

# UNITY & STRUGGLE

International Conference of Marxist - Leninist Parties and Organisations

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**Turkey** Disintegration in the Middle East

**Venezuela** Study of Capital

**No. 29 - SPRING / SUMMER 2015**



*Workers of all countries, unite!*

## **Unity & Struggle**

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# **Unity & Struggle**

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# ICMLPO

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*International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations*

## STATEMENT OF THE PLENARY OF THE ICMLPO

**Turkey, November 2014**

### **Twenty years on the road of struggle and unity for the Revolution and Socialism**

#### **I**

The Plenary session of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO) to mark its 20th anniversary, met in Turkey to discuss important issues of the international situation, of political work, of the question of the Popular Front, and of the orientation for activity with working and communist women in their respective countries.

The meeting emphasized the commitment to continue the struggle against capitalism, imperialism and the international bourgeoisie, and adopted decisions on the current situation of the class struggle in the world and the tasks of the working class.

The plenary of the ICMLPO denounces all forms of injustice, reduction and freezing of

wages, the policy of the imperialist monopolies and their governments, the accumulation of capital on the basis of imposing more taxes and raising the prices of goods and services, policies that are provoking rebellion and struggles of the working class and the peoples.

#### **II**

The defenders of the capitalist-imperialist system launched the idea that a democratic and prosperous world, without crises and wars, was possible. They claimed that capitalism was the only way to achieve the objectives and aspirations of the peoples. However, undisputable facts show, once again, that capitalism cannot provide any better future for the working class, the workers and the peoples.

The productive forces, industrial production and services are developing constantly. The development of these productive forces

can no longer be contained within the framework of the capitalist relations of production. At present, the level of the contradiction between socialized production and capitalist appropriation of the means of production surpasses all previous times in history. Finance capital, which imposes parasitism and corruption that generate super-profits in the capitalist metropolises has developed and spread to the farthest corners of the world.

Outsourcing and fragmentation of the time and place of the labor processes and flexible working hours have become general. However, they have imposed disorganization, low wages, primitive conditions of work, unemployment and layoffs that are increasing; capitalist exploitation is growing. The intensification of exploitation and the profits of monopoly capital, the worsening of working and living conditions, are the main factor of the contradiction between labor and capital.

The development of capitalism means poverty alongside wealth and increased inequality in distribution. Impoverishment and misery are spreading. Even in the developed capitalist countries of Europe, the number of homeless families is increasing, begging is spreading and the search for food thrown away in garbage cans is becoming usual. Hunger has spread to other places, beyond the regions of endemic drought and famine in Africa.

As a consequence of capitalism the deterioration and exploitation of the environment is becoming so serious that it cannot be ignored: soil erosion, water and air pollution, the destruction of nature by the unbridled pursuit of profit, has reached high levels, has caused major climate changes that threaten the future

of human beings and other living species.

The inter-imperialist contradictions and competition are leading to a renewal of economic and commercial alliances which constitute a new offensive against the living standards of the workers and peoples. Agreements such as the Asia-Pacific bloc, the BRICS under the leadership of China and Russia, the Free Trade Agreement between the United States and the European Union, are part of the effort of the imperialists and bourgeois governments to seek new areas of influence for their capital and to further exploit the working class and increase the oppression of the peoples.

The capitalist crisis that broke out in 2008, which began in the US, affected all countries. It destroyed productive forces. The imperialist and capitalist countries through their governments initiated a policy of corporate bailout using billions of dollars and euros for this purpose. These funds were taken from the public treasury, from the workers and peoples through taxes; they led to a reduction in wages, to unemployment and cuts to social security among other measures. Thus the bourgeoisie has shown once again its hostile and contemptuous attitude to the working classes. In various countries, more than 10 million workers were made unemployed; their salaries were reduced to as little as one third; their retirement age was increased; their pensions were drastically decreased.

All this shows that capitalism lacks a humane conscience. While the centralization of capital increases, the full weight of the crisis lies on the workers and oppressed peoples, with very severe results, particularly in unemployment, among the women and youth.



### III

The economies of the US and some European countries, where a process of relative recovery and revival began in 2009, have failed to maintain this; now signs of a new crisis are arising. The debts incurred by the States to carry out the bailouts of corporations in 2008 represent a heavy burden on the economies of the capitalist countries. Except for China, all the countries are in debt.

Currently, one sees a decline in growth rates and also signs of recession. Moreover, the economies of several countries are showing a negative growth.

The figures for unemployment and poverty are alarming. According to data of the International Labor Organization, there are 202 million unemployed worldwide. Poverty rates for 2013 show that there are 1,000 million people whose daily income is less than \$1 while 2,800 million people have daily incomes of less than \$2.

There are 448 million malnourished children; each day 30,000 children die from lack of treatment for curable diseases.

Emigration has reached unprecedented levels. Hoping to reach the developed countries, to achieve a better life, a job to earn a living, millions of people emigrate from the dependent countries, where there is poverty caused by imperialist plunder and where regional wars persist.

A large number of these people (including women and children) die before they get where they wanted to go. Those who do make it become victims of discrimination, racist and xenophobic attacks, of the most precarious conditions of work with the lowest wages.

### IV

The contradictions among the imperialists are sharpening and inter-imperialist contention is growing.

The claims of those who advocate "globalization," based on manipulating the development of the trend towards integration of the world economy, say that "the old imperialism no longer exists," that "the analysis of imperialism is obsolete, surpassed." All this is nothing but propaganda of the imperialists themselves.

The hegemony of finance capital, whose networks continue to expand worldwide, financial speculation for the purpose of the monopoly looting, including the maximum advantage of state resources, are real and its existence needs no proof.

On the one hand, the number of millionaires is increasing daily, as are the profits of the monopolies and investment banks. On the other hand, the working masses and workers are growing constantly, but their working conditions are worsening and their poverty is deepening. These are also facts that do not need proof.

The regional wars and imperialist interventions are continuing; the contradictions and struggle for hegemony among the imperialist states are sharpening. One cannot say that the reactionary bourgeois and imperialist states only act outside their country, only through expansion, without recognizing the consolidation of the "home front"; the expansion of imperialism is also carried out through the exploitation of the working class in their own countries.

After the defeat of the workers' movement

and the demise of socialism, the world has become a place for bourgeois political relations, a completely reactionary world.

The norms of the so-called "welfare state" were considered unnecessary and rapidly "neoliberal" political measures were applied. The bourgeoisie, with its triumph over and disorganization of the workers' movement, is carrying out an increasingly reactionary offensive in all countries.

Bourgeois democracy, whose duplicity and formal nature is undisputable on the issue of equality and freedom, has become even more reactionary with the "neoliberal process."

Reaction is attacking all ideological, political, cultural, moral and legal spheres. The growth of conservatism together with medieval "values" is the defining feature of current development. Organizations such as Al Qaeda and the Islamic State, which have become strengthened under these circumstances, have become useful tools of the international bourgeoisie and imperialism.

Imperialism and financial capital support this reaction, particularly in its medieval form, and are making it into the fundamental basis of their hegemony. Even the capitalist countries where bourgeois democracy is relatively advanced are showing fascist trends and a police state. In recent times, there have been the lessons learned by events in Ukraine, which highlight the limits of bourgeois democracy.

In Ukraine, a center of conflicts between the imperialist powers, the developed capitalist countries that were considered the "cradle of advanced democracy" have no qualms about openly supporting neo-Nazi and fascist forces.

## V

The struggle of the workers and peoples is the other side of the coin.

The anger and discontent, accumulated due to the cruelty of the socio-economic offensive of monopoly reaction, has provoked popular uprisings and mass struggles. The last years are filled with examples of popular movements that emerged in response to the offensive of reaction, of the international bourgeoisie and imperialism.

These popular demonstrations, strikes and massive protests, the uprisings and rebellions, although they have not yet managed to undermine the reaction of the bourgeoisie, show the prospects for development in the near future.

In the Middle East, divided by artificial borders by imperialism and its allies, which do not recognize the right of self-determination of the peoples, the "status" formulated one hundred years ago is disintegrating.

Syria, a country that has lost its territorial integrity, is seeking its future with the end of the civil war. Clearly, Iraq, a country that has never become firmly organized and integrated, influenced by the Syrian civil war, cannot continue as it has until today. The future of this country will be determined by the struggle of the Iraqi people of all faiths and nationalities, who have been dragged into conflicts and sectorial and ethnic divisions.

The future of Egypt is linked to the outcome of the struggle between the people and national and international reaction.

The Kurdish people have taken important steps to determine their own future, establishing democratic mandates in three cantons; joining with the nations of Rojava (Western Kurdistan).

The struggle of the Palestinian people for self-determination and to organize themselves as a state is continuing despite the Israeli Zionist offensive.

Strikes and protests in Spain, South Africa, Portugal, Belgium, Italy and France, have emerged as new and dynamic subjects of the struggle.

In Tunisia, the struggle for rights and freedoms is growing and the Popular Front is being strengthened.

The people of Burkina Faso are carrying out a revolutionary struggle to take their future into their own hands, defeating one dictatorship after another.

In the Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa, the peoples are fighting against religious reaction and the governments allied to imperialism.

In Turkey, the resistance of Gezi in June, in Taksim; in Brazil the protests against rising fares; in Chile the student demonstrations have increased the confidence of young people in themselves; they are demanding democracy and freedom.

The struggles that emerged in Latin America, particularly in Mexico, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic, are being strengthened.

In the popular resistance and mobilizations that are taking place in these countries, the mass participation and attitude of resistance of the workers stands out. This also shows concretely the determining role of women in the advance of the struggle of the working class and peoples.

## VI

Clearly these demonstrations, resistance and strikes are a source of hope in the struggle

of the working class and peoples. However, the massive mobilizations of the workers and peoples also have the weakness of the lack of organization and consciousness, and on the vanguard level the participation of the working class as an independent class.

In recent years the popular demonstrations show that we have not yet overcome the disorganization caused by the defeat suffered by the working class.

Our immediate and concrete task is to change this situation. The disorganized demonstrations can not have a definitive success without a revolutionary program with independent demands, although they may achieve some advances over bourgeois reaction.

On this issue the responsibility belongs to our parties and our organizations. To increase our numbers among the workers and laboring people; to recognize the immediate democratic and economic demands and link the fight to the victory of the revolution and socialism; this is the only way. The objective conditions for socialism are more mature than ever; however, these demand in an unquestionable way the unity and organization of the working class and laboring people.

## VII

Today, just as yesterday, the revolution necessitates strategic alliances. Class alliances built in action, that correspond to the practical political needs of the struggle, in various forms. The working class, the laboring and oppressed peoples, are advancing in their struggle to repel the attacks by building partial and temporary alliances. What is fundamental is to build these alliances around programs of struggle that include concrete and immediate de-

mands of the working class and oppressed peoples. The present task of achieving unity, alliances, of building Popular Fronts, is inevitable, as were the united fronts against fascism in the past.

This is especially important in order to increase the political and ideological power of the working class and of our parties, and to create and develop popular organizations that advance the wheel of history.

### VIII

There are countries in which the ideologues and spokespersons of the opportunist and revisionist parties and organizations invent "new" ideas and proclamations every day and try to distort the class struggle.

In Brazil, the social democratic government, in Spain Podemos [We Can], in Greece the "left" of Syriza, etc. are current examples. On the other hand, the "progressive" governments are becoming worn out, they are losing ground and prestige in Latin America.

Once again events show that reformism and liberalism have nothing to give the working class and the peoples.

Another mystification is the supposed progressive nature of Russian and Chinese imperialism as opposed to United States imperialism and its Western partners; this falls under its own weight, since their confrontations correspond to the preservation and expansion of their own interests. This is nothing more than embellishing bourgeois reaction and imperialist capitalism.

### IX

The present events confirm that the class struggle is the motive force of history, that the working class is the fundamental force and the vanguard of the revolution and socialism.

That is why we call on the workers and peoples of all countries, on the youths, the progressive scientists and intellectuals of the world to unite and raise higher the fight against the international bourgeoisie, reaction and imperialism.

In this process, the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations will assume all its responsibilities and fulfill its necessary tasks.

*ICMLPO, Turkey, November 2014*

Communist Party of Benin  
 Revolutionary CP – Brazil  
 Revolutionary CP of Volta (Burkina Faso)  
 CP of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist)  
 Workers' CP of Denmark  
 CP of Labor of the Dominican Republic  
 Marxist-Leninist CP of Ecuador  
 CP of the Workers of France  
 Organization for the Construction of the  
 Communist Workers' Party of Germany  
 Movement for the Reorganization of the  
 KKE (1918-1955) of Greece  
 Revolutionary Democracy Org. of India  
 Party of Labor of Iran (Toufan)  
 Communist Platform of Italy  
 CP of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist)  
 Democratic Way of Morocco  
 Workers Front of Pakistan  
 Peruvian CP (Marxist-Leninist)  
 CP of Spain (Marxist-Leninist)  
 Workers' Party of Tunisia  
 Labor Party of Turkey  
 Marxist-Leninist CPy of Venezuela

## BRAZIL

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*Revolutionary Communist Party (PCR)*

### Why does Israel massacre the Palestinian people?

*Luiz Falcao*

The terrorist offensive of the Israeli government has no limits: this July and August, hundreds of sea, land and air attacks with phosphorous and fragmentation bombs were carried out in the Gaza Strip, killing more than 2,000 Palestinians, the vast majority of them civilians. The Palestinians have no army, unlike the State of Israel, which has one of the 10 most powerful armies in the world, with 160,000 soldiers, as well as submarines, modern tanks, bombs of all kinds and about 400 nuclear weapons.

The result of these cowardly Israeli bombings are hundreds of children killed and thousands with legs or arms amputated. One of these attacks was on the Abu Hussein School of the United Nations, in the early morning of July 30, killing 21 children while they were

asleep. The school was bombed despite the fact that the UN reported to Israel 17 times that its 83 schools in Gaza accepted only civilians. Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) stated after these deaths: “Last night, children were killed while they were sleeping next to their parents on the floor of a classroom in a UN refuge in Gaza. The children were killed as they slept; that is an affront to all of us, a source of shame.” That same day, more Israeli missiles attacked another UN school and a public market in Sejaiya.

Just a few hours after the massacre, the US confirmed the delivery of heavy artillery such as grenade launchers and 120-mm mortars to Israel.

Up to the beginning of August, more than 400 Palestinian children had been killed and 9,000 seriously wounded. Every day, more bodies are found in the rubble of buildings and houses, schools and hospitals destroyed by Israel.

But why does Israel carry out this blood-bath in the narrow Gaza Strip, where 1.6 million Palestinians live?

There is no doubt that Israel hates Arabs peoples, particularly the Palestinians. It knows that it has a military power infinitely superior to that of the Palestinians and has the support of the imperialist countries, particularly the US, which provides weapons and billions of dollars to promote the killing of Palestinians in the Middle East. From 2009 to 2018, the US gave \$30 billion dollars in military aid to Israel.

Israel is strictly following the Nazi ideology that a lie repeated a thousand times becomes the “truth”. It counts on the complicity of the mass media of the world bourgeoisie, which repeats ad nauseam the Israeli lies as if they were facts.

### **Who are the terrorists?**

Who does not remember Israel saying that as long as Yasser Arafat was alive there would be no peace between Israelis and Palestinians, since Arafat was a terrorist? However, when Arafat’s body was exhumed in 2012, it was proved that he had died of poison. In January 2013, Shimon Peres, then president of Israel, confirmed that Zionist agents had killed the Palestinian leader.

Today, Israel says that as long as Hamas exists and continues governing the Gaza Strip

there will be no peace, because Hamas is terrorist. But who bombs schools and markets and kills sleeping children in the UN school?

Israel is also attacking the Palestinian people in the West Bank, where the government is led by the moderate Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian National Authority, and it is building more settlements there. As the Israeli government statistics show, the building of Israeli settlements on the West Bank increased by 120% in 2013.

Israel never fulfilled any of the peace agreements that it signed. On the contrary, they were all violated and thrown into the garbage by the successive Zionist governments. In 1993, it signed the Oslo Accords, pledging to withdraw its armed forces from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and to respect the sovereign rights of the Palestinian people. But instead of withdrawing from the Palestinian territories, it built more and more settlements on Palestinian land and continues to ignore international law and the pleas of tens of thousands of peoples for a permanent peace in the region.

Israel’s hypocrisy is so great that it proposes putting an end to the bombings and demilitarizing the Gaza Strip, but what it wants is to build up its army and to continue manufacturing and importing weapons. If Israel does what it does now when the Palestinians have only a few rockets and stones, one can imagine what it would do in the Gaza Strip if that were demilitarized.

For decades, Israel, besides carrying out cowardly bombings and constant military actions, has been imposing an inhuman blockade on the Palestinians, forcing them to live with rationing of drinking water, energy, food

and medicine. Its objective is to expel the Palestinian people from Gaza and its lands and to show the Palestinians that either they leave the Gaza Strip or they will be decimated by their bombs and tanks, as was made clear in the words of Nazi leader Benjamin Netanyahu: “The Jewish state must be prepared for a long campaign in the Gaza Strip until the mission is completed.”

And what is that mission? To expel the Palestinian people from Gaza or to make them into slaves of the Zionists. The replacement of Shimon Peres with Reuven Rivlin as President of Israel on July 24 is further evidence in this regard. Mr. Rivlin is part of the more radical wing of Likud, he rejects the creation of a Palestinian state and supports the policy of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. According to the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, “Rivlin won’t be the State of Israel’s president, but Greater Israel’s president. He will exploit the presidential institution to advance the West Bank settlement project.”

### **Israel tortures children**

In 2008 and 2009, Israel carried out “Operation Cast Lead,” in which it murdered more than 1,300 Palestinians and took over more land in the West Bank and Gaza. During this massacre, the US sent 325 containers of 6 cubic meters each, with arms to supply Israel. The cargo left from the Greek port of Astakos for the Israeli port of Ashdod, 8 kilometers from the Gaza Strip.

In May of 2010, Israel attacked the ships of the Freedom Flotilla that was trying to bring humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people,

killing nine people on the ships. So, while the US arms to Israel freely sail the oceans, ships with food and medicine for the Gaza Strip are attacked.

In June of last year, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child accused Israeli forces of abusing and torturing Palestinian children, in addition to using them as human shields. According to the UN agency, “Palestinian children detained by the military and police are routinely subjected to degrading treatment and often to acts of torture.” The agency further stated that over ten years, about 7,000 Palestinian children aged 9 to 17 years were arrested and interrogated and many of them were taken before Israeli military courts handcuffed and chained at the ankles. The majority of the children arrested were accused of throwing stones. According to Israeli law, Palestinian children who throw stones at Israeli soldiers can receive a sentence of up to 20 years in prison.

### **The aim is to rob Palestinian land and gas**

But hatred for the Palestinian people alone does not justify such cruelty. The Zionist state of Israel is ruled by politicians and parties that, in addition to openly defending Zionism and preaching hatred for the Palestinian people, represent the big bourgeoisie of the country, that is, the big civil construction companies interested in building settlements on Palestinian land and the Israeli and U.S. war industries in close relation with international finance capital.

As Israel has few natural resources and 85% of its land is desert, robbing Palestinian land is essential in order to expand the build-



ing of settlements and to increase the profits of the construction and real estate industry in Israel.

Also the Israeli armament firms – Aero-space Industries, Elbit System and Elta – which produce satellite-launching vehicles, drones, fighters, advanced radars, etc., and the United States firms (Boeing, Lockheed, Northrop, General Dynamics, Raytheon), although they can sell their weapons to other countries (including Brazil), they have in the Israeli army one of their biggest buyers. The permanent war against the Palestinian people creates huge profits for the owners of the arms industry.

On the other hand, Israel boasts of having a modern and high-tech industry, but it depends on the import of grain, meat and oil. To overcome this they want to occupy Palestinian lands.

But Gaza does not have only Palestinian children. It also has significant reserves of natural gas. In the year 2000 extensive gas reserves were discovered in the region. These reserves were estimated by the multinational British Gas (BG Group) at 40 million cubic meters, but everything indicates that they are much greater. BG has negotiated with the Israeli government to explore these resources, and the Palestinian people, the real owners of that wealth, have been ignored. In addition to BG, other monopolies have already expressed their interest in exploring Palestinian gas. Whoever occupies the Gaza Strip will control the gas and could make millions of dollars. In 2007, the Israeli government admitted paying for the exploration for gas to the Palestinians, but changed its mind and now wants to take

over the land and wealth that does not belong to them; that is why they are massacring the Palestinian people. For that crime they rely on the weapons and financing of the US, the European Union and the unconditional support of the mass media around the world.

In short, Israel does not want to live in peace with the Palestinian people, it wants to rob their lands and kill those who do not accept its rule, it wants to seize the gas and super-exploit Palestinian labor power.

### **As a wall**

Indeed for the bourgeoisie that rules Israel today and for the major imperialist powers, what matters is to increase their wealth; the wars against the Palestinian people, against the Syrian people (more than 179,000 people killed), against Iraq (more than 1 million people killed), against Libya and Ukraine, among others, are one of the major means for the capitalist class to increase its profits, especially at a time when the capitalist system going through a deep economic crisis. It does not matter, for the lords of war, who are precisely the owners of the means of production and the banks, how many Palestinian children they kill in their sleep, nor how many wars they have to make.

The Zionist government of Israel and its accomplices, the imperialist countries, want to prevent the existence of a Palestinian state at all costs in order to rob their wealth and enslave the survivors of this genocide. These are the real reasons that Israel and the US are carrying out this bloodbath and not the tunnels and rockets of Hamas.



But the Palestinian people have already shown that they will not accept being slaves; they prefer death to living without freedom. A people that fights for its freedom may lose some battles, but it will win the war. And as the verses of the Palestinian Communist poet Tawfiq Az-Zayad say, the Palestinians will not disappear, they will fight:

*“Here  
We shall remain  
like a wall  
upon your chest  
in your throats...  
When we are thirsty  
We will squeeze the stones  
And we will eat land when we are hungry  
But we will not leave  
Our future is here”*

(Tawfiq Az-Zayyad)

## BURKINA FASO

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*Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta (PCRV)*

### On the Ebola epidemic that is striking the West African sub-region

Since mid-April of 2014, the Ebola virus that was only known in Central Africa, specifically in the Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda and Gabon, appeared in the sub-region of West Africa, specifically in Guinea-Conakry, from where it has spread to Sierra Leone and Liberia. According to reports from some NGOs and the World Health Organization (WHO), which became involved in those countries to fight the epidemic, in four months the disease caused more than 930 dead, and there are about 1700 probable cases of people infected [as of August when this was written – *translator's note*], of which an important part are health care personnel from the three countries.

The President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, declared that the situation in her country is “very serious and we are headed towards

a catastrophe.” The WHO calls the epidemic a “bonfire” while the NGO Doctors Without Borders said at the end of June that “the epidemic is out of control.” The threat of the epidemic spreading to other countries such as Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Ivory Coast, which share borders with countries struck by the disease, is a reality, especially when the epidemic has already struck in Nigeria, although this is a country that has no common borders with the countries where the epidemic developed.

West Africa is one of the most populous regions in Africa and also the area that has the largest free movement of people, and this has been the case for centuries. Upper Volta, now called Burkina Faso, which has borders with Mali and Ivory Coast, will not escape if these countries are infected, especially if one considers the mobility of the populations between

those countries and ours and given the porous borders among the countries of the sub-region.

This epidemic has acquired the character of a regional catastrophe, at a time of a political, social, economic and military crisis, or one of bankruptcy, of the neocolonial states. The population suffers from humanitarian crises, with displacements caused by reactionary wars and their consequences. The governments of the countries of West Africa are showing inertia and irresponsibility, which has led the WHO to sound an alarm. Quickly and prematurely, the epidemic was declared by Guinea, a country which however does not have the means to identify the virus, let alone to care for the sick. On the initiative of the WHO, the epidemic has been addressed properly and has been declared a great danger to the world; moreover, the WHO gave instructions to the heads of State of the sub-region that they should inform their peoples and take the necessary measures, such as the state of emergency in the countries that are severely affected, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Some countries bordering on Burkina Faso are carrying out information and awareness campaigns for their populations against this threat. However, the political and health authorities in Burkina are doing practically nothing, based on the fact that there has been no case detected in our country and that we are far from the countries infected. The epidemic has been plaguing the sub-region since March of 2014 and until July the authorities remained in a "state of implementing a response plan to deal with any eventuality," as the representative of the WHO told reporters in Burkina Faso on July 11, 2014. Nothing is being done

with the information, nor to make aware or alert the population on measures to be taken. Nothing concrete to take measures to prevent the spread of the virus. No campaign to train health care workers who could cope with a possible outbreak of Ebola. As always, the government of the Republic is waiting for the catastrophe to break out, when it will mobilize to beg for foreign aid, aid that will quickly be hogged by the vampires of the Republic at the expense of aid to the poor population, as is the case with malaria with infected mosquitoes that have been a great help to the authorities and its allies, especially Alizeta Gando who has done business for thousands of millions with the CFE and AIDS, whose funds have been used by the presidency.

The public health sector has been neglected in favor of the private sector without having taken any steps to develop health research; the neocolonial countries of the sub-region depend entirely on the "good will" of the imperialist countries and their NGOs, such as Doctors Without Borders, in order for them to take measures to control the epidemic. This will prove once again their lack of awareness and ability to protect the population against the disease, measures and treatments that they have begun to implement for the sick people repatriated to their countries such as is the case of the United States and Spain.

The grave threat of the Ebola epidemic concerns all the social and political forces of our country and the West African sub-region, if one takes into account what is at risk for the health and the dramatic consequences for the population already stricken by a profound crisis. With this statement the PCRV, vanguard

party of the working class, sounds the alarm to demand that the government of the Fourth Republic assume its responsibilities and take measures to avoid a catastrophe for our people and our country.

The PCRV denounces the apathy and irresponsibility of the authorities of the Fourth Republic in handling the threat posed by the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. It denounces the contempt and carelessness with which the authorities treat this grave public health problem.

The PCRV demands:

- That measures be adopted to raise awareness and educate the population about hygiene measures and precautions to take to avoid infection. This is of great importance given that access to medical care and hygiene is already very limited among the poor population in the cities and the countryside, and that the cultural practices of our population can be factors that aggravate the spread of the disease in the case of an epidemic.

- That appropriate measures be taken to train and protect care health personnel who are the sector of the population most at risk during epidemics, as the situation in the countries that are the focus of Ebola outbreaks and in Nigeria show daily.

- The creation of an effective epidemiological organization and border control. This is very important given that a significant part of the population has no access to health care

centers and that also a significant proportion of deaths occur at home, which limits the ability to identify and determine the causes of the deaths and thus quickly detect the epidemic.

We call on the health care professionals, the trade union organizations in the health care sector and all those competent in that sector, to organize and unify their forces to contribute to raising awareness and educating the population to fight an eventual epidemic. We call on the whole democratic movement in our country (trade unions, human rights organizations, intellectuals, etc.) to mobilize to demand that the authorities adopt measures appropriate to the situation to avoid a greater humanitarian catastrophe in the country.

The PCRV expresses its solidarity with the peoples struck by the epidemic, the internationalist solidarity of the people of Volta with the hope that this epidemic will be controlled quickly in order to avoid a new catastrophe in the sub-region. It is already faced with the consequences of reactionary civil wars and imperialist aggression, as well as the political, economic, social and military failure of the neocolonial regimes that every day show their inability to protect the population and lead the countries to social progress and a true democracy. Bread and freedom for the people!

August 2014

Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta

## COLOMBIA

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*Communist Party of Colombia (M-L)*

### Grim picture of the Colombian economy

As part of the complex and turbulent international situation, elements of the general crisis of capitalism in Colombia are revealed, including fictions about the bases and sustainability of certain periods of GDP growth, marked by certain currents of anti-capitalist opinion since the crisis of recession of the capitalist world that began in late 2007.

Today life has shown the truth with the notorious fiscal deficit and the increase in the destabilizing factors such as the growth of the foreign debt and its high interest, the growing imbalance of trade, the decline in investment, the unemployment, the very low incomes and wages, the crisis in the countryside, the serious problems of industry and the relationship of all these elements with the implementation of the Free Trade Agreement and the Pacific Alliance. We will show how the above are part of the grim picture of the world economy.

#### **The ups and downs of the Colombian economy**

The economic information given out by the government, banks, institutions and many international organizations keep insisting on and presenting as a great example the positive results achieved by the government in economic growth, control of inflation, growth of employment, balance of public finances and reduction of poverty. The majority of the economic reports highlight the good performance of the national economy, even placing it after Brazil and Mexico as the third largest economy in Latin America.(1)

In the political landscape it is obvious and almost insane to say otherwise when the majority of the analyses are based on government statistics certified by the big banks and inter-governmental organizations. **With the pub-**

**licity and intense idyllic discourse of bourgeois and neoliberal analysts everything seems true, but facts are stubborn things and with the same errors and fictions that government statistics present one can show the opposite.**

### **The boom in dollars and its effects**

It is no secret that over the last 10 years the amount of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) coming into the country is greatly modifying the structure and profile of the Colombian economy. Without agreeing about its productive centers, today in the international arena Colombia is following a neoliberal and extractive model that places it among the leading producers of raw materials in the world.

To point out the major implications of this new orientation of the Colombian economy, it is enough to note what is surprising about these figures. According to the Bank of the Republic, during the last decade including the first quarter of 2014, the country reached a FDI of US \$131,939 million. This means that in the last decade, Colombia has had an annual average FDI of US \$12,700 million, almost unmatched among the other Latin American economies.(2)

Now, if we look at the figures for FDI that have already been agreed upon for the next four years, which reach US \$40,000 million, **we can foresee the continuation of this model for quite a long period in the country.**

The serious problem with all these investments is that they are channeled into the extraction of the most varied natural resources, mainly gold, oil and coal. With all the favors

and guarantees that the big multinationals receive from the state, there is no doubt that **Colombia at the dawn of the 21st century is suffering the consequences of the most terrible exploitation and plunder of its natural resources ever.**

With all this boom of dollars coming into the country and increasing the mining activity, it is not surprising that the growth of the Colombian economy in recent years has appeared among the highest in Latin America. But **the instability continues to increase** if we consider that Colombia is a backward and dependent capitalist country, which in these years has maintained an open economy, inserted into a galloping process of globalization that does not allow it to get rid of the deep problems and conflicts that occur on the international economic and political level.

In the international context of economic and political crisis and instability, the big problem that is beginning to confront the country's economy and with it the entire driving force of energy mining, is that **the revenues and profits are beginning to weaken** on account of the fall in the international prices of both oil and coal, as well as the weaker demand for raw materials today from the advanced countries, mainly China and Europe mired in a slowdown that is tending to deepen.

Under these conditions the new model is beginning to founder, the balloon that all sectors applauded and bet on with special veneration is beginning to lose air. Most bourgeois analysts who are pondering over the overheating are beginning to make new recommendations **to address the fall and not perish at the first shock.** Faced with this new economic

picture that is beginning to take shape at the international level, the Colombian bourgeoisie and government are beginning to show signs of despair, but as history has shown, no measure can be taken without consulting the determinations and commandments that its bigger partner, “the master to the North,” imposes.

Indeed, further setbacks affect not only the Colombian bourgeoisie and the government, they also affect the profitability of the investments made by finance capital and the monopoly groups; thus the effort that they jointly made is understandable in order to **not lose anything and secure the maximum profit**. Still for the ruling classes in the country this means a greater subservience and dependence on US imperialism.

As in other Latin American countries, the dilemmas of the Colombian state is quite large and complex, first because **the disasters left by the boom of dollars coming into the country** will still have to be dealt with and followed by taking steps to address the revaluation of the peso, the decrease in savings, the cheapening of imports, the increase in consumption, the reduction of national exports and resorting to subsidies for those sectors affected by competition and the weakening of the productive apparatus.

Second, because the prospect of a decline in investment and the weakening of the prices of oil, coal and other raw materials, as well as the major imbalances in the balance of payments **imply decreased revenue for the state and government**. In this perspective the danger is great since the “recommendations” that international banking is now making call for the approval of the structural reforms that

would ensure both increased revenues which the Colombian State and the government need as well as the profits that large companies and international monopolies supposedly will no longer receive.

Third, because the measures taken by the U.S. Federal Reserve system proclaiming the dismantling of the policy of the QE [Quantitative Easing],<sup>(3)</sup> aimed at recovering the productive investment and activity of the US, make Colombia and other Latin American countries defenseless and without a clear orientation, because the imminent withdrawal of dollars from our countries – and particularly from Colombia – involves taking measures to retain them; in other words, the Colombian government forced to cede is obliged to maintain the quantity of foreign direct investment providing **greater guarantees to foreign capital**.<sup>(4)</sup> Now, if we take into account the fact that the new US policy implies also facing the trend towards a greater reduction in current account deficit,<sup>(5)</sup> the situation is complicated because any measure taken in this regard by the Colombian State will involve, among other things, a rise in inflation, devaluation of the exchange rate and thus a drop in real wages.

### **The balance of trade and the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)**

Another major problem of the dilemma is the deterioration that has taken place in the balance of trade. To show a little of the situation it is enough to note that in 2007, according to DANE [National Administrative Department of Statistics], Colombian exports reached a value of US \$333,000 million, realizing a pos-

itive balance of trade of US \$12,421 million. In 2013 this positive figure fell to US \$2,202 million, and in July 2014 Colombia had a negative balance of trade of US \$1,913 million. **The FTAs signed by Colombia are unconvincing when what remains is the growth of imports and therefore the deterioration of the national productive apparatus.**

The figures simply illustrate the frank deterioration in the export of manufactured goods, the dramatic fall in the Colombian automotive industry,<sup>(6)</sup> the shrinking export of value added products, and the strong dependence on exports of fuels and the mining sector. In the figures for non-traditional exports there is no consistency and they rise and fall very irregularly from one year to another.

In regard to the FTA<sup>(7)</sup> it is worth noting the serious repercussions that are taking place. Many of the protections and safeguards that were adopted in the past to protect the production and prices have been broken by the numerous economic agreements that have been signed. It is a fact that both signatories of the FTA prefer to purchase products in countries with lower tariffs, but the stimuli and agreements, whatever differences may exist, **accentuate the disadvantages of Colombia with the regard to the United States.** It is enough to point out the data on exports of the first year of implementation of the FTA with the US. Exports fell 14% and the trade balance with the US fell from US \$7,600 million to US \$2,800 million. According to the DANE, in July of 2014 Colombia's trade balance with the US changed again and has a negative balance of US \$2,275 million. We can state that with the signing of the FTA with the US a new

trend has begun in the country's economic performance that **greatly deepens the dependence** of Colombia on the US.

With regard to the Pacific Alliance, unlike what many analysts say, there will also be no solution to this problem of exports, because the agreement is based on the same paradigm of the free market. Basically, what is becoming evident is the beginning of an economic and political strategy by the countries that signed this agreement aimed at reducing the possibilities of the MERCOSUR [Common Market of the South] and ALBA [Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America], to revive the expansionist project of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, strengthening the US presence and dependence in these countries.

We emphasize that the position of Colombia in the FTA and now in the Pacific Alliance is quite similar to that of the peripheral countries of Europe if we look at all the plans of the European Common Market and the European Union. With such a stubborn implementation of the free market economic policy, it is more than obvious that **the country can sustain the competition imposed by globalization only by lowering wages, thus further exacerbating the distribution of income.**

### **A growth induced by a bubble**

Turning to production, the economic growth achieved in recent years has been remarkable. For 2012 and 2013 respectively, a GDP growth of 4.0% and 4.3% was recorded. For 2014 the government forecasts are for a growth of 4.4% of GDP, although there are some who say that if the national economy



grew by 6.4% in the first quarter and by 4.3% in the second half, the country's growth this year will exceed 5.5%. But the concern again is evident and is related to the instability suffered in the external sector, and especially by the reduction in prices of the raw materials, oil and coal,(8) which obviously is complicated with the fall in production. For example, the figures from the DANE speak of a decrease in crude oil production of 1.5%,(9) no new findings have been announced and there have been constant complaints of a fall in reserves.(10)

As for production, the other major concern remains the state of industry and agriculture, due first to the substantial changes that are taking place within each of these sectors, and second to the effects of the FTAs and other economic agreements signed by the Colombian government. Therefore, we agree with some analysts who argue that **we are facing the effects of a growth induced by a bubble, which fills the national economy with instability.**

The results are clear, in 2012 manufacturing industry shrunk by 1% and in 2013 by 1.2%. So far in 2014, **the sector did not rebound and still fails to show a trend of recovery and growth.**(11) In the first half of the year, manufacturing industry achieved a growth of 0.9% compared with the same period of last year. In the analysis of this sector there is definitely not much to talk about. The economic sub-sectors that have seen any growth are those that have received a stimulus from growth in domestic consumption and are characterized by being little tradable, typical of a domestic economy with little production of capital goods. These are clothing, drinks, electrical supplies, sugar refining, brown

sugar, paper and cardboard, coffee products and transport equipment. It is striking that in a country like ours, for the first half of the year, compared to the same period last year, oil refining has shrunk by 8.8%, with 2 refineries and oil production of over one million barrels per day. In reality oil is being exported unrefined and is returned to us as gasoline for which we pay international prices.

In the agricultural and livestock sector, growth in 2012 was 2.5%, in 2013 it rose to 5.2%, and in the first half of this year growth was 3.8%, figures that, if one looks at them superficially, do not indicate an economic slowdown or recession. Actually what is happening is the trend towards specialization in this sector of the production and export of agro-fuels, coffee, banana and flowers, and to a lesser degree temporary crops (vegetables). Sub-sectors such as poultry, forestry and fish farming are losing strength, among other reasons because of the smuggling that has been growing throughout the country. **More precisely, while the peasant economy is going bankrupt accompanied by food insufficiency, the financial institutions with their tentacles linked to agriculture are doing what they please by exploiting the comparative advantages that they have in Colombia.**

One sector that is notable for its emergence and degree of influence in the Colombian economy is the construction industry. Its growth is due largely to the construction of large civil engineering works and public housing. According to the DANE figures, comparing the value added in this sector between January and June of 2014 with the same period in 2013, this sector grew by 14.2%. For

the construction of roads, ports, as well as housing programs that are moving forward in both the public and private sector, the perspective is for further growth.

Looking at it this way we can summarize that the economic model of foreign investment and free trade that makes up the production profile is sinking, and this is the biggest proof we have of the failure of the economic policy of the government. At this stage of the game it is clear that the engines of the Colombian economy are mining and construction. But nothing is certain, as needs of capital are greater and, as we have explained, the revaluation and the FTAs are ruining the limited progress achieved in industry and agriculture.

The other thing is that although the FDI is assured in the coming years, this is not sufficient guarantee of the growth of reserves and production of oil since there are more and more factors such as the decline in exports, the informal sector and the reduction of workers' income that are slowing down the Colombian economy. Furthermore our analysis corroborates the present announcement of the fall in the GDP and a fiscal deficit of about 13 billion, as well as the absence of the same amount for costs that would have to be added to the current costs to pay for the much touted "post-conflict". A tax reform has been announced with more direct taxes for the poor, with great political and social effects that complicate the work the Santos government.

### **The Trojan horse of the external debt**

Another element to be clarified on this point includes the external debt. According to

figures from the Bank of the Republic, in the third month of 2014 Colombia's foreign obligations reached US \$94,620 million, registering an annual growth of 15.9% and accounting for 23.9% of GDP. According to these figures, Colombia's external debt rose to 2.3% of the GDP compared with the same month of 2013. According to these figures, the growth is explained by the increase in long-term debt (17%) and to a lesser degree by the short-term debt (9%). The external debt is mainly concentrated in bank loans (US \$47,515 million) and bonds (US \$37,589 million). According to data, the public sector debt grew by US \$7,421 million (16%) while external debt in the private sector showed an increase of US \$5,547 million (15.8%).

Trying to make sense of these data, although many analysts do not see the external debt as a danger but a situation under control, we cannot ignore the fact that compared to income and with all the efforts to pay it off, the Colombian external debt is quite high and represents a decrease in domestic product. Now, there are many implications of the growth of the external debt; of all of these we shall note that one serious matter affecting sovereignty is the subjection for over a decade of the State and the national economy to the adjustment program which the international banks dictate. This limits the development, income and salaries, the social investment and the general living standard of all Colombians.

### **The labor market and its inconsistent data**

Faced with this issue, it is important to note that according to DANE statistics in July 2014

the percentage of the population of working age that is employed was 57.6% in the country, making a total of 21,241,000 employed people. By sectors of industry, construction, services and real estate activities produce the largest number of jobs. The mining sector, despite its high share of the GDP, creates less employment. Inactive workers reached 13,432,000 people.

Undoubtedly, these figures are very dry if we do not put them in context and with them and others we perform an exercise that allows us to clearly discern trends in the labor market in Colombia. First it should be noted that the data on the growth of employment and the decline of unemployment provided by the DANE are consistent with the growth of Colombia's GDP, **but they also clearly reveal the increasing casualization of labor in our country.** The new jobs that are been created are mostly in the formal sector, but not in those sectors with the highest share of the national GDP, in this case the energy mining sector. The construction and service sectors are the ones that hire the most labor power in the country. Another significant portion of the new workers are the self-employed, who belong to the informal sector of the economy and who are a growing part of the labor market.

These new workers account for an increasingly flexible and particularly cheap market. The high turnover of labor is prevalent and in sectors such as construction the rule is that contracts do not last more than six months, except in public works in which the technological level demands the retention of skilled workers.

Recent studies show that the composition

of the employed part of the population has changed substantially, because while in the late 1990s a little more than 10% of workers were skilled, now about 60% are. Although this trend is widespread, the secondary and tertiary sectors have a higher proportion of skilled workers. Thus one can see that people with a higher level of education are more likely to be hired in the formal sector and have longer-term contracts. The workers with a low level of education are mostly in the informal sector and have the lowest pay.

The growth in employment cannot cover up or obscure the profound deterioration of important sectors of industry and agriculture, that is, the closure of many enterprises, the elimination or reduction in staff. Studies show the transition of most of these workers to the informal sector.

The labor market in Colombia is characterized by the lack of labor protection, lack of individual and collective rights, the promotion of outsourcing and a low level of unionization. The data also show the evolution and ever increasing share of women in the labor market as well as the rising youth unemployment.

### The informal sector

Regarding the informal sector,(12) the Great Integrated Household Survey (GEIH) conducted by the DANE shows the great impact that this has on the labor market in Colombia. One in every three workers is in the formal sector, while two out of three workers are self-employed or independent. In a country in which the economically active population is growing and jobs in both the public and pri-

vate sectors are shrinking, the informal sector is the main **alternative for survival**; in addition, the high labor turnover leads many workers who lose their jobs and are looking for another one to see self-employment as the main alternative for earning an income to survive. Since the informal sector prevails in low-skilled and lower productive areas, most of the workers there have low-paid, unstable jobs without social security, showing **the strong link between the informal sector and poverty among such workers**.

Under these conditions we can also note that the informal sector not only includes street vendors, unlicensed taxi drivers, masons, carpenters, plumbers, cooks, vendors of cell-phone minutes and many other professions involving many workers; **the informal sector is also not alien to the transformation into maquiladoras of the production process** imposed by the implementation of measures for the casualization of the labor market. Thus there are Special Economic Zones, Free Trade Zones and firms such as Simplified Corporations (SAS) and Cooperatives of Associated Workers (CTA) [which hire temporary workers for other companies – translator's note] and many productive units that are not legalized or lack recognition by the state, and are simply strategies for satellitization of production used by capital to reduce costs and intensify the exploitation of labor power. We can note that **the informal sector, which demonstrates situations and strategies of exclusion of thousands of workers from the labor market, is a manifestation of what in the social field is called inequality and political exclusion**.

According to the DANE, in July of 2014 the share of jobs in the informal sector for 23 cities and metropolitan areas was 49.2%. By branches of industry, 41.7% of the informal working population is concentrated in trade, hotels and restaurants. **By occupational position, the self-employed make up 61.8% of the informal working population**. By cities the highest rates of informality were in Cucuta (69.9%), Quibdo (66.1%), Riohacha (65.5%) and Santa Martha (65.4%). The informal sector is smaller in Cali (47.1%), Bogota (44.0%), Medellin (43.9%) and Manizales (42.4%).

### Unemployment and underemployment

The exclusion of people from the labor market is also reflected in high unemployment and underemployment. In July of this year, unemployment reached 9.3% for a total of 2,175,000 people without work. The cities with the highest unemployment rates are Cucuta (15%), Armenia (14.9%) and Pereira (14.2%).

It stands to reason that changes in the productive structure of the country can also be seen in the labor market and that the changes in this would reflect the state and/or cycle of the economy. Considering the data at our disposal on the labor market in recent years, we find that in addition to the inflexibility of capital given the substantial changes in the real wages of workers and the low productivity, the growth in employment is closely linked to the expansion of the labor supply, mainly in the construction and service sectors. **Faced with decreasing unemployment this trend is mainly explained by the growth of the informal sector and the number of inactive workers**.

Regarding the last months, it is necessary to point out that the reduction in the unemployment rate is explained by the greater participation of personnel hired in the election campaigns that were held. In addition to the 23 cities surveyed, according to the DANE, in the second half of the year only 8 cities had single-digit unemployment rates, the rest are far from that level. **This means that the reduction of the unemployment rate to a single digit is more of a temporary situation rather than a trend in the Colombian labor market.**

To further the analysis of the trends that we just discussed, it is important to study the impact on the growth of employment and the reduction of unemployment of situations such as the decrease in industrial and agricultural employment, the participation of young people and women, of the indigenous and black communities, in the labor market, as well as the growing participation of workers in illegal activities and drug trafficking, on which there are no statements nor consistent statistics by the DANE or the government. Given the above situation and noting that these methodologies and indicators are not neutral, the data presented can only be assessed and taken as points of references and working hypotheses.

As to underemployment, it is enough to note that it is an indicator associated both with the low skill of those hired and the underutilization of labor power. Its measurement shows the dissatisfaction of workers when their salaries are inadequate or also when they are working but want to work more hours, as they work less than 48 hours per week. In general they are workers who are not covered by social security, minimum wage laws, nor

**extra-legal guarantees. The underemployed in Colombia are, therefore, those workers who rotate between jobs without optimal or favorable conditions, the informal sector and unemployment.** Therefore, the evolution of underemployment follows patterns similar to those of the informal sector and shows the serious problem of the quality of jobs in Colombia.

According to statistics from the DANE, in July of 2014, in the 23 cities and metropolitan areas, subjective underemployment<sup>13</sup> reached 27.0%, making a national total of 6,476,000 people. In the same month objective underemployment reached 11.1%, reaching a total of 2,477,000 people nationwide. The total underemployment rate is 37.1%. The number of underemployed nationwide comprises 8,953,000 people.

### **The fate of the labor market reforms**

Among the reforms that the Colombian State has advanced regarding labor matters, we emphasize: first, law 789 of 2002 under which the surcharges for night work and for Sunday and holiday pay are reduced, changes are made to the working day, vacations and compensation. Then law 1429 of 2010, also called the law of formalization and creation of employment, which established taxes on commercial trade registration, progressive income tax payment, parafiscal discounts, hiring of apprentices in order to increase employment and reduce the informal sector in the country. Then, law 1607 of 2012, known as the tax reform law, which frees businesses from paying parafiscals and creates income tax for equity.

There have also been regulations for public service employment (Decree 722 of 2013) and there is a large body of law on hiring of apprentices, reinforced labor stability, the inclusion of clauses on restitution in collective contracts, essential public services and strikes and union autonomy.

In general we can say that the new regulations on labor matters have dramatically changed the rules of the game in the labor market, on one the hand cheapening labor power and on the other putting great emphasis on limiting the few labor guarantees and rights that exist. As various studies have confirmed, the reforms that have been implemented **have not served to create jobs** and, despite the talk about legalization or formalization of new enterprises, **the reduction of the informal sector is not a trend that prevails with the new flexibilization policies of the government.** With these reforms the Colombian State and the government is fulfilling the mandates of the international banking sector, favoring big business that have seen their profits increase while the workers have seen both their jobs and their income decrease.

### **The “growth” does not suffice to erase poverty in Colombia**

Studies on poverty in Colombia note a downward trend, but there is still a fairly large sector of the population that remains poor. After many attempts and methodologies implemented just since 2011, the DANE has been annually reporting information on monetary poverty,(14) multi-dimensional poverty(15) and inequality.

Regarding monetary poverty, for the year from July 2013 to June 2014, nationwide the percentage of people in poverty was 29.3%, in the major cities it was 25.6% and elsewhere it was 41.6%. Reporting new methodologies for the measure of poverty, the government states that economic growth, the creation of jobs(16) and policies targeted to helping the poor(17) has allowed 3.6 million people to be lifted out of poverty. According to the government, in June 2010 Colombia had 17,121 thousand people in poverty and in June 2014 this number had fallen to 13,509 thousand people.

Although there is much embellishing of these data, the country cannot forget that the report released by the FAO [Food and Agricultural Organization] and the United Nations a few days ago points out that **hunger strikes 11.4% of Colombians**, that is 5.5 million people, about the same figure (11.3% ) reported worldwide.

In this sense the statistics presented by the DANE and the government are not very consistent if we considered the lack of opportunities and the real social crisis that exists in the country. **While the data show the reduction in poverty, they also show the increase in inequality among Colombians.** Many institutions and researchers that note these changes over time point to the importance of developing new methodologies and indicators(18) that reflect the real impact on the quality of life, such as declining real wages in the country, changes in consumption, precarious employment, marginality, the continuing high rates of underemployment and unemployment, mental problems in a country like ours that has gone from being a low to medium consumer of



drugs, bankruptcy of the country's hospitals and the agony of the health care sector in general, the extremely poor quality of education, the growing number of homeless people, the displacement due to the intensification of the armed conflict, among other issues.

In this regard the government can make up many econometric models and methodologies but it cannot ignore the fact that there is a social crisis of profound dimensions in this part of the world that economic growth could not erase. In other words **we can categorically note that economic growth about which so much fuss is made in the country and the world has not brought progress but rather further inequality among Colombians**; the gaps are increasingly growing and this is confirmed by national and international statistics.

According to data from the United Nations,(19) in Colombia 10% of households with the greatest resources receive more than 40% of labor income, while 90% get the remaining 60%; this accounts for the high levels of inequality in the country. The DANE also confirms that the 1% with the largest highest income keeps one fifth of the wealth produced in Colombia, one of the highest indices in the world, second only to the US.

Another example that shows this inequality is the concentration of land, although there are no recent figures. The University of the Andes<sup>20</sup> recently revealed that in 2010, 77.6% of the land was owned by 13.7% of landowners and that the Gini for land reached 0.86. According to the study the situation has worsened since 2000 when 75.7% of the land was held by 13.6% of landowners.

Regarding the Human Development Index

(HDI)<sup>21</sup> developed by the United Nations for 2014, which is used to analyze the progress of different countries, **Colombia fell 7 position, ranking 98th among 168 countries in the world**, which puts Norway, Australia and Switzerland in first places. In this ranking Colombia is below Chile, Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Cuba.

The per capita income in Colombia is US \$7,800 per year, but in cities such as Buenaventura and Tumaco the figure drops to \$440, well below that of Chile, Cuba, Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil and Peru.

The Gini coefficient,<sup>22</sup> which measures the degree of inequality on a scale from 0 to 1 (where 0 represents a perfect equality and 1 is the most extreme inequality), was 0.54 for Colombia in 2013, while for the US, Mexico and Argentina it was 0.40. Over the last ten years, in Colombia this indicator has remained constant and even had peaks of 6. The increase in per capita income about which the statistics speak has not served to reduce inequality in Colombia. **Compared with other countries in the region, Colombia remains in 3rd place after Haiti and Brazil; it ranks 12th in the world according to the 2014 Report of the United Nations.**

According to the UN Habitat, the 13 most unequal cities in the country are Medellin, Cali, Cucuta, Bogota, Manizales, Monteria, Pasto, Villavicencio, Ibagu , Barranquilla, Cartagena, Pereira and Bucaramanga.

This map of poverty and income inequality reaffirm that Colombia is a country in which the rich get richer through exploitation and violent expropriation and the poor get poorer through their further exclusion and victimization.

## The political crisis deepens

All these elements that we have been sustaining show a rather complex and difficult situation for the country. The instability shown in the economic and social order is also seen very crudely in the political landscape. The peasant strikes and demonstrations, the strikes by coal miners, the protests by oil workers and teachers and the great discussions taking place in the country that presently revolve around the talks in Havana, the presidential authoritarianism contained in the draft balance of powers, the legislative agenda of Congress and all the economic and social tensions in this country reveal the deep crisis that affects the Colombian political system today.

In that vein, Mr. Hernando Gomez Buendia, director of the website "Public Reason" ("Razón Pública"), is correct when he says in one of his articles:

*"Santos II will succeed if he maintains investor confidence, the speed of the mining engine and the increase in social spending. He will do well if he stays afloat in the turbulence that many perceive in the world, and if he succeeds in reducing the cost overruns, which in this case are basically the environmental damage, the social conflicts and the corruption that brings a tax bonanza."*

*"Some people may think that this is not much, but it is everything one would expect from Santos II."*

October 2014

Central Executive Committee

Communist Party of Colombia (M-L)

## Notes:

1 These estimates are nothing but a publicity campaign. Considering the statistics on the GDP we can see that the value of the Colombian economy (US \$378,147,773,316) is lower than that of Argentina's (US \$611,755,084,645), ranked as the third largest economy in Latin America, after Brazil and Mexico.

2 The figures cited are taken from the Quarterly Report of the Bank of the Republic submitted to the National Congress in March of 2014.

3 These measures, known in the economic world as the clearing of the QE model, are nothing more than the buying of treasury bonds to lower interest rates and raise the prices of stocks and bonds.

4 Foreign Direct Investment increased by 8% in 2013 to a record of US \$16,772 million, equivalent to 4.5% of GDP. 46.7% of this type of inflow is directed to oil and mining activities.

5 Colombia's negative balance in its foreign exchanges continues to rise; in 2012 it increased to 3.1% and in 2013 to 3.4% of GDP. By 2014 the deficit is continuing to rise if we consider that in the first quarter of this year the current account deficit rose to 4.6% of GDP. The current account of the balance of payments is a record of the transactions made between Colombia and the rest of the world and is a sign of a tendency for the exchange rate. The current account deficit, the Bank of the Republic explains in its quarterly reports, is due to a decrease in the trade surplus, which fell by nearly half compared to 2012, reaching US \$2,202 million. In July of 2014 Colombia already has a deficit balance of US \$1,913 million.

6 According to ACOLFA (National Association of Auto Parts Makers) between January and April of 2014 vehicle exports fell by 94.3%.

7 Recall that the FTA of Colombia with the US was signed in late 2006 and went into effect on May 15, 2012.



8 In the first half of 2014 the mining sector grew by 1.7%, compared to the same period in 2013. This performance was mainly due to the increases in coal production (16.7%) and natural gas (2.1%) as well as a decrease in the production of crude oil of 1.5%.

9 Source: Quarterly Accounts Bulletin. Second Quarter of 2014. DANE, September 16, 2014.

10 According to the Ministry of Mines and Energy, in late 2011 the proven hydrocarbon reserves were estimated at 2,260 million barrels and 155,000 million cubic meters of natural gas. At current production rates, the duration of proven reserves is estimated at 5 years for oil and 12 years for natural gas. The recoverable proven coal reserves are estimated at 4,945 million tons, representing about 60 years of production at current levels. More than 90% of coal production is exported and Colombia is the 5th largest exporter worldwide.

11 The instability is so great that while in the first quarter of 2014 manufacturing industry grew by 3.3%, in the second quarter it shrank by 1.4%, according to the statistics from the DANE. Expectations for the second half are not very encouraging if there is no considerable increase in exports and domestic consumption.

12 According to the criteria of the ILO, the DANE considers part of the informal sector: 1. Private employees and workers who work in establishments, businesses or enterprises employing up to 10 people in all their agencies and branches, including the employer and/or partner. 2. Unpaid family workers. 3. Domestic workers. 4. Self-employed workers except independent professionals. 5. Bosses or employers of enterprises with 10 workers or less.

13 According to the DANE statistics, subjective underemployment refers to the simple desire of the workers to improve their income, the number of hours worked or to have a job more appropriate to their personal abilities.

Objective underemployment comprises those who have the desire, but have also made an attempt to realize their aspirations and are willing to make the change.

14 Referring to the annual measure of monetary poverty, on March 21 the results for 2013 were published; the second publication was made in August 2014 and collects information from July 2013 to June 2014. In it the following data stand out:

**Per capita income for the spending unit.** For the year from July 2013 to June 2014, the per capita income for the spending unit nationally stood at \$562,151. [Figures here are in Colombian pesos. As of January 2015, there were about 2,378 Colombian pesos to the \$US – translator's note.] In the major cities it was \$661,893 and elsewhere it was \$232,969. This indicates that on the average a family of 4 persons in Colombia receives a monthly income of \$ 2,248,604, if the family lives in the major cities this figure is \$2,647,572, if they live elsewhere it is \$931,876.

**The poverty line** is the minimum amount per capita required to purchase a basket of goods (food and non-food items) to allow for an adequate standard of living in a particular country. For the year from July 2013 to June 2014, the per capita minimum necessary nationally was \$208,404. According to the above, if a household is composed of 4 people, it is classified as poor if the total household income is below \$833,616. If the family lives in the major cities this amount is \$919,420; if they live elsewhere it is \$550,448.

**The incidence of poverty** measures the percentage of the population that has a per capita household income below the poverty line, relative to the total population, according to the geographic area. For the year from July 2013 to June 2014, nationally the percentage of people in poverty was 29.3%, in the major cities it was 25.6% and elsewhere it was 41.6%. Compared to the year from July 2012 to June 2013, the in-

cidence of poverty per unit changed as follows: -2.9% (national), -2.4% (major cities) and -4.4% (elsewhere).

**The extreme poverty line** is the minimum amount per capita required only for a basket of food items to allow a level of survival in a particular country. For the year from July 2013 to June 2014 the minimum per capita necessary nationally was \$92,312. According to the above, a household of 4 people is classified as extremely poor if its total income is below \$369,248. If the family lives in the major cities this amount is \$386,192; if they live elsewhere it is \$313,328.

**The incidence of extreme poverty** measures the percentage of the population with a per capita household income below the extreme poverty line, relative to the total population, according to the geographic area. For the year from July 2013 to June 2014 nationally the percentage of people in extreme poverty was 8.4%, in the major cities it was 5.4% and elsewhere it was 18.2%. Compared to the year from July 2012 to June 2013, the incidence of extreme poverty changed as follows: -1.7% (national), -1.1% (major cities) and -3.6% (elsewhere).

15 Multi-dimensional poverty studies the characteristics of the household, related to education, health care, employment, early childhood and home infrastructure.

16 The government talks about the creation of

more than 2 million jobs in the last four years.

17 The government talks particularly about the programs “Families in Action” and “Greater Colombia”.

18 For example, it is recognized by researchers that the city of Medellín makes up the Mission for Connecting the Series Employment, Poverty and Inequality – MESEP – who adopt a new methodology for calculating and updating the series prepared by the DANE for this city.

19 We are referring to the Report on Human Development, 2014, UN.

20 Research conducted in 2011 by Ana María Ibañez, dean of economics at the University of the Andes.

21 The Human Development Index (HDI) is an indicator of human development created by the United Nations to measure the progress of a country. Unlike many other indicators that measure the economic development of a country, the HDI analyzes health care, education and income.

22 The Gini coefficient is an indicator used by the World Bank and that the DANE uses in its quality of life surveys that measure how much the distribution of income (or, in some cases, consumption expenditure) among individuals or households within the economy departs from a perfectly equal distribution.

## DENMARK

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*Workers' Communist Party of Denmark (APK)*

### **The role of the youth in “the Competition State” and the ideological offensive against the youth**

*Dorte Grenaa*

**T**he future belongs to the youth, so the saying goes. Yes – if not the youth, who else would it be? The question is which youth will hold the future in their hands? Shall it be the youth of the bourgeoisie, of the rich exploiters and speculators, the youth of the imperialists, of the power elite, of fascism, who are all brought up and educated to continue to intensify repression and exploitation? Or will it be the working class youth, the youth of the exploited and oppressed, who shall shape the future? There is a world of difference. And these are the two prospects for the working youth today.

The bourgeois and imperialist media pay homage to and worship “Youth” as an entity, defined only by age, but at the same time they curse those groups of young people that do not

fit into their glamorous images. The youth is portrayed as devoid of class and history.

Of course it is by far not all young people who grow up or are brought up with a clear understanding and consciousness of their class. Children and the very young are defined by the class that their parents belong to. Young people are in a transition phase in their lives and often define themselves according to the class or social strata in which they expect to be placed according to their education, or they may define themselves as a counter-culture expelled from the established society.

The program of the Workers' Communist Party – The Manifesto for a Socialist Denmark – adopted by the founding Congress in April 2000, gives the youth a clear-cut class analysis to understand their situation and conditions,

and to realize that all these things are not a question of individual failure or success. Not the least, it offers the working class youth an instrument to understand their own role in shaping a better future and a better society under socialism.

### **The role of the youth and the working class youth today**

The bourgeois have a fixed strategy in spite of their deafening “glam messages”. The great majority of the young generation must be obedient soldiers in the production of the neoliberal “competition state” of imperialism and its wars of terror for resources, markets and power.

To avoid having their future abused in such a manner, it is the role of the youth of today to throw all their energy and their strong force into the creation of another society, a socialist Denmark, to prevent the scenario of the bourgeoisie and imperialism from becoming their future.

Every new generation must live through their own experiences and use other forms and methods according to the concrete conditions of their generation. The decisive thing is what class interests and policies they serve. Will they make the youth join the class struggle on the side of the working class, or will they lead them away from the working class and through illusions to inevitable defeat?

The different struggles of the youth – from the struggle in defense of the SU (Educational Support of the State) to the struggle for youth housing – cannot be seen in isolation nor be fought alone. For the struggle against the hostility towards refugees and immigrants, racism and fascism, it is decisive that it be seen and

conducted in relation to the broad struggles for change, against cutbacks, wage cuts and social dumping. If these two issues are separated, it means the advance of reaction.

Reformism with its present government led by the social democrats is trying to pose as champions against the racism and chauvinism of the right-populist Danish Peoples’ Party. But it is their own anti-social and neoliberal politics that create the background for and incite racism and chauvinism. And in practice they adopt the reactionary positions and policies of that party, which became the largest party in votes in the election for the EU Parliament in May 2014.

The struggles of the youth must be linked to the decisive questions of the class struggle and be an innovative part of the creation of a broad anti-racist, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist united front and popular front, in order to defend the rights of the working class and the popular majority and to combat the offensive of neoliberal cutbacks and imperialist wars. The struggles of the youth must be linked to and united with the struggle of the entire working class for change, for a socialist society.

The youth has always been characterized by revolutionary energy, courage, their dreams and hopes for a better life and a better future, and they have a great storehouse of previous experiences to consult from the youth struggles over generations.

### **Some features of the Danish youth today**

Denmark is a small imperialist country, deeply integrated into the imperialist and mo-

nopolist alliances of NATO and the European Union. Since 2001 it has been in the front lines of the successive aggressive wars launched by the US.

Today's youth have been born and grown up under the pressure of the European Union of the monopolies that is more and more demonstrating its true reactionary face, constructing the neoliberal union state. They were born in a country without self-determination, which has simply turned into one of the countries of the European Union, existing under its dictate. They have grown up in a country that is on a permanent war footing as a part of the aggressive imperialist "war of terror" alliance of NATO and the US around the world.

**Young people are growing up in a society where they are told that they have the right to bomb and kill the populations of other countries, claiming that it is done in the name of "democracy" and "progress".**

But this is the same "democracy", that incarcerates anti-racists and opponents of the wars and secures police protection for Nazis. The same "democracy" that uses elite soldiers to destroy the youth house in Copenhagen, criminalizes the struggle of the youth and leaves them without jobs, housing, education and the possibility of providing for themselves. They even claim that this is "free choice".

**The youth is growing up under the weight of a society where the dominance of the monopolies stretches into every corner of life, and they experience a carefully planned militarization of all aspects of society and social life today. War is presented as the normal state of affairs, a chance to make a career, a part of everyday life.**

The Military-Industrial-Media-Academic Complex has taken control of the media streaming with military news censorship and poses daily as so-called scientific, objective experts and researchers.

In the beginning of this century, the new global world order of imperialism, that meant wars affecting all continents, has also unleashed a new cold war among the imperialist world powers and increased the danger of a third world war.

**The youth today are growing up with the consequences of the series of neoliberal "reforms" that have changed the Danish (capitalist) welfare society into the "competition state" of neoliberalism.** In addition to the effects of the economic and financial world crises of capitalism, this has meant that for the first time in many decades there is a generation of youth that has worse living conditions than their parents' generation.

This is the reality framing their lives and consciousness, and where they must conduct their struggles and gain their experiences.

The growing fascisation in Denmark and about the countries of the EU is an expression of the fact that the monopoly bourgeoisie of the European Union has a keen awareness that their "generous offer" to the youth of their present and future is not embraced voluntarily. They are keenly aware that extended struggles take place among the youth in the countries of the EU against the consequences of their policies and "reforms", and that confidence in them is vanishing. They no longer believe that they can hold onto their power without brutal violence, without a police state, and if necessary, without fascism in government.

Today's fascists appear in both neckties and high heels, but also with swastikas, arson and racist campaigns against immigrants. In many countries of the EU they have been welcomed into the parliamentary circus by the bourgeois, liberal and reformist parties, in our country and in our neighboring countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Poland) in a housebroken variant, that will make them a part of "normal" policies, while the police state, the undisguised terrorist dictatorship is being prepared.

**The class contradictions among the youth have been acutely sharpened.** The massive and still growing youth unemployment is the largest in many decades and prevents many from a given youth cohort from entering the ordinary labor market. Tens of thousands have been placed in various workfare and forced labor arrangements where they are used as state authorized social dumping and cheap labor in order to maintain the social benefit. In small Denmark of five million people, altogether about 40,000 youths are even outside the labor reserve as "not ready for the labor market".

Large groups of children and youth are excluded and discriminated against in relation to work, housing, leisure and amusements because of their class or ethnic background, their name, where they live or how they look. The continuous cutbacks in education and leisure facilities have increased the ghettoisation, where the youth, and foremost the boys, are left to the parking lots and criminal gangs. These groups of excluded youths are not only deprived of the same possibilities that most of the youth have, but they also lose more and

more democratic and social rights. The sanctions and the punishments from the state are increasing steadily. Even having a boyfriend or a girlfriend can be punishable, if you are poor and unemployed. This is due to the new law of mutual dependency, where people who live together are obliged to take financial responsibility for each other instead of having social rights.

At a time when the educational institutions are centralized in a few cities in Denmark, the class and geographic distortion of Denmark leave the youth in rural and coastal areas in increasing isolation in many fields.

### **Housing, work and education in imperialist neo-liberalism**

The youth has been used to spearhead the implementation of many of the anti-social neoliberal reforms. In order to weaken the general resistance to a given reform they have been calculated to hit different age groups at different times. But whether it is the increase in pension age or reduction or elimination of social benefits such as the so-called cash assistance, it is the young generation that is hit the hardest. With the privatization of social policies in the EU, where social benefits are made dependent on how many years you have been in the labor market, exclusion and discrimination have serious economic and social consequences for the rest of one's life. They are left in economic, social and cultural poverty. **Imperialist neoliberalism has excluded in advance one fifth of the youth from work and education.**

**The youth have become much more de-**

**pendent on economic and other assistance from their families than the generations before them.** The neoliberal reforms have not only cut down and reduced the length of time in which one can obtain social assistance. Many such benefits have been completely abandoned that were formerly public care tasks. They have been made into family responsibilities. As a consequence, the image of the “happy nuclear family” is breaking down. The contradictory fact is that you are expected to provide for yourself from when you are 18 years old, but in order to get state support for education you are judged by your parents’ income until you are 20.

An increasing number of young people today are dependent on their parents and have to continue living with them, not being able to afford their own homes. In Denmark in a few years this has grown to 25 percent of those between 18 and 30 years, exactly the age where in the foregoing decades one would move out to create an independent life.

With the centralization of education in a few towns, this means that many young people have to leave their parents’ homes and settle in another part of the country. But there is no work, income or cheap housing for the majority of young people, who cannot get an apartment bought by their mother and father. Tens thousands of young people in Copenhagen are listed just for a room. The number of homeless youth between 18 and 24 in the streets has doubled during the last four years – these are youth whose families have not been able to provide for them.

**The labor market confronting the youth today is run by the neo-liberal principles of**

**the EU, where wages, workers’ rights and a healthy and safe work environment are considered to be distortionary and anti-competitive. The youth is the labor force of the European Union, which shall be moved across borders according to the needs of the employers.**

Many young people are unaware of the former workers’ rights and they are not met with and included in a strong labor unity in the workplace, where they might learn about the collective struggle for these rights. To them atypical employments are typical and normal conditions of the EU labor market – temporary, part time, short-time, paid by the hour, day laborers, or internship or contract employees.

In attractive jobs young people often have to work without any pay for a long time to “deserve” a vacancy job. Many municipalities terminate the education of trainees if they get pregnant. 14,000 young people, who have gone through part of their education in vocational schools, cannot complete due to lack of internships. Entire industries such as the grocery sector employ only youth part-time, preferably under 18.

Exactly in these areas many struggles have been fought during recent years, making the youth more aware of their situation and the conditions of their struggle.

**The entire educational system has been one of the main targets of the bourgeoisie and the European Union** – and we have not seen the end of the neoliberal educational reforms – from the learning objectives of nurseries to the PhD’s of the universities and lifelong learning and everything in between. The readjustment of the educational system to



entirely serve the needs of capital has had other effects. Where earlier generations in the labor market were better educated than those who retired, this has now come to an end. More young people do get a higher education, but one in every six adults who leave the educational system do not have even the same educational level as their parents. According to the EU designs one fifth of the young generation and the future ones must not have any education at all, they are excluded and left as actual illiterates.

### **The ideological struggle is a political battleground**

Ideological control and aggression consists in organizing the ideas of people and controlling their thoughts and actions. Concepts and ideas are not “neutral”, and they are not eternal or unchangeable. They represent definite classes and definite class interests.

The ideology of the imperialist bourgeoisie, in control of the US, the EU, NATO and every imperialist state, is reactionary; it serves to retain and strengthen their rule as a class, to prepare aggression and enslave other peoples.

Marxism-Leninism, the ideology of the working class, is revolutionary, and aims at ending the power of the bourgeoisie and imperialism and in their place building a new socialist society where there is no room for oppression and exploitation.

The ideological struggle about which road and what future the youth will choose is a decisive one to both the reactionary forces and the progressive and revolutionary forces. It is a question of life and death.

Different currents and tendencies especially directed towards the youth and among the youth can be observed – from anarchistic and populist socialist ideas to more limited ideologies covering some aspects.

The ideological oppression of the youth is intense, massive and pervasive in all corners and developments of life and society. According to the neoliberal view of man, everything is reduced to a commodity to gain profit, and can be valued quantitatively for its market value. Your friends become “social capital” to be sold on facebook. You “invest” in your job, your health, your family and so on. Young people are termed “enterprises that must **brand** themselves in order to optimize their resumes and job capital”.

All means are applied to prevent the working class youth from understanding their real situation and true revolutionary role. They must be prevented from perceiving their collective situation and the experience that it can only be altered by collective fight and class struggle. The various popular youth sectors must be split and made into opponents of each other. Imperialism is trying to privatize everything and present it as individualism and even as individual and unique solutions, which are meant to hide the still stronger uniformity, standardization and disciplining.

The more contradictory, confusing and twisted by demagoguery the world appears, the more the message is sold that your survival and success depend on getting control of everything that can be measured and weighed – your body, your motion, the number of your friends, your grades, etc. Insecurity is traded, and profits are made from selling individual security



solutions. A self-help culture where everything starts and ends with yourself and your family is flowering as never before, and it consumes large amounts of time, money and energy. The growing demands of neoliberalism in all fields have made stress become almost a normal state, and the entire “feel good” culture becomes small breaks offered to curb the feeling that this cannot be the purpose of life.

“Nature” must become trendy, with a hunting license, the right gear, equipment and apps, so you can flash yourself and do a selfie on the social media, showing how many animals or kilometers you have done.

Through the live-streaming media culture young people are constantly introduced as the great ideal to the false and unattainable image of the happy bourgeois nuclear family where all family members have all their needs fulfilled. It is transformed into a question of a demand on each person to obtain personal success. The ideological repression of the monopolies, in addition to the economic, social and environmental oppression, is steadily affecting the mental health of young people in a negative way, even before their personal future finds its shape.

A new wave of radical feminism can be observed under such circumstances. In Sweden a feminist party has been founded, which won a seat in the EU-parliament under the slogan “Racists Out – Feminists In”. During the recent Swedish parliamentary elections in September 2014, every other party declared themselves to be “non-socialist” feminists.

This is an expression of the objectively worsened situation for the majority of the population in Sweden, Denmark and other EU

countries. The economic and social cutbacks severely affect women and their continued double responsibility– their roles both as full-time workers (as they are today) and as the main ones responsible for the family and its care.

The capitalist contradictions between the real conditions and what the young girls learn and are brought up as – that is to believe that they have acquired complete equality – has not only become more visible, but also more intolerable.

The neoliberal reforms roll back the advances formerly won by women to a time when many women lived as housewives, restricted to their homes. Today the old patterns of gender roles from pink and light blue babies are forcefully reintroduced – but to an everyday life where it makes no sense, or is in accord with the demands and conditions of neo-liberalism.

This forces both girls and boys into both stereotypical and ambiguous roles, where they cannot succeed. “Little Princesses” grow up as “Miss Perfects” and spend years of their childhood and youth finding out that they are not self-induced failures. More and more young people, especially girls, lead a virtually parallel existence in the social media – a life that is perfect, happy and without problems and crises – which paralyses them in the face of the facts of reality. The dependence on “likes” is systematized by the marketing of neoliberalism and the hope of a job as a virtual trend-setter. The macho Iron man and the elite soldier are equally impossible role models for the boys.

At the same time as a growing gender fright is promoted, even younger children are

introduced to pornography as being the same as love and sexual life. Sexual harassment in the social media is a growing problem. One third of 9th grade girls (15-16 years old) have been victims of this from strangers. Also the crude violence towards girls and women – physical, mental, sexual, material and economic violence – is a growing social issue, which is treated as a question of private guilt and responsibility.

Insecurity is also used to promote very old reactionary morals and values. Going all the way back to the Christian Old Testament, the classless concept of “the struggle of good against evil” is preached - turning it into a strategic idea of war against “the axis of evil” or doomsday terrorism. An offshoot of this is the notion that if you have nothing to hide, you cannot be against the permanent surveillance by the police state. The glorification of power communities of heroes, arms and violence recruits youth from excluded and marginalized groups to be criminal, fascist and religious warriors, mercenaries and members of gangs.

The ideological offensive of the bourgeoisie continues at a furious speed. A flow of new ideas, phenomena and alternatives replaces those of yesterday. It is a comprehensive and necessary task for the progressive and revolutionary youth movement to tell the truth to the youth about all this in a way that can liberate their energy, initiative and vitality.

### **Weaknesses in the organization of the youth**

In our country today we do not have a strong communist youth league, which could

be the authoritative political center and organizational glue needed to unleash the initiatives and anger and create a new mass youth movement and give it the necessary perspectives. A political radicalization is taking place and many young people are searching for ideas of another society, the ideas of revolution and of communism. Very often the young organize where they find other young people they know, and where things are happening, rather than according to the political programs of the various organizations. Or they organize in various counter-culture groups without formal membership.

The Communist Youth League of Denmark (Danmarks Kommunistiske Ungdomsforbund – DKU) is the youth organization of our Marxist-Leninist Workers' Communist Party.

But there are also two other youth groups calling themselves communist. The “Young Communists” (Ungkommunisterne) of the two old Soviet revisionist parties DKP and KPİD, and the “Communist Youth” (Kommunistisk Ungdom) of the new revisionist party Kommunistisk Parti, an amalgamation of a part of the KPİD and the now defunct, formerly Marxist-Leninist DKP/ML. These two organizations are tied up with the revisionist politics of their parties and express their present revisionist splits.

There are also two somewhat larger youth organizations, linked to the two reformist “left” parties in the Danish parliament besides the old social-democratic party of present Prime Minister Helle Thorning Schmidt. They are the SFU of the Socialist People's Party, which was part of the present government, and the SUF, the youth organisation of Enhedsli-

ten (Red and Green Alliance), which also supports the social-democratic government. The possibilities of futures as “politicians” cause these organizations to be “stepping stones” for career seekers

The mass organizations of the youth – such as the student organizations or the organizations of the apprentices – are not playing the same progressive role as earlier, with a few exception. The leadership has to a large extent been taken over by reformists, claiming that the struggle of the youth is not political, and instead of developing the protests it puts brakes on them, narrows them and directs them towards parliamentary mechanisms, to defeat. The real struggle and experiences of these mass organizations have been excluded from their official history and their present identity, so that new young people should not draw lessons from them.

### **On the role of the APK and the communist youth**

The Party must assume its leading role in the development of the communist youth work that is presently weak. Together with other progressive forces it must strengthen and rebuild the mass organizations of the youth. Most importantly it must expand its roots among the working class youth and play its part in giving the various struggles direction and perspective.

The Party must work to find the ways and forms to give the repressed and progressive youth the tools to address the class struggle by promoting Marxist-Leninist theory and practice, and through participation in and collabo-

ration with the different strata of the youth, developing their solidarity, and not least international solidarity.

Some might say that this is out of reach for a small party like APK. But if the communist party – no matter of what size – does not fight concretely to develop the communist youth work, who should? And if this is not done now, then when should it be done?

APK must direct its work towards the working class youth, both in its propaganda and agitation and its practice in the class struggle, and further develop the forms and methods that we presently apply.

The youth has always travelled and looked around the world for new experiences and ideas. This can be used for both reactionary and revolutionary purposes. It is used and abused in a criminal manner by the imperialist war machine, the EU system and the global business elite. It is our task to show and strengthen the true international solidarity between the oppressed and exploited youth and the peoples of the world.

The development of international solidarity is of great importance in the struggle of the youth. It is also of great importance to the struggle of the Danish youth, and especially the young communists, that the knowledge of the struggles and experiences, defeats as well as victories, of the International Marxist-Leninist Communist Movement of today is widened and becomes an integral part of their outlook.

*This paper is a part of the material for the discussions for the 6th Congress of APK that will take place in the spring of 2015.*

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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*Communist Party of Labour (PCT)*

### On dialectics and its importance for the revolutionary struggle

#### **I. To be or not to be dialectical, that is the question**

This is not the place to discuss the validity of dialectics as a method to interpret social and natural phenomena, because we assumed it as valid some time ago; but we insist on its importance as a weapon at hand for revolutionary activity. This is one of the great achievements of human thought and it took a long time to arrive at the generalization that is confirmed by social events and the most significant discoveries to date.

Several generations of thinkers since antiquity have continuously advanced the thinking about this method of analysis, based on the needs of their respective historical periods, and Marxism acknowledges that each one did what he could.

According to Engels, no single individual could arrive at materialist dialectics, and the explanation of the course of humanity using it. It needed the successive contributions of various generations and the emergence of the right period, in this case, that of the capitalist system that, among its many results, simplified class contradictions into two groups facing each other directly: **the bourgeoisie and the proletariat**.

This task fell to Karl Marx who, in the words of Lenin, synthesized the most advanced that human thought had achieved up to the 19th century.

In any case, it is not correct to assume that dialectics has already been given to us, and that it is sufficient to have a general understanding of its laws and categories of analysis; the most important matter is to be dialectical in every

moment or situation, particularly the historical, that we must consider. Dialectics itself is a frequent critic, revises and is constantly affirming.

## II. Lenin, a model of a militant armed with dialectics

Lenin himself, whose advocacy of the ideas of Marx and Engels has never been called into question, had to return to the study of dialectical materialism after the defeat of the Russian Revolution of 1905. After that defeat many intellectuals renounced Marxism and dedicated themselves to promoting idealist philosophical conceptions, with negative consequences for political activity, art and literature. If one studies the book *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, it shows that Lenin made philosophical study and debate a condition of the first order to open the way for revolutionary political activity and party activity amidst the general despondency that the defeat led to.

Later, in the midst of the First World War and during the revolution of 1917, he made a “materialist reinterpretation” of the philosophical work of Hegel, unsatisfied with the way that the Russian Marxists, particularly Plekhanov, explained dialectical materialism. In 1914 and 1915, he continuously studied Hegel’s philosophical system, even though he was a proven advocate of the ideas of Marx and Engels.

One should call attention to the fact that the book *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, appeared in 1917; that is, shortly after his “materialist reinterpretation” of the philosophical work of Hegel, most notably his ideas on dialectics, and in the year of the October

Revolution.

For in this book, first, starting from the Marxist method, Lenin concluded that capitalism had advanced to another level of development, that capitalism itself was no longer that of free competition, in which capitalist business owners in the developed countries were mainly engaged in the “**export of commodities**”. However, while they continued this activity, it was no longer the main one; the “**export of capital**” was now the main activity, leading to monopolies as one of the forms of existence of capital.

**The export of capital and monopolies were barely noticeable at the time when Marx studied capitalism**, although his work and especially his method of analysis allowed for the consideration of this tendency of capital. It fell to Lenin to study and generalize conclusions on the imperialist stage of capitalism.

On the other hand, and using dialectics as a theoretical weapon, Lenin concluded that **in this new phase of capitalism, the revolution would have this mark**. The theory of the revolution developed by Lenin is a development of the one outlined by Marx and Engels; it contains elements of identity with this, but it is different in other respects.

### II. 1. The phases of development and dialectics, their importance for politics

The Leninist analysis of imperialism and his political conclusion, **the Leninist theory of the revolution**, makes clear that **development takes place in continuous phases which follow one after the other, so that each subsequent phase has something of the**

**former, but basically it supersedes it**, negating it, incorporating different elements.

The acceptance of dialectics as a method of analysis, as a theoretical weapon for the revolutionary political struggle, implies analyzing what is peculiar in each phase, each moment, each situation, highlighting the contradiction to be resolved in each circumstance, and the political tasks which arise accordingly.

If Lenin had been a slave of what was already written, of what was literally established by Marx and Engels, if he had not based himself on principles and the dialectical logic of their thought, with which he analyzed concretely the imperialist stage of capitalism, it is very likely that the October Revolution would not have taken place. Because the Russian communists and revolutionaries had expected that the thesis of Marx and Engels would be fulfilled, according to which **the proletarian revolution would take place more or less simultaneously in the developed capitalist countries**.

We know that the first socialist revolution took place in Russia, a backward country, and the **“weakest link in the imperialist chain”**, as Leninism concluded.

This does not mean that Marx and Engels were wrong. No. They just did not live during the imperialist stage of capitalism.

Lenin’s faithfulness to dialectics can also be seen in how he concluded the concept of the **“revolutionary situation”**. This concept began to appear, although not explicitly designated as such, during the revolution of 1905, when his view of this matter still attached great importance to the economic situation, particularly to the economic crises, in generating and deepening the political conflicts be-

tween the democratic sectors, including the working class, and the ruling sectors.

Eight years later, in the midst of a new situation of the increase in the mass struggle, in his analysis he integrates **the factor of class consciousness and the demands of the masses**. He makes this element an important distinction between the struggles of 1905 and those of 1913. In that year he makes clear his view that poverty and oppression are not enough for there to be a revolutionary situation. He shows that for the revolution to take place, it is not enough that **“the lower classes should not want to live in the old way”**. It is also necessary that **“the upper classes should be unable to rule and govern in the old way”**. (Lenin, “May Day Action by the Revolutionary Proletariat,” Vol. 19, p. 222; *Collected Works*, 4th English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968).

He likens this situation to a national political and social crisis, which affects both the upper classes and the lower classes and the political system as a whole.

In 1915, in the midst of the First World War, confronted by the positions of the old social-democratic parties, Lenin spoke of **objective and subjective conditions to characterize a revolutionary situation**. The objective conditions have already been pointed out; and referring to the subjective conditions, he refers to the change that must take place in the readiness of the revolutionary class to go over to revolutionary actions, and in this aspect he incorporates the work of the party. That is, **the existence and will of the party to make use of the objective conditions, and through revolutionary propaganda and agitation, to raise**

**the consciousness of the masses and lead them into action; this is the element that completes the objective conditions for there to be a revolutionary situation.**

The militant adherence of Lenin to dialectics is also observed in the concept of the “masses”. This, he states, “changes in accordance with the changes in the nature of the struggle.” In an initial stage of the struggle a handful of revolutionary men and women is sufficient, but this quality, if it is such, should contribute to thousands who are not yet active in the revolution taking part in struggle. When this happens, said Lenin, the party begins to win the masses. He added, “When the revolution has been sufficiently prepared, the concept ‘masses’ becomes different: several thousand workers [**under the conditions of Russia at that time, of course**] no longer constitute the masses. The **concept of “masses”** undergoes a change so that it implies the majority, and not simply a majority of the workers alone, but the majority of all the exploited” (Third Congress of the Communist International).

In 1920, after the victory of the October Revolution, the head of the Bolsheviks made the concept a **“revolutionary situation”** more concrete, that is, he added new elements. In a polemic against leftist deviations, in his book ***Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder***, written in May of that year, he confirmed the elements that make up the concept, but he emphasized that it is not enough that there exist objective conditions and that the revolutionary class and its vanguard should express a practical disposition to struggle. He stated that **“Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone.”**

He argues that **as long as the masses in general are under the influence of right-wing or opportunist parties, it is inconceivable to consider the revolution**, and this is supported by the experience of the Bolsheviks during the first phase of the Russian Revolution, in February of 1917, in which the Soviets supported the bourgeois government of Kerensky after the overthrow of the Tsarist regime.

Let us make a general view of the context of February 1917 in Russia, and draw from this a practical lesson in dialectics. **The Bolsheviks were the most consistent political and ideological expression of the working class and the working people in general.** There were also bourgeois parties such as Kerensky’s which were opposed to the Tsarist regime. The working class and the masses in general wanted to get rid of Tsarism and to a large degree **were under the political and ideological influence of bourgeois liberal reformism.** The Bolshevik party did not yet have sufficient forces.

A reading of the situation in the light of the dialectic would suggest that ***Tsarism was the principal aspect of the contradiction to be resolved. It was not the bourgeois-liberal positions that had to be fought in the first place.*** The main problem was Tsarism and they had to aim their cannons against it. This is what the Bolsheviks did with Lenin at their head; they made tactical political compromises with Kerensky, they gathered forces to overthrow the Tsarist regime.

The first phase of the Russian Revolution of February 1917 was a democratic revolution and from it there emerged a government headed by Kerensky, not by Lenin.



Between February and October 1917 a change took place in the attitude of the working masses and the party of Lenin was there, close to them to lead them to the socialist revolution in this month and last year. In eight months the bourgeois-democratic revolution changed character and became a socialist revolution.

What happened that in so little time such a radical change took place? It took place because the Kerensky government did not meet the expectations of the masses of workers and working people in general and they lived through that experience. They had to live through that experience to get out of the bourgeois-liberal influence, and close by was the wisdom and courage of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party to channel this disillusionment. Neither before nor after, but just at that political moment it was clear that the masses were not willing to continue to tolerate Kerensky.

***“The experience of the masses themselves”*** is an element that enriches the Leninist concept of the “revolutionary situation”. But this *“experience of the masses themselves”* is caused by the strength of the events adverse to their aspirations, but **fueled by the work of propaganda and agitation of the party, which, although at one point it made an agreement with liberal democracy to overthrow Tsarism, never abandoned its strategic focus, the perspective of socialist revolution.**

This is a view of dialectics as a theoretical weapon.

In circumstances such as these, the practical question is to do what Lenin recommended, ***“to be able to lead not only their own party, but also these masses, in their approach, their transition to the new position.”***

The masses, no matter under what political and ideological influence they may be, are the main thing **that should matter to the communists and revolutionaries. “To be able” to lead them, wherever they may be** with the aim that they pass over to a “new position”, as Lenin recommended, **is the art of politicians who seek power.**

### III. Dialectics and we, the Dominican revolutionaries

Whether or not this self-criticism applies to the PCT: the revolutionary weapon that is dialectics does not appear really emphasized in the political views and practices of the majority of the Dominican revolutionary groups, and this is the source of their systematic errors.

One must consider whether the basis of the political thought of many of the Dominican leftists is metaphysics. Consciously or unconsciously, mainly the latter, there is a lot of metaphysics when confronting the specific political situations and certain historical projection. Thus, many proposals that are formulated do not go beyond generalities, formulated as principles, that as generalities tend to remain obvious and cannot give a correct answer to the issues of everyday practice, of tactics.

Let us take as an example a subject of great national debate. **Is the Constituent Assembly elected by Popular Vote a revolutionary slogan?** The answer given is ***yes it is*** or ***no it is not***. Metaphysics cannot explain this apparent contradiction. Dialectics can explain it.

Because **for metaphysics, a thing is one thing or another**. As Engels said in *Anti-Dühring*, **for the metaphysician, “...a thing**



*cannot at the same time be itself and something else. Positive and negative absolutely exclude one another....”*

However, dialectics conceives events and things *“in their interconnection, in their concatenation, their motion, their coming into and passing out of existence...”*; in which one thing, in its development, becomes another, because in an embryonic manner it contains the second inside it, and only lacks the right conditions for the first to disappear and give way to the second, renovated.

With this understanding, the proposal for a Constituent Assembly is a democratic slogan; it enters into the camp of reform, of tactics, meaning that **seen by itself it is not revolutionary**. But only **seen by itself**, isolated from a vision of perspective, **it is only democratic**, not revolutionary. But, **from a dialectical point of view, of the concatenation of phenomena, it enters into the perspective of the revolution, to the degree that concrete political and social reforms that open up bigger and better spaces for the emergence of the popular masses, of the left** as a current, as political organization and participation in the various branches of the state, in a manner independent of the parties that have dominated the political system.

**The Constituent Assembly is a democratic slogan that, put forward from a dialectical, that is, a revolutionary perspective, contributes to the accumulation of revolutionary forces. If it remains in its achievements, it is reformism.** If those who promote it achieve better conditions for revolutionary work, then it is revolutionary. *The struggle for reforms can degenerate into reformism, if these reforms become an end in themselves.*

*And they lead to the revolution, if those same reforms are conceived as a necessary step for better work to push forward the revolution.*

What does this political question have to do with philosophy, or more specifically with dialectics? It is completely related. **“The accumulation of revolutionary forces”** is a political concept. If everything that happens in nature, society and human thought can be explained by Marxist philosophy, then this concept must have a philosophical explanation.

The accumulation of revolutionary forces, as a political concept, is explained by dialectics, that is, *the law of the transition from quantitative changes to qualitative ones*, which generally shows that *under certain conditions*, after a sum of elements, events or situations linked together, one reality makes a leap to become another.

When one takes up the struggle for political reforms without this understanding, it is logical that one walks blindly, without being able to properly determine the tasks and possible political commitments that also correspond to a given context.

Revolutionary practice is blind if it is not illuminated by the categories and laws of dialectics.

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## ECUADOR

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*Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador (PCMLE)*

### Speech at the Internationalist Meeting

August 1, 2014

Comrades and friends,

With great proletarian revolutionary enthusiasm and interest, we have reached August 1 on which we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the PCMLE with our red flags flying.

This is an event of great importance for the proletarian revolutionaries, for the men and women of the left, for the democrats and patriots. It is also a great event for the workers, youth and women of Ecuador; for the teachers, indigenous people and peasants, for the neighborhood residents and small business owners, for the exploited and oppressed, for the poor of the country.

We have existed for 50 years and this occasion allows us the chance to sum up what has been a path of unrelenting struggle, of per-

sistent political action, for the organization of the revolution, with our eyes on the goal of the seizure of popular power and socialism.

Since we were born into the political life of the country, since the distant days of 1964, we have kept in mind the goal of the revolution and socialism, but at the same time we understood an undeniable truth, that "the revolution is made by organizing it and placing ourselves at the forefront of the fight to lead it."

We had before us the challenge of deepening our knowledge and assimilation of the fundamental principles of the emancipatory doctrine of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism. We understood from what the founders stated that "it is not a dogma, but a guide to action," that "Marxism is the concrete analysis of con-

crete conditions" and that it was essential to assimilate it in depth "in order to understand reality, but above all to transform it."

Since our founding, we understood that we had to rescue the essence and validity of the proletarian revolutionary principles that the revisionists and other opportunists, on a national and international scale, had falsified and distorted; but this work of assimilation and affirmation could not be understood as a task enclosed within walls of a closet, but that the knowledge and purification of Marxist-Leninist principles had to be done through study and collective discussion, but in the roar of the storm and the fire of class struggle, closely linked to social and revolutionary practice.

We had before us also the challenge of understanding Ecuadorian reality; the main elements of its economic structure, its traditions of struggle, its real history; not the one that the intellectuals of the ruling classes had put in their texts. We had to delve into the history of the peoples and their struggle, in their brave fights for freedom, for independence, in search of a new life. This tradition of struggle we have to understand in intimate relation to their conditions of life, their aspirations and needs.

Through establishing strong political and organic links with the working masses, we have better understood our own people, and this relationship has helped us to really organize them; through this, we have come to understand their interests, aspirations and needs. Thus the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party with its ideological and political contribution, with the live and direct participation of its members, contributes to their unity, organization and struggle. Thus through the mobiliza-

tion of the workers, youth, women, teachers, peasants and indigenous people, they have understood the need to confront their enemies, the enemies of the people, and the need to seize power, the only alternative to see from there their true aspirations for change.

A significant achievement of our Party has been to chart the strategy, develop the changing tactics – some of which are transitory – that the process of emancipation demands, the revolutionary march towards popular power.

In March of 1970, at our First National Conference, we adopted the General Line of the Ecuadorian revolution, the Party Program and Statutes was approved. Afterwards, at various congresses, with the functioning of the Central Committee, its leading bodies at various levels, with the action of the leadership and membership, we have worked within the permanent and many-sided process of political reality; what is happening with the capitalist system, gripped by a crisis of a general nature; of the contradictions that move the world today and how these phenomena are expressed in Ecuadorian reality.

We have studied with keen interest the initiatives and contributions of our fraternal Marxist-Leninist parties of the International Conference, because those actions serve us as valuable example and reference in many circumstances of the class struggle in our country; just as the experiences of the forces of the left, especially of our continent, have been useful to us.

Of the ideological assimilation achieved we are active practitioners of proletarian internationalism; we have contributed in some initiatives to achieving the unity of the

Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries and of other organizations of the left in the anti-imperialist fight and for national liberation; we constitute an iron detachment of combat in the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, ICMLPO, whose 20th anniversary we are now celebrating this August. This luckily coincides with the unitary formation and organization of the Marxist-Leninists internationally that took place in Quito, in the Middle of the World, in 1994. We politely request this whole massive turnout at this Internationalist Meeting to stand up, to greet it with thunderous applause and wave our banners to salute with enthusiasm this great revolutionary event!

We firmly believe that a significant achievement of the Party in the past fifty years has been to promote and maintain the relationship with the different sectors of the people, in the first place with the workers. Consistent with Marxist-Leninist principles we have understood the historic role that the working class must play. Under the conditions of a backward and dependent capitalist country, in which the number of workers is not large in relation to the rest of the population, we have linked ourselves to the masses of the working class, we have taken root in it. We have contributed to the formation of the Revolutionary Federation, the General Union of Workers of Ecuador, UGTE, to overcome the repressive and divisive action of the employers and the governments of the bourgeoisie, the harmful and treacherous work of revisionism, opportunism and the trade union bureaucracy.

We Communists of Ecuador have worked to provide the trade union movement with an

important instrument in the struggle for defense of its interests and rights, to contribute to its unity, organization and consistent struggle, and to clarify the perspective of its own emancipation.

The organization of the youth, for their rebellious, irreverent role, has been our concern, because the characteristics of young people, when they are channeled and led by an advance force, converts them into revolutionaries, into a dynamic force for social transformation.

Some years ago we organized the Revolutionary Youth of Ecuador, JRE, that calls itself "the young guard of the PCMLE," which has allowed us to provide a leftist, emancipatory course to the Ecuadorian youths. The "J" has along its path brave, anti-imperialist struggles, combats and action against the sellout and anti-popular policy of the bourgeois governments, heading towards social change, which the young people themselves have also demanded as the work of the Party.

We have made efforts to strengthen our links with the student youth in the universities. The universities have developed brave, mass struggles in defense of a democratic, scientific and quality education; in this area, the Communist Party has been present in the street fights and in the university, together with the student youth of the country.

Starting from the Marxist conception of the emancipation of women, our Party has taken care to assimilate ever more this concept to achieve the social and political rights of working women in this capitalist society; to denounce the inequities that they suffer under this system of exploitation, to confront the tra-

ditionalist and male chauvinist positions, pointing out that the emancipation of the workers is indivisible from the political participation of women. The PCMLE formed the Ecuadorian Confederation of Women for Change, CONFEMEC, to promote the consciousness, denunciation and struggle, the unity and organization to bring working women into the struggle for change.

Comrades and friends: We highlight here the efforts made since our first years to expand the Party's influence on the peasantry, who have carried out brave struggles for land, for water, for a just price for their products and for essential public works in the countryside. We Marxist-Leninists have been together with the peasants in many of their fights and have put forward the perspective of strengthening ourselves in order to form the alliance of the workers and peasants, which is indispensable for the revolutionary process and the seizure of power.

With the banners of the revolution we are expanding our influence on the various fronts and sectors where the working masses are; the youth, women, teachers, poor neighborhoods and small business owners who have actually felt the combative and clarifying influence of the Party.

As for the indigenous movement, we are making efforts to better understand the Marxist question of multi-culturalism and multi-nationality in this multi-ethnic country. We are with the indigenous movement and the struggle for its political rights as ethnic groups and peoples. We make their aspirations our own and we work to achieve unity with the ancestral peoples in their emancipatory, revolutionary goals.

As we strive towards the revolutionary objectives, from the beginning we have confronted the sellout and anti-popular policies of the various governments of the ruling classes: military and civilian dictatorships; constitutional governments, openly reactionary and anti-communist ones; others that follow a policy of capitalist development and are reformist, repressive and authoritarian such as the present regime of Correa, which is clearly at the service of capitalist modernization, closely linked to the interests of imperialism, but which utilizes a supposedly revolutionary language in its work of confusion towards the working masses.

We have achieved successes, we have suffered defeats, we experienced difficulties, but what is always in our thought and action is the conviction and decisiveness about our role and our objective.

We have led a conscious and persistent work to build, maintain, and strengthen the communist party: in ideology, to affirm our revolutionary conceptions; in practice to carry out actions to develop the process of accumulation of forces and the battles that bring closer the task of liberation; in political action and organizational development, winning to the ranks of the party those social fighters who embrace the cause of revolution and freedom. To make the party so that it is structured and functions loyal to the Leninist principles of organization; so that it rises up in the factories, in the capitalist plantations, in the peasant communes, in the educational centers and the popular neighborhoods.

All this work is based on the understanding and decisiveness that we have about the

full validity and viability of the social revolution of the proletariat and peoples.

With this conviction we have fought revisionism in all its forms and all its currents, knowing that eliminating it from the popular movement is a necessity for the latter to progress better in its confrontation with imperialism and the bourgeoisie and towards achieving its revolutionary role.

We have struggled consistently against factionalism within the party itself to maintain the consistency of its principles and its internal unity. At times in the life of the party there were anti-Marxist and counter-revolutionary outbreaks, which could not thrive much less damage the party, because with the unity and firmness of the rank-and-file and its consistent leadership, they failed in their attempts to undermine the ideological, political and organizational unity of the PCMLE.

In these 50 years of life it is absolutely correct to honor the heroes of the party and the people. We acknowledge that their lives constitute a unique example; they are unforgettable and remain because they have been precious lives of men and women dedicated to the noble and sublime task of the freedom of the people. From this tribune we present a combative and sincere homage to those fallen comrades of the Marxist-Leninist communist parties and of all revolutionary and leftist organizations in the world. A fitting tribute to their status as popular heroes!

Comrades and friends: We Marxist-Leninists are men and women of a special mettle; we are soldiers of the world proletarian revolutionary cause. Therefore, on behalf of our National Leadership, of the Central Commit-

tee, we greet the communist militants of our ranks, the candidate members of the party, our collaborators and sympathizers, those simple and modest, courageous and consistent people who have made the revolution their life's work for all these 50 years. We greet all our friends, the families of our members who understand this commitment, their loved ones and close supporters...

Our solidarity as militant communists with all those detained, prosecuted and politically persecuted of our Party, of the MPD, of the leftist and popular organizations, both nationally and internationally.

We also present a revolutionary greeting to the people of Palestine, shackled with the cowardly attacks of Israeli Zionism, instrument of U.S. imperialism, which is now preying on them with their bombardments of defenseless populations, destroying schools, hospitals and highways, killing children, women, the elderly and civilians. We denounce these crimes and at the same time raise our voices to demand respect for their right to self-determination and territorial integrity that this people demands.

We would like to especially use this opportunity to state that the leaders and rank-and-file of the MPD have the firm and unconditional support of the communists of Ecuador in their struggle against the evil maneuvers of the Correa regime, which is trying through the deceitful maneuver to suspend its electoral registration, to eliminate the revolutionary action of this political formation. This is a vain attempt of the enemies of the people and of the left. The MPD was born in the struggle for a new Ecuador. Our Party has had many political agreements with this political

organization and we have fought together in countless struggles for freedom, for real democracy and social change; we have been united in elections and other actions of economic and political combat. The enemies will not get away with this, this is a rebellious and revolutionary people for a long time, this is an MPD that with its struggle challenges the time and the evil maneuvers of the enemies of the people!

We Marxist-Leninists have enthusiastically seen various processes of unity of the leftist and popular forces; consistent with our unitary concept and our principles, we have supported, worked for and participated to bring about the unity of the political sectors of the anti-imperialist and democratic left. We will continue

with the view and willingness to achieve the broadest and greatest unity of these sectors for the revolutionary and liberating purposes.

Our commitment continues and we will not let down our fists or lay down our banners until we fulfill our noble and historic mission, the seizure of power through revolution and the establishment of popular power and socialism!

**Long live the 50th Anniversary of the PCMLE!**

**Long live the 20 years of the ICMLPO!**

**Long live proletarian internationalism!**

**Glory to Marxism-Leninism!**

August 1, 2014

## GERMANY

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*Organization for the Construction of the Communist Workers Party of Germany*

### **Russia: Anti-imperialist angel of peace or capitalist-imperialist great power?**

Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine up to the present armed struggle, there have been completely different evaluations of the policy of Russia and the character of Russia today among the progressive, revolutionary and communist forces in Germany.

There are no great differences in the evaluation of the aggression of Germany, the EU, NATO and the USA in Ukraine. All agree that the present Ukrainian government came to power by force, that it is ridden with fascists and that it represents the interests of the western great powers. All agree that Germany, EU, NATO and the USA are expanding their spheres of influence – at the expense of Russia.

We can fight jointly against this policy, as many revolutionary and communist organizations do. But there are also voices who use the differences in the evaluation of Russia to separate and fight against each other.

#### **Is Russia an angel of peace?**

For example, the German Association of Free Thinkers published a declaration in May of 2014, in which they say:

*“The only chance of defending peace is coming closer to Russia. The Russian Federation is the protector of peace in Europe... Only on the side of Russia can a third world war be prevented. Only in solidarity with Russia can the peace movement, especially in Germany, become an important force.”* (Original in German, p. 6, pdf: [http://www.freidenker.org/cms/dfv/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=437](http://www.freidenker.org/cms/dfv/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=437))

In “Rotfuchs” (Red Fox) of July 2014, p. 7, Herrmann Jacobs writes in an article entitled *“Why oligarchic capitalism in Russia is not imperialist. This is no restoration of the classical type,”* that Russia *“at this moment is waging*



*an anti-fascist battle to defend peace...*"

Hans Guenther Szalkiewicz of the DKP (revisionist German Communist Party) in the magazine "Theory and Practice", June 2014, p. 3 laments:

"In a joint leaflet of the Communist Initiative Gera 2010, the Organization for the Construction of a Communist Workers Party of Germany, the Communist Party of Germany and the Revolutionary Friendship Association entitled 'Do you want to pay for the struggle over Ukraine' there are sentences such as: 'When the new great power Germany, the EU and the USA have Ukraine under their control, then they will be directly on the border of their rival, the great power Russia'. And: *'The struggle of the great powers leads to the danger of war.... We are not on the side of Putin and Yanukovych.'* In the call for the Easter peace march the newspaper 'Work and Future' (organ of the Organization for the Construction of a Communist Workers Party of Germany), entitled 'Peace', the same thing is said in a somewhat modified manner: *'Before our eyes a power struggle is taking place.... They have acted openly against the great power Russia, with which we do not sympathize'.*" Hans-Guenther Szalkiewicz argues that one cannot characterize Russia as capitalist or imperialist. He refers to the declaration of the Free Thinkers, that Russia is a power for peace.

On the other side the Marxist-Leninist Party Germany (MLPD, a Maoist group) in the call by ICOR (International Coordination of Revolutionary Parties and Organizations) for the Anti-War Day (September 1) states: *"Russia is pursuing an expansionist, military-polit-*

*ical tactic in the Crimea and East Ukraine. It is rehearsing with secret maneuvers such as Vostok 2014 with 'troop transfers over great distances' for an invasion of Ukraine."* ([http://www.mlpd.de/2014/kw33/Aufruf\\_ICOR\\_Antikriegstag\\_2014\\_RZ.pdf](http://www.mlpd.de/2014/kw33/Aufruf_ICOR_Antikriegstag_2014_RZ.pdf))

Concerning the article by Jacobs in "Rot-fuchs", the Communist Initiative (not to be confused with the Communist Initiative Gera 2010) published a vehement statement, in which it explains: *"Russia is an imperialist country with a fully developed, aggressive and exploiting, quite normal capitalism."* (<http://kommunistische-initiative.de/index.php/dokumente-der-ki/dokumente/1791-erwiderung-auf-h-jacobs-keine-restauration-klassischer-art-warum-russlands-oligarchischer-kapitalismus-nicht-imperialistisch-ist>)

### What is the reality?

From our standpoint it is very clear, that today's Russia is a capitalist country. The richest person in Russia, Alisher Usmanov, has assets of \$17.6 thousand million US and is number 34 on the Forbes list of the richest persons on the world. The next is Mikhail Fridman with \$15.4 thousand million US, Leonid Michelson with \$15.4 thousand million US, Viktor Vekselberg with \$15.1 thousand million US, etc. Such assets, we know as communists and the workers, employees and the whole people also know, are not the result of honest labor, but of exploitation and criminal machinations. In the case of Russia these assets are mainly from privatized state-owned property. To say it clearly, this is finance capital, an es-

sential attribute of an imperialist state!

Comrade Hans Guenther Szalkiewicz laments in "Theory and Practice": *"Within the DKP the statement about a capitalist state is repeated from beginning to end."*

He should say what Russia is.

He resists calling Russia a great power that is fighting for its own interests and says:

*"It was clear to see that Russia was not capable of defending its own interests, even in the international finance markets when the banking system of Cyprus was destroyed, and for the first time in the present economic history the bank deposits of the customers (including the Russians) were requisitioned for 'consolidation'."*

Even in this statement he says that Russia fought to save its interests. We say clearly that Russia fought to save the interests of its finance capital. It was the power in a weaker position, as he laments. Should we as Marxist-Leninists support the weaker, inferior capitalist great power? Should we cry when Russian finance capital suffers losses in the international struggle for super-profits through its own speculation?

Precisely with this example he proves that it is a matter of finance capital, which participates in international speculation.

And we think it is bizarre not to see Russia as a great power. Russia cannot be seen as a small or medium-sized power among the capitalist states. Regarding its economic, political and military resources it is a great power, which doesn't say anything about its political character. Even the socialist Soviet Union was a great power. Thankfully! Because only with its strength could it defeat Hitler-fascism.

In the statement of the "Communist Initiative" it is explained with concrete facts that today's Russia is capitalist and imperialist. Therefore we quote it at length:

*"To answer the question as to whether Russia is imperialist or whether, as H. Jacobs thinks, the Russian economy is 'not a fully developed' capitalism, we should examine whether the Russian economy is participating in the world economy as an imperialist competitor."*

*"1. Without a doubt Russian monopolies exist. The concentration of production was highly developed in the Soviet Union and this was taken over. Today's Russia did not need a hundred years to develop monopolies – it inherited the already highly concentrated socialist economy and imposed on it the private ownership of the means of production."*

*"In the Forbes list of the largest monopolies in the world there are 28 Russian monopolies, including No. 4: Gazprom, No. 69: Lukoil, No. 72: Rosneft, No. 91: Sberbank."*

*"The Russian state owns a great part of these monopolies. It holds 50% + 1 of the shares of Gazprom. The other shares belong to private individuals and to foreign investors. According to economic studies the Russian economy is highly concentrated, in some industrial sectors higher than in the USA and Germany. For example the percentage that the 10 largest monopolies contribute to the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) was 28.9% for Russia in 2006, for the USA it was only 14.1%."*

*"Most sectors of the economy, especially energy, machine building, transport as well as food production, are highly monopolized."*

*"In Russia we are dealing with monopolized, highly concentrated capital, conven-*

tional indicators of state-monopoly capitalism.

"2. Sberbank is No. 91 on the Forbes list and is one of the biggest banks in the world. The WTB bank, the Alfa bank and their subsidiary banks in the Western countries such as the Raiffeisenbank also play a decisive role.

"There are big banks that are closely connected to a monopoly company or that belong to it. Such are the Gazprom bank, the Promsvyazbank and Uralsib.

"The merger of bank and industrial capital has also taken place a long time ago. The financiers in Russia are not separate and provide credits to the industrial magnates, as was the case in earlier stages of capitalism. This separation has not existed for a long time, the magnates themselves are the owners of the banks. Not for nothing are they called oligarchs.

"Take for example the financial oligarch Mikhail Prochorov. From 1993 to 1998, he was chair of the ONEKSIM-Bank, from 2000 to 2001 chair of the ROSBank, at the same time from 2001 to 2008 he was the main shareholder and chief executive of 'Norilski Nickel', making his profit by mining nickel. Nearly all Russian oligarchs have a similar biography. The merger of industrial and bank capital is completed. The financial oligarchy is a second characteristic of imperialism.

"3. Export of capital. Does Russia export capital? Of course! In the 1990s there was an uncontrolled flight of capital to the West. The new capitalists tried to secure their stolen wealth in the Western banks.

"But since 2000, the cash flow to the West has become relatively small (5-8% of the export turnover per year). The volume of direct

investment by Russian monopolies abroad increased rapidly and amounted to \$362.1 thousand million U.S. in 2011, which was 30% of the GDP of Russia and 18 times more than in 2000. The Russian capitalists invest in new industrial resources in foreign countries, in order to attain huge profits in countries with even cheaper labor power and resources than in Russia itself."

The facts are overwhelming and clear. And capital has to increase – by exploiting living labor power. Should we refuse our solidarity to Russian workers and trade unionists, because they supposedly weaken the "Russian angel of peace," when they are on strike for higher wages, better working conditions and start to fight for democratic rights and are confronted with the clubs of Putin's police or even worse?

In the stage of imperialism, of the monopolies there is also export of capital and plundering of foreign countries. In the formerly socialist countries it is most obvious that capital is not accumulated by honest work, thrift or diligence, but by robbery and plundering. In the transition to open, unmasked capitalism, the different groups of oligarchs, who were all part of the revisionist leadership, greedily grabbed the privatized state property.

One asks, how can so many on the left be so confused that they now consider capitalist-imperialist Russia to be an "angel of peace"?

### **On the defensive**

It is obvious that Russia found itself on the defensive since the transition to open capitalism. Step by step its capitalist competitors snatched away its spheres of influence and

they continue to do so. All the Eastern European countries came under the control of EU and NATO from one day to the next. Germany underwent a rapid increase in power and influence. In those places where they could not take control voluntarily, the USA, EU, NATO and Germany intervened with all means, economic, political and if necessary military. Wars such as in former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq and presently in Libya, Syria and Ukraine are examples of this redivision of spheres of influence. Russia was dramatically weakened as a great power in this process.

In fact the ruling class in Russia initially was busy getting as rich and grabbing as much power as possible. Everyone fought against everyone else. The nouveau riche were ready to buy and sell everything. Corruption, bribery, prostitution, drugs – everything blossomed. For a long period the country was in the chaos of robbery and division of the loot. This led to a situation where the state declined and the military was substantially weakened. Corrupt military personnel, who wanted their share of the loot, sold weapons and equipment. In this era of the division of the loot the ruling class was occupied with itself, so that it could only act defensively abroad and could only look on helplessly as the USA, NATO, EU and Germany expanded aggressively.

No one can assert that with the change from Yeltsin to Putin nothing essential happened. In fact with the replacement of Yeltsin by Putin this first phase ended. Russian capital wanted to consolidate its loot and avoid greater losses of influence and power.

Frederick Engels said: *“The modern state, whatever its form, is an essentially capitalist*

*machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal aggregate capitalist.”* (Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, 1880, English edition.)

Thus the state has the task of asserting the interests of the whole capitalist class, also against individual capitalists. Putin did this. Putin deprived oligarchs, who were ready to totally sell out the country, of power. He strengthened the state and rebuilt it as a functioning machine. He strengthened the military and put it in working order again. This was in the interest of the whole Russian capital, which did not want to be a loser forever.

Now that it has been strengthened the great power Russia is more and more intervening in the struggle for the redivision of the world. For the present it is still on the defensive, because it had lost a lot of influence in previous years. But the fact that Russia has again gained strength can be seen impressively in Syria, where it smashed the plans of US imperialism in a defensive but determined manner. Also in the Crimea Russia has made it clear that one must take it into account militarily. The USA, NATO, EU and Germany wailed and cried, but they did not dare to act directly against the union of Crimea with Russia.

Many people, who are furious about the wars of US imperialism and the new military adventures of the German military, were glad that at last someone stopped their advance.

In addition, Russia acting defensively is reviving its old connections with states such as Cuba, Venezuela, Iran and Korea. On the one hand it has open markets in these countries and can trade with them without harassment and sanctions, which increases the profits of the ruling class. On the other hand Russia is forced

to support them in their resistance against US imperialism. With its still existing weakness it needs these states as partners against its competitor USA.

For many people, this seems to be a sign of a progressive policy, while it is in reality a normal imperialist tactic. That it is not a progressive policy is shown by a quote from Putin that is cited in the statement of the Communist Initiative: *“President Putin called the October Revolution a ‘betrayal of the national interests’. He claimed that old Russia had ‘done everything to convince Europe to regulate the conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary peacefully and without bloodshed. But Russia was not listened to. It had to accept the challenge and protect its sister Slavic people’.”*

This openly propagates the national interests of a bourgeois-capitalist country – there is nothing progressive about it.

These contradictions between the competing powers are sometimes objectively useful for countries in their struggle against US imperialism when they ally themselves with Russia. These contradictions are also objectively useful for the progressive, revolutionary and communist forces in Ukraine, which are being brutally persecuted, so that they can at least find a safe shelter. These contradictions are objectively useful for democrats and anti-imperialists like Edgar Snowden, who has actually found shelter in Russia. Lenin also used these inter-imperialist contradictions, when he was in exile in Switzerland or when he travelled through Germany and Finland to take over the leadership of the party and the revolution.

But this did not mean that Lenin treated Switzerland or Germany as “angels of peace.”

He knew clearly that these temporary “allies” could become the enemy tomorrow. And this is what happened, when the German Reich used the weakness of revolutionary Russia to bring large regions under its control. Lenin looked on these things realistically, as a materialist and on the basis of an analysis of imperialism.

We too have to analyze unemotionally the contradictions and development of imperialism, including Russian imperialism. We revolutionaries have to use these contradictions when it is possible. But this does not mean having illusions about the peaceful character of Russia or even more the idea that Russia is not completely capitalist or imperialist.

We do not consider finance capital peaceful, so also not Russian finance capital. It is forced to strive for maximum profit and it was not simply because of greed but because of the need to accumulate capital. Therefore we cannot look at Russia as an “angel of peace.” But in the present situation we will not agitate against Russia – though we will disassociate ourselves from it. This is a question of principle for us: Our attack is directed against our own ruling class. Our solidarity is for all people who are threatened by the imperialist wars for the redivision of the world. Our struggle is directed against our government and against its imperialist alliances, the EU and NATO, which carry out these wars.

### **The main enemy is at home** (Karl Liebknecht)

Regardless of what we think about Russia, the main enemy is at home! In the final analysis the Russian working class and people will decide about the development in Russia. We

do our political work in our own country. When we want to mobilize against war, then we have to mobilize against the intervention of the German army in foreign countries, against the German export of weapons. We have to mainly unmask and reject the policy promoted by Berlin for a treaty of association between the EU and Ukraine, which is an instrument to tie that country closely to Western imperialism, to the USA, particularly to NATO, EU and German imperialism.

For this we need a broad front, in which all who fight against war can work together – regardless of whether they are pacifists, idealists, social democrats, trade unionists or communists. What they think of Russia is secondary and less important. This is a question of analysis, especially for the communists, so that they determine their policy without illusions. We are ready to continue the discussion about this objectively among comrades. Whoever today makes the attitude towards Russia into a principal question of unity, prevents this unity. Whoever today thinks that he should

place before everyone the alternative of whether he is for or against Russia, must be aware that this means aiming for a very small anti-war movement.

We need the opposite! We need the broadest possible anti-war front. This is the task for all progressive, revolutionary and communist forces in our country. In fulfilling this task, everyone can show what he is capable of and what he contributes to the result. Sectarian discussions are harmful.

In this spirit we regret the statement of the Communist Initiative, which is factually correct in many aspects. Its tone makes it clear: They do not want to sit or more importantly work together with anyone who has a different position on the question of Russia. We look at this differently. All those who are against war, intervention in foreign countries and weapons exports have to sit together – whether they are for or against Russia – and to awaken the people in this country with multifaceted actions, to mobilize and organize protests on the broadest basis.



## GREECE

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*Movement for the Reorganization of the Communist Party of Greece (1918-1955)*

### Reactionary anti-communist bourgeois theories that conceal the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union (1953-1990) Part B

#### B. The reactionary anti-communist bourgeois theory of “developed socialism” of Khrushchevite social-democracy

After the violent **overthrow** of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the triumph of the Khrushchevite revisionist counter-revolution in the Soviet Union in 1952, while pursuing the scheduled and systematic policy of gradual restoration of capitalism facilitated by the implementation of **capitalist economic reforms**, the leading anti-communist group of Khrushchev-Brezhnev of what had become the bourgeois social-democratic Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), sought to formulate a suitable theory to con-

ceal this **reactionary process** of going back from socialism-communism to capitalism.

In their attempt to formulate a new and suitable “theory” concealing this reactionary process and the emerging society of restored capitalism, euphemistically called “**developed socialism**” (!), the Khrushchevite-Brezhnevite revisionists came up with the well-known theory of “advanced socialism.”

Both the theory of “developed socialism” promoted by the Khrushchevite traitors and the theory of “**convergence**” promoted by Western bourgeois reaction are **anti-communist reactionary bourgeois theories** because, during the period of their dominance (1955-1990), they were directed against the communist perspective of the Proletariat, they obscured the

Proletariat's communist prospect, presenting **the restored capitalism of the Soviet Union** as the "communist" future while, at the same time, they were in total breach of the objective historic progress of society toward socialism-communism. The class character and content of the two theories was based on the defence of capitalism: the theory of "convergence" defended the traditional capitalism of the Western countries, while the theory of "developed socialism" defended the restored capitalism of the Soviet Union and the other revisionist countries. (Details can be found in "Anasintaxi", no. 373, August 2012, p. 3.)

Since the treacherous, renegade Khrushchev-Brezhnev group "managed", at the 20th Congress of CPSPU in 1956, to arbitrarily and provocatively present **capitalist-fascist** Yugoslavia of Tito as "socialist"(!) – a view imposed on the international communist movement (N.S. Khrushchev: "Report to the 20th Party Congress, 1956: **"Much has also been achieved in the building of socialism in Yugoslavia"**", a clear proof that the Khrushchevite clique had decided to follow Tito's counter-revolutionary, capitalist path – and promoted a kind of "socialism"(!) that would come about "peacefully" without the need for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. This group officially confessed and publicly admitted, during the 22nd of Congress of CPSU (1961), that there was neither a Dictatorship of the Proletariat nor a revolutionary communist party in the Soviet Union of that period and that these had been replaced by the "state of the whole people" and the "party of all the people" and mentioned, for the first time, the "transition period from capitalism to

socialism" to which the Dictatorship of the Proletariat "corresponded". At the same time, they formulated the theory of "developed socialism" without using yet the terms that became well-known later: "developed socialism" and "advanced socialist society".

The theory of "developed socialism" promoted by the Khrushchevite renegades constitutes, as will be shown below, a complete revision and a blatant, crude rejection of revolutionary Marxism.

As a theory, so-called "developed socialism" has nothing in common with the revolutionary theory of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin; it amounts to its negation and is an anti-communist bourgeois theory. The much advertised, but non-existent "advanced socialist society" was nothing more than the restored capitalism of the Khrushchevite-Brezhnevite period as shown in previous articles. According to the anti-communist Brezhnev, this type of society had already existed in November of 1967, that is to say, **when capitalism had been fully restored** (on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution, he had declared that **"In the USSR a developed socialist society has been built"**).

The theory of "developed socialism" later dominated the new **bourgeois constitution** (i.e. the constitution of **restored capitalism**) of the Brezhnevite period, while the euphemistically named "advanced socialist society" found its full expression in this – a constitution which, for the first time, officially legalized and confirmed not only the **state-capitalist** (articles 10-11) and **collective-capitalist ownership** (article 12) but also the individual capitalist ownership (articles 13-17) in the Soviet



Union's society of that time. It also legalized capitalist competition between autonomous enterprises, the "socialist commodity producers", and **capitalist profit** (article 16). In this constitution, the content of the "advanced socialist society", that is, of the Soviet Union's restored capitalism is generally described.

The elements from which the theory of **"developed socialism" was made are the following: "the party of all the people", "the state of the whole people", "transition period from capitalism to socialism", "three phases of communist society", "socialism: a new autonomous mode of production"**. Concerning the theory of "advanced socialism" and the euphemistically named "advanced socialist society", there is a vast literature of many articles and books. However, we will make a limited use of them and cite only those extracts that highlight the counter-revolutionary essence of this bourgeois reactionary theory.

### 1. **"Party of all the people" or revolutionary communist party?**

At the 22nd Congress of the CPSU (1961) it was stated: **"our Marxist-Leninist Party, which arose as a party of the working class, has become the party of the entire people"**, an anti-Marxist view which later passed into the new Brezhnevite bourgeois constitution (1977), where it was formulated as: **"The CPSU exists for the people and serves the people"**. (Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution, 1977.)

Some quick comments on the anti-Marxist view **"party of all the people"**:

1. The adoption of this view meant the

abandonment of the Marxist theory not only of the revolutionary party of a new type but also about all political parties considered as separate organisations that defend the different interests of particular classes.

2. The Khrushchevite social-democrats promoted the well-known bourgeois view according to which parties stand above classes and they are, therefore, defenders of the interests of "most" or "all classes".

3. As is known, according to revolutionary Marxism there are no organisations and parties that belong to "all the people", that is parties of all classes. Since the Khrushchevite revisionists themselves admitted that there was no longer a revolutionary communist party in the Soviet Union of that period, because, according to them, the Marxist-Leninist party had been replaced by the party of "all the people", then the new CPSU, that is the so-called party of "all the people" could not be anything else but a bourgeois, social-democratic party. Consequently, the CPSU, that was revolutionary until the beginning of the 1950's, changed its class character: from a Marxist-Leninist party of the working class, it became a bourgeois party, a defender of the class interests of the emerging soviet bourgeoisie.

The character of a party, according to Marxism, is determined first of all by its ideology and, among other things, by its programme. The new CPSU, that is, the so-called "party of all the people", was no longer guided by the ideology of revolutionary Marxism, that is, Leninism-Stalinism, but by the counter-revolutionary ideology of Khrushchevite revisionism (which is **a version of bourgeois ideology**).

In the following decades the new CPSU of Khrushchev-Brezhnev as well as the Khrushchevite parties of all countries were (and still are) bourgeois, social-democratic parties because: a) they were not guided by revolutionary Marxism, b) they had reformist programmes that cannot lead to the overthrow of capitalism, c) they adopted an anti-Marxist view of socialism-communism since they advertised the restored capitalism of the Khrushchev-Brezhnev-Gorbachev period as “socialism”(!), in other words they claimed that there was allegedly “socialism” in the Soviet Union from 1953 to 1991.

4. Neither can socialism exist nor can the construction of socialism continue without a revolutionary communist party of a new type, that is, of the **Leninist-Stalinist** type. Therefore, after 1953, it was inevitable that the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union finally stopped and the new CPSU, that is, the “party of all the people”, was at the forefront of the capitalism economic reforms that completely eliminated socialism and resulted in the full restoration of capitalism by the mid-1960’s.

5. Socialism-communism cannot be constructed without a Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist party, precisely because this party “has put forward a class policy, the organization of the proletariat as an independent political party, as the primary condition of its struggle, and the dictatorship of the proletariat as the immediate aim of the struggle” (Engels, *The Housing Question*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1970) and also it is the party that: first, is the organiser and leader of the giant work of socialist-communist construction and second, without

this party the Dictatorship of the Proletariat cannot possibly exist. That is why Stalin is very right to point out that “the dictatorship of the proletariat is exercised through the Party, that without the Party, a united and monolithic party, the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible” (“Joint Plenum of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission of the C.P.S.U.(B.), July 29 – August 9, 1927”), that “the dictatorship of the proletariat can be implemented only through the party, as the guiding force of the dictatorship” and that “the dictatorship of the proletariat can be complete only if it is led by one party, the Communist Party, which does not and must not share the leadership with other parties” (“Interview with the First American Labour Delegation, September 9, 1927”) (both in Stalin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10).

## 2. “State of all the people” or Dictatorship of the Proletariat

In relation to the state of the Soviet Union of that period, it is mentioned in the 22nd Congress that the state of the working class had been transformed into the “all people’s state”: “The state of the whole people is a new stage in the development of the socialist state, an all-important phase on the road from socialist statehood to communist public self-government” (22nd Congress of the CPSU, Report on the Program of the CPSU) and that “the conditions which necessitated the dictatorship of the proletariat disappeared...” (ibid.) for the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union. Later, this anti-Marxist view passed into the new Constitution (1977) – from which the

term Dictatorship of the Proletariat had been deleted (justifiably so since it had been already been overthrown in 1953) – and which confirms that the Soviet Union was no longer the state of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as it was in the era of Lenin-Stalin but the “state of the whole people” (“Constitution 1977”, p. 19: **“The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of the whole people”**).

The anti-Marxist view of the Khrushchevites about the “state of all the people” is raising some important questions worth of special consideration:

**First**, by denying the **necessity** of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat during an important phase of development of socialism-communism, the soviet revisionists-social democrats, and in such an important and central question the reformist Khrushchevite parties, abandoned Marxism and it is known that nobody can be regarded as Marxist without the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. As Lenin noted: **“Only he is a Marxist who extends the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is what constitutes the most profound distinction between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the real understanding and recognition of Marxism should be tested.”** (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*)

**Second**, it is important to note the **open confession** and the **official admission** made by the Khrushchevites that there was no Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the Soviet Union of that period, and it was exactly for this reason that there was no longer any socialism.

Moreover, the construction of socialism had stopped in 1953 after the death-murder of Joseph Stalin. The continuation of socialist construction in a country without the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is totally impossible and inconceivable. Also, the maintenance of socialism is unimaginable without the Dictatorship of the Proletariat since, for Marx, the concepts of socialism and Dictatorship of the Proletariat are inseparable. As early as 1850, **Marx noted regarding socialism: “The class dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinctions generally, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, to the revolutionizing of all the ideas that result from these social relations.”** (Marx, *The Class Struggles in France*).

Third, the Khrushchevite concept of the “state of the whole people” not only meant a rejection of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat but it constituted a complete revision of the Marxist theory on the state of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the state in general. This is why Lenin emphasized that **“the essence of Marx’s theory of the state has been mastered only by those who realize that the dictatorship of a single class is necessary not only for every class society in general, not only for the proletariat which has overthrown the bourgeoisie, but also for the entire historical period which separates capitalism from “classless society”, from communism.”** (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*)

**Fourth**, the Khrushchevite concept of the “state of the whole people” bears no relation to

Marxism. It is alien to Marxism because according to the Marxist theory there is no state standing above classes, that is to say, “state of all classes” of a society; this is a bourgeois view. On the contrary, the state always has a class character: either it is the state of the bourgeoisie or it is the state of the proletariat. In the period of transition from capitalism to socialism-communism, there can be either the dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. This is why the famous English Marxist George Thomson, in 1971, very rightly emphasized that the “state of the whole people” declared by the treacherous Khrushchevite clique was in reality “a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie”, or to be more exact, a dictatorship of the new soviet bourgeoisie.

**Fifth**, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, according to the teaching of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin, is established right after the vic-

tory of the armed Proletarian Revolution and the complete smashing of the old state machinery; it is preserved and strengthened and it is absolutely necessary for the whole transitional period from capitalism to socialism. The state of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat is never transformed into the “state of the whole people” (it is also known that Marx and Engels rejected with irony the so-called “free state” in the “Critique of the Gotha Program”. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat exists until it withers away in the higher stage of communism, in the communist classless society: **“For the state to wither away completely, complete communism is necessary” and that The state will be able to wither away completely when society adopts the rule: ‘From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs’.**” (Lenin, *The State and Revolution*)

# ITALY

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## Communist Platform

### Gramsci, a Bolshevik

One of the greatest inaccuracies spread by the opportunist politicians and the bourgeois intellectuals about Antonio Gramsci is the alleged distance, or even opposition, between his positions and those supported by Lenin and Stalin, and consequently his closeness to the ideas of Trotsky.

The origins of this legend are remote and well orchestrated, beginning with the fascist *"Il Messaggero"*, which, on May 12, 1937, announcing Gramsci's death, spoke in an ignorant and cowardly fashion of *"his fidelity to Trotsky"*.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Gramsci's "Trotskyism" was the daily bread of revisionist swindlers, which in this way constructed the unworthy and undeserved myth of the alienation or even aversion between the "good" Gramsci and the "evil" Stalin.

In reality, by examining the texts exactly

the opposite emerges, namely a coincidence with the Bolshevik positions and a clear criticism of the positions of Trotsky and other opponents of Stalin. So let us now let Gramsci speak.

#### **In his activity of leader and secretary of the Communist Party of Italy**

In 1924 Gramsci, in his address to the "Conference of Como", for the first time sketched a parallel between Bordiga and Trotsky (who also had differences between them), criticizing both: *"Trotsky's attitude, initially, can be compared to comrade Bordiga's at present. Trotsky, although taking part 'in a disciplined manner' in the work of the party, had through his attitude of passive opposition – similar to Bordiga's – created a state of unease throughout the Party, which could not fail to*

get a whiff of this situation. [...] This shows that an opposition – even kept within the limits of a formal discipline – on the part of exceptional personalities in the workers' movement, can not merely hamper the development of the revolutionary situation, but can put in danger the very conquests of the revolution." ("The Building of the Communist Party." English translation from Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Political Writings*, 1921-1926, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1990, pp. 252-3).

In the following year Gramsci, pursuing his struggle for the bolshevization of the Party, asserted that Trotsky's positions about "American super-capitalism" were dangerous and had to be rejected because, "*postponing the revolution indefinitely would shift the whole tactics of the Communist International [...] They would also shift the tactics of the Russian State, since if one postpones the European revolution for an entire historical phase – if, in other words, the Russian working class will not for a long time be able to count on the support of the proletariat of other countries – it is evidence that the Russian revolution must be modified.*" (Gramsci, Report to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Italy, February 6, 1925. Ibid., p. 284.)

Gramsci was always aware of the importance of the struggle against the deviations from Leninism and against factionalism. Therefore, in the same report he stated: "*The resolution should also say that Trotsky's conceptions, and above all his attitude, represent a danger inasmuch as the lack of party unity, in a country in which there is only one party, splits the State. This produces a counter-revo-*

*lutionary movement; [...] Finally, lessons should be drawn from the Trotsky question for our party. Before the last disciplinary measures, Trotsky was in the same position as Bordiga is at present in our party: he played a purely figurative role in the Central Committee. His position created a tendentially factional situation, just as Bordiga's attitude maintains an objectively factional situation in our party. [...] Bordiga's attitude, like that of Trotsky, has disastrous repercussions.*" (Ibid., p. 284.)

Again in 1925, on the occasion of the Fifth Plenum of the enlarged Executive Committee of the Communist International, the Italian delegation, led by Gramsci, sided in favor of Stalin's positions concerning the criticism of Trotsky without reservations.

For Gramsci, the decision to build socialism in the USSR under the conditions of capitalist encirclement was perfectly consistent with the needs of a period characterized by the relative stabilization of capitalism and the ebbing of the revolutionary wave.

Therefore his intransigent criticism of Trotsky, of his strategy of "permanent revolution", which he considered incorrect, simplistic and insufficient, and his firm commitment to the strategy and politics of the Bolshevik leadership which, as we shall see, he would confirm in his *Prison Notebooks*.

Gramsci was always concerned for the cohesion of the Russian party, which was needed by the proletariat at both a national and international level.

In those years, in which the divergent positions between the Soviet party headed by Stalin and the Zinovievist and Trotskyist bloc

were become programmatic, Gramsci several times warned about the risks of a split which the international bourgeoisie could take advantage of in order to overthrow proletarian power in Russia.

With regard to the struggle engaged in by the CC of RCP (b) against the opposition bloc of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, Gramsci wrote:

*"In fact, one question is of the greatest importance in the measures jointly adopted by the Central Committee and the Control Commission of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.: the defense of the organizational unity of the Party itself. It is evident that, on this ground, no concession or compromise is possible, whoever promotes the work of the disintegration of the Party, whatever the nature and degree of their past merits, whatever the position that they hold at the head of the communist organization. [...] So we think that the whole International must gather closely around the Central Committee of the Communist Party of USSR in order to approve of its energy, rigor and resolution in striking implacably at whoever threatens the unity of the Party."* (Measures of the C.C. of C.P. of the U.S.S.R. in Defence of the Unity of the Party and against the Work of the Faction, in L'Unità, July 27, 1926).

The same concern for the organizational and ideological unity of the Soviet party, and its national and international implications (particularly the struggle that was taking place in Italy for the development of the Party) inspired the famous letter "To the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party" written in October of 1926 (published in Antonio Gramsci,

*Selections...*, op. cit. pp. 426-432).

In this letter Gramsci intervened, in the name of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Italy, in the harsh political battle that was developing in the USSR between the Bolshevik leading group and the Trotskyist-Zinovievist opposition, declaring *"basically correct the political line of the majority of the Central Committee of the CPSU"*. (ibid., p. 430), headed by Stalin.

Although Gramsci was only partially informed about the Russian situation, his siding with the Leninist majority was vigorous and unequivocal. His accusation against the opposition bloc was very harsh and motivated by a main reason, explained by Gramsci in very clear terms:

*"We repeat that we are struck by the fact that the attitude of the opposition [Zinoviev, Kamenev and Trotsky] concerns the entire political line of the Central Committee, and touches the very heart of the Leninist doctrine and the political action of our Soviet party. It is the principle and practice of the proletariat's hegemony that are brought into question; the fundamental relations of alliance between workers and peasants that are disturbed and placed in danger: i.e. the pillars of the workers' State and the revolution."* (ibid., p. 431).

Being a fierce supporter of Leninist principles, Gramsci in the same letter harshly criticized *"the root of the errors of the Joint Opposition, and the origin of the latent dangers contained in its activities. In the ideology and practice of the Joint Opposition are born again, to the full, the whole tradition of social-democracy and syndicalism which has hitherto*



prevented the Western proletariat from organizing itself as a leading class.” (ibid., p. 432).

It is a stance that Gramsci further reinforced in the following letter “Gramsci to Togliatti” (October 26, 1926) (ibid., pp. 437-440), in which, thinking about the slowness of the Bolshevization process inside the Western parties, he wrote: “*The Russian discussion and the ideology of the opposition contribute all the more to this halting and slowing down, in that the opposition represents in Russia all the old prejudices of class corporatism and syndicalism which weigh upon the tradition of the Western proletariat, and delay its ideological and political development.*” (Ibid., p. 439.)

And he concluded by pointing out: “*Our letter was a whole indictment of the opposition, not made in demagogic terms, but precisely for that reason more effective and more serious.*” (ibid., p. 440).

Therefore an interpretation of these letters that aims to strengthen the idea of a “Trotskyist Gramsci” or a vacillating Gramsci is completely without foundation. It is very clear on which side Gramsci stood in the struggle that developed within the Russian party: on the side of the Bolshevik majority of the Party members.

### In the *Prison Notebooks*

As is well-known, the revisionists assert that in his *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci does not write about Stalin, except indirectly, and that when he mentions Stalin’s USSR, he does it in a critical way (see, for instance, the thesis of G. Vacca in *L’URSS staliniana nell’analisi dei Quaderni del carcere [Stalin’s USSR in the*

*analysis of the Prison Notebooks]* in *Gorbacev e la sinistra europea [Gorbachev and the European Left]*, Rome 1989, p. 75).

These are unscrupulous lies and deceptions, because the passages in *Prison Notebooks* that deal with Soviet socialism are all in favor of Lenin and Stalin and against Trotsky.

There are four questions that Gramsci examines in his *Notebooks* in order to defend Bolshevism and criticize Trotsky: 1) The theory of the permanent revolution; 2) The stages of the revolution, and the consequent strategy and tactics; 3) The industrialization in the USSR; 4) The relation between internationalism and national policy.

Let us now examine the corresponding notes in the *Prison Notebooks*, on the basis of the edition prepared by the International Gramsci Society (IGS) (the text corresponds to the critical edition edited by V. Gerratana and published by Einaudi in 1975).

In square brackets we insert the necessary explanations of the pseudonyms (for instance, in the *Notebooks* Lenin is called Ilyich, Stalin is named Vissarionovich, Trotsky is sometimes called Bronstein, sometimes Leon Davidovich) and rewordings used by Gramsci in order to elude the fascist censorship.

1. Gramsci already wrote about Trotsky in *Notebook I*, §44, at the end of an important note entitled “*Political class leadership before and after assuming government power*”. Inspired by the historic events of the Italian Unification, he referred to the enormous and unprecedented challenges that the Soviet government had to face. In this note Gramsci dealt directly with the Trotskyist slogan of the “permanent revolution”:



*"As regards the 'Jacobin' slogan which Marx directed at the Germany of 1848-49 [the idea of uninterrupted revolution], its complex fortunes should be examined. Revived, systematized, elaborated, intellectualized by the Parvus-Bronstein [Helphand-Trotsky] group, it proved inert and ineffective in 1905 and afterward: it was an abstract thing that belonged to the scientific laboratory. The tendency which opposed it [Bolshevism] in this intellectualized form, however, without using it 'intentionally', in fact employed it in its historical, concrete, living form adapted to the time and place as something that sprang from all the pores of the society which had to be transformed, as the alliance of two classes [working class and peasants] with the hegemony of the urban class [the working class]". (Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, Columbia University Press, 1992-, Vol. 1, p. 151.)*

According to Gramsci, modern "Jacobinism" expressed itself above all in a policy of alliance with the peasantry, under the hegemony of the working class. So Gramsci evaluated the correct Bolshevik policy conducted by Stalin against the Trotskyist thesis of the "permanent revolution". This thesis underestimated the importance of the poor peasants as a revolutionary force, and expressed complete distrust in the ability of the proletariat to lead all the exploited and oppressed people in the revolution, until it arrived at the impossibility of building socialism in one single country.

The note ends with a very harsh accusation against Trotsky, who is compared with the reactionary bourgeois Crispi: *"In the one case [Trotsky], a Jacobin temperament without the adequate political content, typified by Crispi;*

*in the second case [Bolshevism], a Jacobin temperament and content in keeping with the new historical relations, rather than adhering to an intellectualistic label."* (Ibid., p. 151.)]

It is interesting to observe that Gramsci took up this same note almost completely in *Notebook 19*, written in 1934-35, that is, after the definitive break with Trotskyism.

Gramsci returned to the question of the "permanent revolution" in *Notebook 7*, §16, in a famous note titled "War of position and war of maneuver, or frontal war":

*"One should determine whether Bronstein's [Trotsky] famous theory about the permanence of movement is not a political reflection of the theory of the war of maneuver (remember the observation by the Cossack general Krasnov); whether it is not, in the final analysis, a reflection of the general-economic-cultural-social conditions of a country in which the structures of national life are embryonic and unsettled and cannot become 'trench or fortress.' In that case one might say that Bronstein, while appearing to be 'Western,' was in fact a cosmopolitan, that is, superficially national and superficially Western or European. Ilyich [Lenin], on the other hand, was profoundly national and profoundly European. In his memoirs, Bronstein recalls somebody saying that his theory had proved true... fifteen years later; he responded to the epigram with another epigram. In reality his theory, as such, was good neither fifteen years earlier nor fifteen years later."* (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 168.)

After having opposed Lenin to Trotsky, Gramsci added: *"Bronstein's theory can be compared to that of certain French syndicalists on the general strike and to Rosa's [Lux-*

emburg] theory in the little book translated by Alessandri. Rosa's book and theory, moreover, influenced the French syndicalists." (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 169.)

2. In his reflections, Gramsci linked the question of the "permanent revolution" to the question of the transition from the "war of maneuver" to the "war of position". In particular, after the defeat of the revolution in Germany in 1923, and the transition of the worker movement to defensive positions, Gramsci was convinced that the problem of the development of the revolutionary process in Europe had to be redrawn up, understanding the reasons of the temporary ebb and establishing revolutionary tasks appropriate for the new phase.

The observation contained in *Notebook 6*, §138 is dedicated to this fundamental strategic and tactical question:

*"Past and present. Transition from the war of maneuver (and frontal assault) to the war of position – in the political field as well. In my view, this is the most important postwar problem of political theory; it is also the most difficult problem to solve correctly. This is related to the issues raised by Bronstein [Trotsky], who, in one way or another, can be considered the political theorist of frontal assault, at a time when it could only lead to defeat."* (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 109.)

Facing the complex problem of the alternative, or rather of the combination, between "assault tactics" and "siege tactics", which had been discussed in the Communist International, Gramsci started from a consideration of extraordinary importance, systematically ignored by the revisionists and reformists: "All this indicates that we have entered into the

highest phase in the political-historical situation, since in politics the 'war of position', once won, is definitively decisive."

On the basis of this consideration, that Gramsci realized by analyzing the profound crisis of the ability of the bourgeoisie to lead and govern, as well as the greater resistance of the State apparatus in the West and the existence of large intermediate social groups, he added in *Notebook 7*, §16:

*"In my view, Ilyich [Lenin] understood the need for a shift from the war of maneuver that had been applied victoriously in the East in 1917, to a war of position, which was the only viable possibility in the West [...] This, I believe, is the meaning of the term 'united front' [...] Ilyich, however, never had time to develop his formula. One should also bear in mind that Ilyich could only have developed his formula on a theoretical level, whereas the fundamental task was a national one; in other words, it required a reconnaissance of the terrain and an identification of the elements of trench and fortress represented by the components of civil society, etc."* (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 168-169.)

We are here in the heart of the research program that Gramsci developed in the *Notebooks*. But there was another key aspect of the strategic and tactical methods determined by the historically created relations of forces: that of the Soviet Union. Regarding this question, Gramsci wrote (*Notebook 6*, §138):

*"The war of position calls on enormous masses of people to make huge sacrifices; that is why an unprecedented concentration of hegemony is required and hence a more 'interventionist' kind of government that will engage more openly in the offensive against the*

opponents and ensure, once and for all, the 'impossibility' of internal disintegration by putting in place controls of all kinds – political, administrative, etc., reinforcement of the hegemonic positions of the dominant group, etc." (Ibid., Vol. 3, p. 109.)

It is an open support of Stalin's line, for the reinforcement of the proletarian dictatorship, a political line that "requires exceptional qualities of patience and inventiveness", but was the only successful one in that concrete historic situation. A political line diametrically opposed to that of Trotsky.

3. As we have seen, a fundamental aspect of the "war of position" was the defense of Soviet power and the building of socialism. In this last case too, acute problems did arise. The criticism expressed by Gramsci at the beginning of a famous note (*Notebook 4*, §52) is extremely interesting:

*"Americanism and Fordism. The tendency exhibited by Leon Davidovich [Trotsky] was related to this problem. Its essential content was based on the 'will' to give supremacy to industry and industrial methods, to accelerate the growth of discipline and orderliness in production through coercive means, to adapt customs to the necessities of work. It would have ended up, necessarily, in a form of Bonapartism; hence it was necessary to break it up inexorably."* (Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 215.)

Gramsci here takes into account one of the crucial questions of the harsh debate that involved the RCP(b) and the Communist International in the 1920s: the question of the forms and rhythms of industrialization and the NEP.

According to Gramsci, Trotsky is the highest representative of a harmful tendency, a

kind of "Americanism", based on coercion, command and the military systems.

That is, the forced and accelerated introduction of forms of production, modes of life and culture tied to the needs of private capital (in fact Gramsci recalled "*Leon Davidovich's interest in Americanism. His interest, his articles, his studies on "byt" [life, mode of living] and on literature*". (Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 215.)

In the same note Gramsci affirmed that "*the principle of coercion in the sphere of work was correct [...] but the form it assumed was wrong.*" (Ibid, Vol. 2, p. 215.)

Therefore it was a position incompatible with Leninism, a position which contradicted the "temporary retreat" of the NEP and would lead to the breakup of the alliance with the peasantry and to the ruin of Soviet power. So it was a tendency that had to be smashed, as it would have led to the restoration of capitalism.

Gramsci never evinced doubts on this matter. In fact, on two other occasions he explained and approved of the elimination of Trotsky: in *Notebook 14* §76, marking the elimination of Trotsky like "*an episode of the liquidation "also" of the "black" parliamentarism which existed after the abolition of the "legal" parliament*" (*Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, International Publisher, New York, 1971, p. 256); and in *Notebook 22* (that can be dated to 1934), when, referring to Trotsky's tendency, he repeated "*the inexorable necessity of crushing it*". (Ibid., p. 301).

4. Last but not least, let us look at the note in *Notebook 14*, §68, in which Gramsci, taking as his starting point the speech of Stalin at Sverdlov University in Moscow (June 9, 1925

– see note at the end of the article), directly contrasting Stalin (Vissarionovich) and Trotsky (Davidovich).

Gramsci writes, deeply examining the question of the relation between internationalism and national policy:

*“A work (in the form of questions and answers) by Joseph Vissarionovitch [Stalin] dating from September 1927: it deals with certain key problems of the science and art of politics. The problem which seems to me to need further elaboration is the following: how, according to the philosophy of praxis [Marxism] (as it manifests itself politically) – whether as formulated by its founder [Marx] or particularly as restated by its most recent theoretician [Lenin] – the international situation should be considered in its national aspect. In reality, the internal relations of any nation are the result of a combination which is ‘original’ and (in a certain sense) unique: these relations must be understood and conceived in their originality and uniqueness if one wishes to dominate them and direct them. To be sure, the line of development is towards internationalism, but the point of departure is ‘national’ – and it is from this point of departure that one must begin. Yet the perspective is international and cannot be otherwise. Consequently, it is necessary to study accurately the combination of national forces which the international class [the proletariat] will have to lead and develop, in accordance with the international perspectives and directives [i.e. those of the Comintern]. [...] It is on this point, in my opinion, that the fundamental disagreement between Leo Davidovich [Trotsky] and Vissarionovitch [Stalin] as interpreter of the majority movement [Bol-*

*shevism] really hinges. The accusations of nationalism are inept if they refer to the nucleus of the question. If one studies the majoritarian struggle from 1902 up to 1917, one can see that its originality consisted in purging internationalism of every vague and purely ideological (in a pejorative sense) element, to give it a realistic political content.”* (Ibid., p. 240-241.)

It is clear as day that Gramsci, tracing the “fundamental disagreement“ between Trotsky/Davidovich and Stalin/Vissarionovitch, shared Stalin’s position, the interpretation of Bolshevism that, in Gramsci’s opinion, correctly put forward and resolved the problem of the combination of national forces that the international class must lead and develop in the perspective of world communism.

### One of the best Bolsheviks

In the light of the texts, an interpretation of Gramsci’s thought in a Trotskyist sense is groundless. On the contrary, from Gramsci’s work, including the reflections contained in the Prison Notebooks, there emerges a ruthless criticism of Trotsky.

In all the passages where Gramsci writes about Trotsky the content is always one of a harsh polemic. At the same time, Gramsci positively appraised the positions of Lenin and Stalin; he approved the whole of the Bolshevik policy, including those features that the bourgeoisie and revisionists include in the misleading concept of “totalitarianism”.

There is no text or speech, neither in freedom nor in prison, in which Gramsci expressed a negative opinion much less

denigrated the leadership of the Bolshevik Party and comrade Stalin.

The manipulators of modern revisionism, the magicians of “socialism of the 21st century” and all the bourgeois and reactionary intellectuals are completely refuted.

Antonio Gramsci was a great revolutionary leader of the proletariat, a giant of communist thought and action, who always fought against anti-Leninist deviations, who always defended the dictatorship of the proletariat, the system of working-class democracy embodied in the Councils (Soviet), against the false bourgeois democracy and its social-democratic variants (such as today’s “participatory democracy”). He always insisted on the necessity of a revolutionary transformation of the whole of society through the smashing of the bourgeois State, and always remained faithful to Marxism-Leninism and to proletarian socialism, until the last day of his life.

As the Communist International wrote on the occasion of his death, caused by long years of fascist imprisonment and cruelty: “*Closely linked to the masses, capable of learning in the school of the masses, able to understand all aspects of social life, an unyielding revolutionary, faithful to his last breath to the Communist International and to his own Party, Gramsci leaves to us the memory of one of the best representatives of the generation of Bol-*

*sheviks who grew up in the ranks of the Communist International in the spirit of the doctrine of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, in the spirit of Bolshevism.*” (*Communist International*, July, 1937, 435-436.)

To rescue Antonio Gramsci, the great communist leader, from the claws of the bourgeoisie, the revisionists and opportunists is an important task for the revolutionary proletariat.

June 2014

Communist Platform (Italy)

**Note:** Stalin’s speech, titled *Questions and Answers* (Works, Vol. 7), was translated into Italian and published in serial form by “L’Unità” in 1926. Gramsci, quoting by memory in jail, by mistake confused the date of that speech with the date (September 1927) of Stalin’s *Interview with the First American Labor Delegation*, that was also in the form of questions and answers (Works, Vol. 10), of which Gramsci had read an account in a magazine while he was in jail.

The change of dates was not noticed by the editor of the critical edition of *Prison Notebooks*, Valentino Gerratana, who perpetuated the mistake with a misleading commentary.

Instead it is clear that Gramsci was referring to the *Questions and Answers* of 1925 (see particularly Stalin’s reply to questions II and IX).

## MEXICO

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*Communist Party of Mexico (M-L)*

### Two urgent tasks to confront the onslaught of the neoliberals and imperialists in Mexico

**D**uring the second half of August, 2014, a pamphlet was published in Mexico entitled “*Two urgent tasks to confront the offensive of the neoliberals and imperialists in our country*”, printed by *Ediciones Vanguardia Proletaria* (Proletarian Vanguard Publishers) signed jointly by the Revolutionary Popular Front (FPR), the Union of Revolutionary Youth of Mexico (UJRM) and our Party, the Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist) (PCMML), a summary of which we present here.

Mexico is no stranger to international dynamics, nor can it be as long as it is buried in economic dependence, suffering oppression by US imperialism. The international economic crisis that struck the world meant for Mexico a decrease of approximately 5% to 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2009.

From then to now it has not recovered its growth rate, even when in 2010, there was a growth of 5% of GDP according to government statistics. The ensuing years were not encouraging: in 2011, the economy grew by 3.9% of GDP, in 2012 by 3.8% and in 2013 its growth began to fall again, reaching a growth of only 1.1% in GDP.

When he took over the Presidency of the Republic, as the result of electoral fraud, Enrique Peña Nieto (EPN) stated that with the structural reforms that he imposed, the economy would accelerate its growth. But the fact is that in 2013, the year in which these structural reforms were imposed, the Mexican economy actually was at a virtual standstill, with just a 1.1% growth of GDP.

The Mexican economy has no firm, real basis that could reverse this trend of stagnation



and crisis that the country is experiencing. Economic dependency is deepening every day, there is no independent development, the economic plan of the regime is for greater dependency. It is trying to increase the presence of transnational monopoly capital in the country. All its efforts are aimed at guaranteeing foreign investment, maximizing profits for the investors. For example, it has granted concessions of about 30% of Mexican territory, mainly to Canadian and US mining companies. The concessions for electricity generation and exploitation of hydrocarbons will also be to increase the profit of transnational corporations. Economically, the country is increasing its dependency, particularly on the US economy, and therefore its bad situation depends on the law of maximization of the profits of the monopolies of that imperialist country.

The economic outlook for Mexico during this year, 2014, is abysmal and still the depth of the new wave of crisis that has already been announced is not clear, with diminished expectation for growth in the United States.

Politically, after nearly 80 years of government by one sector of the national financial oligarchy, allied to the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the alternation in office that the country experienced in 2000 with the arrival of the National Action Party (PAN) did not represent any change in the direction of oligarchic rule. Moreover, it highlights the political decay and corruption and deepened the neoliberal policies. The defeat of the PRI was not consolidated; only 12 years later, the PRI regained control through a great electoral fraud in the elections of July 2, 2012. The old gang of the PRI, with a new televised image,

returned to Los Pinos [residence of the President – *translator's note*], in the person of EPN.

Naturally, the financial oligarchy not only planned the return of the PRI to Los Pinos; this was not the end in itself. It also orchestrated the imposition of the dictates of the World Bank, IMF, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and other imperialist financial institutions. That is why, two weeks before the presidential turnover, in November of 2012, the labor reform was approved by the Congress of the Union.

The disagreements that began to appear before the impending election fraud of July 2012 grew with the labor reform. The bourgeoisie saw it was time to close ranks, and it did this through the “Pact for Mexico”, an agreement among the three main political parties of the financial oligarchy, the PRI, PAN and PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution). This ensured them absolute control over the political institutions and powers, such as the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) of that time, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (Judiciary), and the Congress of the Union (Legislature), as well as, the structures of the three parties making up the self-styled Pact for Mexico, all controlled from the Executive in the person of the “President of the Republic.”

The imposition of the subsequent structural reforms was only possible with the complete closing of ranks of all the political institutions of the financial oligarchy. The plan was laid out; it had no loose ends. Therefore they continued with the so-called education reform (it was actually the labor reform applied to education workers). The reforms that followed were: to telecommunications, adopted in gen-



eral in mid-2013; the political reform (second quarter of 2013) and the fiscal-tax reform (adopted in September of 2013), concluding the constitutional reforms with the energy reform (December of 2013). Following these constitutional changes came the regulatory laws for these counter-reforms; so that until the middle of 2014 they are finishing adopting the secondary laws in telecommunications, energy reform and political reform.

In one year 11 structural reforms were adopted! The majority of these reforms were begun more than 20 years ago, but the total offense was unleashed in 2013 and 2014. This means that the regime and its oppressor class is not willing to negotiate more with the proletariat and the masses, it will advance in its offensive if we the exploited and oppressed classes do not stop them and kick them out of power.

### **The hurricane gales of the crisis are blowing strong in the economic field.**

The economic outlook for the country is not encouraging; on the one hand, faced with the possible approach of a new international crisis that is brewing within the imperialist economy; on the other hand are the terrifying consequences of the structural reforms on the conditions of life, work and study of the great masses of the Mexican population.

Let us mention them in order of the economic impact that the major structural reforms will have, starting of course with the *energy reforms*. Mexico ranks second, surpassed only by Venezuela in the Latin American countries, and as an exporter of crude oil to the United

States it is among the top three. The income earned through exports is third most important in the share of GDP; the consequences that this will have on the Mexican economy will be a large hole in the public treasury. Most of the social spending will virtually disappear, leaving no resources in the budget for social security, health care, education, programs for the recovery of the Mexican countryside; in general all social programs will have to be severely cut back as a result of the energy-privatization reform. Until now, the share of the budget coming from the petrochemical industry is more than 30%.

The *Labor Reform* essentially legalizes a whole series of practices that the bosses have been implementing in the country for several decades, such as job outsourcing, flexibility, extension the working day, the reduction in workers' rights, the extension of the legal powers of the bosses, etc. Likewise laws to weaken trade unions and restrict the right to strike were adopted. The *education reform* is an extension of the labor reform to workers in education. The *agrarian reform*, which is not yet finished, is actually the legitimization of a process of dispossession of the poor peasants and indigenous people from the land and natural resources of the country, which broke out before the agrarian counter-reform of 1992, with a large offensive against the ejidos, the communities of collective land tenure. Another big reason for the urgency of the neoliberal agrarian reform is that the dispossession from the land and territories through the energy reform will grant concessions right and left to the private capitalists and their transnational and national monopolies. This requires

that the Mexican government get rid of the barriers that exist to the use of the territories granted in concessions.

The small and middle bourgeoisie is one of the social sectors most affected by the ***Tax Reform***, which has created new taxes, particularly the so-called *System of Tax Incorporation*. This is aimed at “formalizing” the informal sectors, with the sole purpose of bleeding their economy through taxation. Moreover all the small and medium business owners will inevitably go to ruin; in fact official data indicate that from January to July of this year nearly 30,000 businesses closed each month, showing an accelerated process of proletarianization of these sectors with ***tax and finance reform***.

Mass consumption in the telecommunications industry and the consolidation of monopolies in that sector are fundamental elements behind the ***reform in telecommunications***, the distribution of production and the market among Carlos Slim (one of the richest men in the world), Televisa and TV Azteca, were the main points of discussion since the debate began in the Congress of the Union.

The ***reform in the social security system***, that began with the reforms to the Law of the IMSS (Mexican Institute of Social Security) and the New Law of the ISSSTE (Institute for Social Security and Services for State Workers), imposed since 2008, has not yet concluded. This process of privatization of health care services and retirement funds is continuing, the most recent is the bankruptcy declared by the IMSS and the attempt to replace the rights gained with the so-called “Universal Insurance”.

***The factor of the international economic crisis*** is another element of the outlook of the crisis that Mexico has been experiencing in recent months. In fact, as a consequence of the crisis of 2008, the majority of the countries of the world are over-indebted as a result of injecting resources from the public treasury into the big monopolies. Very soon they will be unable to pay the high interests on the foreign debt to which they have been subjected. The major economies, including the US, China and Europe, are expected to grow less and less; the major powers of the world, except for China, have debts that exceed the value of their GDP. That will actually lead to a new stage of global crisis, which will seriously affect Mexico in the coming months.

### **A quick look at our movement**

In order to pass from the defensive to the offensive, to accumulate forces and resist the neoliberal offensive, one must be clear that the history of Mexico did not just begin. Today we have a wealth of experience, a heritage of organization, and many great lessons from which we must begin to chart our tasks facing the mass movement.

A considerable sector of the organized masses are still under the control and patronage of the bosses of organizations linked to the PRI, such as the Confederation of Workers of Mexico (CTM), the National Peasant Confederation (CNC), the Torch Peasant Movement, the National Confederation of Popular Organizations (CNOP), the National Confederation of Productivity (CNP), among others. These organizations have served to control the move-

ment and in many cases have acted as scabs, strike-breakers and movement-breakers, becoming a form of paramilitarism, depending on the conditions of struggle. It is also the case that the mass movement independent of the bourgeoisie, its state and its political parties has been growing.

Another important block is marching under the banner of social-democracy, reformism and opportunism. However, this sector of the organized masses is tending to disappear; a small part is moving to the right, but the great majority have started to put a lot of pressure on their leaders to call for mobilization and struggle; if they do not do so, these masses in large numbers will abandon the ranks of these organizations that still have an important weight in the mass movement.

A third camp is made up of our democratic, independent and revolutionary organizations. This sector of the organized mass movement is making an effort to unify, by converging all their forces in a great flood of the workers, peasants and popular struggle, advancing a process of accumulation of forces to take the offensive against the regime. This group of organizations is still very diverse, but each one is gaining strength. Although they are still distant from the needs of the growing movement of the masses, they are creating the conditions to contend for leadership with social democracy. Moreover, the last 10 years have been the most successful in the struggle to build the unitary processes or instruments needed for building the united front. Throughout this time, there have been various experiences, and several of them are still relevant and active, including: the Social Congress towards a New

Constituent Assembly (CSHNC), which has held 10 national meetings; the Forum of the Proletarian Left (PIF); the Conference of Socialists and Communists of Mexico (ESyCM); the New Federation of Workers (NCT); the National Coordinator of Workers of Education (CNTE) that has initiated the National Teachers and Popular Conference (ENMP) that has been scattered; the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), its Regional Organizations and its Councils of Good Government; the Popular Movement of Guerrero (MPG); the process of reconstruction of the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of Oaxaca (APPO); the Popular Front of the City of Mexico (FPCDMX); the Regional Coordinator of Community Authorities – Community Police (CRAC-PC); the United Front of Struggle of Baja California, etc.

Beside these movements that have historical roots, there are emerging movements that are jumping into the arena of the class struggle, in a sporadic manner, but with such force that they have helped to revitalize, give new impetus to and inject dynamism and strength into the class struggle of the proletariat. Not even the most aggressive media propaganda, nor the militarization of the police forces, nor the army in the streets, nor the toughening of the laws, nor the control of the masses by the pro-government organizations, could prevent constantly new mass movements from arising that are eager to take to the streets and defend every inch of the rights that they have won.

The contemporary movements have some particularities that we should know how to grasp. For example, the latest movements are strongly interconnected with the new technolo-

gies of communication and in particular the social networks and the “alternative” media. None of these movements could be explained without the existence of tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsap, and at the risk of being left behind, in most of the emerging movements, in their own names or acronyms they use hash-tags: #YoSoy132 (a movement that arose in the midst of EPN’s presidential campaign, its main objective was to prevent Peña Nieto from taking office), #PosMeSalto (similar to the Free Fare movement of Brazil, it has promoted the jumping of turnstiles in the Metro Collective Transport System in the national capital, as a way to reject the rising price of transportation), #YoSoy17 (a movement of doctors who take as their symbol the criminalization of their professional activity, coming out in the streets en masse after very many years), #PosCirculo (a movement that arose against the extension to Saturdays of the program: Do Not Drive Today (Hoy No Circula), which applied to vehicle traffic in the capital from Monday to Friday, ostensibly to reduce pollution), etc.

Besides, these movements tend to develop at unimaginable speeds; in less than a tweet or a like, the orientation of the mass action can change, can be radicalized or weakened. These and other characteristics peculiar to the movements in this golden age of social networks, which have overly exalted the bourgeois and petty bourgeois intellectuals, with a great number of arguments that seek to avoid firm organization and the continuity of these movements.

It is necessary to master the characterization and peculiarities of the emerging movement in order to influence them, to help them build real, long-term perspectives, because

their amorphous spontaneity, the anarchy of their actions and the difficulty in finding which way is up still makes things much more complicated for the working class, its party and the organized movement, to contribute to its strengthening. The petty bourgeoisie and reaction also use precisely these features to exalt the non-partyism and the anti-organization sentiment of these movements, symptoms that lead to disaster, if they do not become aware of the danger of these reactionary positions.

The general evaluation that we make of the current situation in the country is that there is a growing discontent which is multiplying the mobilized forces, against the most varied forms of political, economic and social oppression. There is a rise of the mass movement, every day new sectors are joining the fight against the regime, but they are still very scattered and fragmented. Meanwhile the regime has succeeded in imposing its structural reforms, but now comes the real battle. On the one hand the regime would like to impose its reforms, but it will undoubtedly find the fiercest opposition and resistance of the workers and peoples. Until now the mass movement, despite having already given historical examples of heroism, has not gone beyond actions of resistance, because it still suffers from a number of diseases within the movement: trade-unionism, economism, spontaneity, evils that we must urgently eradicate.

### **We need a single National Plan of Struggle, built in a collective manner.**

It follows naturally that facing a disorganized fight that is growing in the country re-

quires drawing up a Unity Plan of Struggle that would be built collectively with all the forces of the masses, a plan to bring order to the actions, so they can unite in action and organization; that would break with the anarchy of the different calls for the struggle against the regime, but cannot concentrate sufficient forces to make well-aimed blows against the oligarchic neoliberal offensive.

The Plan that we need to build requires making precise the strategic and tactical objectives, that is, the objectives to be achieved in the short, medium and long term; neither confusing nor counterposing any of these objectives. For strategic objectives, it is necessary to be convinced that we want a system change, building in its place a socialist system in the country, with a government of workers and poor peasants, passing through the establishment of a Provisional Revolutionary Government, which would convene the Democratic, Proletarian and Popular National Constituent Assembly, which would enact a new Constitution. Of course this is our contribution to the objectives, there are others; one would have to debate them. But to advance more rapidly in the process of unity, we must clarify the objectives in the medium and short term, that in summary, we all agree that is the struggle to defeat the structural reforms all together and, if conditions permit, to bring down the government of EPN.

### **The General Political Strike is the form of struggle that will define all the rest.**

The General Political Strike [HPG for its initials in Spanish – *translator's note*] is a

mass action whose objective should be, in the first place, to raise the morale and the building of the power of our army-people and inflict a political, ideological and economic defeat on the capitalist-imperialist oligarchic pole. In the second place would be the total paralysis of the country's economic activity (production and circulation of commodities) as well as the paralysis of the entire political structure of the capitalist system. Likewise all this would be directed at totally neutralizing the repressive action of state, in such a way that all the actions aimed at achieving this impact would strengthen the HPG.

If we have already learned that the teachers' struggle and their first two national strikes in 2013 at least put the government of EPN in trouble, if we have been convinced that the actions up to now have not been sufficient to defeat the neoliberal reforms, and moreover we affirm that bourgeois and petty-bourgeois pacifism, as well as parliamentary and legal means, have been exhausted as ways to strengthen the mass movement, then it is clear that the road that remains is to build on the experience of the CNTE, of APPO in 2006 as well as other experiences and to generalize a Political Strike nationwide. If events unfold as up to now, over the coming months, it is very probable that spontaneous and generalized demonstrations will take place throughout the country, in the form of a General Strike. However, they will not achieve specific objectives if they are not the result of a systematic and well organized work. Therefore it is important that they be the result of a single plan of struggle nationwide.

The successful realization of the first HPG

will not be the culmination of the class struggle. On the contrary, it will be the beginning of a new stage, more favorable for the revolutionary process, with greater expectations. It will be a demonstration also for the mass movement itself, that the radical transformation of society is possible through the revolutionary action of the masses. The HPG will restore confidence in their own strength to the proletariat and the peoples of Mexico, and it will revive the hitherto dormant strata, so that they will come out to fight alongside us all. The HPG as a form of struggle does not deny or exclude all other forms of struggle; on the contrary, it projects them and defines them around the main objectives of this stage of the class struggle.

**We need the formation of a National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico as a concrete expression of the united front.**

For the battles of the proletariat to be successful, a high degree of organization is required, and the higher the degree of organization, the more the masses will be in a position to achieve their victories. Of course, this also involves other aspects, such as correct tactics and clarity in the strategic struggle, but once one has a plan, organization decides everything.

To define the forms of struggle it is necessary at the same time to define the forms of organization. In other words, for the HPG to be successful requires a consolidated process of a united front. In the case of our country, what we propose in order to centralize all the

threads of the class struggle, in order to unify our struggle, organize and project it on a national level, requires the formation of a great **National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico** (ANPyPM). This would be the organized expression of our tactic of a United Front in Mexico. The ANPyPM would be built with the convergence of all the unitary processes that have so far been built, whether at a national, state, sectoral or thematic level.

The form of organization of an Assembly or Council has a rich history in our country, because it also has deep roots in the communal forms of organization of the indigenous peoples, and in the democratic unions. Therefore, a focus of our plan of work is to build grassroots or popular assemblies, in every factory, in every neighborhood and community, as a solid foundation on which to build a grand **National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico**.

Some 40 days separate these lines from the journal *Unity and Struggle*, from the pamphlet *"Two urgent tasks...."* However there have been many events that confirm that the analysis that the FRP, the UJRM and PCMML made about the reality and the tasks of our movement continue to remain very relevant. For example: from the side of the regime there has been the disastrous offensive against the people, because the former has increased its deployment by launching its neoliberal reforms. In early September a series of mega-projects were announced, including the new International Airport of Mexico City, which will affect thousands of hectares of land in several towns, including San Salvador Atenco, which 13 years ago prevented the construction of the

airport. Several student and popular leaders have been killed. On the part of the movement at this time (end of September, 2014) there have been two major strikes in the capital, that of the students of the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) and of the Union of the Institute of High School Education, both sketching the perspective of HPG. The process of formation of the ANPyPM is cast, it is a topic being discussed by various forces. The 10th Meeting of the CSHNC, held on August 30 and 31, with the presence of representatives of important organizations and trade unions in several states, took up the task of building the ANPyPM as well as of preparing the HPG. The teachers of the CNTE also took up as a central

point the formation of the united front and a specific plan for the outbreak of the HPG. Thus already these two tasks that we have been pushing can no longer be postponed for an important sector of the organized movement in the country. It is true that there is a long way to go to meet these expectations, but the wheel is turning in our favor, we communists in this corner of the world are now making every effort to fulfill our historic mission with the immortal teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin: to struggle together with our working class for the victory of the tactics and strategy of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, socialism and communism in Mexico and around the world.

*Revolutionary Popular Front (FRP),  
Union of Revolutionary Youth of Mexico (UJRM)  
Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist) (PCMML)*



## PERU

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*Communist Party of Peru (M-L)*

### **On the inter-imperialist contradictions, the growing dependence of Peru and the presence of BRICS**

#### **On the international situation**

**I**n the international context of the political and economic crisis of capitalism, the contradictions among the imperialist countries for the new redivision of the world, markets and spheres of influence, are taking increasingly acute forms. In that sense the contention to systematically exploit and plunder the peoples is once again becoming more aggressive politically, economically, ideologically and militarily. This is so not only for the inter-imperialist contention, but also for the increasing struggle and resistance of the peoples attacked by imperialist greed. These processes are taking place in the context of the revival of the popular movement, which is ready to

undertake processes of national and social liberation led by their proletarian vanguards.

The contradiction among imperialist countries and the struggle for spheres of influence are creating instruments for contention over financial domination of the world market. On the one hand, U.S. imperialism and the members of NATO, with their instruments, the World Bank, IMF, World Trade Organization, UN and other agencies of neocolonial subjugation, and on the other hand Chinese and Russian imperialism and the members of BRICS, which recently established other instruments of domination of finance capital called the New Development Bank and Reserve Fund. Even though it has another name, it has not changed the essence of domination

by finance capital. The essence of imperialism has not changed, nor have the characterization and fundamental contradictions of our epoch pointed out by Lenin. While it is true that the formation of economic alliances among imperialist countries, in one way, manifestations of power, leading to military invasions and pushing the peoples into war, the imperialist countries are at the stage of internal decomposition and corrosion. An example of this are the various demonstrations and strikes taking place in the imperialist countries, such as the U.S., China, Germany and France, among others. This shows the correctness and relevance of the Marxist-Leninist theses on imperialism and proletarian revolutions.

Some opportunist groups claim that within the inter-imperialist contradictions there is a *good* imperialism with which we can ally and a *bad* imperialism that we must fight, trying to embellish imperialism thus denying the revolution, the historic task of the working class and peoples for their class emancipation and denying that both imperialist camps are the backbone of capitalism on a world scale. Lenin said that *"finance capital strives for domination, not freedom"*, so that imperialist countries, their aggression and the capitalist system must be fought at the same time as one fights opportunism, revisionism, reformism, Trotskyism and social democracy in their various shades, which in practice support the domination of capitalism in its stage of imperialist decomposition.

The development of these instruments of domination promotes the granting of credits and loans that reinforce the economic and political dependence of the borrower, in order to

ensure maximum profit by exploiting and ruining most of the population. This leads us to point out some elements that show the increasing dependence of our country, regarding the presence and interests of BRICS in Peru.

The political situation, economic dependence and the presence of BRICS in Peru

Currently the peoples of Peru are at a stage of struggle and resistance against the imperialist offensive and penetration. An example of this is the organization of the popular movement to oppose the mining concessions, labor flexibility, the privatization and pollution of the water, the pollution of the environment, to reject the Free Trade Agreements, to reject the import of genetically modified seeds; to defend national and food sovereignty, among others. All these struggles are also directed against the deepening of neoliberalism, by the counter-reforms made during the period of Alberto Fujimori, Alejandro Toledo and Alan Garcia. There is no difference between these and the current government of Ollanta Humala. We have a country in which there is not the least regulation of the voracious appetite of the transnationals, of imperialism and its allies, the parasitic bourgeoisie.

### **The failure of denationalization, the sale of the country and the Free Trade Agreements**

In the period of the application of neoliberalism in Peru, state enterprises, port and airport concessions and our territory have been privatized and auctioned off, highways have been built allegedly to develop and connect towns largely neglected by the state. But the

truth is that they were built to facilitate imperialist penetration and plunder, through tax evasion and fraud, the payment of taxes for works that widen the highways and access roads to mining areas, supposedly being built in the public interest.

### **In the mining sector**

Recently, under the pretext of reviving the economy, as Peru was one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America with 7.6% growth in 2006, 9% in 2007, 9.84% in 2008, 1% in 2009, 8.8% in 2010, 6.8% in 2011, 6.3% in 2012 and 5.02% in 2013, there has been a slowing down due to the effects of the international crisis and the struggle of the peoples against mining extraction, which have led to paralyzing the major mining projects. The so-called economic revival that the State is leading is in no way aimed at benefiting the people. On the contrary, it is to facilitate the looting of our country, easing the minimum requirements for the establishment of large-scale mining projects, known as the “environmental package.” These followed along the line of the last message to the nation by the President of the Republic on July 28, in which he stated the “need” to promote mining mega-projects: Constancia, Las Bambas, the expansion of Cerro Verde. The expansion of the Toromocho was granted as a concession to the Aluminum Corporation of China (Chinalco), at the source of the Mantaro and Rimac rivers that supply water to more than 10 million people in Lima. The mining project Tia Maria was presented by the government as a center of copper mining but in the particular case of Toromocho,

what is being done is to extract radioactive material and gold. An example of this is the leader Aida Gamarra of the village of Morococha displaced by this project, who has been hospitalized due to contamination by radioactive material, who had lived and worked near this mining center.

This sector is dominated by Chinese transnationals, which control 33% of the total investment; in these projects they use the police and military to impose them, as well as in the mining projects of US and Canadian imperialism.

### **The metallurgical sector**

In 1992 the government of Alberto Fujimori, beginning the privatization of the strategic economic sectors of the country, negotiated the sale of the mining company Hierro Peru S.A. (Peru Iron Inc.) and granted the pier of San Juan de Marcona to the national Chinese company Shougang Corporation, based in Beijing. This news was received with great enthusiasm by some trade union cliques and opportunist parties, which claimed that this company and the Chinese Communist Party were led by communists and that this would lead to the benefit of the Peruvian working class. The character of the Chinese enterprises was revealed when the operations of the company Shougang Hierro Peru S.A. began. They laid off a large number of workers, made the contracts conditional on not recognizing the right to unionize, at the risk of layoffs and the imposition of a long list of abuses such as payment below the average wage compared to other mining companies. Currently this company sends 84% of all the minerals extracted from Peruvian soil to the

Chinese market and less than 5% of the minerals supply the domestic market. This has affected the high cost of steel production, serving as a justification for the new owners of Siderurgica de Peru (Peru Steel), the Brazilian corporation Gerdau, to stop producing steel and import it from its other sources, mainly from Brazil, leaving the workers of the steelworks in Chimbote unemployed and affecting the region, which had been energized by the existence of this industrial center.

In 1996, the government of Alberto Fujimori held an auction of state bonds in Peru Steel – Siderperu, from which the consortium Sider Corp. benefited, buying up almost 97% of the shares of the company. This consortium was made up of GS Industries Inc, a US company, Wiese Financial Investments and Stanton Funding Co. But the crisis of 2001 caused the bankruptcy of GS Industries, so in 2006 the Brazilian transnational Gerdau acquired 86.66% of the shares of the steel company.

Since 2012 Horno Alto, which smelted iron, was paralyzed, stagnating production and instead becoming distributors of steel imported from Brazil to supply the Peruvian market. This process was part of the plans to sabotage production that imperialism and its transnational corporations carried out in order to destroy local production and strengthen their chains of domination.

### **In the textile sector**

Since the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China came into force in 2010, the Peruvian textile and clothing industries were hurt with the import of underpriced garments for

the domestic market. Because of this, it is estimated that about 30,000 jobs were lost in this productive and commercial sphere, causing a high rate of closing of small and medium-sized textile enterprises. The main centers of textile imports are from China and India that have low production costs. The Peruvian government is resuming the negotiations for signing the FTA with India, an act that will end up destroying national production.

### **In the agricultural and livestock sector**

Recently, the Congress of the Republic attempted to pass a bill that would allow the import of genetically modified seeds for production on a small scale. This was despite the fact that these were disallowed in 2012, under the regulations of Act No. 29811, which postponed the import of these seeds, after a process of struggle by the rural communities in defense of national production, when the 10-year moratorium of imports of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) was established.

### **The struggles undertaken by the working class, peasantry, youth and peoples**

The struggles of the working class, peasants, working people and youth have raised their level of political organization and participation, opposing the new wave of legal and political measures that seek to limit the rights won through great struggles, such as the right to labor stability, health care, free and scientific education and legal security, while the land of peasants has been granted as conces-

sions to the imperialist transnationals. In all regions of the country the class struggle is intensifying and is marked by new forms of clashes and the creativity of the peoples to confront the dictatorship of capital and imperialist plunder; they are coming together in order to put an end to aggression and exploitation.

In the health care sector the indefinite strike of the health care workers has been developing in defense of their labor rights and against the privatization of health care, as well as in the struggles of nurses, midwives and staff in this sector, who have been on a national strike for more than 120 days, which government does not want to resolve. On the contrary, it is promoting the privatization of health care through concessions to private companies, thus showing that this pseudo-nationalist government cares more about the extraction of minerals than about the life and health of the Peruvians.

In the peasant movement, the imperialist offensive and submission of the government in office makes them implement the mining projects as such Cañaris, Conga, Toromocho, Rio Blanco, Tia Maria, Lagunas del Sur, etc. and oil projects that were rejected and fought by the peoples since they violating their right to property, polluting the water, life and farmlands. Recently the government has implemented a legislative package that removes the minimal restrictions to mining extraction in our country, and in response to the resistance of the peoples, they have implemented fascist measures to criminalize the organization and repress the protest of the popular movement. Thus the government is showing its propen-

sity to militarize the country in order to strengthen its dependency, showing the degree of decomposition of the state of the parasitic bourgeoisie of our country.

### **Position of the PCP (M-L) towards this scenario**

**1.** We propose to develop tactics to organize, mobilize and politicize the working class, peasants, students and popular sectors. We oppose the imperialist penetration, exploitation and plunder, fighting capitalism and the parasitic bourgeoisie, the opportunism that prettifies and supports the concessions of communal territories and the privatization carried out by the government. We fight to annul the laws that take away the rights won by the working class: the law of reforms to the educational system, the law of “service“, the “health care reform” and for the restoration of the rights of state workers, we fight for the annulment of the FTA, for the cancellation of mining concessions and for the repeal of the law of “Prior Consultation“ of Ollanta Humala, who does not respect the decision of the people for the defense of national sovereignty.

**2.** It is necessary to regain the leadership of the trade union federations, to remove the revisionists and opportunists from the leadership, and to raise the banners of the principles of class-struggle unionism. It is necessary to forge the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist united front, based on the worker-peasant alliance.

**3.** In the process of clarifying the political scene, we must identify and fight the class enemies who confuse and divert the working

class, the peasantry and the people from their struggles, and we also need to identify who our friends are who struggle to organize and make the revolution, to put an end to the dictatorship of capital over labor, to the imperialist exploitation and plunder and to establish socialism, as the transition to a classless, communist society.

Central Committee of the PCP (M-L)  
September 2014

# SPAIN

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*Communist Party of Spain M-L (PCE M-L)*

## Where corruption... and the Bourbons reign

*Raul Marco*

*Of all the histories in History  
undoubtedly the saddest is that of Spain,  
because it ended badly. As if man  
already tired of struggling with his demons,  
decided to entrust them to the government  
and the administration of his poverty [...]*

*I have often thought of those men,  
I have often thought about the poverty  
of this country of all demons.  
And I have often thought of another history  
different and less simple, of another Spain  
where a bad government does matter. [...]*

*Because I want to believe that there are no  
demons.  
They are men who pay the government,  
the entrepreneurs of the false history  
they are men who have sold the man,*

*those who have turned him to poverty  
and kidnapped the health of Spain.*

*I ask Spain to expel these demons.  
That poverty rises up to the government.  
That man should become the master of his his-  
tory.*

(Jaime Gil de Biedma)

Sad and painful verses that perfectly condense the history of this land called Spain. It is as if it was when the poet wrote these verses, today they are, indeed, a tragic and unfortunate reality:

26% of the economically active population (six million people) are without work; among the youths it is 50%; two million families in which all members are unemployed. Hunger that mainly strikes children, of whom a large



percentage have only one meal a day, which they receive at school through cafeteria grants, which they are now eliminating. Thousands, yes thousands of people who lost the homes that they bought because they are unable to make the mortgage payments, many of them immigrants who have lost their savings earned despite the exploitation they have suffered, in addition to the racist attacks, xenophobia of the neo-fascist packs (why “neo,” as they are the cubs of the fierce wolf of always?). And those families who have been evicted, who have paid their mortgages for years, besides being robbed of their homes, are forced to continue paying the debt on what they have been robbed of. They must pay the thieves, such as Bankia and many if not all of the banks that have cleaned out those whom the “right-thinkers” describe with derogatory epithets.

Corruption operates here and in other countries, but we are speaking of Spain where it reaches unimaginable heights, it is a scourge from which the parties and unions are not spared. Every day cases of corruption, money laundering, theft disguised as compensation, etc., scandals that involve ministers and former ministers, heads of state and private enterprises, are being discovered. Even the royal family, some of whose members are involved in this corruption and criminal acts.

The king imposed by Franco, Juan Carlos of Bourbon and Bourbon, has been forced to abdicate for his repeated scandalous conduct. This individual, I refuse to call him Sir since the parameters place him very, very far from that, has transgressed, lied, abused, and more than that, but according to the current Consti-

tution, the king is not accountable for his actions. Who is responsible for his acts or knavery (let us say, Bourbonry [a pun on the term “bribonadas,” or knavery – *translator’s note*])? An old saying from the Castilian lands translated as “fablar” paladino<sup>1</sup> (tell tales clearly), asserts that the one who holds the ladder is as much a thief as the one who robs.

The Bourbon and Bourbon (it rhymes to the consumer’s taste) with a fortune of several hundred million euros (some say it is two thousand million) does not know nor is he able to explain its origin; he has resorted, as other swindlers did, to an “inheritance received from his father” that he kept in Switzerland...

This mister king, while he was president of a society for the protection of elephants, which are endangered, went to Africa to kill... elephants. He was accompanied by his girlfriend (the gossips use another name for this friendship), the German Countess Corinna zu-Sayn Wittgenstein.

He had a good student in his daughter, the princess Cristina who, with her husband, Ur-dangarin, established the non-profit Noos Institute, which they and their partner allowed to make a profit of a few million in deals and public procurement contracts, in collusion with various authorities, particularly from Valencia. Despite the pressures that the investigating judge suffered to close the case, it is likely that the princess, her husband and partner will sit in the dock of the accused. It remains to be seen, because the pressures continue.

Let us continue with the corruption that is devastating these lands.

The president of the CEPR (Center for

Economic Policy Research), Guillermo de la Dehesa, recently wrote a well-documented article with the significant title “Private corruption in Spain,” from which we quote a few paragraphs:

*“If there is public corruption there is necessarily also private corruption. The 3% or 5% that some request, others pay,2 willingly or not, if they get what they want in return. Private corruption begins with the basic distinction between those who pay their taxes and those who do not pay. The last published payment of personal income taxes (IRPF) in 2012, by steps, shows that 19.37 million wage earners and self-employed reported income for this tax. However, only 4,168 reported income of more than 600,000 euros of tax base, only 60,313 reported income of more than 150,000 euros and only 548,823 reported income of more than 60,000 euros. [...]*

*“The majority of people with very high incomes and assets did not report income to be taxed and uses the Investment Companies with Variable Capital (SICAVs), whose profits pay 1%. These SICAVs were created to prevent people with large assets from deciding to legally relocate to other EU countries with more advantageous tax rates than Spain. There are also SICAVs in France, United Kingdom, Italy and Holland. The VDOS Stochastics (2014) estimated that the assets under management by SICAV in Spain were 27,575 million euros.*

*“[...] Tax evasion in Spain has increased by 6.8 points of GDP between 2008 and 2012, from 17.85% to 25.6%, more than 65,000 million euros, reaching 253,000 million.” (“El País” [“The Country”], September 21, 2014.)*

These are facts and data eloquent enough to demonstrate how corruption, fraud, or frankly speaking theft, is practically habitual among bankers, millionaires and others of the same kind. According to various studies, given the difficulty of controlling this kind of economy, the underground economy, black work, reached up to 28% of the GDP in 2013. All these percentages are above the EU average, which stands at 18%, and certainly much higher than that of France (11%) and Germany (13.7%).

Corruption, white collar banditry, is in the hands of the real mafias, known and tolerated because the political and police authorities turn what we call here the “blind eye.” This is what Guillermo de la Dehesa calls, crudely and accurately, the “criminal economy”:

*“The criminal economy operates completely outside the law and with black money, made up of terrorism, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, smuggling of women and children, body organs and animals, as well as induced prostitution and drug trafficking. All these activities have in common that they are funded almost entirely with high denomination banknotes in euros, dollars and Swiss francs of, whose owners or users cannot be identified since they are bearer banknotes and that they often try to ‘launder’ in tax havens. [...]*

*“In 2007, at the height of the real estate and construction bubble, there circulated in Spain 36% of all the 200 and 500 euro banknotes of the euro zone, while the GDP of Spain was only 11% of the total for the zone, that is, three times lower, a scandalous percentage.” (Ibid)*

The figures speak for themselves. Let us

look at some very significant data: In 2012, 443 people had reported income of over €30 million, exceeding the 2011 figures by 25%, and double the number of multimillionaires from the pre-crisis figure, which was 233 people in 2007. It is obvious that, in times of a tremendous crisis such as the one we are experiencing, poverty increases and all sorts of calamities strike the working class and the popular masses, at the same time as they enrich the already rich to an insulting degree, to the point that Spain is the most unequal country in the EU, behind only Latvia, according to Eurostat [statistical office of the European Union – *translator's note*].

A recent study by the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, based in Paris) states that between 2007 and 2011, the average income of the poorest 10% fell 7.5 times more than that of the richest 10%. This also explains the previous scandalous figures. That having been said, the crises are for the poor, the workers, the people in general; that is, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. Nil novi sub sole<sup>3</sup>...

As we have already said, corruption in these parts extends to political parties, trade unions, institutions (such as the Church, as reactionary and obscurantist as it is), the leaders of the employers' association, banks and savings accounts. The phrase (from Hamlet) "something is rotten in the kingdom of Denmark" is a smell of perfume compared to the stench we breathe here.

Consider the case of Bankia, formed after the near collapse of Caja Madrid. The State invested €23,000 million to save it, and Bankia was established. Rodrigo Rato was appointed

the head of the bank; he had been Minister of the Economy from 1996 to 2004 in the government of the neo-fascist Aznar. Needless to say, the salaries of these people are fabulous. But they did not seem enough, and the leaders and "advisers" appointed by the PP [People's Party], PSOE [Spanish Socialist Workers' Party], IU [United Left], and the CCOO [Workers' Commissions] and UGT [General Union of Workers] trade unions, distributed black credit cards, that is, their use was not subject to any control, and the amounts that they withdrew with these cards were camouflaged with methods of payment that did not allow them to be identified. In two years, these ladies and gentlemen spent €15 to 20 million.

Some examples of the doings of this rabble: in just one month Blesa, the former director of Caja Madrid (later Bankia) spent €9,000 on a safari in Africa and €10,000 on bottles of an excellent wine... They all spent huge sums on luxury hotels, jewelry, parties, trips (preferably to New York, what do they have over there?). An "advisor" appointed by the leader of the United Left, Moral Santin, spent €365,000; another "historic" leader of the Workers' Commissions, Rodolfo Benito, beset by scandal and his adventures, was forced to resign. The leader of the UGT, Jose Ricardo Martinez, spent 12,750 euros in one month at a luxury store. Juan Iranzo of the Board of Directors, a member of the PP, spent €46,800... The list goes far beyond the space we have available in both cynicism and larceny.

The fraud having been discovered (there appears to have been a tip-off), the main leaders of Bankia, from before and now) are being investigated, called before a judge and will

probably be brought to trial. Among these thieves we can find, besides the leaders of the PP, PSOE, IU, former senior political leaders, and personalities “above suspicion.” They have all used, why not say stolen, millions of euros of public money. Once again one must repeat the axiom: privatization of profits, socialization of losses.

These robberies, etc. by political leaders, trade unionists and public figures, do not justify offending the feelings of the masses with the oxymoron political-honesty.<sup>4</sup> It is true that practices and attitudes of some politicians abound, including many whose integrity leaves much to be desired, even becoming brittle, but they cannot be measured by the same standard as that of the people who are fighting for the winning of a real democracy, freedom and solidarity, against reaction; they cannot be compared with the miserable, corrupt freeloaders who live off their political positions.

One of the biggest cases of corruption and theft is that of Jordi Pujol, who was President of the Generalitat de Catalunya (Government of Catalonia) for nearly thirty years. This very honorable President, who formed a real mafia clan with his wife and sons, could not explain what happened to the 600 million euros deposited in a bank in Andorra, with which they had been trading and wheeling and dealing here and there for years. Nor could they explain the operations conducted by the Santander Bank which the recently deceased Botin led (another out-and-out element), nor by Prisa worth €2,000 million. Their wealth is held in tax havens, such as Andorra, Switzerland, Luxembourg, etc. Jordi Pujol could only say

that is an inheritance left by his father which he kept abroad, in case the situation in Spain became difficult. As can be seen, the story of the inheritance was repeated among the economic criminals. It turns out that there is no will, it has not been found, and strangely his own sister denies it, she never knew that her father had left an inheritance. Indeed, the father of this individual was a known currency smuggler just after the Spanish Civil War (1939).

It is revealing of the nature of this very honorable person, who headed the Banca Catalana that drained its funds before bankruptcy. He has been one of the most rabid nationalists for the independence of Catalonia, where the phrase was coined “Spain robs us.” This is now the object of laughter and jokes when it was revealed that he has a fortune whose origin and that of his children he could not explain. One of his children, Oleguer Pujol, 35 years old, accumulated a fortune of €2,177 million.

The widespread corruption at the highest levels is beginning to be denounced. Some of these righteous patriots are already in prison, such as Barcena, treasurer of the PP who for years paid bonuses to the leaders of this party, as all their own lists submitted to the judge prove. The former president of the employers’ association of Spain, Diaz Ferran, was jailed for fraud and fraudulent bankruptcies of Marsan Travel and other companies. He had the nerve to say that the workers “have to work more and earn less.” The scandal of the opaque, black cards has revealed no less a person than the principal advisor to the Royal House, a certain Spottorno, as well as the for-

mer Minister Rodrigo Rato and Miguel Blesa.

This is one more scandal, exacerbated by the tremendous inability to cope with the Ebola virus, which uncovered the mismanagement and arrogance of the Minister for Health (an economist with no medical training whatsoever), and his advisers.

***“Of all the histories in History...”***

October 10, 2014

**Notes:**

**1** Paladino: public, clear and patent (DRAE [Dictionary of the Spanish Language])

**2** The “bite” (“bribe”): Income or money obtained from some person for an official or employee through abuse of their position. A fruit of influences or bribes (DRAE). Our note.

**3** There is nothing new under the sun.

**4** Oxymoron: The grammatical combination of terms with opposite meaning or sense, such as “a deafening silence.”

## TURKEY

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*Labour Party (EMEP)*

### Entanglements and disintegration in the Middle East

Since last summer, world public opinion has been following what is happening in the Middle East with great astonishment, anxiety and anger. As of June, the people of Iraq and Syria are facing a barbarism embodied particularly by the actions of the forces of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).<sup>(1)</sup> Medieval religious wars are practically being revived in the region. As though the death of hundreds of innocent civilians losing their lives on a daily basis to the suicide attacks in Iraq and the civil war in Syria were not enough, the people of this region have now to withstand also the primitive forms of violence orchestrated by ISIL via sectarian cleansing, beheading, and women being trafficked in slave markets.

The Western public opinion, puzzled with the question of “How can such forms of bar-

barism be present in the 21st century?” is speculating the revival of medievalism in the Middle East through the lens of a media that is covering the events in this region as phenomena that are unconnected to, devoid of, and in existence despite the bourgeois-capitalist civilisation. The monopoly media delimits the culpability of the imperialist countries to its hesitance to intervene to end this barbarism. This desire for intervention does not stem from humanitarian reasons but from the scare and prospect that “this savagery will land on our doorstep”. In fact, the medievalism we contemporarily see unfolding in the Middle East is nothing more than the inverted version of capitalist imperialism!

In the past, the ‘neo-cons’ and their US generals threatened, in a rather haughty manner, that any regional force in the Middle East

and Asia resisting their will and impositions will be “bombed backed to two thousand years”. As countenanced by all, this warning was not solely constituent of words; it had practical implications: the US and other imperialist powers, by means of war and attacks have slumped Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya into bitter and torturous realities. The “technologically sophisticated” bombs that have come to fruition in the imperialist era of modern capitalism have not only led to civilian deaths and the destruction of inhabitations in the Middle East, they have also toppled the states, engendered the dissolution of the social fabric, and – their artificial and brutal nature notwithstanding – led to demolition of nations and states. Resultantly, tribes, sects and religion have largely shaped the ideational issues and sensitivities, instead of states and nations. The floodgates to sectarianism in the Middle East have purposively been opened by imperialist wars and interventions coordinated by the US. Thus, ISIL is indirectly a by-product of the imperialist wars in this region.

### **A new period of disintegration in the Middle East**

Today it is clear that the strategy of “state building” of George W. Bush has led to the “state destroying”. (The Obama administration knows it. It would be superficial to interpret the bombings by the US – after the creation of a broad coalition – as a transformation of Obama into Bush.)

The actuality we are faced with can be summarised with the following words: The borders of the states and regimes fashioned by

the victors of the First World War, particularly in the Middle East, is undergoing a process of dissolution – a process described by some as “constructive chaos”.<sup>(2)</sup> This process is constitutive of a negative and a positive dynamic. The Arab uprisings and resistances represent the latter, while the former is epitomised – firstly and foremostly by the US – by the interventionist and destructive policies in this region.

If you can impose your will on the world, then, you have profound economic, political, military, diplomatic and mediatic resources. This wealth of resources allows an imperialist state to implement a policy that also aims to turn failures into successes. The policy of the US under Obama regarding the above-mentioned dynamics can be summarised as an attempt to transmute the negative dynamic into the positive dynamic and vice versa. In other words, the US, on the one hand, concomitant to derailing the Arab rebellions that have shaken the autocratic and reactionary regimes in this region, by means of making use of the political and organisational drawbacks of these revolts, has used these uprisings as means of imposing its imperial policies and projects. On the other hand, they want to prevent the regional and international forces from taking advantage of the vacuums caused by state and social disintegrations, which are simply the consequences of their policies, and to use them as a means of restructuring.

The former case is demonstrable with the case of Egypt, and the “fight against ISIL” concretises the latter case. Clearly, the US has aided ISIL, with which it only waged war very recently, as a pit-bull to subdue particularly the



States and forces in the region. The overthrow of Nouri al-Maliki (former Prime Minister of Iraq), who had “crossed the line“ in Iraq was just an initial spin-off of this policy. In addition to utilising ISIL to upend the hegemonic aims or projects of the states in the region (and these states include Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar), this force is also used to reinvent the tarnished image of the US in the region. These developments have facilitated a shift in the ties the states in the region have with one another as well as giving birth to alliances among states that share similar interests. For example, Iran has opted to formally stay out of the coalition and benefit from the somewhat blemished image of Turkey. On the other, the anti-Muslim Brotherhood alliance between Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt has fostered the potential for US’ new approach to yield extensive results. And Russia is aiming to build new and close ties with the state of Turkey, which now has growing disagreements with the US.

The US has waited precisely for the strengthening of ISIL. On account of being well acquainted with the logic, ideology, aims and the “social reality” of this organisation (the Sunni segments that have lost their old status), the US knew where and how ISIL will attack once it gained ground and hence it has based its intervention plan on this knowledge. However, this plan contains two clearly contradictory elements:

a) the disproportion between the existing forces of ISIL (about 20,000 to 30,000 armed fighters) and the size of the coalition formed against this organization (more than 40 countries!).

b) The contradiction between the an-

nouncement of the decision “not to send ground troops,” and the reality of the need for ground troops (admitted by the General Staff of the US) to annihilate this enemy once and for all.

As demonstrated by these conflicting features, “the fight against ISIL” is not founded on the alleged claim: the necessity of eradicating ISIL. Also, if one takes into account the statements of the leaders of the US, namely that “this fight will take at least three years“ (the former president of the CIA and the Pentagon, Leon Panetta, says same thing: “we are going into a Thirty Years War!“), then one can see that it is not so easy to explain what is happening in the Middle East simply by the events that have developed in the region. The importance of the Middle East remains strategic without any doubt. However, the role of this region in the world hegemony scheme of the US is not identical to that imputed to it previously. The US has declared the Asia-Pacific as being the epicentre of its world hegemony strategy, and today, partly owing to the advantageous position it has gained vis-à-vis shale gas and oil, it is the most powerful imperialist force in the region with the opportunity to pursue flexible tactics and options. In other words, the Middle East is no longer the pivot around which the US strategy for world hegemony revolves.

The nature of the engagement that the US has with this region is dependent upon the steps it can and cannot tread in accordance with its aims of world domination. This measure necessitates the following: hampering other imperialist and regional states’ attempts at gaining important positions in the Middle

East that would enable them to oppose or weaken the hegemony of the US! In fact, this is not unique to the steps the US takes in the Middle East; it is a policy that it adopts worldwide: making it impossible for any other force to gain enough power to be on par with it, and obstructing the attempts by the rival countries by damaging their positions and opportunities. Via Ukraine, it aims to upset the special relations between Germany and Russia, and via Japan and India, it aims to develop strategic response to China's hegemony in the region, and via ISIL, it aims to discipline the regional powers and limit the remit of its rivals etc. The contemporary US is no longer aiming to create a "new world" – the coalition's discourse is not based on *fighting for a thing, but against a thing!* The US' priority is to fetter others from conceding positions that would enable them to modify the terms of the existing world order of which it is the "seignior" of and thereby impede them from creating "a new world order" that would challenge it.

In this sense, the coalition that the US has formed against ISIL is therefore a platform to restrain and disciplining rival tendencies. The US as a result of making "the fight against ISIL" a protracted fight it is aiming to attain time and try to shape and direct the regional dissolution in tandem with its strategy for world hegemony.

### **The actual and assumed role played by the AKP government**

The regional policy of the Turkish AKP government has not been limited to a simple collaboration with imperialism and a relation-

ship of "dependence" defined by that collaboration. Particularly its policy towards Syria, linked to the theory of "deep strategy", devised by the current Prime Minister and former Foreign Minister had expansionist "neo-Ottoman" hopes. Turkey has its own demands and objectives. "Assad, President of Syria, will be overthrown," and they will go to pray in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus! To achieve this objective, as reported by Joe Biden, the US Vice President, in a speech at Harvard University, the Turkish AKP government will not hesitate to do it all. Turkey has become the port of entry and exit of the international Islamic Legionnaires. Turkey is risking itself in these adventures...

What the regional policy of the AKP government, whose collapse no one can doubt any longer, wanted to do, particularly during the war in Syria, and what it actually led to is now known to world public opinion. Still the government is acting as a poker player who is about to lose all his money! Seeing a sign of weakness in the face of the opposing player, he wants to raise the stakes. It also increased the conditions for its participation in the coalition during negotiations with the USA: the establishment of a "buffer zone" in Syria (also known in recent days as a "safe zone"), that the zone be declared a "no-fly" zone and that "the Syrian opposition forces" (and the welcome of exiles and refugees) be trained and armed in this safe zone. It is interesting to note that the discrepancy between the axis of struggle proposed by the US and the real need to achieve the stated objectives of the final and rapid elimination of ISIL found exactly the opposite reaction to the preconditions proposed

by the AKP government for participating in the coalition. Here the situation can be summarized as follows: if you pursue your own interests in the name of “the fight against ISIL,” then I will link this struggle to the overthrow of the Assad regime!

The AKP government insists that in order for them to give active support to the US-proclaimed-operation to “restraining and destroying ISIL” the coalition forces should aim to overthrow the Assad regime as well. By doing this they believe the US would give in to their demands. No matter how necessary a “ground operation” might be militarily in order to achieve the declared objective, this does not oblige the US, which has a totally different strategy, to meet Turkey’s conditions. Turkey’s main error in its calculation here is the fact that there is a significant difference between the short-term objectives of the US commitments in the Middle East under Obama and the objectives of engagement in the region under George W. Bush.

The meaning of the blackmail of the “buffer zone” (as posited by the *Foreign Policy* journal) is very clear: to guarantee that the United States would be directly involved militarily in the Syrian civil war.(3) Moreover, the US defines its positions on this issue (in which Russia, China and Iran are also actors), not according to Turkey’s dead end policy on Syria, but according to what it needs to carry out, for world hegemony.(4) In summary, due to the above-mentioned tactics of the US, which is quickly renewing its industry and is trying to restore its economy, the intrigue of the Turkish government of the AKP will not work. The US has “a long time” to wage the fight against

ISIL. The prolongation of this issue will force the Turkish government to abandon its ambitious policies in the region. In fact, the rapid development of events in the Middle East has greatly limited the time for a Turkey that has still not resolved the Kurdish question. Turkey is the actor who must quickly change its position.

Indeed, the main dilemma of the US is the following: the limits imposed on its regional initiatives, in accord with its global strategy, will inevitably allow other imperialist forces, starting with the European imperialists, new opportunities in the region. In addition, the US tactics for the region involve achieving the maximum results with minimum commitments and proposing a restrictive platform to the other competing forces. This tactic, however, can lead to the opposite effect. Turkey is aware of this dilemma and is trying to make use of it but it falls short in creating the effect it desires. However, this does not mean that some other imperialist countries cannot benefit from this dilemma more than the United States had anticipated. In particular France and Germany have acted quickly to offer “help”!

There is also another issue that should be highlighted here. The risk incurred by Turkey is not simply that of not being able to implement an ambitious regional policy. Moreover, its blackmail policy involving preconditions to tackle a real threat posed by ISIL, has only discredited Turkey in the eyes of world public opinion and of the peoples of the region.(5) What is even more serious are the many consequences that this ambitious plan, marked in part by a certain sectarianism, has had and continues to have in the internal politics of

Turkey. At the time of this writing, during the clashes that have taken place in the demonstrations of support for the Kurdish resistance in Kobane, about 40 people lost their lives. The government has introduced legislation to create a climate to terrorize all those who pursue citizens' rights and to expand the powers of the police is only one aspect of the situation. The other aspect is that the process of upheavals in the Middle East and the domestic "policy of overtures," Turkey's so-called initiatives to resolve decades-long internal conflicts, implemented by the AKP government with the expectation of bringing immense gains to it in the region, were intertwined at a disadvantageous time for them.(6)

In other words, the AKP government, a short period after coming to power, began with its neo-Ottoman dreams unstuck itself here and there from the elements of the "glue" that holds the Turkish nation together, formed by the Kemalists after a long period of resorting to repression and denial. The "overtures" towards the Kurds, Alevis, Romanis, etc., to solve the historically deep problems of the country have been declared, but despite the years that have gone by, there have been no real democratic steps taken to resolve them.

The government recognizes the main problems of the Republic, but rather it takes advantage of them to consolidate its domestic power and also to realize its imperial ambitions abroad. Instead of resolving these issues in a bourgeois-democratic framework, the government makes them into instruments of its political tactics. It dissolved the old "glue", which covered many national, religious and regional problems, but it did not establish a

new solution in its place. However, these issues remain as open wounds. And it is precisely these open wounds that leave Turkey open to all these processes of the decomposition of the states and communities of the Middle East and their clashes. In summary, as a result of the greed and ambition, the State and the Government of Turkey risk losing what they already had.

### **The importance of the resistance of Kobane for the peoples of the region**

What is happening in the Middle East and in particular the current position of the Kurdish people in the region and the democratic struggle that it has waged has made the Kurdish question a defining one, as never before for the near future of Turkey.

"The peace process" initiated by the Kurdish national movement, and for which the State has not taken any concrete action has introduced a dilemma in the internal politics of the government, but it still remains a "trump card" in the regional dilemmas.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the positions taken by the AKP government, faced with the fearless resistance waged by the Syrian Kurds in the town of Kobane against the attacks by the Islamic State, show how distant the government is becoming from its own reality and that of the region.

The reasons why the government wants the fall of Kobane by militants of ISIL are clear. This town is one of the three cantons of the Kurdish autonomy in Rojava, which is located in northern Syria. Moreover, this democratic autonomy of Rojava represents a bad example that the Turkish state needs to eliminate, since

it wants to keep negotiations with the Kurds in Turkey at a minimal level. Moreover, this is not only for the inspiration that it can give to the Kurds of Turkey; Rojava also represents a danger to the oil cooperation between Turkey and the Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq. "The Kurdish oil" in northern Iraq is sold to the whole world through pipelines crossing Turkey. The existence of this autonomous region of Rojava in northern Syria represents a risk of bypassing these pipelines.<sup>8</sup> For all these reasons, the AKP government has hoped for the fall of Kobane and furthermore it imposed as a precondition for negotiations with the United States that the latter not intervene to save this town. And the US complied with this for some time, until it got what it wanted from Turkey. Furthermore, it was also in its interest that these cantons with certain anti-imperialist characteristics not be consolidated and strengthened, because they represent a democratic example for the peoples of the Middle East and because their struggle is led by an armed organization (PYD / PKK) [Democratic Union Party / Kurdistan Workers' Party].

However, these intrigues did not materialize! The people of Kobane resisted heroically and are continuing to resist. This resistance has gone very far beyond the boundaries of the town and has become a symbol for the whole world! Those forces that are confronting each other in Kobane in a way represent the past and the future of the Middle East.

Although it is still not clear what will replace what is now disintegrating in the Middle East, one can say that there are green shoots of a democratic future for the peoples of the region as well as the risk of a primitive sectar-

ian barbarism. It is precisely these two elements that are confronting each other in Kobane; this is not a coincidence.

Therefore, a US indifference to the fall of this symbol, when it is claiming to be fighting against ISIS, would not only encourage this organization, but it would also discredit the new US initiatives in the region. The more Kobane resists the more it becomes a symbol, the more the intrigues to make it fall have failed. After all, the more the AKP government stubbornly refuses to acknowledge this reality, and therefore to really enter the coalition, the more the US was driven to multiply the air bombardments to provide support to the population of Kobane. Finally, to further expand this support, they stated that they had met directly with the PYD....

\* \* \*

In Rojava, starting with the Kurds, the Arabs, Armenians, Syrians and Chechens have come together to establish a democratic autonomy. One can have differences with the concept (democratic modernity, autonomy, radical democracy, etc.) that has inspired this structure. It is even possible to think of it as a utopia, something reformist, and to think that its foundations are fragile.<sup>9</sup> But none of this changes in any way the importance that Rojava (Kobane) represents for the peoples of the Middle East. It means that the peoples of the different nationalities and communities can work together in a democratic environment and determine their own future. They can do this with a democratic conception and spirit and they can fight collectively for it without becoming part of an imperialist project or becoming imperialist lackeys.

Our Party supports this initiative of the peoples of Rojava, this democratic conception and spirit, this struggle that is exemplary for the peoples of the Middle East today.

But this support should not be seen as a simple question of solidarity. In fact, Turkey today is a country that, on the one hand, is open to the disintegration that is taking place in the Middle East, to various provocations and incitements of the peoples against each other and, on the other hand, it is a country ruled by a government that is becoming ever more violent to the degree that its failures are aggravated and the mass struggle increases.

In this context in which the masses are pushed to understand the events from a communal, nationalist and chauvinist point of view, our Party gives the utmost importance to the broadest unity of the masses of different nationalities around the democratic demands and objectives as well as broadening the actions to build this unity.

October 2014

Labor Party (EMEP) – Turkey

[www.emep.org](http://www.emep.org)

#### Notes:

1 Although the dynamism of the forces of the ISIL now seems surprising, it is enough to consider the ethnic communal schism, which appeared after the occupation of Iraq by the US and how the attempts at intervention in Syria have exacerbated these contradictions, to note that the scene that appears today is not a surprise... Al-Qaeda, which did not exist in Iraq before, found fertile ground among the Sunnis who were disparaged in the context of ethnic-communal con-

tradition. The surrogates of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, who since 2003 have been responsible for many deadly attacks, took the name of Al-Qaeda in Iraq (The Islamic State of Iraq – ISI) in 2004. With the outbreak of the fighting in Syria, the militants of the Islamic State of Iraq who went to Syria founded the Al-Nusra Front under the leadership of Abu Muhammad Al-Joulani. The Al-Nusra Front managed to attract militants from all regions of the world, from Georgia to Europe, from Libya and Tunisia through Afghanistan, which allowed its leader, Al-Joulani, to consolidate control over the organization. Then in April 2013 the leader of the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, announced through a recording that the Al-Nusra Front was a branch of the ISI and that the two organizations had united under the name of the ISIL. But the leader of the Al-Nusra Front said that this union had not taken place and that they were affiliated with the leader of Al Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri. In June of 2013, the latter said he was against such a merger of the two organizations, but al-Baghdadi refused to obey this order. During this period the ISIL also carried out attacks on other Islamist groups, including against the militants of the Al-Nusra Front and quickly became the largest organization in northern Syria. It managed to control the border posts and to form an emirate in the town of Rakka and thus became the owner of the oilfields. Towards the end of 2013, after having conquered the town of Deir ez Zur, near the border with Iraq, ISIL rapidly established relations with the Sunni tribes of the village of Al-Anbar, who were violently opposed to the Maliki government in Iraq. After the murder of the brother of the Sunni Deputy Ahmed el-Alvani in his home in an operation organized by govern-

ment forces in the village of Al-Anbar in December 2013, the ISIL was able to conquer the towns of Ramadi and Fallujah. It then proclaimed the Emirate in Fallujah. Also ISIL, which had been supported by Turkey and Saudi Arabia on behalf of the successful interventions in Syria, quickly obtained the conditions to conquer the regions populated by Sunni tribes who were in violent opposition to the Maliki government in Iraq.

2 Obviously the issue is not limited with the consequences of imperialist interventions. Countries such as Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, etc. have been states with a lot of difficulties because of the disintegrated economies caused by world capitalism. Therefore, they have similar problems with other countries in the region.

3 “The United States needs Turkey to join the fight against ISIL. But Turkey won’t do it without dragging the US deeper into Syria’s civil war.” Kate Brannen, “Blackmail in the Buffer Zone“, Foreign Policy, October 15, 2014.

4 We cannot predict today whether or not these measures will require a buffer zone in the future.

5 The fact that Turkey, at the time of this

writing, has not been elected to be a member of the United Nations Security Council is related to this loss of its reputation. Moreover, some Western writers are beginning to state that to the extent that Turkey continues to pursue its policy against Kobane, it should question its membership in NATO.

6 In other words, this interlinking occurs in a context in which it is not Turkey that is influencing the region, but on the contrary it is the region that is influencing Turkey.

7 The recent statements by the government show that it is aware that not to unblock this “peace process“ could cause it to lose its best “trump card.” But it is not certain that the steps that it claims to be ready to make will be sufficient to dispel the doubts that its policy of recent weeks have caused among the Kurdish people as to this “peace process“.

8 According to the latest reports, the Parliament of the regional Kurdish autonomy in Iraq decided “to establish official relations with Rojava.”

9 In our theoretical journals our Party has already published its analysis of this concept and the theories that have inspired this.



## VENEZUELA

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*Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Venezuela (PCMLV)*

### The study of *Capital* in the consolidation of Marxist-Leninist cadres

*Capital* is one of the most important works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; although outlined and written primarily by the former, it was completed by the latter because Marx died without finishing his outstanding work.

It fell to Engels to complete the work that took decades of the life of both of them, based on manuscripts and with the help of Marx's daughters. It is a work of great importance that, despite the extensive and high level of specialization of the topics discussed, was prepared using a method which simplified the explanations, first because its author took pains to make it understandable, and second because the working class, for whom it was written, can assimilate its content with remarkable ease since it deals with issues they experience in everyday life.

#### A short historical review of *Capital*

*Capital* first appeared in 1867 in the native language of the author (Das Kapital, Kritik der politischen Oekonomie); later, in August 1872, it was published in French, in installments for ten centimes, which continued until 1875, being published after an exhaustive revision by the author. He not only revised but rewrote the text, introducing "changes and additions." This led Marx himself to say: "Hence, whatever the literary defects of this French edition may be, it possesses a scientific value independent of the original and should be consulted even by readers familiar with German."<sup>(1)</sup>

After Marx's death, his comrade Engels and his daughter Eleanor Marx took up the task of working on the original manuscripts to

complete the second and third volume. Years later the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute of the USSR, as well as other publishers, took on the task of reviewing all the quotations and finding the exact sources from which they were taken. Hundreds of translations into various languages have made of this extraordinary masterpiece a must reading for the serious students of economy and especially for us Marxist-Leninists, who find it an invaluable contribution to the study and dissemination of the scientific conception of society.

Some theorists have spread the idea that *Capital* is too complex a work, only understandable by scholars. This may also be due to the fact that it is a voluminous book, which could frighten many people. Furthermore, the beginning of the work presents a degree of abstraction able to intimidate, which has helped to strengthen the image of intellectual inaccessibility. This was rebutted by the editor [of the French edition] La Chatre in a letter to Marx: "As for the fear that readers will be put off by the dryness of the economic material dealt with in the first chapters, the future will tell us if this has merit. Let us hope that people who take up your work, which has as its main objective the study of economic doctrines, will not stop reading it due to the application of your analytical methods; everyone will understand that the first chapters of a book should be used for abstract reasoning, a first requirement for burning topics that excite the spirit, and only gradually can they arrive at the solution of social problems discussed in the following chapters. I am convinced that all readers will want to continue until the end of your magnificent theories."(2)

The huge size of the work and its cost made its purchase by workers difficult. Therefore Marx and his publisher sought a practical answer: "The method of publication that we adopted, a serial for ten centimes each, have the advantage of allowing a greater number of our friends to get their book, because the poor can only afford to pay for science with very little money; and the objective that you set will have been achieved: make your work accessible to everyone."(3)

We Marxist-Leninists should break down the myth of the inaccessibility of *Capital* and encourage our members to study it, looking for the method that will allow them to make practical use of the explanations and ideas contained in this wonderful work. For such a task the role of the party is very important in order to promote its study and make practical use of the understanding shown by Marx and Engels, so that it does not remain a simple task of intellectuals or for pure theoretical abstraction. For this reason the PCMLV has made known its experience during 2014 which aims to make practical use of studying this work of Marx and Engels, promoting its scientific study and application to the militant action of the party and its mass organizations.

### **A concrete experience with *Capital***

As a product of the historical development of our work, and after several years of attempts, our party has developed the first school of *Capital*, in which the cadres of the PCMLV will learn the investigative and explanatory method of Marxism and the deeper knowledge contained in this great work.

Many people may ask how a party in struggle with countless tasks to take up can dedicate itself to investigating and bringing its cadre to a school on *Capital*; for us the answer is in the question itself: the more complicated the scene of struggle, the deeper must be our understanding and the higher our preparation. For this reason we have made an effort, after a year of final preparation and a great number of meetings and discussions to define the method and facilitators of this task. We concluded with a method that combines individual with group study, of facilitators and participants, the preparation of areas and the techniques to adjust the system of study to obtain the best result.

Among the various objectives planned for the First School of *Capital* for the cadres of the PCMLV, there are: 1. To deepen the understanding of the economic foundations of the functioning of capitalist society, 2. To Consolidate the concepts of Marxist political economy, 3. To raise the ideological and political level and the unity of the party cadres, 4. To deepen the investigative and explanatory method of Marxism-Leninism.

Explanations of the facilitator, videos and questions are combined with previous work sessions, among the facilitators, which have been extended for a year, and which ended with two consecutive days of study for each volume, with an interval of one month for the next.

From the beginning significant results have been seen, since the group of facilitators has had to develop intense individual study and team discussion sessions, in addition to preparing their exposition. This has raised the theoretical level and has led to discussions, even in the Central Committee, to unify criteria on the interpretations and expositions; further, it has promoted among the members the search for answers to many questions that arose in individual study.

By the end of 2014 about 30 cadres of our party will have completed the first cycle of study of the three volumes of *Capital* and another similar group is preparing to complete this study by the end of 2015.

The task has been difficult but rewarding and we hope that it will serve for exchanges with other fraternal parties that have developed experiences of this kind or who are willing to take part in them.

CC of the PCMLV  
Venezuela  
September 2014

#### Notes:

1 Marx, *Capital*, Afterword to the French edition, 1875.

2 Letter from Maurice la Chatre to Marx. June of 1890. From the Spanish edition of *Capital* by Cartago Publishers.

3 Ibid.



