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Whoever mastered the year 2010 is well prepared for 2011!

21 December 2010 - Red Flag interview with the Chairman of the MLPD, Stefan Engel

Red Flag: *Let us begin by looking back a bit.*

Stefan Engel: 2010 was a complicated, but also a **successful year** for us! Since September this development climaxed in five internationalist events. At the end of September the **Conference of Initiators** of the World Women's Conference met with representatives for the first time from four continents. Afterwards the **9th Women's Political Counsel** took place with participants from 33 countries. Here the course of the World Women's Conference in Venezuela was tested. At the beginning of October the **Founding Conference of ICOR** met. Under these impressions the following **10th International Conference** of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations was a very successful meeting with in-depth discussions and a huge step forward, in particular in the unification concerning the environmental issue. On 16 October the **7th central demonstration of the united Monday demonstrations** took place in Berlin with 7,000 participants. It was followed, also in Berlin, in the afternoon by an enthusiastic **international cultural festival** attended by 2,300 visitors and supported by 40 organizations from various countries. The MLPD participated actively in all these events and could contribute to their success.

Red Flag: *You have spoken of "a complicated year". Does this refer to the political development in view of the world economic and financial crisis?*

Stefan Engel: The world economic and financial crisis 2008, but already the crisis management since the Merkel/Steinmeier government in 2005, have created quite a number of new methods of rule and maneuvers which the masses cannot easily comprehend. This has limited the scope of our revolutionary work among the rank and file and was a great ideological-political and moral challenge for our comrades. By and large, the performance of the MLPD in one of the most complicated situations since the German reunification has been excellent. At the same time, those in power manifest their permanent incapacity to solve their problems. The propaganda of the Secretary of Trade and Commerce, Brüderle, of an "upswing XXL", which is supposed to boost hopes for the economic development is just ridiculous. However, the world economic and financial crisis is not at all over, even though in Germany a relative recovery and in some BRIC states (Brazil, Russia, India, China) even a real economic

recovery has taken place this year. Altogether the world economy in the second quarter of 2010 just reached the highest level of the economic development of 2005 and was about 7.7 percent below the level of the first quarter of 2008. All in all, the world economy is in a **stagnation** with much unevenness and many uncertainties that will have repercussions mainly on the financial sector. The internationally comprehensive crisis management in the years 2008/2009, which consumed an estimated amount of 27 trillion US dollars worldwide, has had exactly the effect that we predicted: It has brought a growing number of capitalist and imperialist countries to the brink of state bankruptcy. All this can lead to severe economic and financial disruptions, which can turn the stagnation into an economic crash again. It is an absurdity that the government is talking about a worldwide economic upswing and at the same time crisis-retarding measures are being taken by the state. A big problem for those in power is the fact that the **common** international crisis management that was brought under way by the G20 states in November 2008 **could be maintained for only about one year**. Then the contradictions and the competition among the capitalist and imperialist countries increasingly came to the fore again. Today it is hardly possible to attain a consensually effective solution on the international level. Every capitalist, every monopoly is first and foremost seeking to gain advantage from the development of the crisis and to harm the competitor. This can weaken the competitor and possibly the entire economic development. To give an all-clear or even to speak of a worldwide economic upswing is at the moment wishful thinking.

Red Flag: *What is the concrete prediction for the further development of the world economic and financial crisis?*

Stefan Engel: It is very difficult to make a concrete prediction, because quite a number of new phenomena, interrelations and factors have developed due to the reorganization of international production, which were and are not foreseeable. However, I still assume that we will experience a rather long phase of stagnation, in which there will be a decline in various countries; in other countries perhaps there will be tendencies of recovery or even tendencies toward an upswing. However, all this is accompanied by the latent danger of a renewed deep downturn in the entire world economy. In particular when the crisis-retarding measures no longer take effect and also when the state measures with a crisis-dampening effect are relatively exhausted.

Red Flag: *How is the Euro crisis to be evaluated in this context?*

Stefan Engel: At the beginning of the Euro crisis the small country of Greece, the state budget of which amounts to only four percent of the entire Euro zone, was still presented as a special problem which has a bad payment moral and has lived beyond its means. In the meantime, Ireland has been affected by this problem and people talk about an impending insolvency of the state budgets of Portugal, Spain, Italy and Belgium. It has become evident that the international crisis management could have a crisis dampening effect for a while and that it actually prevented an international financial collapse, but at the same time it seriously restricted the scope of action of the state budgets of almost all imperialist countries. In particular the more or less indebted countries now have enormous problems to pay back their debts. In some countries, as e.g. Japan, the state debt meanwhile significantly exceed the annual gross national product. For this reason the burdens of the crisis are being shifted onto the backs of the broad masses everywhere. This is sometimes being justified very differently, but is the common core of the so-called "austerity measures" which result in a sharpening of the class contradictions on the international level. That is playing with fire, because it aggravates the latent political crisis, triggers open political crises and has also led to a revival of the struggles of the working class, of active people's resistance and the rebellion of the youth. This is,

all in all, accompanied by a growing criticism of capitalism and the search for a societal alternative.

Red Flag: *When we look across the borders to France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal, but meanwhile also to Great Britain, we get the impression that the situation in Germany is still relatively calm.*

Stefan Engel: What we had analyzed at the beginning of the Euro crisis as a beginning **change of mood in Europe** has meanwhile further developed and led to a real revival of active people's resistance, the rebellion of the youth, but also of the struggles of the working class. Class consciousness is developing and the struggles are becoming more bitter. This has become especially evident in their main thrust being directed against the government, in their scope, but also in their identity with regard to their content. In various European countries we are experiencing general strikes and fierce struggles of the youth against the dismantling of

their educational opportunities. We are also experiencing a revival of the defense of the natural environment, because the shifting of the burdens of the crisis is accompanied by the restriction of the measures for the protection of the natural environment, which had been achieved in struggle, as they had been adopted before the crisis, even though these were completely insufficient. Presently, all this is boosting the destabilization in the imperialist countries. In Germany as well, this change of mood is a fact, even though it is not yet comparable with Italy, Greece or France regarding the dimensions and bitterness of the resulting struggles. The people's struggles in Germany have rapidly increased from 122,000 participants on the average in the period from January to August to 446,370 in September and 477,260 in October. The president of the Federal Association of German Industry (BDI), Keitel, moaned in his response to the question whether he is not exaggerating when he describes *"the resistance against 'Stuttgart 21' as symbol for the resistance against all technological progress"*: *"If it were an isolated case one could see it like that. However, massive resistance is rather the rule than the exception. Meanwhile there are protests and there is resistance everywhere in Germany, no matter which project is concerned ... The crisis has destroyed a lot of confidence, especially in the financial economy. This latent mistrust now penetrates all sectors of the economy."* (Frankfurter Rundschau, 15th October 2010)

Among the workers, as well, important struggles are developing against the shifting of the burdens of the crisis, the destruction of jobs or for the employment of trainees after having completed their training, as well as against the relocation of jobs to foreign countries. 163,000 workers participated in the autumn activities of the trade union against the governmental policy. The discontent is directed in particular against the **central points of the intensified exploitation:** the attempts at the further flexibilization of working hours, the extension of the regular working hours to the weekend, etc. There are naturally greater obstacles for setting off and waging workers' struggles than for organizing a demonstration in the streets in view of the enormously intensified exploitation in the enterprises, disciplinary measures, workplace bullying and the unrestricted crisis agreements of the right-wing trade union leadership. The fact that in Germany the struggles have not yet developed to such an extent as in some other European countries has something to do with the significant economic revival in Germany due to the high proportion of export which can benefit from the economic revival in particular of the BRIC states. Against this background the government does not take such radical action against the interests of the broad masses as e.g. in Italy, where 20 percent of the expenditures for education have been cut, or in other countries, where 15 to 20 percent of wage cuts for the employees in the public sector have been affected. But the situation in Germany will also be changing. The crisis development in other countries will be an immediate burden on the German state budget

and thus also limit the scope for crisis dampening measures, and the economic situation in Germany can change rapidly when the opportunities for export are restricted.

Red Flag: *We have clearly seen the maneuvers of the government, but also its vulnerability when the EU first had to give in for fear of the miners' struggles in Spain and Germany.*

Stefan Engel: That is right. In the summer the EU commission took the decision to phase out coal mining in Germany until 2014 by means of pit closures. This was made public among the miners with our support and the miners were mobilized for the struggle. The miners' union IG BCE and also the federal government could only calm down the fighting spirit of the workers by making great efforts and overturning the decision of the EU commission from June. Now coal will still be extracted until 2018. However, the EU commission has imposed that coal mining will finally be phased out until 2018 and during this period the exploitation of the miners shall be intensified. Time will show whether the plans for pit closures free of trouble will work in Germany.

Red Flag: *What do you think about the fact that the government again and again talks about the lowest unemployment rate in Germany since reunification?*

Stefan Engel: Here much effort and inventiveness is being applied in order to cover up the real extent of unemployment. The government refers to 41.09 million persons in gainful employment or 28.28 million workers and employees with social security - more than ever. However, what kind of employees are these people in reality? From January to June the number of employees with social security rose by 250,000. 120,000 of these were subcontracted jobs. That means that nearly every second new job has been occupied by a subcontracted worker. In the meantime, there are 900,000 subcontracted workers, 100,000 more than before the crisis. The enterprises also use the Hartz laws, which were introduced by the former SPD/Green government, in order to replace full-time jobs with part-time jobs. Today there is a volume of only 48 billion working hours compared to 52 billion working hours in the year 1991. That means that the **amount of work has definitely decreased** and not risen, as the employment figures may indicate. Apart from the statistical tricks we should not overlook the fact that the birth rate has fallen drastically as a consequence of the crisis of the bourgeois family system and that therefore 800,000 more older people have retired between 2005 and 2010 than young people have come into the work force. It may even be possible that in the next years there will be a labor shortage in certain sectors due to this development, also because many monopolies have further reduced their expenditures for training. This again is being used by the monopolies in industry as a welcome opportunity especially to recruit cheap labor from other EU countries, in particular in order to further lower the general wage level.

Red Flag: *Doesn't the right-wing trade union leadership play an obstructive role in the development of the workers' struggles?*

Stefan Engel: Undoubtedly. In contrast to other countries, especially the leaderships of the Metal Workers' Union and the Union of the Mining, Chemical and Energy Industry insistently stick to the policy of class collaboration with the government. You could clearly observe this in the activities of the trade unions at the beginning of November. In North Rhine-Westphalia the Federation of German Trade Unions hadn't even planned a mass demonstration. This was pushed through independently by militant shop stewards, representatives of works councils and trade union members in Dortmund. Until the very end the Metal Workers' Union was not ready to actively support this demonstration and mobilize for it. Nevertheless 5,000 people participated in this demonstration which was initiated to a large extent independently. In this context the **"Declaration of Dortmund"** is playing an important role. Meanwhile 10,000 trade union members, workers and employees have signed this platform and expressed their criticism of the policy of class

collaboration of the reformist trade union leadership. We welcome and support the spirit of the "Declaration of Dortmund", because it is a positive contribution to the mobilization of the trade union rank and file and will also prevent disappointed workers from drawing the wrong conclusions from the justified criticism of the trade union leadership. Many workers are turning their backs to the trade unions, because these do not struggle and because the workers again and again have the feeling they are being cheated.

Red Flag: *Is it a coincidence that the environmental issue is so much in the center of active people's resistance ?*

Stefan Engel: Not at all! Growing masses of people are more and more feeling the already **beginning change to a global environmental catastrophe** to be an existential threat . In Germany alone 400,000 people, among them many young people, have been taking part in protest actions against the nuclear policy since 24 April. The decision of the Federal Government to extend the operating time of the nuclear power stations was against the explicit will of the majority of 60 to 70 percent of the population. We see important beginnings for **a newly arising environmental movement involving a growing politicization and criticism of the system**. At the same time this is not yet the **international front of resistance** which is necessary to really enforce a change in this dramatic situation. At the present stage of capitalism, the reorganization of international production, **the destruction of the environment has changed from a concomitant to a new law-based phenomenon of imperialism**. That means that today the destruction of the environment is inseparably connected with the entire capitalist means of production and distribution . This problem can only be solved if imperialism is eliminated and replaced by socialism. That means that active people's resistance to save the natural environment has to combine more and more with the class struggle of the working class and its society-changing struggle for socialism. I see positive developments on an international level. I would like to emphasize especially the courageous appearance of the antiimperialist government of Bolivia at the UN climate summit in Cancún/Mexico. In opposition to the efforts of imperialist ecologism, it demanded resolute measures to save the natural environment at the expense of the imperialist countries and the rich monopolies, and thus quite rightly rejected the shabby final resolution despite fierce pressure .

Imperialist ecologism with its hypocritical slogan of "compatibility of economy and ecology" only uses the unquestionable fact of the advancing destruction of the environment to make a billions on it. Thus the governments of the imperialist countries, together with their monopolies, even claim to be in charge of the struggle against the destruction of the environment which they are mainly responsible for. This imperialist ecologism has an effect among the masses in form of a petty-bourgeois-ecological mode of thinking. Characteristic for this is the idea that the environment could be saved by mere education, thought-out alternative proposals and symbolic actions without having to basically change the economic and social conditions. This is often accompanied by a good deal of hostility towards the masses and anticommunism. It is essential to struggle over the mode of thinking of the masses so that the newly arising environmental movement will indeed become a sharp weapon and not once again appendage and electoral potential of one or another bourgeois party.

Red Flag: *What is the reason for the weakness of the international environmental movement?*

Stefan Engel: Grave shortcomings of the international Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary and workers' movement are also a root of this weakness. It dealt with the environmental issue as being secondary for a long time. Many organizations were hardly interested

in it, they dismissed it as a crazy petty-bourgeois idea and dealt one-sidedly only with the social issue. It is a welcome development that a self-critical and a forward-looking attitude in these existential issues was shown at the ICOR founding, as well as at the international conference of Marxist-Leninist parties. The ICOR called up to activities for an international day of struggle to save the environment on 4 December for the first time. Of course this was only a beginning and too shortly after the ICOR founding to already become a resounding international mass movement. It is obvious, however, that a clear course is developing in the international Marxist-Leninist and working-class movement and the environmental issue is declared to be the most important issue along with the social issue.

In the MLPD there is also a tendency to underestimate the environmental issue although the MLPD more or less has been taking part in the environmental movement for years.

The fact that the all-around destruction of the foundations of life and especially the climate

catastrophe is **not directly visible or noticeable** means **a high demand for class and environmental consciousness**. The rise in temperature of the atmosphere as a result of the CO2 emissions will only occur decades later. Imperialist ecologism uses this fact to play down the drama of the situation and to prevent necessary measures like the reduction of the CO2 emissions by 70 to 90 percent like at the climate summit of Cancún.

The problem in our work is also related to economistic tendencies in our political work in factories and trade unions handling one-sidedly the wage and working conditions and tending towards leaving aside the entire vital questions. We will discuss this thoroughly in our party in the coming time and urgently launch a change. What was done by our party on 4 December was, compared to the dimensions of the problem, not satisfying, although there were increasing activities.

Red Flag: *One gets the impression that the Federal Government is just trying to put its mission in Afghanistan into a better light.*

Stefan Engel: That is obvious and also seems to be necessary. Two thirds of the population still disapprove of the mission abroad of the Federal Army in Afghanistan. Nobody believes the government any longer that it is not about active participation of the Federal Army in a war. Accordingly Guttenberg and Merkel openly have been talking about a participation in a “war”. They try to manage a change of mood in their sense with different media-engineered visits and Merkel’s comment that the Federal Army is also protecting the safety of the population in Germany. At the same time the Federal Army is being re-equipped as a professional army. An army with persons drafted for military service is not suitable to lead imperialist wars of intervention. Merkel made clear at her last visit to Afghanistan that the withdrawal of the troops from Afghanistan, which has been promised the whole time to calm down the population in Germany, would only take place if the situation allows it. What they are aiming at is to continue and even extend the Afghanistan war through the Federal Army.

It remains an important task for our rank-and-file work to mobilize against this imperialist war policy and to enlighten the people about the true imperialist character of the war. After all, there are substantial deposits of raw materials and energy in Afghanistan that are becoming of more and more importance for the imperialist economy in the future.

Red Flag: *Despite a clear revival in the economy and a numerical decline in unemployment one does not get the impression of a stable government.*

Stefan Engel: On the contrary, this year a number of noted standard-bearers of the Federal Government like Koch, Rüttgers or Ole von Beust made themselves scarce. The government appears to be in a disastrous state. After its flight the FDP is at the lowest point in decades in the opinion polls. But also the SPD can hardly benefit from this

bad reputation of the government. It is stagnating at about the same level it had in the national elections. Above all the Greens are benefiting from this situation, changing their appearance clearly toward the left in order to take advantage of the trend to the left. Compared to that, the Left Party has a miserable appearance. In opinion polls it is far away from maintaining its election results and fulfilling the hopes pinned on it. The extension of the detachment process of the masses from the bourgeois parties, from bourgeois parliamentarism and its institutions also shows how deep the discontent among the masses is and how little the ruling powers have access to the thoughts, feelings and actions of the masses. The more important it is, notwithstanding all difficulties, to strengthen the revolutionary direction in the trend to the left with a clear perspective of socialism. This is only possible if the Marxist-Leninists themselves have a clear orientation in all ups and downs of the complicated development and impart this to the masses

patiently and convincingly. The MLPD managed this challenge successfully in 2010. It is of special significance that the MLPD and REBELL successfully carried out a criticism-selfcriticism-campaign on youth work. REBELL and Red Foxes have clearly gained an attractive profile! **Red Flag:** *For this reason the ruling powers give all the more weight to the destructive method of anti-communism in order to keep the masses from turning to a socialist alternative.* **Stefan Engel:** Less than ever can the general crisis-proneness of the imperialist world system win the masses over for the capitalist way. For the ruling powers the growing discontent brings about the danger that the struggles of the working class will develop into class struggle in its true sense and that a revolutionization of the workers' movement will take place. This is systematically encountered by the ruling powers with anti-communism of various colors. So, for example, the conference of the Secretaries of the Interior in autumn 2010 in Hamburg discussed concepts against the so-called "violence-oriented left extremism" and drew up plans for a European file "endangerers from the left". This repressive action is accompanied by secret service informers like professor Eckhard Jesse from Chemnitz. He is presently traveling around the country with the thesis that the MLPD belongs to the "hard extremists" in Germany, so obviously to prepare more vigorous action against us in public. The problem of taking more vigorous action against the MLPD in public is that it does not fit in with decades of the politics of political isolation, of keeping the MLPD out of the media and the public in order to let sleeping dogs lie. Apparently the ruling powers presume that these politics of political isolation at some time will no longer have the necessary success in suppressing and discriminating the MLPD. This seems to be the perspective content of such activities like those of Professor Jesse or of the secret service. In any case we have to intensify our revolutionary vigilance against sharper attacks by the state apparatus, against different provocations and anti-communism as well. It is apparent that presently something is going on with regard to the **fascization of the state apparatus**. The planned merger of the Federal Criminal Agency (BKA) with the federal police is a further step to overcome the division between secret service activity and police activity, and it is justified especially with the struggle against the inner enemy, the so-called danger of "terrorism". The working class must get clear about the fact that this fascization of the state apparatus in the first place means preventive measures to suppress a revolutionary higher development of class struggle. An illustrative example was the aggressive state repression of the self-organized strike of the airport controllers in Spain two weeks ago. The social-democratic Spanish government immediately declared a state of emergency, put the work of the airport controllers under military control and brutally suppressed the strike. This shows how little interest the ruling powers have in bourgeois-democratic rights and liberties as soon as their interests are seriously

threatened or when even danger for the further existence of the capitalist societal order is on the march.

Red Flag: *There is certainly a connection to the intensified appearance of so-called "rightwing populist" parties in imperialist countries.*

Stefan Engel: First of all I want to say something about the term "right-wing populism". This term wrongly suggests that these reactionary politics are coming from the masses and that certain parties are serving this reactionary conviction of the masses to gain votes in the elections. In reality it is just the opposite. These fascistic, extremely reactionary parties and movements appeal in part skillfully to the anger among the masses, for instance against mass unemployment or against the dismantling of social rights and, at the same time, stir up prejudices against migrants, other cultures and naturally the communists and the "terrorists". Different from the openly fascist and neofascist forces, these parties are extremely skillful and correspondingly get room in the mass media to spread their reactionary ideas. This goes as far as some of these forces being outright products of the mass media, like the organization of Wilders from the Netherlands, who is apparently purely a product of the media and does not even have any real party. This development in Europe has already lead to such forces participating in some governments or that governments at least have formed coalitions with such parties. This applies to the Netherlands, Denmark, some countries in Eastern Europe or Italy and Belgium, too. We must not underestimate such new forms of demagogic, ultra-reactionary and fascistic influence among the masses. It divides the working class and intentionally diverts from the standpoint of the working class and stirs up nationalistic, religious, cultural and anti-communist prejudices. It can acutally gain influence among people with a low class consciousness. But you cannot fight these parties exactly like the open fascists; most of all, you have to intensify educational work and use the struggle against these parties to raise class consciousness.

Red Flag: *What changes will the founding of the ICOR bring for the work of the MLPD by its having become a member in the new international organization?*

Stefan Engel: With the decline of the old communist movement starting with the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union since the 20th

Party Congress of the CPSU in 1956, the working- class movement has witnessed decades of fragmentation, splits and suffering. In the last two decades many efforts have been made by the various revolutionary organizations and parties to overcome this decline and step by step come to a unification of the international MarxistLeninist and working-class movement. With the founding of the ICOR as a revolutionary world organization on 6 October 2010, the international revolutionary forces have made a significant step ahead in accelerating the development of the **subjective preconditions for the victorious worldwide struggle of liberation to overcome the imperialist world system and for socialism**. For the first time in its history, the MLPD is together with 40 other revolutionary parties and organizations in a **common and international revolutionary organization**. With the founding of ICOR our entire work gets a new point of reference of the preparation of the international socialist revolution in theory and practice. That makes it necessary **to think over all tasks anew**. The 5th

CC plenum arrived at the conclusion that to bring about the new quality of proletarian internationalism **a new orientation of the criticismself-criticism movement of the MLPD on the way to the party of the masses** is needed. This new orientation will be the **essential guideline in the preparation of the 9th**

Party Congress of the MLPD in 2012.

Red Flag: *In the documents of the founding of the ICOR it was striking that unity was reached there on the slogan "Workers of all countries, unite ! Workers of all countries and oppressed peoples, unite !" Didn't the MLPD, when it was founded in 1982, hold the view not to put up the slogan "Workers of all countries and oppressed peoples, unite" any longer?*

Stefan Engel: The discussion about the appropriate slogan could not be led at the founding conference of the ICOR. Therefore it was possible to unite about this compromise and postpone the discussion about it to a later time. All attending organizations are united in the view that the slogan has to be aimed against the imperialist world system and has to bring about the revolutionary overthrow of the existing relations. So it was a decision which is supported wholeheartedly by the MLPD as well and which expresses the level of the discussion and the unification so far. The general guideline of proletarian internationalism and of Karl Marx is and continues to be: "Workers of all countries, unite!" At the time of the rise of imperialism and the colonial system the Comintern added the coalition slogan "Workers of all countries and oppressed peoples, unite! It was necessary to make clear that in the preparation of the proletarian revolution against the imperialist world system the working class will have its decisive ally in the liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples. Today there are still such oppressed countries and nations, as well as progressive governments in neocolonially dependent countries, which can be supported by the working class without restriction. Therefore the alliance slogan put up by the Comintern still has a certain justification. But now only for a minority of countries. Most of the neocolonially dependent countries presently have a distinctive class division. Their governments are direct allies of the imperialists and very closely connected to the imperialist countries. The imperialist bourgeoisie in many neocolonial countries has brought about monopolies which are cooperating with the imperialist countries. This especially applies to those countries which are the main fields of investment for international finance capital. Here even imperialist tendencies have developed, especially in Brazil, India or South Korea. We have to take these changes exactly into account. It goes without saying that there can not be a coalition of the working class with the reactionary governments of these countries. According to the Marxist-Leninist definition, a people or a nation embraces all classes and because of that a coalition of the working class simply with the "peoples" cannot be formed. However, the Central Committee still has the opinion that the working class needs a **generally valid alliance slogan** to express that the proletariat can not struggle against imperialism and be victorious on its own. Therefore at its last plenum it has decided to take on, in addition to "Workers of all countries, unite!", the slogan **"Workers of all countries and all oppressed, unite !"** in the future. **The majority of humanity today is oppressed in one way or another.** This applies to the masses of women; this applies to the discriminated working migrants; this applies to the more than one billion people hungering in the world; this applies to many millions of young people who are robbed of their future; this applies to the masses of people fleeing from the destruction of the environment, but also those who are oppressed by imperialism and fascist terror. The working class has to unite with all of these "oppressed" on the basis of the struggle against imperialism and has to put forward its leading role.

Red Flag: *Which social role do the 100th International Women's Day on 8th March 2011 and the World Women's Conference in Venezuela have?*

Stefan Engel: I still have in mind how the former main representative of the petty-bourgeois women's movement, Alice Schwarzer, demanded quite seriously on March 8

that the International Women's Day be abolished because of its roots in the socialist women's movement. This demand expresses the fact that petty-bourgeois feminism has long been socially institutionalized in order to undermine an independent movement for the liberation of women. The 8th March 2011 and the preparation for the World Women's Conference, however, signalize a **new women's political consciousness** which has to be promoted universally by the revolutionary working-class and people's movement. The problems of the double exploitation and oppression of the masses of women are an integral component of the mechanism of the imperialist world system. A liberation of the working class from the system of wage labor without the liberation of women is inconceivable. With the world economic and financial crisis the crisis of the bourgeois family system has been intensified. Almost all imperialist countries are complaining about a massive decline of the birth rate, which seriously calls into question the sufficient production and reproduction of human labor. The World Women's Conference of rank-and-file women is also a project of the internationalization of the militant mass movements which signify an answer to the reorganization of international production. It is also expressly supported by the Founding Conference of ICOR. What matters here is less the fact that some people are going to Venezuela, than that the struggle for the liberation of women has to be raised to a higher level in accordance with the new conditions. 100 years ago, when the International Women's Day was launched, the issue of women's suffrage and the demand for women's rights were in the forefront. Today the task of the international militant women's movement has become much more comprehensive, fundamental and universal. Therefore, the World Women's Conference has to send out a **signal for the struggle for the liberation of women in the 21st century!** I can well imagine that the women will decide in their general assembly that in future the women's movement will cooperate more closely and in a more organized form worldwide. The MLPD wholeheartedly supports the World Women's Conference. However, it holds the view that this activity mainly has to be used to give new impetus to the militant women's movement in the individual countries. There are sufficient world women's meetings which produce little apart from discussions. This World Women's Conference has to exert a **lasting effect**. This is the decisive criterion for its success.

***Red Flag:** We are, of course, very curious about the progress of the new REVOLUTIONÄRER WEG (Revolutionary Way)*

Stefan Engel: The central committee has worked intensively on this new book during the last months. Almost eight years after the publication of "Twilight of the Gods - Götterdämmerung over the 'New World Order'" with the analysis of the reorganization of international production now the conclusions have matured which have to be drawn from it for the Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics. This urgently needed further development of the Marxist-Leninist strategy and tactics for the preparation of the international proletarian revolution has also matured in the interrelation with the systematic cooperation in the international Marxist-Leninist and working-class movement. In particular the founding of ICOR and the elaboration of this REVOLUTIONARY WAY have interpenetrated and stimulated each other very much. Despite all the differences in the class struggles in the individual countries, the international proletariat needs the **common point of reference of the international socialist revolution** in the alliance with all the oppressed people. The coordination and revolutionization of the class struggle has to unite the progressive, democratic and revolutionary mass movements and organizations to an internationally superior power to defeat the imperialist world system. The concrete economic, social and political conditions in every country have to be taken into consideration in the respective strategy and tactics in the same way as the general reference to the international revolution. Thus the international proletarian strategy

and tactics manifests itself as a **concert of diverse concrete proletarian strategies and tactics** of the revolutionary working-class parties in the respective countries. It is foreseeable that this issue of the REVOLUTIONARY WAY can be published in the new year. It will become the ideologicalpolitical basis for a strategy discussion in the entire party and hopefully also give some impetus to the international Marxist-Leninist, revolutionary and working-class movement.

***Red Flag:** Do you want to say anything regarding the year 2011 at the end?*

Stefan Engel: I am firmly convinced that the year 2011 will bring about a further selftransformation of the party and its members, which will enhance the attraction of the revolutionary party of the working class in Germany - the MLPD - and deepen its relations to the international Marxist-Leninist and revolutionary working-class movement. The active participation in the state elections in Saxony-Anhalt will also contribute to this. Our comrades have achieved a great deal in the last years. Whoever has persevered and mastered the year 2010 has an excellent basis for 2011. I wish all members of the MLPD, Rebell and Red Foxes, as well as the readers of the "Red Flag", happy holidays. Best wishes for all of us and inviolable solidarity for the year 2011!

***Red Flag:** Thank you for the interview!*