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China: Sixty years of the Peoples Republic

On October 1 sixty years ago, at Tiananmen Square Beijing, Mao Tse Tung proclaimed the establishment of the Peoples Republic of China. This was indeed a great event in world history and a major victory for the proletariat, internationally. Mao and cronies pursued a Stalinist strategy. This meant that instead of fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat, they fought for national bourgeois tasks and adapted to the peasantry. Had he pursued a Leninist strategy, the Chinese revolution would have been won decades earlier.

We salute the formation of the PRC. The victory of the revolution there has meant a massive development of the economy, increase in living standards and development of infrastructure such as schools and hospitals which would not have been developed under feudalism.

Today, Mao is remembered with some affection as a patriot who played a key role in establishing the PRC. His revisionist ideology, Maoism, though, is dead at least in the eyes of most Chinese, especially the ruling elite.

Mao's peasant based strategy also meant that the victory did not mean a dictatorship of the proletariat but a workers and peasants' state transitional to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Mao's Stalinists maintained peasant privilege at the expense of the proletariat. Nevertheless, capitalism was abolished and this was a major gain for the Chinese working class. Now the bureaucrats are going hell for leather in handing over China back to the bourgeoisie, or rather to a new bourgeoisie. This is of course, thoroughly and utterly treacherous.

Of course, Mao's victory, scared the bourgeoisie internationally, shitless. After the Second World War there were many national liberation movements erupting, throughout Asia, Africa, Central and South America. Many of these were eventually victorious.

Today Australia's bourgeois are so reconciled that when Stern Hu and other Con Zinc Rio Tinto executives are arrested in China, notorious bourgeois chronicle The Australian, counsels Malcolm Turnbull to "put down the megaphone and behave responsibly" The Australian bourgeoisie know that without Chinese assistance buying raw materials they would not have avoided recession..

After the end of the Second World War there was a massive expansion of Stalinism. The Moscow bureaucrats, led by Stalin, expanded into Eastern Europe creating a buffer zone. But as well national liberation fronts were on the offensive. These fronts which united workers, peasants and bourgeois forces effectively fought for the first stage of a revolution, national independence and democratic tasks – under the gun. It was known as the Bloc of Four Classes.

The Moscow bureaucrats were comfortable with their buffer zone which meant they effectively controlled Eastern Europe. The newly established Chinese bureaucracy, led by Mao wanted to encourage radical communist influenced nationalist movements.

This would lead to a parting of the ways. In fact they became mortal enemies.

For many young people of the post war generation, Maoism represented revolutionary energy and rebellion. The two stage strategy of the Maoists did not live up to the image According to Mao, Marxism stood for the fundamental. "It is right to rebel". The Moscow bureaucrats, their international allies, appeared and were staid and conservative. They certainly didn't believe in rebellion...

Marxism is, of course about class struggle and not "rebellion". One can "rebel" against the working class as well as the ruling class. One can rebel with a fascist ideology. Marxism is a method based on class struggle, not on individuals "rebelling".

Mao was aware of the perils of bureaucracy. But his way of fighting it was not the proletariat but a lumpen student movement called the Red Guard. The affects were devastating. This "revolution" ridiculously demanded that peasants hand over their woks so China could out do the West in terms of steel production.

Many at the time confused Maoism and Trotskyism Trotsky stood for permanent revolution. Maoism stood for continuing revolution by stages. They seem the same, but there is a massive difference between the two. Permanent revolution, which is a dictum of Marx means that communists complete the bourgeois democratic revolution by fighting for the socialist revolution. This means drawing class lines.

For Mao first you fight for bourgeois democratic demands uniting all classes, and then you fight for socialist revolution. This meant you fought for a radical form of capitalism.

Whilst many of the liberation struggles were successful, establishing workers and peasants states (bureaucratically deformed), the big exposure of the Maoist strategy came in Indonesia, 1965. In that year, millions of revolutionaries, peasants, Chinese and others were downed in blood by the very regime the Maoist loyal Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) declared loyalty.

Mao personally stabbed his comrades in the back by maintaining friendly relations with the military dictatorship in Indonesia. He also maintained friendly relations with the Chilean junta which downed the Allende government, killing many thousands of leftists and unionists...

The Cultural Revolution was defeated. Mao was succeeded by Deng Xiaoping who put on trial Mao's closest allies known as the Gang of Four, one of whom was Mao's widow. Deng avoided attacking Mao directly which would mean an attack on the revolution directly. But it was clear that he was targeting Mao's policies.

Under Deng, China began the counter-revolutionary road. With regular growth of the private sector. The main enemy of the world's peoples was according to Deng "Soviet social imperialism" This facilitated a block with US imperialism. Prior to Deng, Mao had friendly discussions with Richard Nixon – while US jets were bombing North Vietnam. Deng continued what Mao had begun.

In 1979, Vietnam invaded Kampuchea led by Pol Pot. China invaded Vietnam. There was the possibility of the Soviet Union declaring China making it an all out war between post capitalist states. Unfortunately this did not happen.

Economically, Deng introduced the Special Economic Zones which allowed Chinese labour to be exploited by multinationals within limited areas.

Since Deng, the capitalist counter-revolution has gone from strength to strength. China has introduced the stock exchange. Large sections of the economy have been denationalised. Multi nationals have been allowed access to Chinese labour, usually, paying their Chinese labourers a pittance. .

In 1989 there was a major uprising “for democracy” The students uprising were basically for bourgeois democracy which meant more privilege for the elite. This is not strictly true as there was a proletarian component of the demonstrations and the real possibility that working class within the movement could break, take the leadership and fight for real workers democracy – proletarian power. This unfortunately, didn’t happen.

The Chinese bureaucrats have failed to understand the national question. Yes many national minorities live comfortably within China and would be horrified if they witnessed what black communities had to endure in the Northern Territory. But when national minorities rebel in China, they are met with brute force. This especially applies to the Tibetans and the Uigars in Xinxiang Province which borders Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Many leaders of the nationalist movements are downright reactionary. This includes the Dalai Lama. But the actions of their leaders do not deny the overall justice in Tibet’s claim for self-determination.

To get true Chinese national unity, national minorities must consent to be part of China voluntarily. Otherwise there will be national conflagrations. Can the Uigars be blamed for responding angrily when their people are attacked brutally in Guangdong province?

The bureaucracy has learned from the Tien An Min uprising. It has learned that to maintain power, it must serve the people. The people who it has chosen to serve are the aspiring bourgeois. They have accelerated their plunge into capitalism whilst ensuring enough growth to keep the masses happy.

Throughout the world, economies faced recession. China suffered also. This is because China has been dependant on selling commodities to the west. The bureaucracy responded by a massive programme of spending for construction. The Chinese bureaucrats offered their assistance to bail out capitalism in the West. They certainly assisted Australia by purchasing commodities. The Chinese counter-revolution has meant sweatshop labour and massive attacks on working class wages and living standards.

When workers rebel against Chinese bureaucrats, capitalists and the foreign capitalists which they have introduced, they have our full support. In fact we urge workers to organise and fight the bosses whether government or privately owned. It is the working class which is key to China’s future. It is the only force which can save China from capitalism. Workers must win over peasants in a principled way.

We are for the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. We are for political revolution in China.

In no way do we consider the Communist Party of China to be in any way “communist” We are for the formation of a new revolutionary party to challenge the CCP

We consider the introduction of capitalism to China to be a betrayal, even to a limited degree. But the question seriously posed is: has China become capitalist? Yes a large section of the economy is capitalist. This is undeniable. But the question is does the capitalist sector predominates? Our answer is no! We do not think the bourgeoisie dominate the economy despite capitalism making up a large sector of the economy. The banks, for example are nationalised. Most of the key corporations there are government owned.

Recently there has been a degree of retreat in relation to China’s turn to capitalism. But it is clear that sections of the bureaucracy do want to go all the way and create a fully capitalist China. They must be fought.

The future of the Chinese revolution depends on the working class. This decisive class for revolution throughout the world is also the decisive class in relation to defending the Chinese revolution.

China must be unconditionally defended from imperialism. The capitalist roaders within China must be defeated and the capitalist counter-revolution reversed.

Honduras. Coup and reconciliation.

The coup is over. Zelaya is back in the country. There will be elections to be held in November which Zelaya will probably win. Most of the Honduran left is happy. Hillary Clinton certainly is. Coups do not usually have such happy endings. However, even if Zelaya wins the election (we think he will) imperialism certainly will be the winner. Unfortunately, workers of Honduras will be the losers.

In Central and South America, in fact throughout most of the world, when governments carry out vaguely progressive policies, let alone socialist policies, they have been deposed by military coup. Democracy is a luxury reserved for imperialist countries. Even they are usually not consistently democratic. Often there has been a massive blood bath as was the case in Chile. So it is no surprise that Zelaya in Honduras was greeted by such a coup. In fact coups are a common occurrence in Honduras. According to the military, “crime” was to initiate a referendum to lengthen his term in office.

After the coup there was a massive uprising in Honduras. There was a general strike support of his right to govern. Hondurans were angry and rightly so. The message was received loud and clear, that Hondurans were not going to take this lying down. A potentially revolutionary situation could have easily developed.

His real crime was to want closer relations with the Chavez regime in Venezuela. The imperialists feared an extension of the Venezuelan revolution. The Chavez revolution does not constitute a socialist revolution despite clear benefits to ordinary people. It is though, a serious inconvenience to imperialism. For the sake of the empire, America had to clamp down lest things get out of control. If the US cannot defeat Chavez, it can at least contain him. Imperialism knows that revolutions have to internationalise to succeed.

There has been some debate over whether or not Obama was responsible for this coup. He did make a statement denouncing it and calling for democracy. Most of the CIA operatives in Honduras were appointed by the Bush administration. These operatives clearly backed the coup. It is of academic interest whether Obama was a hypocritical backer of the coup or merely unwilling or unable to remove these operatives. The fact remains that he was both unwilling and unable to do anything. The fact is that if he did something it would be to the benefit of US and not to the benefit of the oppressed of Honduras

The reconciliation will be seen as a diplomatic victory for Obama. Obama may have tactical difference with the way imperialism has operated under Bush. He wants imperialism with a human face. This means more co-operation as opposed to ultimatums as dictated by George Bush.

Hugo Chavez of Venezuela asked Barak Obama to intervene in defence of democracy, against the coup. Obama has indeed intervened – to defend US interests with the veneer of democracy. The US has imposed the San Jose Tegucigalpa Accord. Courtesy of this Accord, US interests are guaranteed.

The Accord calls for a “government of unity and national reconciliation” which includes the coup leaders. Effectively it gives them real power whilst promoting Zelaya as a figurehead, to maintain popularity amongst the masses.

The elections to be held on November 29 are to be supervised by Obama’s Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and Ricardo Logos who is also reactionary. This means the US controls the electoral process. Zelaya is effectively accepting US imperialist control of Honduras,

The Accord specifically rejects any reform to the Honduran constitution such as a constituent assembly. They also explicitly made an agreement to actively oppose any uprising against this agreement.

Zelaya is not US imperialism's president of choice. But it fears that justified anger and hostility towards the coup will radicalise the masses. They fear a revolutionary situation might develop and perhaps be victorious. Zelaya is their insurance policy for a stable Honduras. They will support him as president so long as he allows the military to pull the strings and defuse or repress any opposition

In Nicaragua, Daniel Ortega was once part of the Sandinistas. Now he has learned his lesson and is a politician of the mainstream. It is a good bet that Zelaya will follow suite. Zelaya is no revolutionary. He knows where the force lies. He knows that if he doesn't obey the dictates of the system, another coup will follow. He has made it clear that he will not disrupt the status quo.

From a revolutionary point of view, in no way was Zelaya ever supportable. His popular front was just as much a death trap as Allende's in Chile. It is very important that the left and workers movement do not get sucked into the euphoria about the "victory". Yes, the elected president is back, but he doesn't have power. He is a prisoner of the system. He will carry out policies which serve the system. This includes the Honduran military coup leaders and US imperialism. We need a political alternative which fights the system.

Revolutionaries and other militants in Honduras are denouncing these elections as a fraud, basically a whitewash for military rule. We agree with them! The way forward lies in mobilising the working class for strike action and the formation of workers militias.

Workers must win over small farmers to a programme of proletarian power.

For the Nationalisation of the Land! Repudiate all small farmers' debts! Expropriate the bankers! For a workers and small farmers government!

These are key planks of a revolutionary proletarian party which must be built in Honduras.

Supporting Zelaya is a serious trap. It was bad enough when he appeared progressive. It is even worse now he represents merely a fig leaf for military control!

Refugees. Rudd's reactionary attacks on Tamil boat people!

The arrival of boatloads of Tamils from Sri Lanka, victims of a civil war has indeed embarrassed Kevin Rudd. The Rudd way of dealing with issues, promoted by Howard, has been to sweep them under the carpet and hope that they will go away.

For example instead of Howard's reactionary industrial legislation called Workchoices, we still have tough legislation giving the unions more recognition and participation. Julia Gillard did though threaten the building workers with "the full face of the law" if they dare industrial action so workers would win back the gains lost under Howard.

On every issue, be it industrial relations, unemployment and the unemployed, or the Northern Territory Intervention, Rudd wants to maintain the reaction though without the controversy.

In the case of refugees, Rudd wants to keep them out but without the divisive wedge politics. Images of refugees in prison camps in the desert were an embarrassment both in Australia and overseas. Australia was seen as a barbaric and uncaring country. But Rudd cannot be seen as soft in defending Australia's boundaries. This would play into the Liberal's hands as he refuses to counter their reactionary framework.

At the moment, Rudd pleases no one. He has no answers to the many boatloads of Tamils headed to these shores. His only answer is increase the capacity of Christmas Island detention facilities and to persuade Indonesia to help out with detention centres funded by Australia. This is not much different from John Howard and has strong opposition from the left, liberal left and the trade unions. It also doesn't please the Liberals. They argue that Rudd's soft line implies that Australia would welcome boat people. Rudd, they claim, has sent out the wrong message and encouraged boat people to come here. They oppose asylum seekers getting Centre Link assistance and suggest that Tamils are braving the oceans not because they are political refugees but because they want benefits. They suggest they are only economic refugees. They argue that if Rudd took a tougher line, they wouldn't come here. Malcolm Turnbull wants to re-introduce the Temporary Protection Visas as some form of deterrent. If refugees in fear of their life need to come here, they won't let a TPV get in the way. What it will mean is that it will be virtually impossible for those waiting for citizenship to get a job while they wait.

The Tamils have just lost a thirty year war. They live in barbaric concentration camps. Many face the real threat of torture in Sri Lankan prison cells. Fundamentally, we think their cause was just. However, there is no denying their suffering at the hands of the victorious Sri Lankan government. Many face serious torture or death.

The Liberals suggest that the Tamils are merely queue jumpers who come here merely to enjoy the benefit of an Australian dole which is a disgusting lie. They insist that they join a queue. Those who face immanent torture don't have the luxury of going across the country to Colombo and wait in a queue while the government decides they are "real" refugees. They need to go now and the only way out is by boat

Peter Costello suggests that they be processed off shore which means they will have to find people smugglers to get them out first and then make arrangements to come here if accepted... Barnaby Joyce wants them returned to Sri Lanka which could lead to their death or torture.

Steven Smith is now in Colombo negotiating to stop the "people smugglers". He shows more concern about them coming to Australia than their treatment in Sri Lanka. If you stop the people smugglers you condemn Tamil militants to the brutal persecution of the Sri Lankan state. That is unless they are flown out by RAAF jet. We doubt if Mr Smith has this in mind.

Rudd has developed his own reactionary method of "defending Australia" – the Indonesian solution. He hopes this will show his toughness in defending Australia. Indonesia has a much higher population and population density. If Australia is packed to the rafters than surely Indonesia is. Indonesia is not a signatory to the international refugee declaration, so the Tamils have every reason to fear going there, and being ill-treated... Why can't asylum seekers come to Australia?

The intransigence of the asylum seekers is catching Rudd out..The Indonesian solution appears to be failing. The Philippines and New Zealand refuse to take any. He doesn't know how to deal with the situation. His choices are therefore taking them back to Sri Lanka which is illegal under international law or allowing them to come to Australia. If he accepts the latter his apparent "tough stance" in defending Australia will be exposed. The extreme right will gain political capital.

For revolutionaries, the Tigers of Tamil Elam were fighters for self-determination of an oppressed nationality. They and all Tamils should be welcomed in Australia. We don't care if they are classified as "real refugees" or otherwise.

Let them stay in Australia!

The Liberals have warned that there may be terrorists on board. Well according to the official classification of the Tamil Tigers as "terrorist" this may well be so. The Tamil Tigers fought a bloody and ruthless war. Many of their tactics terrorised innocent civilians. The Sri Lankan government behaved brutally also.

Many Tamil Tigers are escaping in fear of their lives. The Tigers had no other agenda aside from their demand for an independent Tamil Elam. Technically they are not terrorists as they represented a clear social grouping. They pose no threat to anyone in Australia.

It now appears that Indonesia is going to send them back to Sri Lanka. Should this happen, things could be disastrous for the Sri Lankan Tamils. Rudd deserves a large section of the blame for this situation.

It is good that the ACTU is showing dissent on this issue attacking Rudd's "hardline border security policy" (Sharan Burrow). Yes, it is good that the ACTU is rejecting a refugee policy whose principles are fundamentally the same as Howard's. It is good that they want refugees in Australia. Unfortunately, though, the ACTU accepts the distinction between "real refugees" and others. The latter, they think should be sent back. . By accepting this artificial distinction the unionists are playing into the hands of reactionaries. They are supporting proletarians being deported if they are "not refugees" as defined by the jargon.

Communist Left welcomes all to Australia (except fascist reactionaries) irrespective of whether they are defined as "real refugees" or otherwise. In short, proletarians should be allowed to live in their country of choice.

It is the responsibility of the workers movement to build a movement which defends the right of refugees to stay in Australia. This movement must support direct working class action. Smash all immigration controls!

We think every proletarian should have the right to come to Australia if they want to. We think that it is the responsibility of the workers movement to back these refugees -- unconditionally

Gay Rights in the ACT.

The Australian Capital Territory Legislative Assembly has just moved legislation which is a significant step forward in term of the rights of same sex couples. Their relationships can now be registered and therefore officially recognised. They stress that this does not constitute a gay marriage. It isn't

We believe that gay people should have the right to marry. Failure to have this right means that they are not quite equal. They should be. Communists recognise all forms of sexual relationships between consenting partners equally. Whilst this legislation is a step forward, Gay relationships are still not equal to straight ones in the ACT.

This registering of relationships has a number of advantages. Gay partners have often lost out in inheritance disputes with family members because they couldn't prove their relationship. This registration documents the relationship and therefore holds weight in court. Also gay couples will use the registration as a celebration of their relationship just as heterosexuals do when they get married.

Legislation similar to this has been moved in the ACT before and was carried by the Assembly.. The problem was that under Australia's constitution, the Prime Minister has the right to veto this, or for that matter, any legislation passed in the A.C.T. The Prime Minister at the time was John Howard who was very happy to veto it. He claimed that it was effectively gay marriage which he strongly opposes...

Australia has a different Prime Minister namely Kevin Rudd. Will he veto the legislation? Well that is the question. He opposes gay marriage but will he allow the elected representatives of residents of the ACT to enact legislation which is clearly popular amongst the electorate? We hope he respects their decision even though he may disagree. Kevin Rudd believes in the conventional Christian view that marriage is a Christian ceremony for heterosexuals only and doesn't apply to gay people. John Howard vetoed the ACT

Legislation on the ground that the registered relationship was "too much like a marriage".

Gay people in Australia are clearly second class citizens. It is a reflection on the rest of Australia's governments that they don't even attempt similar legislation even though they (with the exception of the Northern Territory) they cannot be overridden by the Federal Government.

Apart from exposing the inequality of gay people, Howard's vetoing exposed the lack of democratic rights for people in the ACT. Why can't their Assembly move legislation without big brother Federal Government ripping it up? Yes, given that Canberra is the capital there may be a conflict of interest between the national interest and those perceived by the residents of Canberra. This is how this injustice is rationalised.

But there certainly isn't any "national interest" in preventing gay people from recognising their relationships. There is only the perverse desire of John Howard to impose his reactionary values on an electorate which clearly doesn't agree. This is a perverse misuse of power. We hope Kevin Rudd accepts the decision and allow the views of the majority to be accepted.

The state system is undemocratic. A constitution which permits ACT citizens to fewer rights is undemocratic. For many reasons we want to smash this reactionary Australian Constitution.

COMMUNIST LEFT

Is a revolutionary communist organisation founded on the basis of the Transitional Programme of the Fourth International established by Leon Trotsky.

Because we believe there is no continuity of this international we call for a Fifth communist International based on Trotsky's programme.

Communist Left calls for revolutionary workers and small farmer's government, a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat based on soviet power instead of a capitalist parliamentary government.

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