

A Great Ideological-Political Initiative in the Preparation of the Party Congress

Rote Fahne (Red Flag) interview with Stefan Engel, Chairman of the MLPD, 24 April 2012

On May Day hundreds of thousands of blue- and white-collar workers and employees will be demonstrating for their demands. Which economic development can they expect?

We can observe a complicated and contradictory economic development in Germany. In 2011 the GDP (gross domestic product) rose by 3 percent compared to the previous year, industrial production by 7.9 percent, sales grew by 9 percent, the exports reached a record level of more than 1 trillion euros for the first time and the officially recorded profits reached a new record level of 104 billion euros. The number of employed persons also rose to a record of 41.1 million. However, since the middle of the year 2011 the tide has begun to turn: industrial production has fallen since then in tendency – from December to February 2012 even below the level of 2006. The order intake mainly from foreign countries fell significantly in the same period of time below the level of the previous year (Monthly Report 4/2012 of the BMWI).

For which development do we have to be prepared in Germany in 2012?

The spring report of the eight leading German institutes for economic research aims at lulling us into a sense of security. We are supposedly on the brink of **“a sharp upswing”**. This is mainly substantiated by the cheap money and the **“best competitiveness”** for years in Germany. This “competitiveness” means an intensified exploitation in the enterprises and a gigantic plundering of the public budgets by finance capital, as well as ruthless competition with other countries and corporations. Real wages have dropped by 7 percent since 2005. The surplus billions in the social security budgets and the extremely high revenue from taxation as well are the result of the plundering of the masses. It is an illusion to attempt to make up for the declining exports due to the negative development of the world economy by means of a domestic demand that is only still growing due to speculative daydreaming.

For the first time in two years, at the end of March German enterprises officially announced more job cuts than new job offers. First plant closures and mass dismissals highlight what is in store for us. 11,000 dismissed employees all at once at the Schlecker company were fired without tranquilizers like transfer companies. This is a sign for the future tougher line that is being planned.

Unlike the bourgeois media, the MLPD assumes that the present drop in the growth rate is an expression of the world economic and financial crisis which has been continuing for three and a half years. Why is that so important and why do bourgeois governments merely speak of a “debt crisis”?

There is no doubt that the world economic and financial crisis and in particular the comprehensive international crisis management have led to a galloping state debt in most of the capitalist countries. Germany, for instance, is one of the most indebted states in the EU with 2.1 trillion euros. The proportion of public debt in the euro zone has officially risen from 83.2 percent to 87.4 percent of the GDP in the third quarter of 2011 compared to the previous year. This increase in state debt, however, is mainly only the effect and not the cause of the world economic and finance political turbulences.

The debt crisis mainly occurs when government spending cannot be covered by the revenue and a permanent flight into a new contraction of debt takes place. This new contraction of debt

continuously increases the mountain of debt of the state budgets which on the other hand have to use an ever greater proportion of the expenditure to pay the interest to the monopolist banks. For decades these have not been paid back! The **open debt crisis**, the tendency towards state bankruptcy, is caused mainly by the fact that the economic crisis in the mainly affected countries brings about a lower production of new value.

The real cause lies in the **chronic over accumulation of capital** since the reorganization of international production in the 1990s. Various measures are being taken against the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. They are actually presently preventing an open and uncontrolled collapse of the world economy and financial system, but in the end they are further aggravating the overaccumulation of capital.

The constant injection of capital and protective umbrellas are not suited for reducing this mountain of capital that cannot be invested to yield maximum profits. On the contrary, with the flood of cheap money the fundamental problem is being increased. Some time these built-up dams will also break and flood the capitalist world economy. The consequences for the masses will be open mass dismissals, breakdowns not only of some companies, but of entire branches, a disastrous mass unemployment and growing poverty. The governments and the monopolies are not capable on pain of their ruin of eliminating the causes of the crisis. The impending change of government at the first ballot of the presidential elections in France alone immediately led to the fall of shares by 3.8 percent. This shows the great instability arising from the crisis management.

This insoluble problem of the system is to be covered up by the depiction of the world economic and financial crisis as a "debt crisis". The working class is well advised to become independent of the bourgeois reading of the tea leaves and carry out its own economic analyses. Only the basic lines are reliable which were developed by Marx and Lenin and which were specified by the MLPD for the present situation.

What we mainly have to do is to identify the capitalist mode of production under the rule of the solely ruling international finance capital as being chiefly responsible for the unending world economic and financial crisis. This also means to fend off the attempts of the reformists and revisionists to win people over for striving to save the capitalist economy together with the exploiters.

What effect does this development have on environmental policy?

The overexploitation of nature takes on a new dimension against the background of this economic development. Again the protection of the environment is being sacrificed more openly to the increasing competition. This is becoming clear, for instance, in the solar industry in Germany. Its promotion has been cut back considerably by the government, since leadership in the world market with the corresponding maximum profits cannot be realized anymore due to the strengthened Chinese competition. Also the CO2 emissions increased again by 9.3 million tons in Germany last year. This shows once again that the so-called compatibility of economic success and effective environmental protection in the economy is nothing else than a new fundamental lie of capitalist society.

Despite the crisis Chancellor Merkel is being regarded as the most popular politician. and the North Rhine-Westphalian government is trying to achieve a clearer mandate through the regional elections. Are these not signs of a stabilization of the political conditions in Germany?

These appearances are deceptive. The **latent political crisis** has actually **deepened** in the last months in Germany. Christian Wulff was the first federal president who had to resign because of continuous mass criticism. This led to an open state crisis for a short time. An open government crisis even threatened to break out which only was averted hectically within one day by a "mega coalition" of SPD/CDU/CSU/ the GREENS / FDP.

You have to differentiate: the failure of the **government of North Rhine-Westphalia** on

grounds of the lost vote on the budget showed on the one hand that the SPD/Green government, which is dependent on varying partners, seems unstable for the monopolies. At the same time new elections were desired by SPD and Greens, but also by the FDP, especially for reasons of national politics.

Looking at the federal state parliament election campaign one is amazed: state leader Kraft uses the slogan "*Fight for Jobs*", while she supports the liquidation of coal mining, the reorganisation of the international steel industry at the expense of thousands of jobs or the 11000 lay-offs at the Schlecker chain. The established monopoly parties in NRW are united in the questionable promise to provide a multitude of social and ecological benefits after the election. Norbert Röttgen of the CDU wants to pursue a policy "*from the viewpoint of children*" and even the FDP presents itself as being social by using the slimy slogan of "*compassionate liberalism*" and promises the abolition of doctor-consultation fees, the raising of commuter benefits and better education. However such promises are a daring game, because on the basis of the continuing worldwide economic and financial crisis the leeway for that will even be decreasing in the near future.

In Germany Chancellor Merkel is still appearing as obliging and moderate, while in Europe she long ranks as one of the rabble-rousers of cuts in social policy.

The main answer of the ruling class to the obvious symptoms of the crisis of the capitalist system are always **new variants, contents and methods of the societal system of the petty bourgeois mode of thinking.**

While the system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking is becoming more sophisticated, the **bourgeois spectrum of parties** is, at the same time, getting more and more **fragmented**, which is not conducive to stable political conditions in the sense of the monopolies.

However I am very discontented with the way the "Rote Fahne" has been dealing with phenomena like the appearance of the "**Pirate Party**" up till now. The Pirate Party benefits from the aura of a so-called "protest party". Its program is completely superfluous, since its policy is nothing but a **shallow rehash of bourgeois programs** enriched with enigmatic **petty-bourgeois anti-authoritarian symbols** and "modern" knick-knacks of the internet time. It works on the basis of **modern anti-communism**. Its liberalism goes so far that they are presently unable to cope with the tendencies of an open fascist infiltration. The media are purposely promoting its construction to undermine the parliamentary influence of the **Left Party** or especially to build up a dam against the **trend to the left** and the strengthening of the revolutionary direction within this trend. At the same time, those in power are demanding from the **Left Party** to bow down to anti-communism. This however meets with opposition from its followers and members.

The MLPD is not taking part in the federal state elections of North Rhine-Westphalia for reason of forces. However, it actively propagates its alternative socialist program. We reserve the right to support progressive candidates and possibly also the Left Party critically. The attitude towards modern anti-communism is an important dividing line there.

We are observing a growing danger of war; what is your opinion on this?

After a temporary phase of common international crisis management at the outbreak of the economic and financial crisis 2008/2009, meanwhile **the inter-imperialist contradictions are increasing** considerably. The imperialist policy of expansion, even further fueled by the crisis-proneness, is accompanied by an increasing militarization; this is governed by law. For example, India, currently the biggest importer of weapons in the world, signed a contract with the USA at the end of 2008 for the delivery of uranium which can be used for nuclear weapons within the framework of nuclear armament, and they tested the long-range missile "Agni 5" with a range of 5,000 kilometers on April 18. Indian newspapers therefore regard India as catapulting itself into the circle of the nuclear powers USA, Russia, France and China.

The contradictory economic development causes **a dramatic shift in the economic and political balance of power**. Especially the **BRICS states** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) are aggressively pushing **forward** with regard to the "traditional" imperialist powers. It is the geostrategic goal of US imperialism to defend and to restore its hegemonic position by reordering the Middle East. After all, we are talking about two thirds of all known crude oil and natural gas deposits in the world and about a power political and military strategic hegemony over the whole Eurasian double continent. The failed war adventures in Iraq and Afghanistan have a destabilizing effect on these plans.

At first, the mass struggle for democracy and freedom in the North African and Arabian countries objectively also had a destabilizing effect on the reactionary power structures that had been quite stable for the last few decades. Taking advantage of their weaknesses, the imperialists – especially the USA and the EU – try to influence this struggle in a way that stabilizes their hegemony over the region by supporting western-style bourgeois-democratic forms of government. Therefore, they are even prepared to intervene militarily like in Libya, Syria or Iran.

It would be disastrous to assume that the cease-fire agreement now negotiated in Syria was a step toward world peace. The so-called "solid operation", promoted presently by the imperialist powers France and USA, also means the preparation of military aggressions.

An attack on Iran or Syria could hardly be limited regionally, since the **contrary interests** of the imperialist powers – USA and its allies on the one hand, Russia and China on the other hand, are **directly** behind them. Joint Russian-Chinese maneuvers in the Yellow Sea on 21 April, also intended as an answer to the US maneuver nearby, indicate the dangerous potential of the aggravation.

The Easter marches in 2012 and the common actions of different political forces set an important signal against war preparation. Nevertheless, the intensification of the general threat of war is still being underestimated. Without any doubt, this is connected with the confusion spread among the masses by revisionist and neo-revisionist forces. For example, some of them seriously impute anti-imperialist features to the fascist regime in Iran or the reactionary Assad government or gloss over the actions of the imperialist powers China and Russia as a policy of peace-making.

Therefore, it is unthinkable to mobilize the masses for the preservation of world peace without uncovering these illusions in social-imperialist forces.

In China the top functionary Bo Xilai was recently dismissed from his posts. There are surely reasons for the fact that there is such broad coverage of that in the bourgeois media.

Bo Xilai was dismissed on 15 March as head of the party in Chongking – which with around 30 million inhabitants is the biggest city area worldwide. In April he was dismissed from his posts in the political bureau and the central committee of the CP of China. Special attention attracted the presentation of Bo Xilai as a "Neo-Maoist". Apparently he had made a name for himself amongst the masses by rigorously taking action against the mafia structures and by putting more than 3000 persons behind bars for corruption. He promoted government-subsidized housing and measures for protecting the environment. He thereby referred to Mao Zedong and demanded that the functionaries **"serve the people"**. He revived forms of mass mobilization and songs from the time of genuine socialism. Prime Minister Wen Jibao started Bo Xilai's removal from office with a warning against a new „Cultural Revolution“, which he defamed as a „historic tragedy“.

This shows what the ruling bureaucracy of the social-imperialist China is really afraid of. However, the warning against Bo Xilai is completely exaggerated. He advocated reforms and acted against corrupt excesses, but defends the bureaucratic-capitalist system in China.

The restoration of capitalism in China and the rise of the People's Republic of China to a new

social-imperialist superpower do not require reforms in China, but a **new proletarian revolution** and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Nevertheless, this dismissal is a certain reflection of the class struggle in China. More and more the workers with their strikes and the peasants with their uprisings refer to the social achievements, rights and liberties and to the basic philosophical lines under Mao Zedong. The fact that Bo Xilai had to adapt to this does not only show how big the mass influence of the Mao Zedong Thought is, but most of all that this influence is clearly on the rise. This gives us much hope, because it shows that the new capitalists in China are skating on thin ice and the development of the class consciousness is making progress in China as well.

The party is in the middle of the preparations for the 9th Party Congress. Is it already possible to evaluate how preparations are going up to now?

The preparation of the party congress is marked by an upswing of the **ideological-political initiative** of the rank and file of the party, great approval and unity of the party about the draft report of the central committee and the book „Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution“. From the four months of discussion in the basic units, thousands of motions for the draft report have been worked out. In different areas – for instance concerning the „Rote Fahne“ and the guidance of our work in factories and trade unions – the critical-self-critical assessment of the leadership work was deepened. The very diverse experiences in local systematic rank and file work, as well as in recruiting members, in the environmental work or the factory and trade-union work were assimilated and qualifications were improved. From that 1640 motions arose, which were adopted at the county or local delegates' conferences. These are 30 percent more motions than at the last party congress. The MLPD has committed itself to the task of the preparation of the international revolution, has consolidated itself as revolutionary party of a new type in the struggle against anti-communism and has taken on environmental work as the second most important line of struggle in its work.

At the same time, the motions naturally indicate to us a number of questions which we do not agree upon yet. We had a debate about single skeptical motions, which often are connected with their separating the assessment of the MLPD from the complicated societal development. In assessing the party work, one always has to take into consideration the balance of forces and restricted possibilities. In the period of relative calm in class struggle it is not possible to avoid defeats and setbacks. However, the MLPD has given the masses a clear orientation at any time, strengthened the revolutionary direction in the trend to the left and has strengthened and consolidated the party and the youth league, too. With our systematic rank and file work the seeds were sown, which sooner or later will grow into a general upswing of the revolutionary working-class and people's movement in Germany.

With the forthcoming regional delegates' conferences of our seven regional party organizations we have a good opportunity to further go into more depth in these questions. These **regional delegates' conferences mainly** have the task of further preparing the **9th Party Congress of the MLPD** thoroughly, of clarifying the questions that are arising in this process and of contributing to a broad ideological-political unification of the mode of thinking of the members and leading bodies.

In January the MLPD described the international movement for freedom and democracy as the „most striking phenomenon“ in the international class struggle. Aside from predominantly approving reactions there was also a tendency of confusing interpretations ?

Indeed! In my interview in January the point was to characterize the most important change in the international class struggle. This can not be applied mechanically to the conditions in the Federal Republic of Germany. Since the turn of the millennium the center of revolutionary

ferment has shifted from Latin America to North Africa and into the Mediterranean region. The storm of the movement for democracy and freedom is targeting the autocratic, fascist regimes which suppress any democratic movement of the masses. The strategic goal in these countries is the establishment of an anti-imperialist new-democratic order. At the same time this creates necessary preconditions for the struggle for socialism in these countries.

In some motions to the party congress this situation was equated with the class struggle in Germany. So for example, the above quotation was taken out of context and a **tactically correct assessment of the international situation** was turned into a **wrong strategic concept** when the struggle for freedom and democracy was described as being a preliminary stage of the struggle for socialism in general. In the imperialist countries the **strategic goal is the immediate revolutionary overthrow of imperialism** and the construction of socialism. As early as 1981, our theoretical organ „REVOLUTIONÄRER WEG“ 20/21 „Strategy and Tactics in the Class Struggle“ stated:

“ Reformists and revisionists of all shades attempt to distort this by completely ignoring the strategic goal or by naming a different goal, as for instance the DKP (Deutsche Kommunistische Partei – German Communist Party) with its „antimonopolistic democracy“. Thus they objectively serve to maintain state monopoly rule.” (p.38)

The mistake was made because the work was not consciously done with the dialectical method. Naturally there is an interaction between the countries in which the struggle for freedom and democracy in fact is a strategic task and the imperialist countries, in which it is the direct struggle for socialism. The strategy and tactics of the international revolution have to take into consideration the characteristic features in the individual countries, as well as the **inseparable connection between the national and international class struggle**. In our book „Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution“ we warned urgently: *“Every stereotype, every leveling of differences, not to mention petty-bourgeois competition or division, but most of all*

denial of the inseparable connection of the national and international class struggle will inevitably lead to defeat.” (p. 313)

What are the ideological-political roots of this metaphysical tendency and which consequences does this have?

In the transition to the second stage of class struggle the situations, challenges and decisions are getting more and more complex: Every phenomenon and task in class struggle and party building in Germany has to be related to the international situation and to the strategy and tactics of the international revolution.

If concrete phenomena and experiences are being **inadmissibly generalized** – but also relations ignored or denied, wrong conclusions will inevitably be drawn.

For instance, under the CDU state government of Baden-Wuerttemberg under Mappus repressive measures in connection with the mass struggles against “Stuttgart 21”, restrictions of bourgeois-democratic rights and liberties have increased. The spectrum reaches from more than 1,000 political preliminary proceedings against opponents of Stuttgart 21, prosecutions of people collecting donations at the Monday demonstrations, the presently required authorization of the selling of the “Rote Fahne” at the factory gates, to “black Thursday” when brutal police action was taken against mostly young demonstrators using water cannons. These quantitative changes, however, should not be generalized rashly as a qualitative leap in the process of the fascistization of the state apparatus or even as a general “repressive domestic course”. This would mean **to overrate the fascistization of the state apparatus** in comparison to the prevailing **methods of the system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking** as the main form of government. With the change of government the deceitful methods of the “ stress test”, the referendum that could not be won and the hopes placed in a Green federal state leader came to the fore. Every skeptical or panic-stricken tendency, which

assumes that the transition from the main method of deception to the main method of violence were in full swing, underestimates and plays down what can be expected from a real repression and counterrevolutionary violence against a revolutionary change. It also underestimates the still prevailing governmental method of the system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking or opens a flank to its influence upon the working class, the people's movement and the party.

How can this tendency come up immediately after the publication of the “Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution” and the draft report which respectively deal thoroughly and critically with the worship of spontaneity?

The party, of course, is subjectively behind the “Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution” and the draft report of the CC. You will probably find no comrade who would reject the quintessence explained there: **“preparation of the international revolution – instead of the worship of spontaneity”**.

However, if you do not study the “Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution” or also the draft report of the CC critically and self-critically, but only as confirmation of already existing evaluations and practices, you cannot really grasp the new aspects. The fact that the international revolution is again on the agenda today due to the internationalized capitalist production requires a critical-self-critical and **creative calling into question of our present mode of thinking and style of working**.

Only if the whole **dialectics** of the preparation and realization of the international revolution are understood and we deal **consciously and critically-self-critically** with the present **stamp and approach**, will a real positive self-transformation take place. Thus the organization must comprehend, for instance, that it has to orient its work towards the present international prerevolutionary situation, whereas in Germany at the moment a change of mood among the workers is only just beginning.

What does the general task of the critical-self-critical study of the REVOLUTIONÄRER WEG 32 -34 and its creative application in practice mean for the work?

One year ago, the Central Committee (CC) together with the Central Control Commission (CCC) adopted a call for a campaign of criticism and self-criticism. Guidance is given there for a stage of the critical-self-critical study and creative implementation of the further development of the line of the international socialist revolution as process of self-transformation.

In this context the international campaign for the propagation of ICOR among the masses, the struggle for its financial independence by means of the collection of donations is of great importance. The plenary session of the CC could establish that there is great enthusiasm in the organization for this new task of the party. This can be seen in the donations which have come in up to now for the internationalist work of the MLPD and for the support of ICOR. We could already collect more than 380,000 Euros in a little more than seven months. At the same time we have observed that in many cases this ICOR campaign is not being conducted from the viewpoint of the movement of criticism and self-criticism and consciously for the development of the internationalist consciousness of the masses at all times. For this kind of fund-raising a thorough work for convincing people of the necessity of proletarian internationalism and the preparation of the international revolution has to be done. This is systematic work among the rank and file, this is work of convincing people, this is a practical struggle against modern anticommunism among the masses. This means that the selling of postcards and the recruitment of new members for the solidarity and aid organization “Solidarity International” has to be the center of attention. We have observed that a trade-union legalistic and opportunist tendency especially has effect in our work in factories and trade unions and that fund-raising for ICOR in the factories and trade unions is often not part of

the systematic work among the rank and file. But the fund-raising among the industrial proletariat is the **most important aspect of this fund-raising campaign**. The point is not to raise money somehow or another, but we need to do the work of convincing people and in this way test whether our strategy and tactics are understood by the masses, whether we can win them for it, etc. At the same time there are many examples of how this kind of systematic work among the rank and file in the residential areas and the factories, everywhere where we are working with the masses, good achievements were made and where this also contributed to a positive development of membership.

In the individual study of the "Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution" the point is not to somehow read through the book. We have to pay attention to the aspect that this is the new yardstick against which we have to measure our work among the rank and file self-critically and that we have to engage in **active self-transformation**. The ideological-political mistakes which have been made in the motions to the party congress are an expression of a lack of **dialectical individual study** as the basis for the self-transformation of the members of the party. This debate has to become the focus of the regional delegates' conferences in connection with the evaluation of the manifold practical fields of struggle in which the party is active. It will surely take some time until this new task becomes second nature. This self-transformation is presently the **main yardstick** for the evaluation of the work – also that of the regional leaderships.

We are experiencing a considerable upswing of the militant women's movement in connection with the assessment of the World Women's Conference 2011.

During the preparation and holding of the World Women's Conference of rank-and-file women in Caracas in 2011 we emphasized again and again: It is most important to use the preparation of the World Women's Conference for **sustainably strengthening and developing** the militant women's movement in the individual countries and its cooperation. The international days of action of the world women's movement that were adopted by the World Women's Conference – especially the day against violence against women and International Women's Day – showed that the militant women's movement in Germany was considerably revived and broadened after the World Women's Conference. There were a great number of demonstrations, events and activities with thousands of participants with up to 25 organizations in one place in active cooperation with the MLPD. The reluctance to come into contact with the MLPD due to a petty-bourgeois anti-communist mode of thinking has decreased. This also reflects a greater respect for the MLPD's work among women.

The main emphasis must currently be placed on the breakthrough in the clarifying process that must still be taking place and on the sustainable strengthening of the **organized ueberparteilich (without regard for political affiliation) militant women's movement**.

The 7th International Automotive Workers' Counsel will be taking place in Munich in May this year, the 1st International Miners' Conference in Peru in March next year. How is the response to these events?

Both projects show that there is a great and increasing need for collaboration, coordination and cooperation in the international industrial proletariat. The registrations and inquiries so far show that both events arouse a considerably grown international interest. The ICOR decided to support both *ueberparteilich* initiatives which have to become milestones in the international union of the international industrial proletariat and will contribute to the mutual stimulation of the national and international class struggle.

They can become an important step for the international industrial proletariat, that has developed in the last decades, to consciously put itself at the head of the worldwide struggle against imperialism and for genuine socialism.

At the **1st International Miners' Conference** it is becoming apparent that a step by step

coordination and cooperation of miners with their mass associations/trade unions including tens of thousands of miners will develop. The meanwhile 22 million miners worldwide, together with their families, are one of the largest and most militant units of the international industrial proletariat.

They are often at the head of the struggles in their countries or are their backbone. More than 500,000 miners were in the struggle for jobs, wages, defending the environment, but also in the worldwide struggle for freedom and democracy in the middle of 2011 alone. For reasons of profit the international mining monopolies often sustainably destroy entire regions with open-pit mining and poison rivers; wars are being waged to control the sources of raw materials. The miners, who today are often still fragmented in their struggles, have to develop their international collaboration. This will also push ahead the struggle of the miners in Germany against the early shutdown of hard coal mining and saying farewell to mining this important raw material.

At the 7th **International Automotive Workers' Counsel** the number of international registrations has doubled compared to the last counsel in 2009. Organizations will be participating which together represent millions of automotive workers: for instance the trade unions KMWU South Korea, CGT Spain, CGT France, FIOM Italy, Conlutas Brazil, "August 80" Poland, KMU the Philippines, NTUI India, Deri-Is Turkey and others.

This is only possible because a relationship based on trust has developed in the year-long work of the last six counsels, the discussions at the counsels were conducted creatively and in a democratic culture of debate, and the mutual support and solidarity were proven in practice.

At the same time, drastic changes are taking place in the worldwide automotive industry. Since the turn of the millennium the balance between the strongest automotive countries and corporations has dramatically shifted. In 2000 the USA unquestionably led the list of the strongest automotive countries with a proportion of about 25 percent of the world production, while China ranked eighth and India 15th. In the last year, however, China ranked first with 22.9 percent of the world's car production, in the USA only 10.8 percent were produced, and India advanced to rank 6. Traditional automotive countries like Great Britain, Italy and Belgium are no more to be found among the 15 leading car manufacturers.

A new slump in the crisis will bring about a drastic worsening of the living conditions of the auto workers and their families.

All this confirms that the auto workers and their families, but also the population in the centers of the automotive industry, have to wage the struggle beyond country borders for a worthwhile future and in this overcome the division among the locations and the division between the permanent workforce and agency workers. The MLPD welcomes the fact that the struggle for saving the environment from the profit economy is also a central topic at the automotive counsel and that the struggle for the liberation of women is an integral part.

The declared goal of the 7th International Automotive Workers' Counsel from 17 to 20 May in Munich is to get under way the transition to a binding international automotive workers' coordination **of class struggle**. The treacherous policy of class collaboration of many trade union leaderships in the world led to the division of the working-class movement and aims at the separation of the working-class movement from socialism. However, the response to that is often a splitting-off of class-militant or revolutionary trade unions or the transition to a work as a trade-union opposition. However, this is very problematic, because this objectively complies with the division of the reformist trade union bureaucracy. We should not let ourselves be led to undermining the strategic unity of the working class for the supposed advantage of an unhindered militant trade-union work. I also heard about demands in connection with the automotive workers' counsel to strengthen this oppositional trade-union work in Germany or even make it a common platform of the automotive workers' counsel. This is strongly criticized

by the MLPD. In the preparations for the counsel in Germany we have to discuss thoroughly about this harmful tendency. The justified criticism of the policy of class collaboration has to be voiced within the trade unions with the **positive goal of the unity of the working class on the basis of the common struggle for better wage and working conditions.**

Is the Youth League REBELL included in the preparations for the party congress, study and implementation of „ Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution“? Isn't that asking too much from a youth league?

If things went according to bourgeois society and its youth conceit, you could not demand too much of the youth - some superficial knowledge or cool talk at the most. In contrast to that the MLPD places its **trust in the youth** and feels that it is willing to learn and fight, and that for this purpose it also can overcome the hurdles of the petty-bourgeois-anti-authoritarian mode of thinking. A rising **ideological-political initiative**, a strengthened **revolutionary spirit** and **strong ties to MLPD and ICOR** are expressed in the motions of the central leadership (VL) of REBELL to the draft report and in the 20 „letters to the party congress“ up to now from the rank-and-file of REBELL. The Youth League has **stabilized** itself.

These are all important results of the successful criticism-self-criticism campaign on youth work! It would however be an idealistic understanding that all questions and issues could be solved with this. Understanding youth work as all-sided mass tactics of party building, realizing it sustainably and in all party work, is currently even one of the most significant tasks for the future in party building.

Recently, a meeting of the Central Committee took place. What was discussed there?

The 8th plenum of the Central Committee met one year after the publication the book „ Dawn of the International Socialist Revolution“. It made a positive evaluation of the overall development and emphasized the correct overall leadership of the CC. There was, however, also a critical-self-critical discussion about the persistent weaknesses in certain fields of the CC leadership. This mainly includes the vigorous criticism of several aspects of the central public relations work, the still lacking brochure on socialism or a variety of criticisms of the „**Rote Fahne**“. It is mainly criticized for losing, in tendency, its role as an all-sided central organ that provides orientation. In many cases the readers miss the realistic, interesting, understandable and also profound treatment of key issues in party building and class struggle, issues of natural science, culture and everyday life. In tendency, the „Rote Fahne“ is still intellectually abstract. It is not really in touch with the many people who are politically not very well educated and do not even have the possibility for that. It performs only insufficiently its most important task of **initiating people into the ideological-political line of the MLPD.** However, the key problem is that the „Rote Fahne“ steers well clear of the central issues raised by modern anti-communism today. There will however be no sustainable progress in party building and class struggle in Germany without the masses coming to grips with the petty-bourgeois anticommunist mode of thinking. Hence, overcoming this tendency is of strategic importance.

The criticism of our work in factories and trade unions and its central guidance is mainly that it does not go into depth sufficiently and that it still has a strong tendency to respond to the ups and downs of the economic and political developments and class struggle. This way it will be impossible to win the decisive majority of the working class and to wage the class struggle as a school of class consciousness, of the proletarian mode of thinking and of the organized struggle.

The plenary session settled all these questions with the usual proletarian culture of debate in the MLPD and was able to reach unity as well.

The close relationship of CC and CCC was and is an important trump card.

The plenary session also dealt with the necessity of building up cadre reserves for the central level in time. This makes it necessary to mobilize even more younger and suitable worker cadres and women within the organization to run for the central bodies. Of course, the work in the Central Committee is no simple matter and requires great commitment, a high fighting morale, ideological-political depth and the mastering of the dialectical method on the level of the doctrine of the mode of thinking and systemic thinking.

However, all these capabilities do not develop automatically. They must and can be developed and consolidated in a longer process. Hence, we have to give the widest scope to this **perspective educational and training work**.

What is therefore your overall conclusion for the work of MLPD?

The MLPD is an ideologically-politically consolidated party which has established roots among the masses, has proven its worth and consolidated itself in many years despite the policy of political isolation and modern anticommunism of the ruling class. During the last years the MLPD has cooperated constructively in the international Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary and working-class movement, too. It could reach unity with many parties ideologically-politically to a large extent and develop practical cooperation. This is an essential prerequisite for successfully coping with future class disputes in the transition to a revolutionary crisis and for mastering our strategic aims.

Thank you very much for the talk!