

# *On the Maoist Principle of Great Leadership*

**JULY 20, 2018**

**STRUGGLESSESSIONS**

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# ON THE MAOIST PRINCIPLE OF GREAT LEADERSHIP

Great Leadership – or what the Communist Party of Peru (PCP) refers to as Jefatura (in English it translates to Great Leadership) – is Communist leadership. We must be ready, armed with the entire arsenal of proletarian theory, especially in the U.S. as the horizon of the coming PPW approaches.

Great Leadership is an integral part of Marxism, because it is a component of proletarian revolution, and its Communist Parties. It is the natural outcome of Democratic Centralism, as it will be explained further on. Great Leadership is not what the revisionists and bourgeois scholars would have you believe, the tyranny of a demigod over a helpless and ignorant majority.

In the following I hope to lay out more on what Great Leadership is and what it isn't and how it develops and why it must be embraced and defended as part of Maoism, and of course Marxism.

**Jefatura is Great Leadership – it is not “a cult of personality”**

In 1956, just three years after the death of the Great Leader and Defeater of Nazism, Stalin[1], at the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Khrushchev devoted a long, babbling and rabid attack on Marxism under the guise of exposing the supposed “cult of the person of Stalin[1].” The international bourgeoisie was beside itself with glee and satisfaction at the end of his speech. So much so that it has become a permanent part of World History as the accepted anti-communist narrative of the errors of socialism.

In the speech, Khrushchev sneakily made a false dichotomy between the masses making history versus Great Leadership making history – and attempted to cite Lenin as proof. But Maoists understand this better. The masses make history. But the Vanguard Party guides the masses to build Communism. And who is at the helm of the Vanguard other than Great Leadership? It is disgraceful but not unsurprising that arch-revisionists would attempt in resurrecting Lenin and propping him up as something that he never was or prying his dead mouth open and forcing him to mouth things he never said.

Communist leadership never dispenses, and must never dispense, with two things: 1.) *that revolution is only made through the people, principally the proletariat*, and 2.) *Communist leadership means mastering Marxism and leading the masses through revolution and in building socialism and Communism.*

Khrushchev and all revisionists and the more honest capitalists (who don't pretend to call themselves Marxists) ignore the second point. They are not bothered by Communist leadership because they are not Communist! But also because Communist leadership is in direct opposition to their red-bourgeois ideology. It is a constant threat to their comfortable, parasitic existence within or outside of the Party.

Today's revisionists are like mini-Khrushchevs. They pretend to be Communists. They quote all the correct quotes by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and even Mao, Stalin and Gonzalo. But they quickly interject a stupid apology for the supposed shortcomings of the latter three. They say things like, “They were mostly correct but if only there weren't cult of personalities around them, they would have achieved more” or “their

downfall was their cult of personality and the inability to be held accountable to the Party and the masses” or the best one that “they were above the Party” as if they were a fucking cloud.

But Great Leadership is only Great Leadership because they understand the two criteria for themselves. Without the Party or the masses they would cease to exist. They are not only held accountable to the highest degree by both the Party and the masses, they are banished to a position of complete servitude to the revolution and condemnation to building Communism above all else. Great Leadership, in this way, transcends the individual and becomes an embodiment of the application of proletarian ideology to a specific time and place, i.e. country.

The Peruvians perhaps have done the best job in defending Great Leadership. But communists, at least in the U.S., need a better understanding of the concept.

Great Leadership, like any universal principal, exists everywhere at all times, in all contexts, without anyone’s acknowledgement or defense. Therefore, it is evident throughout history.

You don’t have to like it; it cares not what you think; it just is.

## **Great Leadership as an extension of Democratic Centralism**

All revolutions guided by the Party, which is hierarchal due to Democratic Centralism, are guided by revolutionary authority. It has to be this way in order to wield revolutionary violence. You can’t wage warfare by not prioritizing centralism.

In “The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War,” [2] Mao defines Democratic Centralism as containing four integral articles:

(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.*

But the pyramidal hierarchy of structure of Democratic Centralism does not stop at the Central Committee but has individuals in positions of heavy responsibility and authority as chair people, official leadership. This is not in contradiction to Mao's four parts of the discipline of Democratic Centralism; it is part of the structure of the Central Committee. They exist within the Party and its structure, and not above it as the anti-communist revisionists allege. Those who argue differently either are ignorant or have an underhanded agenda of undermining Marxist, specifically Maoism, for their own gains – which whether they are aware of it or not, comes through the vehicle of postmodernism's concept of liquidating leadership and diffusing political power.

What Great Leadership is *not* is a mindless following of an omnipresent demigod who controls his followers – as the revisionists and bourgeoisie would have us believe. These enemies of revolution need us and the masses to believe this desperate lie in order to discredit and hopefully kill the revolution. Or in our case in the U.S., to kill the revolution's germination. But as Chairman Gonzalo himself says it in his interview with *El Diario* in 1988,[3] *Jefatura* is the necessary component and formal appearance of and within PPW:

*A leader is someone who occupies a certain position, whereas a top leader and Great Leadership [Jefatura], as we understand it, represent the acknowledgment of Party and revolutionary authority acquired and proven in the course of arduous struggle—those who in theory and practice have shown they are capable of leading and guiding us toward victory and the attainment of the ideals of our class.*

Hierarchy is a necessary component of the militarized Maoist Communist Party because it instills the discipline of subordinating oneself to the higher militarized

command of revolutionary leadership and revolution itself. Authority is another indispensable component because of its constant conditioning and training of communists as people's soldiers and proletarian administrators, all in preparation to seize power and establish proletarian democracy and exert authority over the bourgeoisie through the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. This is the Centralism in Democratic Centralism, which is generally principal in the Party as its mission is the *political-military* conquest of power through PPW. The militarization of the Party, which is also the militarization of the masses, cannot exist without the concept of Great Leadership.

Enemies of Marxism, and principally Maoism, would dispense with Great Leadership in the hopes of making Communism more appealing to leftist activists and the petite-bourgeoisie of the masses. They begin entirely from the wrong premise that there is a desire or need to resuscitate the image of Communism as something less frightening and simply mistakenly understood. That what it really means is only democracy and egalitarianism/humanism. They start from the philosophical place of self-appointed savior of revolutionary Marxism and the great apologists of proletarian revolutions of history. For them, the more they denounce the "cult of personality" the closer they get to mass-acceptance and therefore revolution. It is not coincidental that these same revisionists attack Stalin or the supposed "downfall" of Chairman Mao and Gonzalo – that if only they hadn't been placed above the Party that their revolutions would have succeeded.

Great Leadership is the manifestation of the guiding thought of the specific ideology of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, principally Maoism, as it develops exclusively in revolution. There exists no revolution, nor has there ever, without a central figure at its head. From the native resistance movements in the times of early colonization of the Americas – Geronimo, Tetabiate, Cajeme, Cuauhtémoc, Popé, Túpac Amaru, Hatuey, etc. – to the contemporary Marxist revolutions of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, Lenin, Stalin, Mao, Mazumdar, Gonzalo, Kaypakaya. Even the leaders of revolutions or revolutionary movements who betrayed the masses, like Prachanda in Nepal, or Avakian in the US, exist as proof of the universality of Great Leadership but in the latter two cases as the inevitable rise of leadership which fails without the mastery of proletarian ideology.

Great Leadership is the informal and formal assignment and undertaking of revolution. It is not an undemocratic coup in the Party or an egocentric ploy to exercise hyper-individualism.

Formally, Chairman Gonzalo was elected chairman democratically by the democratic bodies of the Party. Gonzalo Thought was adopted organically as he rose to Great Leadership through organized two-line struggle within the Party – beginning with defense against attacks on Mariategui early on in the Party, then by standing against Paredes and his “Patria Roja” fraction, against the fake and anti-Party “Bolsheviks” within the Party and finally in support of the Initiation of Armed Struggle in 1979-1980.

### **Why is Great Leadership attacked?**

The bourgeoisie attacks Great Leadership also for its supposed antagonistic contradictory nature between the individual leadership and the mass-based project of revolution and building communism. This is nothing more than anti-Communism masked as concerned critique. It is childish to try to argue, like some anarchists and liberals do, that having a single-head at the top of the revolutionary movement negates the principles of Communism. But Communism is not humanism or some ideology based on peace and love. It is a machine of hatred against the bourgeoisie. It is a highly-centralized and authoritative militarized body from generals to privates, the lower-body members subordinate to leadership, and both subordinate to the ideology of the proletariat and its specific application in PPW through a central figure as a guiding thought.

In Peru the masses and cadre talk about Chairman Gonzalo and the Party, not as something idealistic and heavenly, but as the components to the invincibility that is Maoism. In this, they have shed their bourgeois mortality for proletarian morality and the acceptance their historic condemnation, the march of history.

There is only history. The martyrs of the Peruvian PPW saw themselves as agents of Communism with no need for individuality; they were part of one body, one mind, one heart – extremities coming together for the sole purpose of the functionality of the whole body. The bourgeoisie and their self-appointed red lapdogs are disgusted and frightened at the sight of this amazing heroism. They are disgusted because it is an attack at their supposed need for individualism. They are frightened because they see it as unstoppable and infectious. The future belongs to communism and the masses, not capitalism and the supremacy of the petite-bourgeois individual. Great Leadership is not in contradiction to the collectivity and mass character of Communism, exactly as how the proletarian state is not in contradiction to the statelessness of Communism; they are both necessary steps in the road to Communism.

When the heroes of the Peruvian PPW pledged their loyalty to Chairman Gonzalo and the Party they did so not because of a strange bourgeois, pseudo-religious devotion to a God figure. They pledged their loyalty only to Maoism and revolution above all else, including and ultimately their own lives. What about this is bourgeois? It is heroically Communist, and part and parcel in the militarization of the Party and the masses. The People's Army's soldiers subordinate themselves to leadership not because they are leadership but because their specific leadership represents the proletariat's ideology and their highest fighting organization. For some, it is not impossible to think of laying down their life for the Party and the revolution. And for that, they are correct but only partially. Give your life to the Party and the revolution, but also give your life while alive in subordination and revolutionary servitude to the guiding thought of the invincibility of Maoism and the revolution's Great Leadership.

On June 19, 1986, more than 300[4] heroic guerrillas laid down their lives while in the Callao, Lurigancho and El Fronton prisons when the Peruvian state descended on them in frightened frenzy. Without a doubt in their minds, these People's Guerrilla Army soldiers, these guerrillas of Chairman Gonzalo, the Vanguard of the international proletariat, knew in their heart of hearts that they were not dying; They were being made immortal in serving the Peruvian masses, the international proletariat and worldwide revolution.

Can you imagine the scared faces of the state reactionaries as they threw cadre from helicopters when they without hesitation or fear yelled, “¡Viva El Presidente Gonzalo!”?

Chairman Gonzalo did not invent Great Leadership, but he did develop it and squarely placed it on the red banner of Maoism. He did not take a single step back and apologize or downplay his rise to leadership at the helm of the Peruvian PPW. Leaders rise to Great Leadership through the class struggle, including two-line struggle, and steeled in revolutionary practice and experience. There is no such thing as an inexperienced leader. All leaders are experienced. But Great Leaders unify the militarized Party around themselves and embody the revolution through correct navigation of two-line struggle.

As mentioned earlier, all revolutions and revolutionary movements have produced leaders. To deny this is to deny history.

Comrade Stalin understood this and defended the leadership of Lenin and his indispensable role as the main organizer and leader of the Russian Communist Party and the Soviet Union[5]:

*In our time of proletarian revolution, when every Party slogan and every utterance of a leader is tested in action, the proletariat makes special demands of its leaders. History knows of proletarian leaders who were leaders in times of storm, practical leaders, self-sacrificing and courageous, but who were weak in theory. The names of such leaders are not soon forgotten by the masses. Such, for example, were Lassalle in Germany and Blanqui in France. But the movement as a whole cannot live on reminiscences alone: it must have a clear goal (a programme), and a firm line (tactics).*

*There is another type of leader—peacetime leaders, who are strong in theory, but weak in matters of organization and practical work. Such leaders are popular only among an upper layer of the proletariat, and then only up to a certain time. When the epoch of revolution sets in, when practical revolutionary slogans are*

*demanded of the leaders, the theoreticians quit the stage and give way to new men. Such, for example, were Plekhanov in Russia and Kautsky in Germany.*

*To retain the post of leader of the proletarian revolution and of the proletarian party, one must combine strength in theory with experience in the practical organization of the proletarian movement. P. Axelrod, when he was a Marxist, wrote of Lenin that he “happily combines the experience of a good practical worker with a theoretical education and a broad political outlook” (see P. Axelrod’s preface to Lenin’s pamphlet: *The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats*<sup>10</sup>). What Mr. Axelrod, the ideologist of “civilized” capitalism, would say now about Lenin is not difficult to guess. But we who know Lenin well and can judge matters objectively have no doubt that Lenin has fully retained this old quality. It is here, incidentally, that one must seek the reason why it is Lenin, and no one else, who is today the leader of the strongest and most steeled proletarian party in the world.*

It is fitting that I end this with the boogeyman of Marxism – which still haunts the fascists who are creeping back into popularity, the revisionists and the bourgeoisie who never went away, all in 2018, a century after the heroic conquest of power by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. To be an organizer, a propagandist, a leader, a theoretician, and above all else a soldier – and in combination, a Communist – is not to usurp the power from the masses and ride above them disconnected from their goals, ideas and accountability. It is for the undying loyalty to the masses, the Party and its leadership.

As communists, we should all strive to give our lives to the Party and revolution.

***Article by – Cajemé Iniciador***

[1] <https://www.marxists.org/archive/khrushchev/1956/02/24.htm>

[2] [https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2\\_10.htm](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_10.htm)

[3] [https://archive.org/stream/InterviewWithChairmanGonzalo/ICG\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/InterviewWithChairmanGonzalo/ICG_djvu.txt)

[4] <http://www.bannedthought.net/International/RIM/AWTW/1987-9/AWTW-09-Peru-Prisons.pdf>

[5] <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1920/04/23.htm>

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