

Fundamental Conclusions from Profound Changes in Society

Rote Fahne: The year 2022 is considered to have been a “turning point in history”. What is your assessment?

Gabi Fechtner: With his *Zeitenwende* (turning point in history) Chancellor Olaf Scholz at least made it to the “Word of the Year”. He used the term to describe the new orientation of imperialist Germany’s foreign policy toward the open preparation of a Third World War. In 2022, for the first time since World War II, an **open war of imperialist blocs** began. But 2022 stood for further profound crises: It became apparent that the gradual development of the global environmental crisis had transformed into a **global environmental catastrophe**. 2022 was a year of **galloping inflation** and the impoverishment of the working class and the broad masses. But it was also a year of growing discontent with the government, awakening class consciousness among the core of the industrial proletariat, and, not least, **general societal crises in more and more countries of the world**. While depression spreads among opportunists against this crisis background, the MLPD proved to be a stable point of orientation in the confusion among the broad masses that initially arose on all sides. After all, previous leaders of the peace movement mutated to become open warmongers on the side of Ukraine, and the Greens, who once started out as an environmental party, pushed the expansion of fossil fuel combustion with lignite, coal-fired power plants, and fracking gas. The AfD, of all parties, demagogically presented itself in a social-fascist manner as an advocate of immediate peace in Ukraine, while the Left Party and the German Communist Party (DKP) have remained vague.

Rote Fahne: Last year the central promise was given that arms deliveries and “sanctions” would quickly put an end to the war in Ukraine. How could that fail so grandiosely?

Gabi Fechtner: In the meantime, both sides of the warfare are in a crisis, in a war which is unjust on both sides. As early as mid-November 2022, the highest-ranking U.S. general, Mark Milley, came to the assessment that “*The probability of a Ukrainian military victory ... happening anytime soon is not high, militarily.*”¹ This, when only a few months ago, Ukraine’s unconditional victory was proclaimed to be the guiding principle. NATO’s Ramstein Conference in January initiated a **further stage in the escalation of world war preparation**. The delivery of Leopard tanks was previously considered to be a “red line”. Shortly after Olaf Scholz set up the delivery of jet fighters as a new red line, Poland, France and the U.S. are now considering precisely this delivery. In the meantime, the phrase is making the rounds that there should be no more red lines.² Meanwhile, Russia is increasing its (active) army from 1.15 million to 1.5 million soldiers and is waging its **inhumane** war on the backs of the Ukrainian population. Ukraine’s counteroffensive has brought death to tens of thousands more soldiers and civilians. **We have never been so**

close to a (nuclear) Third World War as we are today. It cannot be assumed that the masses in the warring countries can be lastingly won for this war. An imperialist war cannot be waged indefinitely and won without or against the majority of the population. In Germany as well as in other countries, the further advancing transition of NATO to an open war party could become a **culmination point in the approval of the masses.** In any event, in opposition to the deafening war drums, the MLPD will educate even more intensively about the character of the war and organize active resistance. The activities on the anniversary of the beginning of the war on February 24 will play an important role in this.

Rote Fahne: What role are the new-imperialist countries currently playing?

Gabi Fechtner: The new-imperialist countries are profiting from the clash between the imperialist blocs NATO and Russia. This is especially true for **India, China, South Africa, Brazil and Turkey.** Most of the forces of modern revisionism have now adopted a social-chauvinist position and support new-imperialist Russia and China. They are hoping for a more peaceful world from the new multipolar world order. The 29th Federal Peace Council in Kassel in December 2022 even propagates that *“the new multipolar world order could be committed to the principles of social justice, international solidarity, democracy and ecological sustainability”*.³ This is the position of opposing the imperialist superpower USA with the uncritical support of smaller or other imperialist countries. This is incompatible with Marxism-Leninism, which states that there can be no concession to any brand of imperialism. In reality, the **struggle for the redivision of the world is coming to a head.** The **USA and China** are the **centers of bloc formation** in the imperialist struggle for the redivision of the world. Both are preparing for new “major conflicts”. Contrary to the claim that the West has not been so united for a long time, trade conflicts are also intensifying between the USA and the EU. The so-called Inflation Reduction Act is a program of subsidies and protectionism in favor of the investments and production of international finance capital in the USA. New-imperialist Turkey is playing a remarkable double game with its NATO membership and, at the same time, close economic, political and military cooperation with Russia. It is an active warmonger in the Middle East region, with raids on Syria, Iraq, a special targeting of the Kurdish liberation struggle, and constant threats against Greece.

Rote Fahne: In the summer of 2022, the UN sounded the alarm about the worsening environmental crisis. Are the analyses of bourgeois environmental research correct?

Stefan Engel: The UN report does actually see a dramatic worsening of the global environmental crisis. However, it is not able to interpret the very real facts correctly, because it evaluates the whole development on the basis of its observance of the Paris Climate Agreement.

This agreement, however, was from the outset not a scientifically based target, but a foul compromise. Based on purely mathematical calculations of past developments, the Paris Climate Agreement arbitrarily assumes that a global warming of 1.5 to 2 degrees could still be coped with by humankind. However, this has now been proven **wrong**. The world is

now at an average of 1.2 degrees of warming,⁴ at which a number of **new manifestations** in the environmental crisis have already occurred. In their sum, they mean that humankind is now at the **beginning of a global environmental catastrophe that is successively spreading and deepening**. There are, for example, a number of developments that environmental research had previously not taken into account in the necessary way. These are **irreversible** and, **even without direct human intervention**, signify a **new phase in the destruction of the existential foundations of humankind**: The **melting of polar ice** reduces the **albedo effect**, which reflects the warming rays of the sun back into space, and this is now dramatically heating up the world's oceans. Not to mention that this will cause a significant portion of today's land masses and islands to disappear irretrievably into the ocean. The **thawing of the permafrost** releases around 1,500 billion tons of CO₂ and methane gas. Methane amplifies the greenhouse effect up to 25 times more than the same amount of CO₂. With the accelerated **melting of glaciers** by 2050, humanity will lose its largest reservoir of drinking water, which will additionally cause many rivers to dwindle to mere rivulets. The accelerated **deforestation of the Amazon rainforest** has resulted in the Earth not only losing a major CO₂ sink. It has also contributed to the permanent disappearance of a growing number of species of flora and fauna throughout the biosphere. The **enlargement of the ozone hole** has dramatically worsened the life-threatening contamination of the Earth's surface by radiation, causing entire species to disappear and also dramatically increasing skin cancer. Last but not least, **ocean currents** have changed so much in recent years that the balance between the southern and northern hemispheres is increasingly being irreversibly disrupted.

The **accelerated process of destruction of the basis of life on earth**, which has now begun and is **associated with violent eruptions – we call this a global environmental catastrophe** – is a complete fiasco for humankind. The sole responsibility lies with the imperialist world system and the solely ruling international monopolies.

Bourgeois environmental research cannot come to such an assessment, because it only argues immanently to the system and largely disregards the fundamental connections between humanity and nature. Accordingly, it makes its predictions only according to **mathematical algorithms**, which are blind above all to unforeseen developments. In our forthcoming book in the *Revolutionärer Weg* (Revolutionary Way) series, entitled *The Crisis of Bourgeois Natural Science*, we address in more detail this problem of the **increasing lack of a scientific approach in the natural sciences** and its dramatic consequences. Only the revolutionary **struggle to overcome the imperialist world system and to establish the united socialist states of the world** decides whether this process of the global environmental catastrophe, which has already begun, can still be **dampened or even stopped** in its humanity-threatening quintessence. For such a society-changing struggle, the environmental movement, the working class and the broad masses of people must come to grips with the influence of imperialist and petty-bourgeois ecologism.

Rote Fahne: According to environmental researchers, the UN report shows that the development is already “five minutes past twelve”. So is it too late to fight to save the environment?

Gabi Fechtner: No! It is never too late to fight, and the necessity is even amplified by this very dangerous development. The environmental catastrophe that has already begun will sooner or later cost the lives of hundreds of millions or even billions of people. On the other hand, the material conditions and the knowledge of a socialist society in unity of humanity and nature have largely matured. In the meantime, however, they are in a **historical race against time** with the destructive imperialist world system. I am firmly convinced that humankind does not want to perish in the barbarism of a Third World War or a global environmental catastrophe! The environmental struggle will combine with the international class struggle and become an integral part of the international socialist revolution. The struggle over the mode of thinking will unfold over the question how one stands on this issue. We will oppose every **disregard** of this issue, but we will also oppose a **doomsday mood**. The MLPD will have to take a leading role in this society-changing environmental struggle and in preparing and carrying out the international socialist revolution in Germany. It will also set unmistakable impulses for this internationally.

Rote Fahne: A few weeks ago we experienced an active resistance against the forcible eviction of the village Lützerath. Is this already a revolt against the global environmental catastrophe?

Stefan Engel: The active resistance in Lützerath is directed against the expansion of lignite mining by the federal and state governments, each with Green government participation. Justifiably, the Greens are accused of treachery there. In the last election they were still peddling the demand for an early end to lignite mining in order to channel the growing environmental protest into parliamentary tracks. The actions of the struggle are also verbally directed against capitalism and the energy corporation RWE, which expresses a **tendency critical of capitalism**.

However, the main demands of the protests, for all their radicalism, are still largely within the framework of the Paris Agreement, and they also officially refer to it.⁵ In doing so, however, they fundamentally underestimate the process of global environmental catastrophe that is already underway. This is due to the fact that these activities are ultimately still largely controlled by the pro-government NGOs, which are closely linked to the Green Party, and are explicitly **anticommunist in orientation**.

It is the task of Marxist-Leninists to resolve this **ambiguous situation** through solidarity-based and critical support combined with consciousness-raising educational work. Only then can this struggle become part of a **truly society-changing environmental struggle**. Such an environmental struggle must be closely connected to the working class and recognize it as the leading force. The industrial workers have a society-changing position in the giant enterprises of the international supermonopolies, the main perpetrators of the global environmental catastrophe, a position they must also use for the urgently needed environmental struggle. The partly childish anarchist battles in Lützerath were gladly exploited by the bourgeois media, but at the same time they deter the broad masses from the environmental movement. Active resistance is urgently needed, but must never remain isolated from the masses and the working class and thus change its main thrust. The necessary society-changing character can only be a result of coping successfully with the most diverse forms of anticommunism and opportunism.

Rote Fahne: In any case, the question of violence is also on everyone's lips in view of New Year's Eve. What do you say to that?

Gabi Fechtner: We firmly reject this **manipulative reporting**. Not because we are uncritical of young people who unleash their senseless destructive rage even against rescue workers, paramedics or firefighters. But it is a red herring to portray migrant youths as the perpetrators of violence. Their violence only reflects the **tremendous escalation of violence in bourgeois society**. When ruthless warmongering is practiced around the clock, the excesses of violence in the Ukraine war are propagated uncritically, and the German armed forces extensively recruit youth to participate in war, they themselves lower the inhibition threshold for reactionary violence. On ZDF television it was lamented that in Berlin-Neukölln one has to deal with "parts of the population that are distanced from the state".⁶ This is the case, and this state has to blame itself first and foremost: with its policies for solely ruling international finance capital and against the working class, the broad masses and the future of their youth, as well as the racist discrimination against migrants institutionalized in parts of the state apparatus. Those in power push confrontations like the one in Lützerath or on New Year's Eve in order to advance the **fascistization of the state apparatus**. Why is the nationality of a perpetrator of violence always emphasized? The information content would be much higher if the news informed about the **class affiliation of warmongers** or the **ideologically fascist convictions** of the assassins, who are mostly downplayed as "confused individual perpetrators". It would then be easy to see that the greatest share of violence in the world comes from imperialist, reactionary and fascist forces.

Rote Fahne: Despite growing dissatisfaction with the government, the "hot autumn" feared by those in power has failed to materialize.

Gabi Fechtner: Indeed. But the government did not come out unscathed. Contrary to its initial assertions, it was forced to introduce the **biggest program of dampening measures** to date. These include the extension and increase in housing benefits, the so-called gas and electricity price brake, subsidies for energy-efficient renovation, one-off payments, etc. These measures are, of course, only a drop in the ocean and often a downright sham, especially since they also provided the monopolies with additional profits. Nevertheless, they helped to appease people for the time being. The fact that the government felt compelled to take such measures to dampen class contradictions shows its **pronounced political defensiveness**. The magic of the self-proclaimed "progress coalition" has now faded. In November, 66 percent of those surveyed said they were dissatisfied with the federal government's policies.⁷ However, the expectation that has arisen on various occasions that, in view of the crisis, developments in consciousness or struggles should go much faster is idealistic. Active resistance does **not simply** unfold **analogously to the intensification of the objective situation**. To process all the events with a proletarian class viewpoint, a **higher consciousness** is needed. This also includes overcoming a petty-bourgeois negativist mode of thinking that cultivates a general skepticism of humanity and its ability to take the struggle for its future into its own hands. This consciousness-raising is unspectacular and sometimes laborious, but it is also a great trump card of the MLPD in its systematic rank-and-file work.

Rote Fahne: For some people, it was surprising how the working class came on the scene last year. What role does it have in the society-changing struggle?

Gabi Fechtner: Despite record profits, the capitalists did not even make any serious offers at first in the collective bargaining rounds, instead relying on their crisis propaganda and betting on another zero round. The **workers offensively rejected this provocation**: in 2022 there were 1,448 trade union strike actions in Germany with 1.2 million participants, the highest number since 2018, as well as six independent strikes with 3,850 participants.⁸ Internationally, **workers** are also **the crucial backbone** in the unfolding struggles in Iran, France, Great Britain, Greece, Belgium and Italy – to name a few.

In the **metal industry collective bargaining** in Germany, 900,000 colleagues participated in militant warning strikes. Especially the militant elements therein were often influenced by MLPD members. The MLPD developed apt arguments for the full use of trade union fighting strength, against renunciation propaganda, and against any class conciliation. Karl Marx's slogan, "Abolition of the wages system!", although not yet uniformly shared, is increasingly a subject of obvious and interested debate. The capitalists had to meekly abandon their blockade attitude. However, the sudden wage agreement also offended the metalworkers. The **trade unions' fighting strength was not yet really deployed** and was reduced to warning strikes. A certain movement of criticism of the reformist agreement unfolded.

The **demand for a supplementary wage increase** has become a mass discussion in which the MLPD has played a considerable role. About a year ago, we had spread the topic ten thousand times at and in the largest companies in Germany with our brochure *Inflation Alarm*. In the run-up to the IG Metall collective bargaining, several bodies of shopfloor union representatives decided on wage demands in the double-digit range. There were a number of independent gatherings, smaller strikes and militant initiatives in companies or trade union bodies. The capitalists and the government had to respond to this. The so-called "**Concerted Action**" 2022 was intended to take the wind out of the sails of the workers' offensive demands by allowing relatively high tax-free one-off payments. Since then, various collective agreements have been interpreted with titles such as "inflation surcharge" as if the fight for a supplementary wage increase had been settled. But this neither compensates for inflation, nor does it settle the workers' unpaid bills. Apart from the economic side, the **fundamental importance of independent strikes also lies in their political character**. This is especially important at a time when the increasing militarization of society and the preparation for a world war make active resistance, especially by the working class, necessary.

An important **independent workers' struggle** is currently taking place at the automotive supplier and world market leader for aluminum wheel rims, **Borbet in Solingen**. **Class independence** was preserved and developed there. The workers did not make their struggle dependent on the leadership of the right-wing trade union leadership or works councils, but organized it independently against their swan song. There is also a close connection and a relationship of trust with the MLPD, and the workforce has to some extent overcome the **petty-bourgeois anti-communist mode of thinking**.

The workers elected an **independent fighting committee** in time before the struggle measures, which confers and decides democratically.

Such independent experiences of struggle are also important because we have to prepare ourselves for the fact that the monopolies **want to cut jobs massively** in the coming months. The 3,200 announced layoffs at Ford in Cologne, the reduction of thousands of jobs at Amazon, SAP or Twitter are a first omen of this.

Rote Fahne: There has not been such an inflationary trend since World War II as there was in 2022, with the government claiming it was “war-related inflation” for which Putin’s war of aggression is responsible.

Stefan Engel: It is quite a phenomenon that **inflation** skyrocketed with the global economic and financial crisis. It has usually been the case that an overproduction crisis is accompanied by **deflation**. In Germany, inflation officially rose to a rate of 7.9 percent in 2022; in real terms, it was between 15 and 20 percent for working-class families.⁹

The change has only indirectly something to do with the Ukraine war or the COVID-19 pandemic. In truth, it is a **speculation-driven inflation**, starting from the solely ruling international monopolies. They want to use speculation to secure their maximum profits even in times of economic crisis. Against this background, the measures taken by the government to counter this inflationary trend **largely come to nothing or even turn into the opposite**. Thus, with the so-called gas price brake, the state is even financing speculation with the taxes of the masses. By redistributing national income in favor of the monopolies and at the expense of the broad masses, the government is additionally contributing to the devaluation of wages and salaries.

Of course, this inflationary development also has negative consequences for imperialist society and the economy, because it unsettles the masses and turns them against the social conditions. Worryingly, Deutsche Bank CEO Christian Sewing warned as early as July 2022 that inflation was a “threat to social peace” and “poison for society”.¹⁰

Moreover, inflation also has a partly negative impact on production and trade, which is a major problem especially for the non-monopolist bourgeoisie and the self-employed petty bourgeoisie. Therefore, the imperialist governments try to exert a dampening effect on inflation, but without making the slightest attempt to counteract the cause, speculation by the international monopolies. The only thing left for the working class and the broad masses is the joint struggle for higher wages and salaries and for corresponding social gains.

Rote Fahne: If you believe the bourgeois narratives, the world economic and financial crisis is due to the Corona pandemic or the outbreak of war. How do you respond to this?

Gabi Fechtner: We have been in a full-fledged and cyclical global economic and financial crisis since the 3rd quarter of 2018 – long before the Ukraine war. This crisis reached the overwhelming majority of imperialist and capitalist countries in 2019. To date, leading imperialist and new-imperialist countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Japan, Brazil, South Africa, as well as the overall economy of the Eurozone or the group of G7 countries, have not recovered from it. In some cases their industrial production is still well below pre-crisis levels. The USA has only slightly exceeded this level. China’s industrial production is above the pre-crisis level. However, since the beginning of the

world economic and financial crisis its growth has tended to weaken significantly and is expected to reach its lowest level in decades in 2022.¹¹ The interaction with the Corona pandemic, the Ukraine war and the global economic war deepens the world economic and financial crisis, but is **not the cause**. On 25 January, the Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Habeck, presented the “Annual Economic Report 2023”, in which the government corrects its economic forecast for the third time in three quarters of a year. Habeck had, after all, already delivered a sample of his analytical skills a year ago. He predicted a turn toward a “social-ecological market economy”. The result is the extension of the operating times of nuclear and coal-fired power plants, the promotion of gas and oil extraction in Africa, the use of fracking gas from the U.S., and a relative and absolute poverty in Germany unprecedented in the post-war period! But Habeck’s ability is seen anyway mainly in philosophizing about his politics. **Cyclical overproduction crises are a law of capitalist production**. Even Habeck cannot argue that away!

Rote Fahne: In the midst of the crisis-ridden world situation, the 3rd International Conference of the militant and class-militant miners’ movement is to be held this time in Germany. What significance do you attach to this event?

Stefan Engel: With more than 20 million miners, the mine workers form the largest army of industrial workers in international production. As a rule, they are extraordinarily militant and radical, and thus have **outstanding significance for the development of the international class struggle**. Even though hard coal mining ended in Germany in 2018, there are still more than 50 different pits here. The largest group of miners today, apart from those employed in lignite mining, are the potash miners in northern Hesse, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia. In the Ore Mountains, in particular, old ore mines that were closed after reunification are currently being reopened in order to counteract the ever **scarcer global supplies of raw materials** (silicon, rare earths, etc.). The miners’ initiative “Kumpel für AUF” (Miners for AUF), in cooperation with various non-party self-run organizations of the masses, contributed significantly in 2013 to the successful founding of the “International Miners’ Coordination” (IMC) in Arequipa, Peru. The third congress is now to take place at the end of August in Thuringia, Germany. Politically, it must counter the growing **danger of a division in international working-class unity** against the background of the Ukraine war and the associated upsurge of social chauvinism and nationalism in the working-class movement. The MLPD is making the preparation and support of this miners’ event one of its **central tasks in 2023** and thus underlines its claim to be the sole representative of the miners in the conventional party landscape.

Rote Fahne: How does the recently held 4th plenum of the Central Committee assess the development of the MLPD, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year?

Gabi Fechtner: The 4th CC plenum delivered a positive summary of the MLPD’s development. Our three-day festivities of “40 years MLPD” in August left a deep impression on the around 3,000 attendees as well as on many online viewers – through its political meetings and by clarifying the role of theoretical work in the successful party building **against societal disorientation**; through its high cultural level and the optimism it

communicated, the honoring of pioneering comrades of outstanding merit, a varied presentation of the system of rank-and-file work of the party and the youth league *Rebell*/Red Foxes, and first-rate organizational work. The MLPD has consolidated its abilities to **move and lead masses**. With the publication of Nos. 36, *The Crisis of Bourgeois Ideology and of Anticommunism*, and 37, *The Crisis of Bourgeois Ideology and of Opportunism*, in the series *Revolutionärer Weg* we put essential fields of bourgeois ideology in the crosshairs. This did not lead to alienating allies, as some might have feared, but **expedited clarifying processes**. With an unparalleled country-wide system of study groups, indoor and also outdoor events, we organized small and large mass discussions on these publications. With more than 12,000 circulated copies of the brochure, *The Ukraine War and the Open Crisis of the Imperialist World System*, and 17,000 downloads of this text¹² we were able to contribute to consciousness building and exert an influence on democratic, antifascist, anti-militarist, and socialist people as never before.

We especially intend to strengthen **guidance, education and coaching** and assess these efforts more intensely in order to even better help our members understand the current crisis situation and gear their rank-and-file work to it in the factories, neighborhoods and universities.

Our **youth league *Rebell*** has developed some quality features that a mass youth league requires. They are, however, not yet the standard in the youth work of the party and of *Rebell*. The restrictions during the Covid pandemic plagued the youth work considerably. Group meetings of the Red Foxes, for instance, could not take place regularly. These negative effects must now be overcome step by step, and the road to a mass youth league must uncompromisingly be followed.

In all this, we must keep in mind that the **tightened action of those in power against the MLPD** is continuing. It started under the former Minister of the Interior, Seehofer, with the persecution of Stefan Engel and others as “dangerous militants,” with putting the party leadership on the wanted list, with the prohibition of events and banishment from halls, etc. Combined with this, the policy of the current federal government increasingly aims at driving the MLPD back into isolation. For this purpose outright smear campaigns against the MLPD are set off, goon squads are set on the MLPD, etc. The government is hoping to repel alliance partners and interested people with such measures. A nasty anticommunist court decision against the non-party-affiliated women’s association *Courage* states that in future everyone is to be persecuted who does no more than organize an information stand at an event in which the MLPD is present as well, or who holds a greeting address at one of the MLPD’s events. Such prying into people’s political beliefs is open anticommunist oppression!

At the same time, the **petty-bourgeois anticommunist mode of thinking** is **still the main impediment** for many people to permanent cooperation with the MLPD. In spite of all progress, the MLPD is still a relatively small force. One conclusion is to **lead the movement “Don’t give anticommunism a chance!” offensively**. That means not only to react when there are attacks, but to put the topic of the socialist perspective on the agenda by oneself. Above all, the **days of struggle and commemoration** of the revolutionary working-class movement are of great significance for this purpose; with them the strategic questions of the preparation of the international socialist revolution can be

discussed and processed in a cultured way. Such events and tasks are part of the **struggle of world outlooks**, which we absolutely must continue to intensify.

Rote Fahne: Why did you choose the topic “The Crisis of Bourgeois Natural Science” for the new book, No. 38 in the series *Revolutionärer Weg*, which is to appear in the next few days, and what is this book about?

Stefan Engel: In the last few years the masses have become more and more critical of the statements of politicians, industry representatives, or corporate spokespersons. **Natural science**, however, is still **considered neutral, committed only to the truth**, and **progressive in itself**. Thus it is a useful vehicle, especially in exacerbated crisis situations, for spreading the bourgeois ideology and regaining trust. It is not for nothing that in the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic a huge troop of virologists, epidemiologists, and physicians was mustered to convey that the situation is well looked after by the government.

Thousands of TV documentaries, blogs, magazines, and newspapers impart quite valuable, materialistic pieces of information. But each individual piece of information is also ideologically interpreted, brought into line with the bourgeois world view, and furnished with practical conclusions.

Far be it from us to condemn the natural sciences wholesale. On the contrary, this book is about **developing dialectical-materialist criticism of bourgeois natural science and thus rendering usable**, and maintaining, **all materialistic new insights for the working class and its allies**. This aspect of the ideological struggle is particularly important for the spreading of materialism among the working class. We will also encourage a systematic criticism of the bourgeois teaching content in schools and universities with it. Most of all, in this book **we defend scientifically founded materialism against its anti-science undermining by the pragmatic narrow-mindedness and the positivistic blinders of bourgeois ideology**. We thus pave the road for dialectical-materialist natural science as a fundamental part of scientific socialism.

We consciously made sure that the book does not wander off into an incomprehensible specialist debate, but really deals with the **questions of the masses**: polemically as ever we discuss the anticommunist thesis that humans are selfish by nature, the fantasies of the Big Bang and the black holes, or the idealist thesis that every mental health problem has a trauma as the underlying cause and the solution is to withdraw from social life. In many passages we point out the **perspectives of the natural sciences in a socialist society**, as far as this is possible today. Socialism will **lend wings to the natural sciences** if they turn back to **dialectical-materialist thinking** in the struggle against its anticommunist denigration and devote themselves uncompromisingly **to the service of the masses**. At the same time, this is an initiative to promote the youth work of the party – among the masses of the young people studying in universities and among the intellectuals working in science.

Rote Fahne: How are you going to spread and discuss the book?

Gabi Fechtner: We will sell this book broadly among workers, women and young people, read it together with them, and discuss it in numerous events. We will put a special focus

on going on the offensive with the **criticism of bourgeois natural science** and thus of the **teaching content** at universities and colleges. After all, there are three million students at German university-level institutions. Many of them study to be a doctor, engineer, or ecologist with the motive of contributing to social progress. Apart from events covering the complete book, the authors and contributors are planning to organize, together with progressive and rebellious students and lecturers, **discussions** in universities in the **respective faculties**, like physics, biology, psychology, etc. We will start a broad advertising campaign for reviews and for this purpose also approach science magazines, professors, and industrial workers. This book belongs in every university library!

Rote Fahne: What are the upcoming tasks of the editorial team *Revolutionärer Weg* in the next few years?

Stefan Engel: The completion of our polemical treatise, *The Crisis of Bourgeois Ideology, and the Doctrine of the Mode of Thinking*, in five volumes is currently in the focus. After the third volume, *The Crisis of Bourgeois Natural Science*, the two other volumes of this series under the titles, “The Crisis of Bourgeois Human Sciences and Culture” and “The Doctrine of the Mode of Thinking,” as well as the book, “On the Changes in the Imperialist World System,” are work in progress.

Simultaneously, for a considerable time a work group has been carrying out comprehensive analyses for the publication of “Some Biographical Reflections on Stalin”. In the next few months, however, we will first draw up a **special issue or supplementary volume to No. 35** of the *Revolutionärer Weg* series, ***Catastrophe Alert – What Is To Be Done Against the Willful Destruction of the Unity of Humanity and Nature?*** about the onset of the process of the global environmental catastrophe and the conclusions for the proletarian strategy and tactics in the environmental struggle.

In all this it is particularly essential to continue the **generation change in the editorial team *Revolutionärer Weg*** in a determined way in order to ensure a **solid theoretical foundation** also for the future development of party building and class struggle. Learning Marxist-Leninist theoretical work has to be done systematically. Therefore, one or another inevitable delay arises at times. But it is not rocket science, either, if you dedicate yourself to the task with discipline, proletarian ambition, and a proletarian style and method of work.

Rote Fahne: One gets the impression that the pack is being reshuffled in the international revolutionary movement. Is this process positive, or does it rather worry you?

Gabi Fechtner: It meanwhile becomes apparent that an outright process of reorientation and regrouping is in full swing in the international revolutionary and working-class movement. It was fueled by the crisis-prone nature of the imperialist world system and especially by the Ukraine war. Internationally we are witnessing a whole series of **splits and line struggles** in revolutionary organizations. This comes along with a clarification of the fronts – such as against modern revisionism, which has proceeded to the **open social-chauvinist apology of Russian imperialism**.

The changes in the imperialist world system exert an influence on the international process of clarification – either positively or negatively. Several revolutionary parties and

organizations fail to recognize the phenomenon of the **emergence of new-imperialist countries**, for instance, which leads to the result that some even take social-chauvinist positions toward imperialist countries. In this question a **new split in the international revolutionary and working-class movement can arise**, if we do not succeed in clarifying it positively.

A special feature of the MLPD is that we do systematic theoretical work and stay a bit ahead of the developments with our system *Revolutionärer Weg*. For us, too, this is an intensive process of discussion, but it is worthwhile, and no one can dispense with it today. This theoretical work gains widespread approval internationally and is perhaps our **most important contribution to the international class struggle**. There is a lively, driving discussion within the ICOR and with more and more revolutionary parties and organizations. The **ICOR** advocated **a clear position of proletarian internationalism at all times**. Also, the international antifascist and anti-imperialist **united front** is a great progress. It would be a somewhat peculiar limitation of this united front if we wanted to gear it only to the struggle of the oppressed peoples against the USA now. In fact, in the oppressed countries, too, the vast majority of which are capitalist countries themselves by now, class struggle is raging, there is a bourgeoisie that is closely linked with international finance capital, and the working class must have the leading role. Most of all, the imperialists mainly snatch their maximum profits away from each other today, which has resulted in a fierce competitive rivalry and a growing danger of world war.

Rote Fahne: Can you give us a brief outlook?

Gabi Fechtner: A genuine **“turning point in history” from capitalism to socialism** can never mature without the leading role of the Marxist-Leninists in ideological, political, and organizational respect, which has to manifest itself currently in comprehensive and intensive consciousness-building and organizing rank-and-file work. The role of the MLPD in society as a whole and of the ICOR on the world stage is more and more becoming a **crucial question of societal development**. Like Karl Marx said, the point is not only to interpret the world, but to change it. Proletarian internationalism is the guideline for the preparation and implementation of the international socialist revolution.

Workers of all countries, unite!

Workers of all countries and all oppressed, unite!

Rote Fahne: Thank you very much!

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⁷ <https://yougov.de/topics/politics/articles-reports/2022/11/11/sonntagsfrage-november-2022-unzufriedenheit-mit-de>

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⁹ www.destatis.de/DE/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2023/01/PD23_022_611.html, calculations by GSA

¹⁰ RND 4.7.22,

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¹¹ Calculations by GSA based on OECD figures; for China for 2022 based on the Chinese statistical office

¹² As of 3 Feb. 2023, incl. foreign language editions