gender is not a matter only of self-identification [gender based on presentation/communication/language as queer theory suggests], but they fail to present any clear definition of the material process that goes into the creation of trans people, who they admit exist. The limitations of this effort on their part open them up to a volley of postmodernist attacks. Theoretical work on this topic is forthcoming, so we will not dedicate too much time to the matter here. Suffice it to say that simple "malaise" as posed by the PCR-RCP and the "Proletarian Feminist Front" is not an acceptable, sufficient or correct analysis.

The mass line, the United Front, and the "possibility" of Communism The mass line is another point of contention. The PCR-RCP correctly identified the rightism in the conception of the mass line posed by the pan-Canadian faction. The pan-Canadian faction conceives of the mass line as a concession to the fact that, according to them, the Canadian masses are not ready or willing to hear about socialism! What a bankrupt analysis! What a total disparaging view of the masses as backward! Not to mention a negation of the fact that imperialist crisis creates favorable objective conditions. In fact, being unable to meet these has been the subjective conditions of the PCR-RCP. The pan-Canadians are unable to view themselves as the source of any problems and instead blame the masses and form a rightist theory of the mass line as an alibi for their difficulties. For more on this read "In Defense of the Mass Line"

The Montreal based PCR-RCP correctly state,

"The Canadian opportunists clearly reveal their rejection of the Leninist party, their revisionist conception of the mass line and their vision of reducing the revolution to a succession of struggles for reforms and inventing useless strategic prerequisites to the initiation of People's War." ("Against the Confusion and Opportunism of Arsenal No. 9")

Our disagreement with them then comes down to their own rejection of Leninism, exemplified by their promotion of Prachanda as applied MLM in 2007–8, which can be understood only as a rejection of the Leninist theory of the State and revolution. By 2008 it was clear that the Nepalese State had not been smashed, yet the PCR-RCP declared support for the "Nepalese People's Republic." This inconsistency, having one standard for yourself and those you support and another for your opposition, necessarily limits your own ability to apply Maoism. Thus their most correct positions tend to be incomplete.

While the pan-Canadian opportunists place the Party and its mass organizations on equal footing (totally liquidating the Party as the most advanced organization of the proletariat), the PCR-RCP attempt to correct this with bureaucratic control over the mass organizations with cadres as imposed leadership. This theoretical misstep exposes the cadres and falls short of the mass line method of Communist leadership. According to Maoism, cadres are a valuable asset that are not to be deployed into every mass organization; they must remain able to be mobilized and lead whole areas of mass work outside of the organizations. They are neither mechanically attached to nor are they equal to the mass organizations. To understand the mass line as Marxist-Leninist-Maoists, we must understand its synthesis in Peru. The PCR-RCP on either side of the split remain unable to accomplish this.

It is Party militarization and the concentric construction of the three instruments of revolution which give power to the mass line method of leadership, unlocking what the PCP prescribes here:

"*Organize the masses so that they can go beyond what is permitted by the existing legal order, so that they struggle to destroy the old order and not to maintain it. This is accomplished by use of the three instruments of the revolution: The Party where the few converge, the Army with more participants, and new State/Front which is the base which progressively accumulates the masses through leaps.*" ("Mass Line")

Without the simultaneous and concentric construction of the three instruments, the masses remain an elusive subject who cannot be led, resulting only in performative militancy or, worse yet, narrow economist reformism as the two major pitfalls revolutionaries face. Maoism navigates these turbulent waters by affirming that the struggle for political power is principal, but that the struggle for economic reforms is part of this, that they are but two sides of the same coin. It can be observed that in spite of the shared loose definition of MLM both factions attempt to overcorrect for the other, becoming satirical inversions of the other, and suffering in their ability to treat Marxism scientifically as a result.

Regarding Party-generated organisms and what type to form, the PCP could not be more clear:

"We use the double policy of developing our own forms, which is principal, and penetrating all types of organizations. We apply 'Combat and Resist!'" ("Mass Line")

A partial break with rightism and insistence on dogmatism—what is wrong with the political line of the PCR, what is correct about it

Having broken decisively with the opportunists, the PCR-RCP has liberated their potential to develop. They are no longer encumbered by the postmodernism or transparent right-opportunism of their former comrades; still, they have to develop in adverse conditions, beset by the same bad politics they have just broken with, and with lower numbers. It is a certainty that other identity politics–based groupings will come to tactically support the pan-Canadian opportunist group, in spite of whatever serious disagreements. This is not due to anything other than having a common enemy (more false unity). Still, this condition imposes itself on the comrades in Montreal. To meet this condition, they must swing harder and further to the left—in short, they must learn Gonzalo Thought so that they can properly grasp MLM and break as firmly with the halfway Maoism of the past as they have with their opportunists.

Many groups that have been around a long time become dogmatic. Some are dogmatic toward their own eclecticism. The PCR-RCP suffers from a kind of dogma: they never properly upheld, defended, and applied MLM and were instead swept up into the whirlpool of RIM's distorted, watered down Maoism, the chief architect of which was Bob Avakian. In order for the US MLM movement to advance at all, the teachings and principals of Avakian had to be exposed and destroyed.

We must absolutely reject respectability-politics and "stay in your lane" type thinking, if what we say is correct, then it is correct to say it and to hell with formality. If it is incorrect then it demands correction, which can only come in the form of ideological struggle. Any comment on the public documents has been treated as chauvinism by the opportunists so we are already expecting this programmed response.

Openness and lack of fortification of the Party

Both organizations using the name PCR-RCP have failed to make secret work the principal aspect in the open/secret work contradiction. Both operate social media pages linked directly to the *Party itself*, and the pan-Canadian side has people openly identifying themselves as members, posting images of themselves and their faces (posing with fake guns), and showing absolutely no regard at all for security. This is all evidence of semi-professionalism at best and amateurishness at worst. This situation, like all the other issues, is rooted in historical policy and positions. Mainly the bad idea that in imperialist countries legalism is the common sense approach to making revolution, as mythic conditions are waited on potentially forever.

In 2013—again, this is before the split—the then-unified Party published the document "Getting Started with PCR-RCP: Building an Organizing Committee," which lays out their recruitment and vetting process *publically*. This policy stems from the concept that their Party must be "a mass party," to use JMP's term. This policy is made public to allow for easy recruitment and rapid expansion. Its existence is evidence of the lack of internal opposition pre-split, as those who seek the formation of a Leninist Party of a new type must certainly take issue with the aims and objectives of this document from the PCR-RCP.

They state, "Anyone wishing to join the PCR-RCP as a member must file a written application preferably to a Party member or if impossible, to an official point of contact of the Party. In the case of a collective or group application, there may be a special process of which the applicants will be notified. This application letter should contain:

A formal request for becoming member;

A statement in which the applicant commits to follow Party discipline;

A short resume including: family background; schooling; political experience; etc.

General information on the current situation of the applicant: workplace; school; any litigation with the police or Justice; average earnings; health problems; dependencies;

Main reasons why the applicant wants to join the PCR-RCP and a brief description of his/her understanding of its political and ideological line.

The applicant will first be introduced as a candidate member. During that period, which lasts at least for six months, two party members will follow him or her. As a candidate member, the applicant cannot vote in Party structures or be elected to any position, but has all the other rights and must fulfill its duties. The members in charge of supervising the candidate member will give him/her feedback through the whole process until a final decision be made. The candidate member must apply the decisions of the Party, pay his/her dues and carry out the general or specific tasks assigned to him or her by the Party."

Fairly easy—anyone who can write can enter into this level of the Party, making them particularly vulnerable to infiltration from the State and non-State agents. Contrast this briefly with some criteria outlined by Chairman Gonzalo in his 1988 interview:

"*How does this process take place? It starts with how each of the future cadre is forged in the class struggle before joining the Party. Each one participates in the class struggle, advances, and begins to work more closely with us until the time comes when that person on their own makes the big decision of asking to join the Party. The Party analyzes the person's situation, their strengths and weaknesses—because we all have them—and if worthy, accepts them into the Party. Once in the Party, systematic ideological training begins. It is in the Party that we transform ourselves into communists. It is the Party that makes us into communists."*

We are reminded of what Lenin said regarding the 100 fools versus the 12 wise men:

"I assert that it is far more difficult to unearth a dozen wise men than a hundred fools. This position I will defend, no matter how much you instigate the masses against me for my 'anti-democratic' views, etc. As I have stated repeatedly, by 'wise men,' in connection with organisation, I mean *professional revolutionaries,* irrespective of whether they have developed from among students or working men. I assert: (1) that no revolutionary

movement can endure without a stable organisation of leaders maintaining continuity; (2) that the broader the popular mass drawn spontaneously into the struggle, which forms the basis of the movement and participates in it, the more urgent the need for such an organisation, and the more solid this organisation must be (for it is much easier for all sorts of demagogues to side-track the more backward sections of the masses); (3) that such an organisation must consist chiefly of people professionally engaged in revolutionary activity; (4) that in an autocratic state, the more we *confine* the membership of such an organisation to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to unearth the organisation; and (5) the *greater* will be the number of people from the working class and from the other social classes who will be able to join the movement and perform active work in it." (*What Is to Be Done?*)

Lenin, like Gonzalo, draws a clear distinction between the movement and the Party. Everyone in the Party must be forged in class struggle—that is, the movement—before joining the Party. And key to all of this is their forging and emergence in actual class struggle. This is not based on a formal agreement with publically released material, but on actual risk, actual struggle, and actual practice. The mass contacts still have a long way to go before the Party considers forging these people (plucked from real class struggle) into Communists.

The calls for the "mass party" or a party easy to join by the vague masses is dismantled by Chairman Gonzalo as well:

"*Concerning the Party, Chairman Mao teaches us, as did Marx, Lenin and all the great Marxists, that the Party is not a mass party, though the Party has a mass character. It has a mass character in the sense that while being a select organization–a selection of the best, of the proven, of those, as Stalin said, who have what it takes–being numerically small in proportion to the broad masses, the Party defends the interests of the proletariat, and takes responsibility for the class interests of the proletariat in taking responsibility for its emancipation, which can only come with communism*." ("Interview")

And,

"*the Party has a mass character, but it isn't a mass party. The mass party, of which so much is said today, is nothing but an expression, once again, of rotten revisionist positions. Such parties are parties of followers, of officials, organizational machines. Our Party is a Party of fighters, of leaders, an instrument of war like the one Lenin himself would demand. I believe we can understand this more deeply if we remember how many Bolsheviks there were when the October Revolution triumphed: 80 thousand in a country of 150 million inhabitants." (Ibid)*

Lenin asserts that Party members are to be taken on the basis of professionalism, and makes an irrefutable argument as to why Bolsheviks must insist on this high standard of membership. Contrary to this Leninist principle The PCR-RCP opens the doors fearing they might miss out on 100 or so fools. Consequently they treat their Party like a hotel with vacancies and just seek to fill rooms:

"Candidate members and sympathizers can form an organizing committee. Such committee [*sic*] does not require each participant to apply for membership; participation is based on sympathy with the Party's policies and a general will for unity and solidarity." ("Getting Started with PCR-RCP")

So a candidate—who has not yet been made a full member, not proven any merit at all in actual struggle, not been investigated more than is possible on the basis of an easily fabricated resume—is able to recruit members of an organizing committee in the name of the Party without even so much as having these new members submit the easily faked application! We are aware that candidates are not full members, lacking certain privileges, and we are of course aware that an organizing committee is not the same as a Party branch—but their methods of recruiting into the Party on these low levels are structured to be able to promote individuals and presumably turn organizing committees into branches. Thus there is no meaningful quality control.

This policy of the PCR-RCP in no way meaningfully diverges from that of any major US revisionist group. Where it does diverge is from the CPSU under Lenin and Stalin, the CPC under Mao, and the PCP under Chairman Gonzalo. The key way in which it diverges is that there is a clear abandonment of the Maoist formula of struggling for unity, of insisting cadre emerge from actual class struggle. Agreeing on paper is one thing— becoming close to the Party through mass work is quite another.

A rupture with science: Avakianism without Avakian

As late as 2003, the PCR-RCP was quoting the RCP-USA from their 2001 draft program. This speaks to a larger problem: that of the influence that the RCP-USA has had throughout the world and mainly North America. Avakian, always in the driver's seat, has produced certain standpoints that find expression on both sides of the Canadian split. Chief among these is the view that Communism is a possibility and not an inevitability.

Given their identical names, their quoting the RCP-USA, their uncritical demand to reorganize the Revolutionary International Movement, their past defense of CoRIM, and so on, we can see the scale of the impact the RCP-USA has had on the Canadian movement, whether or not the Canadian comrades are fully aware of this affect. While the PCR-RCP has failed to respond to public statements by supporters of the Maoist

movement in the US, they found it appropriate historically to respond to the now-defunct Kasama Project (split from RCP-USA), showing that they respect and value discourse with US groups—provided that they are well to the right of Maoism and an offshoot of the RCP-USA.

In an even more rightist impersonation of the Avakian assessment of Stalin, the PCR-RCP state in 2007,

"After Lenin died, the Bolsheviks and Stalin carried on. They *tried* to build socialism in Russia and help build it throughout the world. Stalin fought hard against the old bourgeoisie and against opportunist deviations like Trotskyism. He also led the struggles of the proletariat and the people against fascism in the Thirties and Forties. The Russian proletariat did in fact make enormous sacrifices during the Second World War. *Overall, however, Stalin was unable to grasp the contradictions in socialist society. He also failed to understand the erroneous ideologies and weaknesses of the Bolshevik Party. The proletariat was thus overthrown and the gains of the October Revolution lost. On an international scale, Stalin and the Bolshevik Party were too domineering and this led to promoting their erroneous aspects throughout the whole international communist movement.*" (PCR-RCP Programme, "Our Ideology Is Marxism-Leninism-Maoism"; emphasis ours)

In reversing the verdict on Stalin issued by Mao, the PRC-RCP and the RCP-USA are alike, outright blaming Stalin for capitalist restoration after his death, which was carried out between the years of 1953-56. As Mao insisted, "Therefore if people like Lin Piao come to power, it will be quite easy for them to rig up the capitalist system".

This wretched idea that Stalin is the man to blame for Khrushchev is unevenly applied— for instance, when it comes to Mao, like the RCP-USA, the PCR-RCP actually take the time to unearth *the real economic and social reasons for restoration*, and Mao is not blamed. This comes down to their shared positioning of "Maoism" against Leninism while simultaneously categorizing anything at all passing itself off as Mao Thought as worth recognizing as Maoism.

The PCR actually veers to the right of RCP-USA by claiming tacitly that there was no socialism ever in the USSR, only an *attempt* at it. (The position that the USSR was never socialist was the position of Charles Bettelheim, who is in the official pan-Canadian reading list. This position was explicitly denounced by the RCP-USA in 1990.)

The charlatan philosopher and main ideologue of the pan-Canadian opportunist faction shamelessly promotes his "continuity and rupture" thesis, even naming his book after it. The origin of this thesis is not even with the rightist Communist (Maoist) Party of Afghanistan (CmPA), whom JMP worships—it is with Bob Avakian. The truth is, the pan-Canadian opportunists and the CmPA diverge from Avakian on only a few

points. Principally, they are the expression of his ideological formulation of MLM, which runs counter to that of the PCP. The PCR-RCP and CmPA both belong to the Bob Avakian school of dialectics, and both should be understood as students of Avakian who maintain continuity with his revisionism while rejecting his individual personage: *they are Avakianites without Avakian.*

In 1990, Avakian claimed, "As opposed to such erroneous tendencies, we must arm people with the basic understanding that there are certain underlying contradictions in all things and processes, that these contradictions give rise to struggle which leads to changes through leaps and break—radical ruptures" ("Two Talks by Bob Avakian").

Failing to comprehend overall development of revolutionary science and how it is enriched by new experience, Avakian, like JMP, is motivated by bourgeois anti-Communist pressure to "rupture" with everything. Overstating Engels emphasis on "rupture" which was in reference to taking the kernel of truth from bourgeois science and expanding it in service of the proletariat, Avakian and JMP expose themselves by their treatment of Leninism as if it were a bourgeois science which only contained a kernel of truth, while Avakian goes further than JMP and ruptures with all of MLM in form and essence, JMP only ruptures with the essence and only in the interests of promoting right opportunism—both are liquidationist-revisionist theories.

In 1981, in the very talk that serves as the wellspring for Avakian's "New Synthesis of Communism," he carries out his assassination of Stalin while promoting the thesis of "continuity and rupture":

"So it appears, perhaps, that Stalin was deviating from the previously accepted notions or norms of Marxism-Leninism by saying that the bourgeoisie had been eliminated when that was actually more of a *continuation of the tradition* and not a deviation on Stalin's part. Mao in fact was making a leap beyond and to a certain extent away from that—*a radical rupture beyond it*—on the same road as a continuator of that same historical experience—but a leap beyond and in that sense away from it (though not, certainly, a reversal of it). Stalin presented socialism as the elimination of antagonistic classes, and it's this that he said was possible in one country." ("Conquer the World"; emphasis ours)

Not only is this a revival of the Trotskyite aversion to "socialism in one country," but it also overblows Stalin's mishandling of dialectics to negate dialectics (instead of understanding the process of development, new discoveries and new applications deepening and enriching the science, the relationship between quantity and quality, the Avakianite seeks to toss universal theory into the trashcan, viewing it as inherently flawed from start, requiring a new synthesis.)

It conceals its attacks on Marxism-Leninism, but nonetheless attacks it through attacking Stalin—exactly the same method used by the Canadians. This goes back to the fact that Avakian was dominant in the RIM beginning with his opposition to Gonzalo's line and ending with his total hegemonic influence after the bend in the road. RIM which was useful in regrouping Communists internationally but in no way rivaled the Comintern, which Avakian and his students in Canada and Afghanistan also wildly attack. (Note that the recent May 1st statement signed by CmPA, PCR, et al. credits the Comintern with setting the tactics and strategy for world revolution, which is a negation of the principles of People's War, since the experiences which made PPW possible were based on decisions to defy the Comintern thesis of blockhouse war, represented by Otto Braun against Mao. Clearly they attack the Comintern when it's convenient while upholding some of its worst aspects, all while having an uncritical flat, no-line-struggle conception of RIM.)

RIM had two major defects—eclecticism in ideology (MLM) and the leadership of Avakian (which was the principal defect)—both of which still influence some of the rightists in the ICM, who can make only a partial break with Avakian. CmPA attempt to liken Gonzalo Thought to the New Synthesis as post-Maoism, but it is they and the Canadians who refuse to grasp the developmental process that ML underwent to form MLM, and that MLM was synthesized through a specific application. Opposition to Gonzalo Thought is liquidation of Maoism. It is important to note that Gonzalo Thought was theorized as the application of MLM to Peruvian reality over a decade before RIM superficially adopted MLM. And in order to develop MLM a decade before RIM, Mao Zedong Thought had to be applied to the conditions of Peru specifically, this process was called Gonzalo Thought, hence this is why Maoists argue that to grasp MLM one must understand Gonzalo Thought.

The RCP-USA tried to press-gang the ICM into accepting the New Synthesis via its role in the CoRIM at the top of the RIM. What is important to understand here is that they did so based on the continuity-and-rupture mode of thinking, which situates issues and shortcomings not in a material context of discovery, whereby established practice comes into contradiction with new conditions, but as inherent ideological defects present all along that required rupture. Revisionism is a rupture from ML, while MLM is the enrichment of it, is it in a higher stage.

Avakian held that his "New Synthesis" was a continuity of everything good in MLM and a rupture with all the things "bad" about it. According to them the "bad" consisted of inherent ideological defects that caused the bend in the road in Peru, the capitulation in Nepal, the dissolution of the RIM, and so on. The Avakianites insisted in 2012 that,

"most fundamentally, things have come to an impasse not because of the obstruction of one or another party, or the inactivity of the CoRIM [Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement] in the face of the acute differences over line, nor even fundamentally because of the very real betrayal of the revolution in Nepal with all of its negative fallout (about which we will have more to say below). Rather, the crisis of RIM and the international communist movement more generally arose because the understanding on which the movement was based—what we have called Marxism-Leninism-Maoism—is 'dividing into two': *its revolutionary, correct and scientific kernel is both validated and is advancing to new levels, while secondary but nonetheless real and damaging errors in politics and theory have been identified and can and need to be struggled against as part of making the leap that is required.* That is the approach that Bob Avakian and our Party have taken and have called on others to join with us in filling that great need." ("Letter to Participating Parties and Organizations of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement"; emphasis ours) The pan-Canadian opportunists—and to a lesser degree their counterparts in the PCR-RCP, the CmPA, and others—do the same, differing only by still claiming to uphold MLM. When it comes to the actual content of their ideologies as well as their interpretations of history, in many respects they mirror the "New Synthesis." Likewise they argue that they have continued on with all the "good" experience of Peru (or Marxism-Leninism for that matter) and ruptured from all the "bad." This way they can avoid things like developing a Guiding Thought, which is just their way of covering up a refusal to apply MLM to their particular conditions. What they mean to say is that they remain faithful to Avakian's always-distorted-watered-down version of MLM, that they have become dogmatically faithful to this conception, going so far as to try to remove the role of the PCP in developing MLM to begin with (because it is the truth which with shining light exposes Avakianism). They simply draw the line at following Avakian *the person* or formally embracing his wholesale *admitted* rejection of MLM, even though they both have rejected its essence.

Avakianism, with or without Avakian is black-line, foul and rotted revisionism, we must absolutely, and this pertains to every communist on earth, cure this sickness to save the patient.

While we are of course glad to read that the Montreal-based PCR-RCP has denounced their former comrades' "continuity and rupture" thesis, we believe that a full break with the Avakianite distortion of MLM is required to advance their struggles, fully grasp the lessons of Peru and improve and develop international relationships with all of the principally Maoist groups to the south of them geographically and to the left of them politically.

Absolutely support the emergence of principally Maoism in all countries including Canada

It was not through coincidence that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, took control over the US Maoist movement. This was fought against and rejected by a few fringe groups with no countrywide level of support, with no international support. Those willing and able to organize for Maoism, those able to secure international support, are the same comrades behind the success of the line of principally Maoism, based firmly on the teachings of the PCP and its chairman and Great Leader of the world's Communists, Chairman Gonzalo.

For the revolutionary impulse in Canada to be freed from the mistakes of the past, from unprincipled peace and rapid expansion at the expense of quality, the comrades not only in Montreal but in *all of Canada* must not hesitate to carry out a great struggle for Maoism, against eclecticism, dogmatism, and the Avakianite distortions of MLM. This is not a matter of who belongs to which organization, but of who is willing to grasp, uphold, and apply MLM. All true revolutionaries everywhere in the world have the responsibility to reconstitute their Parties as militarized Maoist Parties—Canada is no exception.

It is the uncontestable truth that the bourgeoisie create the proletariat and that the processes of oppression, exploitation, and the class struggle in turn produce and steel Communists. These must take up the teachings of Chairman Gonzalo and carry out fierce two-line struggle for the establishment of MLM, principally Maoism, across Canada, so that all the Americas fall under the red banner of the red line in the ICM.

Maoists in the US had the dual burden of overcoming, on one hand, the revisionist stain of the RCP-USA, and, on the other, the corrosive influence of the RCP-USA filtered back to us through the outdated ideas of the PCR-RCP, which had about a 6-year head start on the US Maoist movement. This is of course an ongoing battle, but it was only through the discovery of and solidarity with the Latin American Maoists that the US was able to begin real Maoist unification.

On behalf of the *Struggle Sessions* theoretical journal, we hope for an honest engagement with the positions and analysis we put forward. More than that, we hope that our document finds support in the movement of the Canadian proletariat. We have the utmost surety that the revolutionary line will win the whole world over, we know that Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, is only comprehended completely through Gonzalo Thought, now we must fight fiercely for this, more than ever as a great red wave sweeps the entire continent.