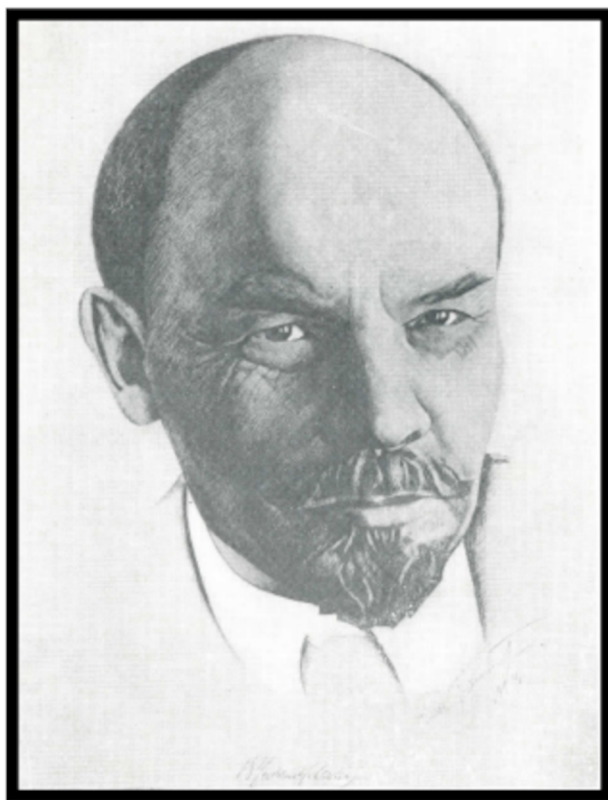


*The*  
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V. I. Lenin, 1870-1924

# *The* **COMMUNIST**

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# Leninism and Revisionism. In the Fundamental Questions of Theory and Practice of Socialism (The dictatorship of the proletariat, its organizational form and economic entity)

By V.A. Tyulkin & M.V. Popov

In 2009, the Fund of Workers' Academy that promotes learning course for workers in Russia, published a collection of "**The main idea of Leninism**", which has incorporated major Lenin's views on the class approach to the analysis of social phenomena and **the dictatorship of the proletariat**.<sup>1</sup> Acquaintance with this collection helps to understand the defection, apostasy those of CPSU leaders, who took the revisionist stance on major issues of Marxism-Leninism at the XXII CPSU Congress. This stance was fixed in the CPSU program which, at most, predetermined the subsequent dissipation of the party and the destruction of the country. The above is proved in this article. The authors have tried to draw the particular attention to the fact that most inventions, excuses and "modern" arguments presented by current opportunists and renegades were retorted by Lenin long ago, at the time of the Lenin's fight against opportunists and those perverting Marxism during the Second Inter-

national and the establishment of the Soviet power in Russia.

\* \* \*

## The Class Character Of The State

The fact that every state has the class character is the ABC of Marxism, and Lenin was constantly stressing it. In his article "The Petty-Bourgeois Stand on the Question of Economic Disorganization" Lenin wrote: "to distinguish which class the state serves, whose class interests it stands for".<sup>2</sup> And in the book "The State and Revolution" Lenin emphasizes, that "according to Marx, the state is an organ of class rule".<sup>3</sup> In the article "The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It" Lenin asks: "And what is the state?" and gives the following answer: "It is an organization of the ruling class".<sup>4</sup> The same idea Lenin explains in his article "Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?": "The state, dear people,

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<sup>1</sup> The main idea of Leninism. Lenin on class approach to the analysis of social phenomena / Comp. Dr. Ph. Sc. M.V. Popov. - St.: Polytechnic Univ. Press, 2009. - 311 p. <http://rpw.ru/>

<sup>2</sup> Lenin, V.I. *Collected Works*, Vol. 25; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1977, pp. 562-564.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 381-492.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 323-369.

is a class concept. The state is an organ or instrument of violence exercised by one class against another".<sup>5</sup> In the Report at the Second All-Russia Trade Union Congress, January 20, 1919, Lenin stresses more categorically: "There is and can be only one alternative: either the dictatorship of the bour-geoisie, disguised by constituent assemblies, all kinds of voting systems, democracy and similar bourgeois frauds that are used to blind fools, and that only people who have become utter renegades from Marxism and socialism all along the line can make play of today—or the dictatorship of the proletariat".<sup>6</sup> It is therefore logical that the Program of the RCP(b) developed by Lenin states clearly: "As opposed to the bourgeois democracy, which has been hiding the class character of the state, the Soviet government openly acknowledges the inevitability of the class character of any state. This class character will exist until the division of society into classes will disappear completely together with any respective state authority".<sup>7</sup> In the brochure "Letter to the Workers and Peasants Apropos of the Victory Over Kolchak", Lenin stresses the class character of the state in the strongest terms: "Either the dictatorship (i.e., the iron rule) of the landowners and capitalists, or the dictatorship of the working class.

There is no middle course. The scions of the aristocracy, intellectualists and petty gentry, badly educated on bad books, dream of a middle course. There is no middle course anywhere in the

world, nor can there be. Either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (masked by ornate Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik phraseology about a people's government, a constituent assembly, liberties, and the like), or the dictatorship of the proletariat. He who has not learned this from the whole history of the nineteenth century is a hopeless idiot".<sup>8</sup>

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### The Essence Of The Socialist State

**I**n his **Concluding Speech On The Report Of The Council Of People's Commissars, January 12 (25) January 1918 at the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies** Lenin said: "Democracy is a form of bourgeois state championed by all traitors to genuine socialism, who now find themselves at the head of official socialism and who assert that democracy is contrary to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Until the revolution transcended the limits of the bourgeois system, we were for democracy; but as soon as we saw the first signs of socialism in the progress of the revolution, we took a firm and resolute stand for the dictatorship of the proletariat".<sup>9</sup> In the brochure "**The successes and the difficulties of the Soviet power**", Lenin simply made fun of the unfortunate

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<sup>5</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 26; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1972, pp. 87-136.

<sup>6</sup> Lenin V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 28; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1972a, pp. 412-428.

<sup>7</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 38; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1976, p. 424.

<sup>8</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 29; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1972b, pp. 552-560.

<sup>9</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972, pp. 453-482.

communists who rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat. He wrote: "We, of course, are not opposed to violence. We laugh at those who are opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, we laugh and say that they are fools who do not understand that there must be either the dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Those who think otherwise are either idiots, or are so politically ignorant that it would be a disgrace to allow them to come anywhere near a meeting, let alone on the platform".<sup>10</sup> Lenin defended the same idea in **the Report On The Domestic And Foreign Situation Of The Soviet Republic at the Extraordinary Plenary Meeting Of The Moscow Soviet Of Workers' And Red Army Deputies** on April 3 1919: "either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, or the power and complete dictatorship of the working class; no middle course was ever of any use, nothing came of it".<sup>11</sup>

In **"The dictatorship of the proletariat"** Lenin wrote the following:

"1. The chief reason why the "socialists" do not understand the dictatorship of the proletariat is that they do not carry the idea of the class struggle to its logical conclusion (Cf. Marx, 1852)

The dictatorship of the proletariat is the *continuation* of the class struggle of the proletariat in new forms. That is the

crux of the matter, and that is what they do not understand.

The proletariat, as a special class, alone continues to wage its class struggle. 2. The state is only a weapon of the proletariat in its class struggle. A special kind of *cudgel, rien de plus!* Nothing more.—*Editor.*]<sup>12</sup>

In his Speech Delivered at The All-Russia Congress of Transport Workers, March 27, 1921, Lenin once again explained that the question is put "either-or": "The class that took political power did so in the knowledge that it was doing so alone. That is intrinsic to the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It has meaning only when one class knows that it is taking political power alone and does not deceive others or itself with talk about "popular government by popular consent through universal suffrage". You all know that there are very many-far too many-people who love to hold forth on that subject, but, at any rate, you will not find them among proletarians, because they have realized that theirs is a dictatorship of the proletariat, and they say as much in their Constitution, the fundamental law of the Republic".<sup>13</sup> In his brochure "The Tax in Kind" Lenin stressed quite simply and briefly: "At the same time socialism is inconceivable unless the proletariat is the ruler of the state. This also is ABC".<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972b, pp. 55-88.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255-274.

<sup>12</sup> Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 30; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1965, pp. 93-104.

<sup>13</sup> Lenin's *Collected Works*, Vol. 32; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1965, pp. 272-284.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 329-365.

## The Concept, The Objectives, And The Historical Boundaries Of The Dictatorship Of The Proletariat

In his article "**Fear Of The Collapse Of The Old And The Fight For The New**" Lenin notes: "What dictatorship implies and means is a state of simmering war, a state of military measures of struggle against the enemies of the proletarian power".<sup>15</sup> With that, in his article "**Greetings to the Hungarian workers**" he emphasizes: "But the essence of proletarian dictatorship is not in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its chief feature is the organization and discipline of the advanced contingent of the working people, of their vanguard; of their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, abolish the division of society into classes, make all members of society working people, and remove the basis for all exploitation of man by man".<sup>16</sup> Lenin explains that "the abolition of classes requires a long, difficult and stubborn class *struggle*, which, *after* the overthrow of capitalist rule, *after* the destruction of the bourgeois state, *after* the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, does not disappear (as the vulgar representatives of the old socialism and the old Social-Democracy imagine), but merely changes its forms and in many respects becomes".<sup>17</sup> In his brochure "**The Great Beginning**" Lenin gives the following definition of the dictatorship

of the proletariat: "If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term "dictatorship of the proletariat" into simpler language, it means just the following:

Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (Let us observe in parenthesis that the only scientific distinction between socialism and communism is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage.)

The mistake the "Berne" yellow International makes is that its leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletariat only in word and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion. They are afraid of that inevitable conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoisie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to them. They are afraid to admit that the dictatorship of the proletariat is also a period of class struggle, which is inevitable as long as classes have not been abolished, and which changes in form, being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the period immediately following the overthrow of capital. The proletariat does not cease the class struggle after it has captured

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<sup>15</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972, pp. 400-403

<sup>16</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972b, pp. 387-391

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 387-391.

political power, but continues it until classes are abolished—of course, under different circumstances, in different form and by different means.

And what does the “abolition of classes” mean? All those who call themselves socialists recognise this as the ultimate goal of socialism, but by no means all give thought to its significance. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time”<sup>18</sup> Lenin in his article “**Economics and politics in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat**” continues to define the boundaries of the dictatorship of the

proletariat and highlights the impact of the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the whole phase of the socialism: “Socialism means the abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished at one stroke.

And classes still *remain* and *will remain* in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The dictatorship will become unnecessary when classes disappear. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat, they will not disappear.

Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat **every** class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed. The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat; it merely assumes different forms”.<sup>19</sup> It should be stressed that Lenin specifically lists these forms for the communists of all countries and of the times to come, in his book “Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder”: “The dictatorship of the proletariat means a persistent struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative – against the forces and traditions of the old society”.<sup>20</sup> Under the socialism there is a sharp class struggle against the powers and traditions of the capitalist society. At the first place this struggle is aimed against the “petty-bourgeoisness” and against the petty-bourgeois manifestations on the part of representatives of classes and the layers of the social society. In particular this struggle is aimed against the petty-

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 409-434.

<sup>19</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1965, pp. 107-117.

<sup>20</sup> Lenin, V.I. *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964a, pp. 17–118.



bourgeois aspirations to give to the society as little as possible and to give to the society not the best things while attempting to take from the society the best things and as much as possible. This struggle takes part in the working class, in the party itself and the mind of almost any man.

How long is the dictatorship of the proletariat indispensable? In the **Theses on Tactics of the RCP report at the III Congress of the Communist International** Lenin answers this question as follows: "The dictatorship of the proletariat does not signify a cessation of the class struggle, but its continuation in a new form and with new weapons. This dictatorship is essential as long as classes exist, as long as the bourgeoisie, overthrown in one country, intensifies tenfold its attacks on socialism on an international scale. The dictatorship of the proletariat does not mean the cease of the class struggle".<sup>21</sup> And since, as highlighted in the **Report on the tactics of the RCP at the III Congress of the Communist International of July 5, 1921**, "The aim of socialism is to abolish classes"<sup>22</sup>, the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat shall include the entire first phase of the communism, i.e. the entire period of the socialism.

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## The Organizational Form Of The Dictatorship Of The Proletariat

The essence of any state – the dictatorship of the ruling class. At the same time, this dictatorship rarely openly acts on the surface of the political life. Each type of dictatorship (with all its deviations and temporary retreats) has a definite stable form of display. This form of display, as the organizational form, shall be adequate for the dictatorship of the particular class. This form corresponds to the dictatorship of the given class and provides for the preservation of the dictatorship of such class in the best possible way. The immanent, i.e. the inherent organizational form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is the parliamentary democracy founded on the elections based on the territorial districts' principal. The organizational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the Soviet power, elected in accordance with the factories' and plants' principle. In his **"Thesis and Report on Bourgeois Democracy and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat"** at the I Congress of the Communist International of March 4, 1919, Lenin wrote: "The old, i.e., bourgeois, democracy and the parliamentary system were so organized that it was the mass of working people who were kept farthest away from a machinery of government. Soviet power, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the other hand, is so organized as to bring the working people close to the machinery of government. That, too, is the purpose of combining the legislative and executive authority under the Soviet organization of the state and of replacing territorial

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<sup>21</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 451-498.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 451-498.

constituencies by production units—the factory".<sup>23</sup>

As mentioned in the Lenin's brochure "**Letter to the Workers and Peasants apropos of the Victory Over Kolchak**", "*Soviet power*—that is what the “dictatorship of the working class” means *in practice*.”<sup>24</sup> Lenin in his article "**The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government**" emphasizes explicitly: "Soviet power is nothing but an organizational form of the dictatorship of the proletariat".<sup>25</sup>

Analysis of organizational forms of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (in its most stable modification – the bourgeois democracy) and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of councils (i.e. soviets) demonstrates that the stability and functioning of the mentioned dictatorships is provided for by the objective grounds. The formation of the power is based on such objective grounds. The formation of the parliamentary democracy as a form of the dictatorship of the bour-geoisie is based on the monetary resources of the capitalists, on the institution of private capitalist prop-erty. The formation of the parlia-mentary democracy uses the bour-geois ideology which is dominant in society (as the being of the society determines its conscience). The proletarian democracy is based on the objective self-discipline of the working class in the course of the working class' labour at the factories and plants. Such factories and plants become the electoral units (districts) of the Soviets.

This is not about the title, but about the form of organization of the power which is characteristic for the Soviet power (the power ensuring the dictatorship of the working class).

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### Waiver Of The Organizational Form Of The Dictatorship Of The Proletariat A Threat To The Dictatorship Of The Proletariat

**S**oviets emerged in Ivanovo-Voznesensk in 1905 as organs of strike and organs of self-government of the working class formed at the factories and the plants in accordance with the labour collectives' principle. The Soviets were at that time elected at factories and plants. In 1917 the Soviets recurred throughout whole of Russia. The constitutive principle of the Soviets is the election of deputies at factories and plants, as the election of deputies at factories and plants provides for the possibility to control the activities of Soviet deputies and the feasibility of their calling off and replacement at the discretion of the labour collectives. This principle was formalized in **Program of the RCP (b)** adopted by the VIII Congress of the Party of Lenin: "The Soviet state also brings the state apparatus together with the masses by establishing that the electoral unit and the basic unit of the state shall be the production unit (plant, factory), not the territorial district".<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972a, pp. 455-477.

<sup>24</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972a, pp. 552-560.

<sup>25</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Pro-gress Publishers, Moscow, 1972c, pp. 235-77.

<sup>26</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1976, pp. 425 – 426.

On the contrary to this program's provision, in 1936 (in connection with the adoption of the new, supposedly more "democratic" constitution) the transition to the election based on the territorial principle took place. Such territorial principle of election is typical for bourgeois democratic system. This principle makes it impossible to call off the deputies which turned away from the people. The statements made by Stalin at that time on the alleged broadening of the democracy due to the adoption of the Constitution of 1936 shall be acknowledged as incorrect. It would have been more correct to say that a step toward the transition from the Soviet, proletarian democracy to the parliamentary, bourgeois democracy was actually made. Such parliamentary, bourgeois democracy implies formal equality and ignores the actual inequality. A formal onetime' extension of the voting rights to former members of the exploiting classes could not actually broaden the democracy. The Soviet democracy (the democracy of the working people) gradually comes to all people's voting on the basis of the gradual withdrawal of the former members of the exploiting class at the historical stage due to the elimination of any exploitation. The renunciation of the principle of elections through labour collectives at factories and plants (such principle is a characteristic principle of the Soviets) and the shift to the election in accordance with the territorial districts principle is equivalent to a throwback. It is the throwback from the Soviets to the parliamentarism and, hence, to the weakening of the real democratism.

**It is interesting to recall that Lenin, while preparing the second Program of RCP(b), considered the possibility of waiver of the form of the Soviets only as the result of the general retreat in the struggle under the pressure of the circumstances and the forces of the enemy. He did not consider such waiver as the move to develop the democracy of workers (proletarians' or workers' democracy). In the Resolution on Changing the Name of the Party and the Party Programme of the Seventh Congress RCP (b) Lenin wrote:** "the change in the political part of our Programme must consist in the most accurate and comprehensive definition possible of the new type of state, the Soviet Republic, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and as a continuation of those achievements of the world working-class revolution which the Paris Commune began. The Programme must show that our Party does not reject the use even of bourgeois parliamentarism, should the course of the struggle push us back, for a time, to this historical stage which our revolution has now passed. But in any case and under all circumstances the Party will strive for a Soviet Republic as the highest, from the standpoint of democracy, type of state, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, of abolition of the exploiters' yoke and of suppression of their resistance ».<sup>27</sup>

Everything seems to be explicit. However, a move to the bourgeois democracy was made. Since Then, due to the liquidation in practice of the possibility to call off the deputies that

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<sup>27</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972c, pp. 85-158

betrayed the trust of the voters organized as labour collectives, the process of more and more intensive contamination of the state machine by the bureaucracy and careerism started. It is also within the framework of this process the party-and-state machine bred Khrushchev and Gorbachev. The state machine became soiled with careerists and bureaucrats for whom their own interests were the priority compared to the common interests. The title “Soviets” remained but the essence of the soviets started to blur. The dictatorship of the proletariat, having been deprived of its inherent organizational form, was put at risk. After the principal of election on the basis of the labour collectives was eliminated, the proletarian character of the bodies of the power (it still bore the name “soviet”) was only provided for by the still preserved elements of their connection with labour collectives. This connection took place through labour collectives recommending the candidates, through occasional reporting of the deputies to the labour collectives, through the regulation of the social contingent of the soviets by the party. This connection also took place on inertia due to the proletarian character of the party contingent. But even at the time of Stalin (who has vowed to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat by the coffin of V.I. Lenin and who was fighting for the strengthening of the proletarian dictatorship throughout his life) the anti-workers’ majority began gradually accumulating in the Central Committee of the party. This anti-workers’ majority opportunism, evolving into

revisionism, was going to alter the class nature of the state after Stalin's death.

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### The Waiver Of The Dictatorship Of The Proletariat – The Waiver Of Marxism

A kind of artillery preparation for the direct attack at the main idea of Marxism was held at the Twentieth Party Congress. By the efforts of Khrushchev’s revisionist group everything positive done under Stalin’s leadership was libelously questioned. This Khrushchev’s revisionist group also applied for the revision of the key provisions of Marxism on the class struggle and on the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, Lenin’s program of the RCP(b) was still in effect and, therefore, Khrushchev’s supporters began the preparation of this program’s replacement by a different one that would eliminate the very essence of Marxism-Leninism. A thesis of the final victory of socialism in the USSR (an unwinding and demobilizing thesis for communists, working class and all working people) was put forward by the CPSU’s First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev in his report at the XXII Congress **"On the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union"**.<sup>28</sup> It was stated in the report that *the class struggle is confined only to the transitional period towards the socialism*.<sup>29</sup> Throughout the whole report socialism was understood not as

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<sup>28</sup> XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 17 – 31 October 1961, Verbatim record., M. Gospolitizdat, 1962. Vol. I, p.151.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

a phase of the communism, but as a separate formation. Accordingly, instead of the typical socialist goal of *complete elimination of classes at the first phase of the classless society* the goal of *building the classless society* was put forward. At the same time a purely anti-Marxist, revisionist goal was declared: "From the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat to the "people's state".<sup>30</sup> It was stated that, allegedly "the working class of the Soviet Union on its own initiative, based on the tasks of building communism, transformed the state of its dictatorship into the people's state... It is for the first time that we have formed a state which is not based on the dictatorship of any class ... the dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer indispensable".<sup>31</sup> The party, in the contradiction to Lenin's concept of a political party as the vanguard of the class, was also declared to be not the party of the working class but the party of all people.

These revisionist ideas were not resisted at the Congress. The Congress unanimously adopted the revisionist, essentially anti-Leninist and essentially anti-Marxist program. According to this program, allegedly "the dictatorship of the proletariat has fulfilled its historical mission and, in terms of the goals of the internal development, has ceased to be indispensable in the USSR. The state which has emerged as the dictatorship of the proletariat, at this new, modern stage, has become a people's state... As the party understands, the dictatorship of the working class ceases to be indispensable before the state withers

away".<sup>32</sup> To appraise this position in more detail lets once again turn to Lenin.

In his book "The State and the Revolution" Lenin stressed the class character of every state (until such state continues to exist), the necessity to destroy the old state machine and the necessity to create the new state apparatus which would be able to solve the problems of the proletarian dictatorship for the purpose of the victory of the proletarian revolution; he also developed a number of provisions that have to be observed so that the state (which is the weapon of the working class, the means of ensuring its political domination) would not become the power dominating the working class. In this book and also in the notebook "Marxism on the State" Lenin clearly pursues the idea that the state withers away only with the complete elimination of classes (i.e. while the classes still remain, the state, as the body of the politically dominating class, remains as well). He cites and develops the idea of Engels about State: "When at last it becomes the real representative of the whole of society, it renders itself unnecessary".<sup>33</sup> Lenin, as if responding to all the doubters, to all those who are hesitant and indecisive, emphasizes: "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

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 210 – 211, 212

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303.

<sup>33</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1977, p. 381-492.

Marxism should be tested".<sup>34</sup> In his work "The State: A Lecture Delivered at the Sverdlov University of June 11, 1919) Lenin points out that it is the capitalist state which "proclaims liberty for the whole people as its slogan, which declares that it expresses the will of the whole people and denies that it is a class state ".<sup>35</sup>

The Khrushchev's revisionist group, having disoriented, having actually deceived the party and the people with respect to the issue of the dictatorship of the proletariat (the dictatorship which absence makes the development of the socialism into communism impossible), eventually altered the goals of the development of the production and the society. The above is worth considering in more detail.

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### The Goal Of The Of Socialist Production

The essence of history, the progress of the society shall be the movement to the full welfare and the free all-round development of all members of the society.

At the time of **primitive-communal communism** this essence only appeared in the strictly limited way due to the lack of the development of productive forces. It appeared in satisfying the urgent needs of society members, satisfying their demands

based on the available resources and based on the tribal hierarchy.

At the time of slavery, slaves were not considered to be human beings. During the period of slavery the production was being developed for the benefit of the prosperity and all-round development of the members of the ruling class – slave owners.

At the time of the feudalism it was mostly the welfare and all-round development of the feudals that was increasing. The peasants and the craftsmen had to be content with rather poor satisfaction of their needs.

Under capitalism, the goal of the production is the production of the surplus value and profits. Such production leads to the increase of the welfare and all-round development of the capitalists. It limits the satisfaction of the workers' need to the extent ensuring the reproduction of the work force required to continue the capital's self-expansion. Under capitalism, as Lenin wrote in "**Materials for the elaboration of RSDWP program**", "the gigantic development of the productive forces of social labour, which is constantly becoming more socialised labour, is attended by monopolisation of all the principal advantages of this development by a negligible minority of the population. The growth of social wealth proceeds side by side with the growth of social inequality; the gulf between the class of property-owners (the bourgeoisie) and the class of the proletariat is growing".<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 381-492.

<sup>35</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1972b, pp. 470-488.

<sup>36</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Collected Works*, Vol. 6; Progress Publishers: Moscow, 1964b, pp. 17-78.

At the same time under capitalism the struggle of the working class begins. It is the struggle against limitation of the progress to the development of the members of the society belonging to the ruling class, the struggle for creation of the communist society in which the essence of the history would be revealed and in which the real purpose of production would be complete well-being and all-round free development of all members of the society.

In the commission's draft party program prepared for the II Congress of the RSDWP the goal of the socialist production was formulated as a planned organization of social production process "to satisfy the needs of both society as a whole and its individual members" Lenin objects to this: "Not accurate. *Such* "satisfaction" is "given" by capitalism as well, but *not to all* members of society and *not in equal degree*".<sup>37</sup> In "**Notes on the second draft of the Program of Plekhanov**" he wrote: "Nor is the end of the paragraph properly expressed: "the planned organisation of the social process of production so as to satisfy the needs of society as a whole, as well as its individual members". That is not enough. Organisation of that kind will, perhaps, be provided even by the trusts. It would be mere definite to say "by society *as a whole*" (for this covers planning and indicates who is responsible for that planning), and not merely to satisfy the needs of its members, but with the object of ensuring *full* well-being and free, *all-round* development for *all* the members of society ".<sup>38</sup> Finally Lenin

secured that the Program approved by the Second Congress of the RSDWP Party states as follows: "Having replaced the private ownership of means of production and means of circulation by the respective society's ownership and having introduced the planned organization of socio-productive process for the welfare and all-round development of all members of society, the social revolution of the proletariat will eliminate the division of society into classes and will set the suppressed mankind free".<sup>39</sup>

In view of this program's objective, the Bolshevik Party raised the Russian working class to the victorious socialist revolution. It is natural that while compiling the second program of the party, Lenin considered it absolutely necessary to keep in the new program the same goal which was recorded in the first program and which, if implemented, leads to the complete elimination of classes, i.e. to the full communism. The Program adopted by the VIII Congress of the RCP(b) reproduces the goal of the socialist production precisely in the wording of the first program, namely: "Having replaced the private ownership of means of production and means of circulation by the respective society's ownership and having introduced a planned organization of socio-productive process for the welfare and all-round development of all members of society, the social revolution of the proletariat will eliminate the division of society into classes".<sup>40</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Program of the Russian Social Democratic Worker's Party*, adopted at the Second Party

Congress. July–August 1903, Protocols, Moscow, 1959, p. 419.

<sup>40</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1976, p. 419.

This scientifically discovered, true goal of the communist production which was set for the working class (the founder of communist society) in the party program stayed in the party program as long as the party remained the party of the working-class ensuring the working class' dictatorship. This goal was not, however, mentioned in the third, the revisionist party program adopted by the XXII Congress of the CPSU. It was substituted by *satisfying of the constantly growing needs* whereas neither well-being, nor development of the people, especially all-round development, may not be reduced to such *satisfying of the constantly growing needs*. Satisfying the needs alone leads neither to elimination of social inequality, nor to the elimination of classes. To be more specific, the third party program stated that under communism "the highest stage of the planned organization of the whole social economy is reached, the most efficient and rational use of material resources and manpower to meet the growing needs of the members of society is ensured".<sup>41</sup> Working members of society, whose development shall be the ultimate goal, turned into the manpower, effectively used to meet the needs of selected members of the society (such selected members of the society later became the oligarchs). It is removal of the development of all members of society from the goal of production, that turned the program's definition of the goal of production into the camouflaged breaking away from the true goal of the socialism. The revisionists' third program states: "The goal of the socialism – more and more complete

satisfaction of the growing material and cultural needs of the people".<sup>42</sup> At the first glance, this definition of goal of socialism seems to be beautiful. At the same time this definition is deeply wrong. The goal of socialism, as defined by the founders of the scientific communism, is the elimination of classes. Such elimination of classes includes the satisfaction of the needs but may not be reduced to such satisfaction; also the elimination of classes does not imply that any and all needs shall be satisfied. At the first place it implies the ensuring of the complete welfare and free all-round development of all members of society, the elimination of any social inequality.

The waiver of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the waiver of the goal of socialism changed the class nature of the state. The state became unable to carry out the interests of the working class. In the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat the interests of the working class shall be deemed the interests of the society as a whole. That is why the state property was gradually ceasing to be a form of the social property. This property was gradually being transformed into a peculiar form of private property of those who actually controlled the public property – top party and state bureaucracy. Thus, the party-state nomenklatura elite succeeded in appropriating the property of the whole society. This elite also succeeded in creating the conditions allowing to divide such property and appropriate and privatize the resulting shares, formalizing the privatization in accordance with the

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<sup>41</sup> XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 17 – 31 October 1961, Transcript. Vol. III. M. Gospolitizdat, 1962, p. 274.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.



laws of “all people’s” state. The above was happening at the instigation of Gorbachev during the Yeltsin’s era – first under the slogan of the revisionists’ “movement to the market”, and then, openly, under the anti-communist slogan: “come on, privatize!” This process was ideologically supported by the revisionist concept of “the developed socialism”, which included and strengthened the notorious revisionist “all people’s state”.

The CPSU’s waiver of the main ideas of Marxism, i.e. the dictatorship of the proletariat, the goal of the socialist production and the goal of the socialism at the XXII Congress could not help resulting and, in the end, has resulted (despite of the active resistance on the part of the communist minority) in the destruction of the party, the state and the country. The above waiver was not only the fault of the renegade CPSU elite, but also the fault of those party members who, instead of studying and understanding Leninism, learnt by heart quotes and slogans, and took on faith the words of the revisionist party elite. And, therefore, consistent communist forces could not overcome the opportunists, revisionists and renegade traitors to socialism. The above is a lesson not only for the communists of the former Soviet Union and contemporary Russia. It is a lesson for the whole international movement of workers and communists.

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## Non-Commodity, Direct Society’s Nature Of The Socialist Production

This matter is timely as this is, in the end, the question of the **reason** of the communists’ struggle for the power of their class. This is a question of what they would do if the working class seizes the power. To what extent have the conclusions from the mistakes of the CPSU and from the practice of building socialism in the USSR been made? What should be built in the economy and how should this be built?

Nowadays this issue both continues to be of the interest for the communists’ movement in Russia and abroad, and this issue also divides the communists movement. Herein we will not consider outright apologists of "swedish socialism" and other improvers of capitalism. We will speak only of those who continue to call themselves marxists and communists. Among such marxists and communists there are, on one side, a lot of supporters of the so-called “market socialism” (it has been lately more and more often called "China-style market socialism"). On the other side there are people calling themselves pragmatists and realists who are also constantly can be heard. The latter consider it ridiculous when the orthodox communists talk of the non-commodity character of the socialist production. Look around! – they say – The market is everywhere and, hence, starting from the market economy is the only way to go.

The market is, in fact, under capitalism everywhere. Therefore, we believe that it is just time to decide what is

happening with the commodity character under capitalism, and what should be done with such character in the process of socialist revolution and building of socialism.

As early as in the First and the Second Bolsheviks' Programs (as well as in the Program of Russian Communist Workers' Party (RCWP)) the nature of the capitalism and the bourgeois society was described in the following wording: "The main feature of this society is the commodity character of production which is based on the capitalist production relations. These relations imply that the most important and significant part of the means of production and the circulation of goods is owned by a small (in terms of the head count) class of individuals, whereas the vast majority of the population consists of proletarians and semi-proletarians that are forced, due to their economic status, to continuously or periodically sell their labour power, i.e. hire themselves to the capitalists and create the income for the upper classes of society by their labour".<sup>43</sup>

That is, capitalism – is primarily the commodity production. With that Lenin in his observations on the second draft of the Program of Plekhanov wrote on the mentioned program provision the following: "That is rather incongruous. Of course, *fully* developed commodity production is possible only in capitalist society, but "commodity production" in general is both logically and historically *prius* to capitalism".<sup>44</sup>

That is, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin specified that capitalism is the result of the development of commodity production. In many of his works Lenin kept pointing out that the commodity production in its development constantly and inevitably gives rise to capitalism.

The commodity is a thing produced for the purpose of exchange. Commodity production is the production of commodities, production of value. Capitalist commodity production is focused on selling goods in order to obtain surplus value, profit to the benefit of the capitalists (owners of the means of production, retail store networks, financial capital and capitalists in other forms of existence). The regulatory role in the production of commodities (this includes the capitalist commodity production) is played by its basic law – the law of value. This law directs the capital and, consequently, the commodity production to the most profitable areas.

And the goal of the socialist production is not generating profit on the capital. This goal is the satisfaction of the society's interests. The above-mentioned programs of RCP(b) and RCWP state: "Having replaced the private ownership of means of production and circulation by the respective society's ownership and having introduced a planned organization of socio-productive process for the welfare and all-round development of all members of society, the social revolution of the proletariat will eliminate the division of society into classes and will set the suppressed mankind free, as thus it will put an end

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<sup>43</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1976, pp. 417 – 418.

<sup>44</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1964b, 17-78.

to all kinds of exploitation of one part of society by its other part".<sup>45</sup>

The core, the essence of the socialist production is not the law of value, but the law of the use value. This law is aimed at the provision of the complete welfare and all-round development of all members of society. It is clear that ensuring the complete welfare and all-round development of all members of society may be possible only through socializing of the means of production and centralization of planning and management, which shall be politically ensured by the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The above is not possible to achieve through the self-regulation of the market of separate private producers.

Notwithstanding the above, it seems that the money, and a number of so-called commodity-money relations formally exist under the socialism, although neither Marx, nor Engels nor Lenin did not mention the term "commodity-money relations". Does this usage of external commodity forms and titles mean that the socialist production is the commodity production according to its nature? Of course it does not. And the treasury notes, which are used by the socialist society, are not the money in the sense of the political economy. These notes are an additional indirect measurer of the productions volume and the quantity of the required effort that was spent, they play the role of the accounting and planning units. The money under socialism carry out the function of the inventory count and control of the direct society's

production and distribution. Socialism would not be possible if this function is not carried out. It is no coincidence that the Program of the Comintern, adopted in 1928 states: "capitalist forms and methods of economic activity (evaluative account, cash payments, sale and purchase, credits, banks, etc.) which seem to be connected to the market relations, play the role of the balance levers of the socialist overthrow. These balance levers serve at the greater and greater extent the enterprises of consistently socialist type, i.e. the socialist sector of the economy".<sup>46</sup>

Supporters of the market socialism usually remind of the NEP (New Economic Policy). They say that it was Lenin who stated that NEP is *the radical revision of our views on socialism. It is here to stay*. During the early period of the transition from the capitalism to the communism the New Economic Policy (NEP) implied (as a temporary retreat) the increased freedom for commodity production and circulation. Especially, this increased freedom was meant for circulation of commodity between the peasants and the socialist state sector. With that, Lenin was well aware that this increased freedom implies the struggle between the socialist tendency and the capitalist tendency. Bukharin's book "Economics in Transition" contains the following thesis: the "dictatorship of the proletariat is inevitably followed by the latent or more or less open struggle between the organizing tendency of the proletariat and the commodity-anarchic tendency of the peasantry". Lenin noted to that: "It should have

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<sup>45</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1976, p. 419.

<sup>46</sup> The Communist International in the documents. 1919 – 1932. M. 1933 p. 24.

been said: between the socialist tendency of the proletariat and the commodity-capitalist tendency of the peasantry".<sup>47</sup> Here Lenin also supports the following Bukharin's analysis: "In the city the main fight for the type of economy [after the seizure of the power – editor's comment] ends with the victory of the proletariat. It also ends in the villages due to the defeat of the major capitalists. But at the same time it is being reborn in other forms. It is being reborn in a struggle between the state plan of the proletariat (that embodies the socialized labour) and the commodity anarchy, the speculative licentiousness of the peasantry that embodies the scattered property objects and the market welter." Lenin appraised the above idea with the brief "That is it!" And then Lenin supported the following Bukharin's statement "But as a simple commodity economy is exactly an embryo of the capitalist economy, the struggle of the described above tendencies shall be, basically, the continuation of the struggle between the communism and the capitalism" by writing "True. And it is better than the "anarchy".<sup>48</sup>

We note that Lenin had never raised the question of the immediate abolishment of the commodity production. He always emphasized that the issue is overcoming the commodity character of the production, escape from the commodity character of the production, denying the mentioned commodity character in the socialist society's production. Based on the Marx's position "Only the products being the results of the different,

independent works confront each other as commodities», Lenin expressed his understanding of the goal of the socialist revolution as follows. "the abolition of private ownership of the means of production, their conversion into public property, and the replacement of capitalist production of commodities by the socialist organisation of the production of articles by society as a whole, with the object of ensuring full well-being and free, all-round development for all its members".<sup>49</sup>

And in the Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence To Local Soviet Bodies, which was compiled in 1921, during the transitional period, Lenin noted, that "the manufactured goods made by socialist factories and exchanged for the foodstuffs produced by the peasants are not commodities in the politico-economic sense of the word; at any rate, they are not only commodities, they are no longer commodities, they are ceasing to be commodities".<sup>50</sup>

This idea of overcoming the commodity production even during the construction of the socialist economy Lenin once again confirms in his comments on Bukharin's book by writing down to his workbook the following thought of Bukharin: "The product may be a universal category only so far as there is a constant, not random social connection to the anarchic basis of the production. Therefore, to the extent the irrationality of the production process disappears (i.e., to the extent a conscious society's

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<sup>47</sup> Lenin, V.I., *Miscellany*, Vol. XI 1931, 2nd ed., p. 368.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 370.

<sup>49</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1964b, pp. 17-78.

<sup>50</sup> Lenin, *Op. Cit.*, 1965, pp. 375-398.

regulator takes the place of the welter), a commodity becomes a product and loses its commodity character". Lenin notes: "Correct!", however about the ending he writes: "not quite correct: becomes not a "product" but somewhat differently. ETWA (roughly - Editor): becomes the product which goes to the society's consumption not through the market".<sup>51</sup>

The adepts of the market usually cite the example of the NEP as an alleged Lenin's turn towards the understanding of the socialism as the commodity economy. They try to depict it as if Lenin did not consider NEP as the necessary temporary drawback to the market but thought it to be the goal and the perspective. The smartest of them even invented some, allegedly Leninist, methodology of the NEP and the socialist market. However, firstly, it should be noted that the NEP is not the methodology but the policy. Lenin and the Bolsheviks introducing the NEP acknowledged their retreat in the admission of the elements of capitalism – they did not call it the development of characteristics inherent to the socialist production. Secondly, the strongest leverages to overcome the market elements inherent to the period of transition towards the socialist economy were being developed at the time of NEP. In particular, that were the State Planning Commission (Gosplan), State procurement authority (Gossnab) and large manufacturing industry. Also the electrification plan was being developed, etc. That is, while the physical volume of the commodity (according to the title, but not, any longer, according to the nature) was

increasing, the directly social nature of the socialist production was being enhanced and the pre-conditions for the further overcoming of the commodity character of the production were being prepared.

Stalin, consistently pursued the Lenin's policy of overcoming the commodity character of the production in practice – the policy of overcoming the commodity character of the production during the transitional period of the production towards the socialism, the policy of giving to the socialist production the characteristics of the direct society's production. Stalin outlined basic thoughts on this matter in his work "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR". In particular, Stalin formulates the goal of the socialist economy as follows: "Is there a basic economic law of socialism? Yes there is. What are the essential features and requirements of this law? The essential features and requirements of the basic economic law of socialism could be formulated roughly as follows: ensuring of the maximum satisfaction of the constantly growing material and cultural needs of the whole society through the continuous growth and improvement of socialist production on the basis of the most modern technique".<sup>52</sup> Thus, Stalin clearly emphasized that the interests of the entire society shall be the definite priority in the system of the socialism.

With that, Stalin based his analysis not only on his "Marxist's" views, but on the objective assessment of the available facts. Stalin examined guarantees of the proletarian state that are aimed to

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<sup>51</sup> Lenin, *Miscellany*, Vol. XI 1985, p.388.

<sup>52</sup> I.V. Stalin. *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. 2010, St. Petersburg. pp.31–32.

prevent the restoration of the capitalist elements in the economy. However, as we believe, Stalin somewhat underestimated, that the commodity production surely creates the tendencies and the desire to move towards the full-fledged capitalist commodity production and the market (this was eventually implemented in the USSR).

Stalin stated that under socialism the law of value, although with no regulatory significance, is still partially in effect, especially in the sphere of production of the consumer goods. The latter statement is disputable. After all, the law of value is the basic law of capitalism and, therefore, it can not be a law of the socialism. Engels pointed out in *Anti-Duhring*, that “the law of value is the basic law of the commodity production. There-fore, it is the basic law of the highest form of the commodity production—the capitalist production”.<sup>53</sup> In the socialist economy the commodity feature of the production is only the denial of such character’s direct society’s nature. This feature belongs to the residuals of the capitalism that should be overcome in the course of the development of the socialism (as underdeveloped communism) into the ultimate communism. Therefore, we can assert that the development of the socialist economy shall be aimed at the strengthening of its direct society’s nature and at the overcoming of the commodity feature of the production. No matter, what would be the circumstances of the revolution for the communists, no matter what retreats and compromises would the

communists have to accept, there should be the clear aspiration to achieve the ultimate goal – to overcome the commodity character of the production and the transition to the socialist, directly society’s character of the production. The socialist economy was moving forward as long as the state power considered the organization of such economy as direct society’s production.

The waiver of the fundamentals of socialism—the dictatorship of the proletariat—by Khrushchev’s leadership in 1961 and the economic reform of 1965 gave rise to the process of gradual accumulation of negative tendencies in the socialist economy and in the socialist relations. Figuratively speaking, the above began the preparation to the **Gorbachev’s perestroika** which changed the social order.

Whatever the current advocates of the capitalism would say, the economics in the Soviet Union was based on the direct society’s pro-duction. The above is particularly clear nowadays, when there is a possibility to compare the life in the Soviet Union to the current circumstances. A Soviet citizen was receiving more than half of the consumed goods (as calculated based on the current prices) through funds of public consumption. And that was almost “in accordance to the demand” that some of the crucial needs were being satisfied. The above included: free housing (although with long queues), cold and hot water, electricity,

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<sup>53</sup> K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 20. p.324.

bread, healthcare and education, public transportation and much more.

It is a pity that the waiver of the socialist course, both in terms of the economics and in terms of the politics, was made by the leadership of the party itself, the party that still was called the communist party. The XXII Congress of the CPSU adopted a new party program, which excluded from its main provisions the necessity of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And the XXVIII Congress of the CPSU approved the transition to the market economy. It was at this Congress that the party and the people were being warned that the transition to the market economy will result in the capitalism and in the collapse of the CPSU and will bring misery for the people. The report of the representative of the Movement of the Communist Initiative, professor A.A. Sergeyev stated: "In addition to the commodity market there are two more markets. That are: the market of the private capital, represented by stock exchanges, and the labour market. So, these two markets, as taken together, will inevitably give the classic capitalist market (even if such capitalist market will be formally called the regulated market). And there is no escape from this... And neither our people, nor the party will survive this perestroika. The party, as the communist party, will disappear".<sup>54</sup>

As we can see now, the predictions made by the science have come true. So we have to start anew. Figuratively speaking, we have to address again the question "What should we do?" which

Lenin considered in his book with the same title.

The concepts of building the socialism through the development of the market, commodity character of the production and the commodity-money relations (i.e. capitalist relations) and, similarly, through the plans of building different kinds of socially-oriented market economy, even with the best intentions and even under the leadership of the most patriotic and the most trusted government – this is the way of gorbachevs which will bring to the capitalism. The opportunism and the revisionism have learnt to compose a lot of patterns of capitalism. They have also learnt to invent many justifications for such patterns. However, the practice has shown to us the following. To separate the economics from its political basis, to consider the politicized economy, economy deprived of the class content in the coherent theory of socialism is an error and a stupidity. Moreover, it is a crime committed by communists with respect to the working class. In the USSR, in the last years of the CPSU' ruling, the market socialism was being built. But as the result, the capitalism has been built.

To paraphrase Lenin, we may say that without fighting this infectious disease of the market, speaking of the commitment to the socialist or the communist choice is simply uttering pompous but deceitful phrases.

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<sup>54</sup> XXVIII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 2 – 13 July

1990. Verbatim record. Vol. I. M., Politizdat, 1991, pp. 504.

Let us then reconcile our course with Lenin, with the science of the communism!

*\*V.A. Tyulkin is first secretary of the Russian Communist Workers' Party - Revolutionary Party of Communists,*

*M.V.Popov is doctor of philosophy, professor, president of the Fund of Working Academy*

*Representatives of the journal of RCRP-RPC "Soviet Union"*





# Why Socialism is superior to Capitalism- The achievements of Socialist construction in the Soviet Union

By Nikos Mottas

During the last 25 years, after the victory of the counterrevolutionary forces in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the public political discussion has been dominated by the concept of the “end of history, end of ideologies”. This is certainly a very convenient concept for the dominant class, the bourgeoisie, in her effort to convince the world that: 1) Socialism has irreversibly failed, 2) Capitalism is the final winner in the succession of History's socio-economic transformations, 3) Every argument for a non-capitalist society, where the means of productions will be socialized in a centrally-planned economy, is “unrealistic” and a “utopian fantasy”.

Anticommunism, of course, consists of a core part of the above bourgeois principle. For more than two decades, the bourgeois forces and their mechanisms (historiography, media, etc.) in all over the world have unleashed an anticommunist crusade, mainly through demonizing and slandering the Soviet Union and the socialist construction of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in general.

A spectrum is haunting over the heads of neoliberals, centrists, social democrats, neo-Nazis and other apologists of the capitalist barbarity every time they face the Marxist-Leninist truths. It is the spectrum of the- as they use to call it- “totalitarian”,

“Stalinist”, “bloodthirsty”, “repressive” etc. Soviet regime. The anticommunists try to distort history in any possible way but, unfortunately for them, they can't change the historical facts.

History herself exposes the blatant lies of the bourgeois anticommunist propaganda. Despite it's existed problems and weaknesses, the socialist system of the 20<sup>th</sup> century proved Socialism's superiority over Capitalism and showed the huge advantages it provides for the peoples' work and life. The abolition of the capitalist relations in production liberated the man from the shackles of the wage slavery thus opening the way for the production and the development of sciences, not for the profit of the few, but for the satisfaction of peoples' needs. In the so-called “totalitarian communist regimes” (sic) everyone had a guaranteed job, free public health and education, low-cost services provided by the state, homes, broad access to cultural and sports activities.

In the following paragraphs, as a reply to all the apologists of the capitalist barbarity, we will refer to some fundamental achievements of the socialist construction in the Soviet Union:

**WOMENS RIGHTS:** The great 1917 October Revolution paved the way for the social emancipation and liberation of the working class women. Before the

October Revolution, in Tsarist Russia, woman was subject to various class and sex-based discriminations, with 80% of them being unskilled workers earning half the salary of their male colleagues. In Tsarist Russia, 87% of women did not know to read and write. One of the Revolution's first decrees was to grant complete political rights to women; in Britain that happened in 1918, in the USA in 1920 and in France in 1944.

In Soviet Russia, from 1917 to 1920, almost 4 million women learned reading and writing, while from 1922 to 1928 the female representatives in the Soviets increased by 9 times (830,700 female workers and farmers). During the 1970s, while in the U.S. only 5% of the members in the federal government and the states governments were women, the 35.6% of the Supreme Soviet's members were females.

It was in the Soviet Union- not in western Europe or in the United States- where special laws were established to protect working women during their pregnancy period: 4 months maternity leave with full pay for every woman.

*Note: In the European Union the rate of unemployment in women was 10.6% in 2012 and 10.1% in 2014 (Eurostat), while the total number of women living within the limits of poverty reaches 65 million!*

**LABOUR ACHIEVEMENTS:** In the Soviet Union there was stable and permanent work for everyone, no more than 41 hours per week. For those working in less healthy job conditions the labour hours were reduced to 36 hours/week. The working week in the

Soviet Union was one of the shortest in the world, while every working man and woman had the right to leisure every week, along with stable annual-full pay- allowances.

Workers' state social insurance was compulsory. The source for the insurance contribution wasn't the salary of the workers but the state budget and the budgets of the state companies. Every worker had the right to full pension, at 60 years of age for men and 55 years for women. In cases of less healthy jobs, men had the right to retire at the age of 50 and women at the age of 45.

Rest and leisure was not a privilege- as it happens in Capitalism- but a right according to Article 119 of the Soviet constitution. The socialist state provided a large network of free cultural and sports institutes which were at the disposal of the people. The first house of leisure was built in Petersburg (Leningrad) in 1920, being an initiative of V.I.Lenin himself. In the beginning of 1940, there were already 3,600 houses of leisure which could serve almost 470,000 workers, while in the 1980s there were more than 14,000 leisure and vacation centers for 45 million people.

*Note: In the capitalist world- especially in western Europe- the labour achievements came as a result of constant and bloody class struggles. The existence of the Soviet Union and the example of the socialist construction forced a significant number of western- bourgeois-governments to grant some social and labour rights to their people. However, after the counterrevolutions in the*

*USSR and eastern Europe, these social and labour rights were ferociously attacked. Today, in 2016, we live the capitalist barbarity of mass unemployment, underemployment, reduced salaries, mass lay-offs, zero-contract labour relations, child employment. In the capitalist world, all social and labour rights have been sacrificed in the altar of capital's profitability; from the U.S. of the 47 million people who live on the edge of poverty to the European Union of the 25 million unemployed people!*

**PUBLIC AND FREE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM:**

The public healthcare system that was established in the Soviet Union is a significant example of socialist construction. In Soviet Russia there was a broad state network of healthcare, based on the centrally-planned socialist economy, which provided free services of medical care for the whole population. Numbers speak by themselves: Before the October Revolution, in Tsarist Russia, the life expectancy was just 32 years. After 1917, within a few years, the life expectancy raised to 44 years (1920). In 1987, the USSR had the same life expectancy rate with the western world (69 years).

During the socialist construction, the number of doctors of all specialties was rapidly increased, while child mortality (which in pre-revolutionary Russia was a huge problem) was decreased by 10 times. In the midst of 1980s, approximately 160 million people were passing annual, preventive health-checks, while more than 35 million were under constant- free of charge-medical monitoring. During the same period, more than 28,000 state

infirmaries for women and children were existing in the Soviet Union.

*Note: In capitalist Russia of Mr. Putin, life expectancy rate declined- in 2004 it was at 63 years of age. Furthermore, in capitalist Russia of oligarchs and monopoly groups, healthcare isn't free and public anymore: numerous state hospitals and clinics closed while large private hospitals were created, the work "accidents" were increased (6,000 deaths every year) and the Russian working people have to pay for the services in the existing public hospitals.*

**PUBLIC AND FREE EDUCATION SYSTEM:**

A unique achievement of Socialism's construction in the Soviet Union was the complete elimination of illiteracy and the rapid increase of the educational level. Before the 1917 October Revolution, only 37.9% of the Russian-speaking men and 12.5% of the Russian-speaking women knew reading and writing. From the very beginning, the Soviet government made a colossal effort to eliminate illiteracy. Numbers speak by themselves: Approximately 50 million adults learned reading and writing in the years between 1920-1940; in 1937, the 75% of the total population knew how to read and write. By the decade of 1960, illiteracy had been completely eliminated.

The elimination of illiteracy- which was also achieved by Socialist Cuba in 1960s – consisted part of a general and unified educational program created by the Soviet government which included: The establishment of free education for every child, the creation of a social preschool education program, free accessible university level education for

the working class and the farmers, creation of thousands of public kindergartens, elementary and high schools. The number of people who reached university-level education raised from 1.2 million in 1939 to 21 million by the end of the 1980s. From 1918 to 1990, more than 135 million Russians completed university-level education.

While in the capitalist world the right to education was becoming subject to profitability and privatizations, the students in the USSR had free access to all educational levels. There were no fees in Soviet Union's higher education and, moreover, there was complete accessibility to medical insurance as well as to various sports and cultural events.

*Note: In 2000, in Capitalist Russia, 40% of the university-level students paid fees. The restoration of Capitalism in the country led to the disintegration of the public and free character of education. The undisputed achievements of Socialism in education have been internationally recognized by scientific bodies of capitalist states. The phrase “what Ivan knows that Johnny doesn't”, which became subject of research in the United States, is characteristic. Especially after the Soviet triumph in the sector of sciences, including space science, nobody could dispute the superiority of the socialist system in the field of education.*

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There is no sector of science during the 20<sup>th</sup> century in which the Soviet Union wasn't a leading force. Every year, 20%-

25% of the annual inventions, in almost every aspect of technology, belonged to the USSR.

We could refer to much more achievements of Socialism in the Soviet Union, as well as in eastern Europe. We could certainly refer to the complete transformation of a poor, semi-feudal Tsarist state to a superpower with extensive industrialization and rapid increase of agricultural production. We could refer to the colossal contribution of the Soviet Union to the antifascist struggle during WW2. We could also refer to the magnificent Soviet achievements in Arts and Culture, including cinema, theatre, classical music, poetry, literature, etc.).

**The conclusion is one: In any sector of the social and economic life, Socialism proved it's superiority over Capitalism. And when we talk about “superiority” we refer on how the Socialist system managed to satisfy peoples' needs by eliminating the exploitation of man by man. Capitalism, with its anarchist nature in production and the deification of profit, has nothing more to offer to humanity except from poverty, misery, unemployment, inequalities, and wars.**

**The Soviet Union and the socialist states of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, despite their existed problems, proved that a better world is possible. Despite the temporary historical setback of the 1989-1991 counterrevolutions, nothing has finished. The end of history didn't come, Mr. Fukuyama and dear apologists of Capitalism.**

*Nikos Mottas is a leader in the Greek communist movement*



# Communists and the so called “Socialism of the 21st century”

By Pável Blanco Cabrera

*In memory of Vladimir Ilich Lenin, on the occasion of the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth.*

The world counterrevolution of the end of the 20th century gave impulse on the ideological field to the thesis of the **end of the history**, a campaign directed to affirm capitalism for all *eternity*, centered on questioning the validity of Marxism-Leninism and to disarm to the working class and the oppressed people in their struggle for emancipation. Also known as **deideologization** this pretension designed by thinkers in service to imperialism had as premise to discredit the theory of communism and the praxis of socialist construction using the effect of the crisis that carried to the temporary retrogression of the working class in the USSR and other countries of the socialist field in Europe, Asia and Africa. At the same time, taking advantage of the confusion of the moment in the workers' movement and in the communist parties – several of which renounced to their identity and objectives in order to transform themselves into social democrat parties-, it cultivated the surge of new forms of dominant ideology, such as postmodernism and other variants to influence not only in universities and centers of formation, culture and art, but to permeate unions, popular movements and organizations, left political forces, progressive intellectuals and also to impact

negatively in communist and workers parties.

The general objective of imperialist strategy was not achieved, since reality cannot be held in a strait jacket, and class struggle did not stop for a single second, regardless of the fact that counterrevolution, triumphant at that moment, presented with propaganda historical events distorted to its favor. Today –two decades after the Berlin Wall and all that volley of irrationality-capitalism at crisis has the working class and the communist and anti-imperialist movements confronting it in all continents. Nevertheless in a secondary way this served as breeding ground for a series of approaches that today can become constraints to carrying the struggle to new favorable levels for the international working class and the peoples of the world. Many of these approaches converge in the so called "Socialism of the 21st century".

The so called "Socialism of the 21st century" cannot be identified with the theoretical elaboration of a single political and ideological current, since it's the confluence of diverse currents identified by their hostility to Marxism-Leninism and to the international communist movement: for example various trotskyst groups; heirs of the *new left*; *latinoamericanist*



*marxists*; supporters of movementism and neo anarchist; intellectuals that consider their contribution produced in the frameworks of the academy as indispensable and essential for social processes. The paternity of such concept cannot be attributed to a single current, to a single author, although they all have sought as platform the actual processes in Latin America, particularly in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador, but without renouncing to be considered as universal and disqualifying like unfeasible all that cannot be grouped under its approaches. Another element of their positioning is that they insist on the "new", "innovative", "novel" character of their proposal in front of which they consider the workers' movement of the 20th century and the ideas of Marxism-Leninism as old and out dated.

In class struggle, since the conditions of social development made possible the creation of the materialistic conception of history, it's not the first time that communists confront themselves with currents that in the name of socialism present the positions of the petite bourgeoisie, it's not the first time that reform or revolution are placed face to face.

In *The German ideology* and in *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*, just for citing two works of Karl Marx and Friederick Engels, adjustments are done with "true socialism", "reactionary socialism" ("feudal", "petite bourgeois"), with "reactionary or bourgeois socialism" and with "critic-utopian communism and socialism". In another work, result of

the polemic of Marx and Engels with Düring (although the work as was custom in the division of tasks of the teachers of the proletariat carried only the sign of one of them) the following is affirmed: "Since the capitalist mode of production has appeared in the arena of history there has been individuals and entire sects who projected more or less vaguely, as a future ideal, the appropriation of all means of production by society. However, so that this was practical, so that it became a historical necessity, the objective conditions for its execution were needed to be given first.<sup>55</sup>"

A synthesis of the criticisms of Marx and Engels shows us that not everything that is presented in the name of socialism has to do with the historical role of the proletariat and of the communists:

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## The Negation Of Socialism Built In The 20th Century

Among the promoters of the so called "Socialism of the 21st century" there is a fundamental coincidence: the demarcation and rejection to the socialist construction experience in the USSR and in other countries of Europe and Asia. Some of them go further by blaming the October Revolution, assuming the old ideas of Kautsky and the opportunists of the II International. They claim that the conditions were immature for the conquest of political

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<sup>55</sup> Engels, F.; *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*; in *Collected Works by Marx & Engels*

in two Tomes; Tome II; Progress Editorial; Moscow; 1971; Pg. 149

power by the working class and the impossibility of socialism because what corresponded was to develop capitalism. From here, they derive the bases for the alleged separation between democracy and communism; to explain that it was all damned to fail from the beginning. - However, although they vindicate the 1917 October Revolution, the developers...assume the Trotskyist critiques towards socialist construction and to the role of the Bolshevik Party particularly, and to Marxism-Leninism in general, in fundamental matters that we are going to examine further ahead. In this they cannot be differentiated from, for example, the theses assumed by the opportunistic group of Bertinotti for the V Congress of the Refoundation Communist Party of Italy in the year 2002. That planted a "radical interruption with regard to the experience of *socialism as it was carried out*", something to which they also refer as to a "radical break with Stalinism".

Some of those –really reactionary- ideas preached as characteristics of the so called "socialism of the 21st century", is argued, are not criticized in the name of tactics. In order not to torpedo the process in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador that are in the center of the anti-imperialist struggle of Latin America. There are even communist parties that integrate such concept to its routine vocabulary, to propaganda and to the programmatic question.

We do not believe –upon setting our divergent and critical point of view- to lack respect for those processes, which we support, of which we are supportive. These processes were not born with the flag of "socialism of the 21st century"

and they have advanced a lot with relation to their initial programs but is necessary to add that they are not consolidated processes and that the ideological confusion that is promoted with the "socialism of the 21st century" can carry them to defeat. With Marx we say that a step of the real movement is worth more than a thousand programs, adding that an erroneous program as north of the movement can conduct it off the cliff. It is a duty of the communists to place scientific socialism as the road of the working class and of all the peoples, defending Marxist-Leninist theory and the praxis of socialist construction in the USSR and in other socialist countries.

Before proceeding to a serious, scientific study of the experience to extract the necessary lessons for overthrowing capitalism the historical experience of the working class is condemned based on premises elaborated by reaction or by opportunism, reformism and revisionism. Communists reaffirm that in the same way in which the little more than 70 days of the Commune of Paris provided extraordinary teachings that enriched the revolutionary theory of the proletariat, the experience of socialist construction that started with the Great Socialist Revolution of October constitutes a valuable patrimony for the heritage of the proletariat in its fight for socialism and communism and that it constitutes a serious error to reject or avoid it. We coincide with what is expressed in the document of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece *On the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Socialist Revolution of October* "One of the main tasks of communist ideological front is to restore to the eyes of the working

class the truth about socialism in the 20th century, without idealizations, objectively, free of petite bourgeois slanders. The defense of the laws of development of socialism and, at the same time, the defense of the contribution of socialism in the 20th century suppose an answer to the opportunistic theories that speak of "models" of socialism adapted to "national" peculiarities, they also respond to the defeatist discussion about errors.<sup>56</sup>

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### Emerging Subjects Versus Working Class

The developers of "Socialism of the 21st century" coincide all in that the revolutionary role of the working class today is occupied by other "subjects", calling inclusive to the construction of new social agents; They resort to arguments of the *new left*, of marcusianism, of t 60's and 70's, on the gentrification of the working class, on their fragmentation, on the "end of labor". They call to rethink the concept of "worker" and without performing that exercise they pass to claim social movements, indigenous, the "multitude" as the center of the transformation.

A very important aspect of Marxism-Leninism is the clarification of the role of the proletariat. Lenin express it thus:

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<sup>56</sup> Communist Party of Greece; *On the 90th anniversary of the Great Socialist Revolution of October*; in Propuesta Comunista number 51; Ediciones del Partido Comunista de los Pueblos de España; 2007; Pg. 48.

"The fundamental thing in the doctrine of Marx is that it emphasizes the historical international role of the proletariat as the builder of socialist society" and further on the same work he expresses: "All doctrines of socialism that have not a class character and of the politics that are not of the class, showed to be a simple absurd<sup>57</sup>". There have been changes that is true, but in no way they destroy the contradiction in capitalism that is the one existing between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; in no way do they destroy the fact that the proletariat is the only consistently revolutionary class to carry to the very end not only the overthrow of bourgeois order, but the emancipation of the whole human genre. They do not take into account that their role is determined by their place in production, by their objective role in economy. The proletariat, the working class, the workers, in function of acquiring class conscience "for themselves" not only emancipate themselves, but all human kind.

Nobody will deny that in political struggle the working class needs and should forge alliances with the oppressed mass of the peoples. But there exists a distance with that and the affirmations of those who search for "new social actors" assigning them a liberating role above class conflict when reality shows how passenger movements are.

<sup>57</sup> Lenin, V. I., *Historical destiny of K. Marx's doctrine*; in Marx, Engels, Marxism; Foreign Languages Publishing House; Moscow; 1950, pp. 77-78.

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## Socialism Without Revolution And... Without Party

"Socialism of the 21st century" claims that neither the conquest of power or destruction of the State is necessary, but with the conquest of government it is possible to initiate a new road. Because of it all its developers do not speak of overthrowing, of breaking, of Revolution, but jumping that vital need, they present post capitalism and they devise already programs to transit to a new society. Because of it in the speech of this political-ideological nonsense not the most minimum strategic approach exists that conducts to the destruction of the State. Consequently neither any worry regarding the construction of a revolutionary party of the working class exists, a party of vanguard, a communist party. What for? If it does not claim the working class as the interested in burying the exploiters? If Revolution is not claimed as the moment in which the working class overthrows capitalism? If the possibility of undertaking post capitalist transformations is claimed in the framework of the old bourgeois State?

Let us take into account that besides planting that "in the Socialism of the 21st century" private and social property are able to and should coexist, inclusive the praise of a socialist market is done.

observed one cannot stop from noting the similarity with what was the democratic- bourgeois Revolution of 1910 in Mexico and the period of greater radical nature in the developments that happened during the government of Lazaro Cardenas in 1934-1940. During that six-year period it was established that in schools, social organizations and in state administrations along with the national anthem, The Marsellaise and The Internationale were sung; an impressive distribution of lands was carried out, a true agrarian reform; oil up till then in the hands of the American and English monopolies was nationalized and in general a politics of nationalizations was opened that conducted to the result that in the 80's 70% of the Mexican economy was nationalized; even a great aid to the Spanish Republic was given. From this, under the influence exercised by Browderism illusions on the Mexican Revolution as way to socialism grew. Just like the followers of today's "Socialism of the 21st century" then they spoke of a State placed above classes and of class struggle, as a lever for development. For Marxists-Leninists the State is not a referee above the classes in combat, it's the apparatus of domination, of repression, in the case of capitalism, of the class that has the property of the means of production and of change, the bourgeoisie. Nationalizations are not by themselves socialists, therefore in the case of Mexico they showed to be a mechanism for centralization and concentration of capitalism.

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When the programmatic approaches of "Socialism of the 21st century" are

Instead Of Contradiction  
Among Capital And Labor:  
North Against South, Center  
Against Periphery.

Another notion sustained by "Socialism of the 21st century" notes as a fundamental problem to resolve the contradiction between the rich North and the poor South, parting from deceitful statistics and above all leaving sideways that both in the north and the south of the Planet class struggle exists; the same thing is the harmful idea of the center versus periphery that intends to ignore that we live in the monopolist phase of capitalism, the higher phase of capitalism which is imperialism and that all the countries are immersed in it, as well as with relations of interdependency.

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It is not a matter of minor  
differences but of different  
roads.

There are those who sustain that in reality such proposal has come to bring up to date the debate on the alternative against capitalism today in crisis; that that is its value and relevance and that besides its a critical focus that with a similar ideological base than ours helps to surpass the errors of socialist construction bringing fresh air.

We try to show here some questions in which the followers of "Socialism of the 21st century" converge, however it is necessary to affirm that we face a

proposal that is not structured, but that results from a mixture of positions, in some cases based on aspects of Marxism, of Christianity, of the ideas of Bolivarianism; eclecticism dominates.

They express that participatory democracy, cooperatives and self-management will come to give answer to the "authoritarianism" of the **Dictatorship of the proletariat**. And in short they throw incoherent concepts with the purpose of torpedoing communist theory; but without arguments; nowadays a position, tomorrow another; full confusion as the calling to the construction of a "V International" with enemies of the workers like the Institutional Revolutionary Party of Mexico.

Contemporary struggle requires to advance firmly grouped around the red flag of communism, for the transformation of the material conditions of life, for the abolition of bourgeois relations of production by the only possible way, the revolutionary way. Confusion helps In nothing, the maelstrom of incoherent approaches that are raised with the debated concept and that in last instance only are presented to retouch capitalism trying the unrealizable operation of "humanizing it". For the working class, and not only in Latin America, for the class-conscious forces and revolutionary forces the duty is to fortify the communist parties that inscribe in their principles and program, in their action the historic experience of the workers of the world to overthrow capitalism and to build socialism, from the Paris Comune to the October Revolution.

It is nevertheless necessary to conclude that "Socialism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century" is an alien position and even opposed to Marxism-Leninism and to the international communist movement in not only questions of politics but ideological matters. It corresponds to the communist parties to raise the red flag for the development of class conscience, the organization in class of the proletariat and the assembly of exploited and oppressed workers, the construction of the necessary alliances with all interested in overthrowing capitalism with an objective that since 1917 has full force and validity, Socialist Revolution. It's a task of the epoch that we live at, that of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, and there is no space left for "compromises" neither for confusion.

*Pável Blanco Cabrera is Member of the central committee of the Communist Party of México*

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# The revolt and the struggle. On the protests in the USA and the tasks of the Communists

By Paolo Spena

**Note from Editors** - This article was written June 5, 2020, during the height of the uprising. Movements spread from the U.S. to cities across the world in Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and islands in the Pacific. This article appeared in Senza Tregua, the official online newspaper of the Fronte della Gioventù Comunista (Communist Youth Front).

The eyes of the whole world are focused on the United States, despite the discreet commitment of certain Italian media which, for evidently political reasons, succeed in the arduous task of giving considerably greater importance to the protests in Hong Kong. The virality of the video showing the death of 46-year-old African American George Floyd and the indignation that ensued sparked a spontaneous mass movement that spread from Minneapolis to the whole country in a few days.

This is a just, legitimate protest. And not only that: what days ago could be defined as a protest movement, today takes on the characteristics of a **real revolt of the urban proletariat, right in the metropolitan center of imperialism**. Just look at what is happening. Protests in more than 40 cities where a curfew was imposed with the intervention of the National Guard; more than 10,000 people arrested, dozens of injured by the police who make extensive use of tear gas and rubber bullets. The repressive response of the state has raised the bar of

confrontation day by day. Donald Trump has openly addressed the governors of the various states, accusing them of being too weak and asking for more arrests and to intervene to "restore order", an invitation that seems to have already been taken up by far-right groups and supporters of white supremacists. of the President. A few days ago, taking refuge in the security bunker while the White House was surrounded by demonstrators, Trump announced the banning of the "Antifa" network and declared that the protests are led by terrorist organizations. In part it is an electoral campaign, in part it is unmistakable signs of the high level of the conflict in which the country finds itself today.

Police abuse of African Americans in the United States and racial discrimination<sup>58</sup>, which has never really disappeared from American society, have always been known. But **it would be highly reductive to think of the protests of recent days as a simply anti-racist movement**. From the riots of the last few days, a *political* rejection of the

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<sup>58</sup> Let us use the term "race" in its social and non-biological meaning, which has always belonged to the Afro-American movements.



American model, of the injustice of that model of society has emerged. The target of the protests does not appear to be just the Trump government, but the entire scaffolding that large sections of US society perceive as grossly unfair. And in fact, in all the cities, demonstrators are seen waving US flags upside down.

The African American question in the USA, which today also extends to Hispanics, has always been intertwined with the class character of American society. Police abuses of African Americans are the icing on a deeply unfair system. To cite some data, African Americans are 13% of the US population, but they own 1.5% of the wealth. A white household earns on average ten times more than a black household, and inequality rose sharply during the crisis 10 years ago (before the crisis the proportion was one to seven). **The health emergency from Covid-19 has hit African Americans in considerably greater proportions**, in a country without a true public health service, which does not consider health a right, making it accessible only to those who can afford it. All the statistics have highlighted a trend: the sick and especially the dead from Covid are African Americans. According to data from the Washington Post and the New York Times, in counties with a majority of African Americans there are three times the number of infections and six times the deaths. In New York, the main outbreaks of the epidemic are in the working-class neighborhoods: Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens. The data of the individual states make the situation even clearer: In Michigan, African Americans are 14% of the population, but they represent 40% of

deaths from Covid. In Louisiana, 70% of Covid deaths are African American, but blacks are only 32% of the population. This happens because the black communities, being the poorest, they have less access to treatment as they cannot afford to pay for them and therefore have more frequent previous pathologies, which increase mortality. Many work underpaid and exploited precisely in those essential sectors that are not affected by lockdown measures and are therefore more exposed to infections. All this happens to increase the dose in a context, that of the health emergency, in which thousands of people are deprived of their income, lose their jobs, have no access to medical assistance.

The killing of George Floyd acted as a detonator for the exasperation of the popular classes to turn into revolt. A class revolt, because those who live in African-American neighborhoods are proletarians, and it is the proletarians who are affected by racial discrimination. It is against this exasperation that the police, the National Guard are mobilized today in the US and the opportunity to use even the army to suppress protests is discussed. It is a response that is far from atypical for the United States: a country that has 6% of the world population, and which at the same time boasts 25% of the world's prison population.

Any reflection on the violence, on the police stations set on fire, on the destroyed shop windows or on the episodes of looting, must take steps starting from this context, because they are typical phenomena of a context of revolt like the one in progress, they

have to do with the effective mass participation in the protests that have been going on for more than a week now. This net of reports of infiltration by police and provocateurs by the protesters themselves. The talk of beautiful souls about violence that calls more violence, about "there is a way and way to manifest", really leave the time they find when faced with a real mass movement that points the finger at the power of the ruling classes. It is a context that physiologically presupposes, by its very definition, the presence of violence, which comes primarily from the state. Those who hasten to "condemn" the violence of the demonstrators, real or alleged, only show that they prefer the daily violence of the bosses. Those who even from the "left" distance themselves from looting do not realize that there is no popular uprising in history without such episodes, in which exasperation for their living conditions finds an outlet in the act of appropriating goods and merchandise which normally could not be afforded for economic reasons. It is a phenomenon explained by the context. Rather, we should ask ourselves what are the reasons why the anger of the popular classes in the US does not find a more advanced outlet than this. What for the right-thinking and for the theorists of order and discipline would be enough to condemn that movement?

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The United States is a country in which the insufficiency of the forces of the labor and communist movement has emerged for some time and much more than in other countries. The historical CPUSA, who started with a troubled history, suffers the profound limits due to an opportunist political leadership that has led him for years to support the Democratic Party of the USA, also and above all electorally. The Communists in the USA operate in a context of weakness and fragmentation, in the absence of a party that can express today a real political and fighting alternative. The US trade union system imposes an entirely company-based structure in the total absence of collective agreements and therefore an enormous fragmentation of workers' organizations. An overall picture that shares many aspects with other Anglo-Saxon countries;

The movement these days is paying the price for these shortcomings, for which the young people who animate it are not to blame. It is a great protest movement, a revolt that certainly sees black and non-black men and women as protagonists, workers and precarious workers, and students but that does not see the support of a large, organized workers movement that is capable of giving the protests an outlet for struggle for a more advanced policy. This movement does not exist in the USA, just as there is no communist party rooted and present throughout the national territory, despite some interesting and important experiences, but still in an embryonic phase. These days it is a movement animated by proletarians, by waged, precarious, unemployed workers, who however are

## What Are The Prospects?

not organized as such, and one would wonder if they are aware of it.

The United States is no stranger to the explosion of this kind of movement. Indeed, it can be said that in the last 10 years there has been more mass movement in the US than in Italy. But they **take place in a context in which the forces capable of directing anger and rebellion in the direction of the revolutionary struggle**, of the struggle against the imperialist system of which the US has been the main global player for years, **are lacking**.

It is not a question, mind you, of discrediting a movement for these shortcomings. Those who think that the role of the Communists is to pontificate at the window by excommunicating any mass movement that is not born on its own initiative, without asking the question of what kind of intervention should be put on the real level, have understood very little of Marxism. However, it is a question of remembering the lesson of the many movements seen in recent decades. We think of Occupy (born in the USA), the Indignados and so on, which were also movements with more "political" connotations when compared with this which really expresses the characteristics of a people's revolt. The irrational and romantic fascination for protest movements should rather be contrasted with a mature reflection on how the communists should act.

In Italy the movements have shown one thing: without a communist party and an organized workers' movement, but even if the communists do not prove themselves politically up to it, a

spontaneous protest movement can run out, or slowly ebb, without there having been no advancement for the class forces. In the years of the G8 in Genoa, the two communist parties present in Italy at the time, Rifondazione and the Pdc, were respectively engaged in theorising the movement of movements (a sort of Bertinottian version of the multitudes of Toni Negri, which in fact dragged that party to the tail and not at the head of those movements) and to study the best alliance for each region to obtain councilors and elect councilors. That movement, which posed important fundamental questions in the opposition to the G8 and saw the participation of large proletarian and trade union sectors, found itself lacking a vanguard leadership and a real perspective. A merciless picture if observed today in retrospect, which reminds us that that is not enough in itself *there are* communist parties, but it is also necessary that the right objectives be set.

A separate discussion applies to the individual days of protest that resulted in pitched clashes with the police, which is linked to the reflections on the violence. On the specific theme of street clashes, some clarifications are important and it may be useful to recall the recent experiences of our country to clarify some aspects. A day that the not so young will remember is that of December 14, 2010. A large mass movement, participated in spite of the fact that it mostly saw students at the center (unlike the movement against the G8 in Genoa which saw a wider mass participation), culminated in that day that saw the explosion of the clash in the street after the Berlusconi government did not fall in the Chamber

by three votes from the center-left. The last blow of the tail of that movement was, in hindsight, on October 15, 2011, where the contradictions of an ever less spontaneous street conflict were already emerging and more and more practiced on the precise choice of individual organized groups. But it is perhaps the march of 1 May 2015 in Milan that made a reflection on how the mere simulation of a conflict that does not correspond to the reality of the class struggle (which certainly cannot be reduced to the aesthetics of a clash with the police) really necessary. ) risks even being counterproductive and lending its side to reaction and repression. Here, when it comes to violence and clashes that take place during a protest, this should be the main discriminator for communists. But it is perhaps the march of 1 May 2015 in Milan that made a reflection on how the mere simulation of a conflict that does not correspond to the reality of the class struggle (which certainly cannot be reduced to the aesthetics of a clash with the police) really necessary. ) risks even being counterproductive and lending its side to reaction and repression. **The condemnation of spontaneous episodes of violence typical of a mass movement does not belong to the communists, much less the condemnation of violence in general in the name of that "pacifism" which would like the unilateral disarmament of the oppressed. On the other hand, it is entirely legitimate and right to criticize the political tactics of certain minority groups which envisage the *simulation* of that violence even when the real mass movement does not exist or does not express advanced positions,**

for the reasons mentioned above. In the case of the current uprising in the United States, however, it seems that we are more in the first case than in the second.

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### The attempt to "absorb" the protest and the tasks of the Communists

**W**hen a movement is born and develops outside the organized workers' movement, but above all when there is no political vanguard of the class capable of taking over it, it is physiologically that this movement expresses backward conceptions and that above all the conditions are met for which it can be absorbed by bourgeois political forces.

Recent news is the announcement of the participation in the funeral of George Floyd of Joe Biden, candidate of the Democrats in the US presidential elections highlighted an election campaign logic that seeks to transform the anger that is setting the United States to fire and sword into political consensus, without any form of real political discontinuity. Suffice it to say that the Democratic candidate, even in a similar situation, did not go much further than affirming the need to teach the police to "shoot in the legs instead of the heart". And beyond Biden, **all the political, media, cultural, and even economic apparatuses are already working to "normalize" the protest.** Big companies are scrambling to take part for the demonstrators, for many big

monopolies #BlackLivesMatter has already become a marketing campaign, much like what happens annually in the month of Pride (which "normalization" has already seen. for quite a while), in which even large companies are tinged with the rainbow.

For some time now the hands of those "left" sectors of the Democratic Party of the USA have been reaching out to the Black Lives Matter movement, from Bernie Sanders to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, which more than representing a real alternative of struggle capable of undermining the American bipartisan system, are successfully carrying out the function of reabsorbing even the most radical elements of protest emerging from American society into the confines of that system. A function similar to that performed throughout Europe by the parties of the European Left with respect to movements against austerity. Experiences of government or support for bourgeois governments of the European Left in countries such as Greece, Spain, Portugal have fully demonstrated the historical function of those forces that are now fully integrated into the bourgeois political system (Syriza, Podemos, Bloco de Esquerda...), for the sake of those in Italy who still think they are taking that road out of time. The "left" of the US Democratic Party does not express anything qualitatively different from these experiences, and manages to be more backward even on the political level.

The Communists of the USA operate in a difficult context, but also in a historical moment in which - it is now well known - among the young American generations an idea of rehabilitation of "socialism" (certainly

conceived in a confused way) is gaining ground. It took place from the time of the protests against the war in Vietnam. This sentiment, certainly confused and contradictory, but which remains indicative, is now being intercepted by the left of the Democrats, which re-proposes the project of a "traditional" social democracy as opposed to the substantially liberal nature of that party.

Of course, the bipartisanism of that system, with the primaries of the two parties now welded as institutional processes in all respects (and not just party-based), has considerable weight. Asking whether the two-party system in Anglo-Saxon countries is the product of the marginalization of the communists in the political scenario or whether it is quite the opposite is a bit like the story of the chicken and the egg. If one thing is certain, it is that that mechanism can only be undermined by the material strength of the workers and organized proletarians; that building this force is all the more necessary in a country like the USA where the electoral system deprives the Communists of even the same parliamentary illusion and the possibility of building the party as a political / electoral consensus party disconnected from the working class.

It would be a great mistake, however, to cultivate the illusion that those forms of spontaneity can in themselves lead to a real change in the system, and that in this they can replace the organization. History shows that when there is no political reference, even the largest mass movements can ebb and give way to the return of ordinary oppression, or even to responses of a

reactionary nature. The images of the White House surrounded by demonstrators are an important signal, but we cannot delude ourselves that the White House "conquers itself", without an organized force of the oppressed classes capable of leading the assault as it did with the Winter Palace.

**The task of the Communists would be first of all not to arrive unprepared.** Recent events, not only in the US but also in France, constantly remind us that the possibility of the explosion of movements of struggle and protest also exists outside the forecasts of the organized class forces. When this happens, you risk missing the train of history. The biggest mistake, in a situation of this kind that we know well in Italy, would be to stay at the window launching anathemas, blaming the masses for being backward, blaming the movement for its own limits deriving above all from the unpreparedness of those who should put themselves to the guide of the masses. Conduct such as this has the sole result of facilitating the absorption of a movement of this type by the bourgeois political apparatus,

The experience of the workers' movement teaches us that the Communists can and must move like fish in water. That even small organized groups, such as the most consequent Communists in the USA who are fighting for the reconstruction of a revolutionary party, can act in the context of a mass movement, gaining positions and prestige, albeit in initially limited sectors; they can place the need for organization on the more advanced and conscious sectors of that movement, absorb the more combative part that has no intention of remaining

to witness the reflux of a struggle movement that it has helped to animate. Our whole history is full of episodes that remind us of a lesson: there are no conditions that, however unfavorable they may be, justify the abandonment of the struggle.

To the anger, to the will for change of millions of proletarians in the USA who today point the finger at injustice, we must offer a force capable of truly conquering a different society. This force is the Communist Party. The struggle to organize and strengthen this party, in the US as in all countries, remains the greatest hope of change for a generation that does not want to bow its head in the face of the new capital crisis.

*Paolo Spena is a leader in the Italian communist movement.*



# Opportunism and the Liquidation of the Third International

By Timothy Dirte

The Communist Party has always united with the workers in their fight for immediate demands under capitalism such as better wages, better working conditions, and safer work environments. This is what generally constitutes the policy of the United Front. Its aim is to unite the working class against capitalist attacks, and was the position of the Comintern up until its 7th congress.

The situation preceding the general crisis of world capitalism before World War II called for this basically correct policy as well as that of thoroughly fighting against forces on the left that ultimately serve to weaken and break the workers resistance against capitalist aggression. With the practical effect being the victory of fascism if the workers are beaten. These forces are what we call *social-fascists*.

However, once the victory of fascism was achieved in Germany, Italy, and Japan, the conditions ostensibly called for a more advanced policy. The presence of fascism had a deleterious effect on the entire world and threatened to pull the whole of humanity down with it. No longer could the struggle against social-fascists be carried on in the same way.

The international situation called for the policy of a *People's Front*. This differs from the United Front as its basis of unity extends beyond the

working class and seeks to unite an entire people, the progressive elements which for one reason or another stand against fascism and against the capitalists offloading the crisis onto the workers.

As well, the stronghold of world socialism, the USSR, was under threat of invasion by the German fascist forces. The defense of the international position of communism required a tacit alliance on the lines of anti-fascism between the socialist camp and the capitalist camp which had not fallen into fascism. Dimitrov, secretary of the Comintern, explains the reasoning for this at the 7th congress of the Comintern in 1938:

“We Communists employ methods of struggle which differ from those of the other parties; but, while using our own methods in combating fascism, we Communists will also support the methods of struggle used by other parties however inadequate they may seem, if these methods are really directed against fascism.

“We are ready to do all this because, in countries of bourgeois democracy, we want to block the way of reaction and the offensive of capital and fascism, prevent the abolition of bourgeois-democratic liberties, forestall fascism's terrorist vengeance upon the proletariat and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intellectuals, and save the young generation from physical and spiritual degeneracy.



“We are ready to do all this because in the fascist countries we want to prepare and hasten the overthrow of fascist dictatorship.

“We are ready to do all this *because we want to save the world from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war.*

“Ours is a *Congress of struggle for the maintenance of peace, against the threat of imperialist war*”

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The struggle of the French people, led by the Communist Party of France on the lines of a People’s Front against the rising tide of fascism before WWII proved effective at preventing the rise of fascism in France before Hitler invaded. The resolve of the French people to resist fascism was a boon to the world anti-fascist movement. Even though with the defeat of France during WWII, their people carried on the anti-fascist fight which was best represented by the heroic resolve of the French Partisans.

The Communist Party USA, sought the same success as the tendrils of fascism crept over our own country in the wake of the Great Depression. The threat of fascism in the US was real and presented a revolutionary situation as Stalin outlined at the ECCI in 1929. Twice US finance capital sought to overthrow the bourgeois-republic, first with the American Liberty League, and a few years later with the American First Committee.

As Dimitrov and Stalin outlined at the 7th congress, the fascists rummage through history and uphold or revise it in order to validate and achieve support

for their anti-democratic and anti-people aims. CPUSA general secretary Browder took on the task of combating this by trying to show the progressive side of American history which the capitalists all too often obscure and suppress.

Simultaneously, the cooperation between the Soviet Union and the USA in anti-fascist efforts produced great expectations about the *possibility* of a lasting alliance. In fact, the feeling was so pronounced that many in the party leadership came to see the US bourgeoisie as basically progressive, beyond the context of the Anti-Fascist People’s Front.

During the war, the party even went as far as to restrict its agitation among the workers in order to further alliances with center-left forces. This meant ceasing criticism against social democrats and the like, as well as ending political education among the workers to further relations with bourgeois organizations or even calling attention to the anti-worker policies of the big capitalists.

In order to achieve the unity required for the People’s Front, the concept of *National Unity* was needed. This concept was essentially an all-class alliance against fascism. As Browder explained in *Victory - and After*, it had the goal of “uniting the entire nation, including the biggest capitalists, for a complete and all-out drive for victory.”

The defeat of fascism, as argued by Dimitrov and Stalin, necessitated the party to uphold the progressive elements of our national history, to open the scope of our agitation to appeal to all elements of society and

lead the American people against fascism. This meant that the party would appeal to cultivated bourgeois sentiments among the people in regards to the "Founding Fathers" and the first American Revolution. This was showcased by "Jeffersonian Democracy" being enshrined in the CPUSA constitution and argued to be the American path towards communism.

By 1940 however, the CPUSA had left the Comintern in order to further its National Unity policy.<sup>59</sup> This is due to the capitalist Allies accusing the comintern of fomenting the "Bolshevization" of the US and others. For the Party's policy to succeed, it required it to make every effort to prove its commitment to the American people and their national interests. It was feared that not having left the Comintern would have hurt the campaign of National Unity. In fact, Browder later argued in 1944 after the Teheran conference that it was essential for the *Communist Party* to not "push" the progressive elements of US capital towards reaction.

Because of the policy of National Unity and bringing into the fold both the workers and big capitalists against fascism, it was said to have required on the part of the big capitalists a progressive interest to do so. Browder suggested in his 1944 work *Teheran* -

*Our Path in War and Peace* that this National Unity was possible owing in part to the immaturity of US capitalism and the classes therein not fully understanding their own class interests or positions.<sup>60</sup> His ultimate point being that US capitalism constituted a peculiarity of world capitalism, ie., not bound to the same laws of capitalist political-economy which was true of all other capitalist countries.

This progressive interest was in the petty-bourgeois concern for "free-enterprise." On this line of appealing to US capital's concern for "free-enterprise," rested the Anti-Fascist People's Front, ie, the alliance of the CPUSA and the US bourgeoisie to redivide the world market. And this "peculiarity" of the immaturity of US capitalism was said to have stemmed from the same conditions of the US that gave rise to "Jeffersonian Democracy." This referred to a particular period of the US that saw Jefferson elected on a popular campaign against large landowners and bankers who retarded the development of industry.

Jefferson's campaign consisted of both working class elements and that of the industrial bourgeoisie that was prevented from developing under the conditions of the monopoly-landowners, otherwise known as the planter class, or land speculators. This unity of the American workers and

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<sup>59</sup> In fact, Browder says as much in the early 1943 issue of *The Communist* when the Comintern was dissolved.

<sup>60</sup> First of all, it would be well to clear up a certain paradox which gives rise to many confusions. The paradox can be stated in this form: that American capitalism is the most advanced in the world, but not the most mature. It is the most advanced, in that it is the strongest, it has brought the technique of production to its highest known

point, and it has carried over and preserved the least proportion of pre-capitalist social, political, and economic forms. It is not the most mature, in the sense that it does not exhibit the full evolution of its inherent tendencies of development, it retains some of the characteristics of a young capitalism, and lags in self-understanding and self-consciousness. (E. Browder, *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace*, 1944)

elements of the bourgeoisie in opposition against certain monopoly forms (particularly land and slave owners) formed the basis of the “peculiarity” of US capitalism which set it apart from world capitalism. The American values which comprise this unity such as rights of free speech, assembly, worship, trial by jury, expansion of the franchise, and the like all aided Jefferson’s ability to garner the support of the budding bourgeoisie.

As early as 1938, this perspective on Jefferson and US capitalism became the party line: “A full and complete application of Jefferson’s principles, the consistent application of democratic ideas to the conditions of today, will lead naturally and inevitably to the full program of the Communist Party, to the socialist reorganization of the United States, to the common ownership and operation of our economy for the benefit of all.” Though, four years prior in 1934 the slogan of “Communism Is Twentieth Century

Americanism” had already been popularized by the party leadership. And here the concept of “Americanism” refers to the democratic ideals of Jeffersonian democracy, a wholly bourgeois concept.

With this foundation of a progressive essence to US capitalism, the context of the unity between the capitalist and socialist camps against fascism took on a different perspective than initially thought of as that of a tacit strategic alliance. Not only the *possibility*<sup>61</sup> for a progressive interest among the capitalists became considered by party leadership, but its *actuality*.<sup>62</sup> And if the US represents a progressive form of capitalism capable of peacefully, inevitably, leading to communism, then it should be the work of communists to aid the development of US capitalism.<sup>63</sup>

This campaign of unity with the national interests of the US bourgeoisie in its progressive drive against fascism, required, too, that in the spirit of

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<sup>61</sup> Regulation and limitation of monopoly capital, in a society in which it plays a dominant role, are not simple and easy matters. If big capital unites its forces against the rest of society, and fights for unrestricted domination, then it is extremely doubtful whether it can be regulated successfully, short of a major political and social struggle, and a crisis resulting in a socialistic system replacing the present one.

If, however, in the ranks of big capital there is a sufficient number of men of vision and understanding who recognize the suicidal results to their own system that inevitably flow from a failure strictly to subordinate its operations to a broadly conceived and definitely planned program of national and international expansion of well-being for all – then such men, integrated in or working with the democratic-progressive camp of the people, can become the decisive leaders of big capital in a maximum of self-limitation to meet a minimum of governmentally-imposed regulation that will effectively curb the anti-social and anti-national tendencies of big

capital, sufficient for it to participate in the national unity in support of the program of Teheran. (Ibid)

<sup>62</sup> There is a growing volume of evidence that there are such men of vision and understanding in the ranks of big capital. Their number will grow, and their initiative and leadership will become stronger, to the degree that it is made evident that there exists a practical platform upon which they can unite, and are uniting, with the broad democratic-progressive camp inclusive of the organized labor movement, which promotes the general interest of the whole nation. (Ibid)

<sup>63</sup> Therefore, the policy for Marxists and all adherents of socialism in the United States is to face with all its consequences the perspective of a capitalist United States in the period of postwar reconstruction of the world, to evaluate all plans on that basis, and to collaborate actively with the most democratic and progressive majority in the country in a national unity sufficiently broad and effective to realize the policies of Teheran. (Ibid)

proving communist commitment to the US that the party withdraw from the Comintern in 1940. This is because the capitalist “allies” wasted no effort in accusing all the communist parties and the Comintern itself of acting in a concerted effort to “Bolshevize” them. It is a long standing accusation of the party as receiving orders from Moscow. Stalin explained the dissolution to Reuters shortly after its finalization in 1943:

“The dissolution of the Communist International is proper because:

(a) It exposes the lie of the Hitlerites to the effect that “Moscow” allegedly intends to intervene in the life of other nations and to “Bolshevize” them. From now on an end is put to this lie.

(b) It exposes the calumny of the adversaries of Communism within the Labour movement to the effect that Communist Parties in various countries are allegedly acting not in the interests of their people but on orders from outside. From now on an end is also put to this calumny.

(c) It facilitates the work of patriots of all countries for uniting the progressive forces of their respective countries, regardless of party or religious faith, into a single camp of national liberation—for unfolding the struggle against fascism.

(d) It facilitates the work of patriots of all countries for uniting all freedom-loving peoples into a single international camp for the fight against the menace of world domination by Hitlerism, thus clearing the way for the future organization of a companionship of nations based upon their equality.”

Furthermore, the conditions of World War II for the Soviet Union meant intense battles mainly being fought on the eastern front. The allies refused to attack from the west until after the comintern was dissolved.

In the international context of the alliance between the capitalist and socialist camps, this international camp against fascism, led many to believe a new world was on the horizon. The prospect of both camps working together for the benefit of all was a seemingly tangible possibility. Many assurances from both sides were made on the post-war order of the world.

In fact, peaceful coexistence was not a new idea. Lenin also considered it not only possible, but a necessity for building socialism while encircled by capitalism. This is because a global revolution at the same time was not possible. So naturally, socialism would crop up in one country or another while existing side by side with capitalist states. Peace as a matter of foreign policy is then not negotiable, it's a requirement of survival for the proletarian state until socialism has sufficiently encircled capitalism.<sup>64</sup>

Yet, in the conditions of the Anti-Fascist People's Front, the threat of fascist terror proved to be a far more pressing concern, and rendered the antagonism between the two systems secondary while fascism existed. In

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<sup>64</sup> [...]the lesson all workers and peasants must master is that we must be on our guard and remember that we are surrounded by men, classes and governments openly expressing their extreme hatred for us. We must remember that we are always at a hair's breadth from all kinds of

invasions. (“On the Domestic and Foreign Policies of the Republic, Report Delivered at the Ninth All-Russian Congress of Soviets”, Collected Works, fourth Russian ed., Moscow, Vol. 33, p. 122.)

1947, Stalin explained that “[t]he difference between them [capitalism and socialism] is not important so far as co-operation is concerned. The systems in Germany and the United States are the same but war broke out between them. The U.S. and U.S.S.R. systems are different but we didn’t wage war against each other and the U.S.S.R. does not propose to. If during the war they could co-operate, why can’t they today in peace, given the wish to co-operate?”<sup>65</sup>

Peaceful coexistence as a practical possibility was thus built upon the concessions of the international communist movement to unite both camps against fascism. And owing to the progressive aspirations of the people from both camps toward a post-war world, no sacrifice was too sacred to further the Anti-Fascist People’s Front, up to and including the dissolution of the Communist International. Thus, the international communist line was set on the facilitation of national interests to build “national unity”, rather than an international centre for proletarian revolution.

However the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) thoroughly repudiates the long believed purpose of the dissolution of the comintern. The characterization of the war by the comintern to be initially that of an imperialist war to redivide the world market was abruptly changed to being anti-fascist once Germany invaded the USSR. The KKE argues that the real character of the war as being an imperialist war was inescapable and

unavoidably part and parcel of the underlying conditions of the war but underestimated in the line of the Anti-Fascist People’s Front. The KKE explains in its report on the Comintern by the Section of the International Relations of the Central Committee of the KKE:

This position underestimated the fact that the character of the war is determined by which class wages the war and for what purpose, whether it is originally and at that particular moment on the defense or on the attack. The struggle against fascism and the liberation from foreign occupation, for democratic rights and freedoms, was detached from the struggle against capital.

The contradictions in the CI’s (Communist International) line on the character of World War II were also influenced by the aspirations of the USSR’s foreign policy and by its attempt to defend itself from an imperialist war. However, in any case, the needs of the foreign policy of one socialist state cannot supplant the necessity of a revolutionary strategy for every capitalist country. The ultimate security of a socialist state is determined by the worldwide victory of socialism or its prevalence in a powerful group of countries and hence, the struggle for revolution in each country.

Further, the change in policy of the communist parties to this new reality meant doing away with previous methods of work as was done before the rise of fascism. To prevent a collapse of the international camp, and its tenuous alliance, the role of the communist

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<sup>65</sup> J. V. Stalin Coexistence, American-Soviet Cooperation, Atomic Energy, Europe, 1947.

party was redirected away from an exposure of the oppressive policies of the bourgeoisie. The party saw such agitation as a threat which could culminate in driving progressive capital towards reaction.<sup>66</sup>

Through this context of national unity, progressive capitalism, and peaceful coexistence, the dissolution of the Communist Party USA took place and its re-formation into the Communist Political Association (C.P.A.) in 1944. This was an organization not for the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, but for “Marxist edification” of the American people who by means of the existing bourgeois political structure of the country would realize socialism peacefully in alliance with progressive monopoly capital. The party of a new type, Leninism itself, finally being rejected.

It is quite easy and convenient to attribute all of the incorrect policies of the party during the war period to Browder. He was of course the general secretary of the party in the period. The theoretical leader of the party. However, this would fall into the easiest traps of analyzing this period. The Popular Front, National Unity, Progressive Capital, and Peaceful Coexistence were not solely Browder’s ideas. These all came from the international movement and its

leaders. As well, almost every communist party in the advanced capitalist countries fell into similar mistakes.

Ultimately, we cannot ignore the reason why the Communist International was dissolved to further the national unity campaigns of the parties in the advanced capitalist countries in order to gather bourgeois support against the Axis. Neither can we ignore the extent to which peaceful coexistence was believed to be not only possible, but probable in a post-war world. That hostile attitudes and imperialist interests would dissipate in the absence of the unifying threat of fascism was not seriously considered.

What many call Browderism was in reality then a *global* right-opportunist phenomena which stemmed from imperialism and its effect on the policies of the international communist movement during the war. Browderism is only how it manifested under the conditions of the US. This also explains why all the advanced capitalist countries fell victim to their own national variants of Browderism. Nevertheless, in essence, it can be said to have arisen in part out of an upward swing in conditions, a lull in the growth of the movement and from political immaturity. As well as the social composition of the parties in the

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<sup>66</sup> We must all learn to welcome their appearance and prove in practical life that such cooperative effort in the spirit of national unity is both possible and profitable. Nothing can be more fatal for the perspective of Teheran, so far as the United States is concerned, than an attitude of uniform and undifferentiated hostility to the ranks of big capital from the side of the labor and liberal sectors of our democracy. That only drives the intelligent capitalists back into the arms of

their most reactionary fellows and unites the most powerful group in American society solidly against all progress.

There can be no effective national unity in America to secure and unfold the program of Teheran that does not include big capitalists able to fight for and win at least a certain minimum of participation on the part of their whole group. (E. Browder, Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace, 1944)

advanced capitalist countries. Plainly, from *opportunism*.

By virtue of our analysis coming some 80 years after the policies of the Popular Front, some truths are self-evident. Such being that many parties in the absence of the Communist International fell into social-democracy, the capitalist camp vehemently attacked and subverted the People's Democracies of Europe, and finally, had a hand in the dissolution of the USSR in 1991. The long desired peaceful coexistence, its technical possibility, and historical necessity only resulting in the loss of the international position of the communist movement.

Perhaps the alliance between the capitalist and socialist camps was only possible through the shared interest in destroying the rise of fascism, and ultimately in furthering imperialist interests. Stalin further qualified such an alliance as being possible only if the underpinning impetus to its continuation in the context of shared interests overcoming the fundamental contradiction between states remained intact.<sup>67</sup> Alliances between capitalists states are predicated on the build-up of forces for the re-division of markets, this is indisputable, alliances between imperialist bourgeois-democracies and socialism are, as evidenced by the practical result of the second world war, predicated on the existence of a threat

to both bourgeois-democracies and socialism.

The “desire,” so to speak, which conditions the unity between the two camps against fascism stems from the very nature of fascism. Without this threat, the domination of imperialism becomes the overriding interest of the capitalist camp if it is not all along.

The economic logic of imperialism necessitates war, it requires the penetration of new markets. Peace between the socialist and capitalist camps can then only ever be tenuous at best. The capitalists will never stop looking for weak points in the proletarian state to subjugate it to the interests of capital. The only way to maintain peace between the camps then is through trials of strength, otherwise the capitalists will attack with force and destroy the socialist state.<sup>68</sup> Lenin was very clear that peaceful coexistence was limited and conditional:

“the very thought of peacefully subordinating the capitalists to the will of the majority of the exploited, of the peaceful, reformist transition to Socialism is not only extreme philistine stupidity, but also downright deception of the workers, the embellishment of capitalist wage slavery, concealment of the truth.”<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Of course, if there is no desire to co-operate, even with the same economic system they may fall out as was the case with Germany. - J. V. Stalin Coexistence, American-Soviet Cooperation, Atomic Energy, Europe

<sup>68</sup> That is the way it always is — when the enemy is beaten, he begins talking peace. We have told these gentlemen, the imperialists of Europe, time and again that we agree to make peace, but they

continued to dream of enslaving Russia. Now they have realized that their dreams are not fated to come true. (“Speech Delivered at the First All-Russian Conference on Party Work in the Countryside”. Alliance of the Working Class and the Peasantry, FLPH, Moscow 1959, p. 326.)

<sup>69</sup> V.I. Lenin, Theses on the Fundamental Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International, 1920

In fact, the entire purpose of the Communist International was to serve as an organizing body of the world proletariat to combat the encirclement of the young Soviet Republic, the stronghold of socialism.

In the final analysis, the Axis was defeated, but at a severe cost to the international communist movement which still struggles against fascist reaction today. The factors which contributed to the degradation of the western communist parties are situated in a deeper analysis of the conditions of capitalism retarding the ideological development of the workers and subsequently the communist parties therein.

Reflecting on the collapse of the Second International in 1972, Gus Hall remarked,

“The unity between parties was first diluted to a formal unity. But very quickly even the formal ties became obstacles to carrying out opportunist policies. World and class ties between parties became an embarrassment. Each party stated its internationalism would be expressed through effective work, each within each of the national entities.

The leaders of these socialist parties very quickly made “new” discoveries. They decided Marx was wrong. There were no laws of capitalist development that applied universally. There were no worldwide concepts of the class struggle. In each country they discovered “fundamental” national peculiarities that overshadowed international similarities. The working-class interests were watered down to where they did not appear in contradiction with the interests of the ruling class.

The class struggle became purely a “people’s struggle.” Class concepts became national concepts. No party openly condemned internationalism, they just put it on the shelf for “the duration.”

Many of the parties became large mass parties. This was good. But what was not good, was that they became broad popular parties by going along with popular concepts of nationalism and classlessness. They became mass parties by giving up their advanced working-class positions. Their growth was fed by opportunism”

A very apropos analysis of the Second International that has an all-too coincidental similarity to the objective consequences of the 7th Congress of the Comintern line. Opportunism is at the heart of its self-dissolution.

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## Some Implications and Consequences

If the Popular Front line of the 7th Congress of the Comintern is examined to its end in 1943 it is unquestionable that its primary thesis forms the foundation for several party leaders later on. Let us outline this connection.

As stated previously, it was fully argued under the 7th congress line that the previous periods of the Comintern were a *mistake and were ultra-leftist*. The development and popularity of fascism had come out of the “failure” of the communist movement to have



adequately embedded itself in the large petty-bourgeois, and nationalist populations. The new line was to correct this mistake by shifting the movement away from "left-sectarian" methods.

In effect, a move away from combating the bourgeoisie ideologically to form the popular front through concessions to it was the systematic *dismantlement* of proletarian internationalism. "Peaceful Coexistence" as a matter of foreign policy thereafter for the communist movement became perverted to mean outright submission to the capitalists who were now "progressive."

The "broad masses" as defined in the line of 7th Congress of the Comintern were not compelled out of necessity to unite with the communists here as much as was the case in war torn Europe. While all western communist parties eventually devolved into social democracy over several decades, the US party did so not two years after the 7th Congress. No one can deny the fascist threat which loomed and looms in the US, yet the US party was destroyed easily by opportunism.

Again, we cannot stress enough that Browder is merely applying the line of 7th Congress of the Comintern to its logical end. All understandings of Browderism while correct superficially are hollow when examined at a deeper level. Browder was many things, but in the final analysis their failure is primarily to be found in their uncritical approach to the line of 7th Congress of the Comintern. We must also mention that while Foster was correct in recognizing the folly of what came under Browder's leadership, they failed

to see its real connection to the 7th Congress of the Comintern.

Even after the disastrous effects under Browder, Foster and the CP leadership failed to see what truly upended the communist movement. As a further consequence, the CPUSA never abandoned the rightist line of the 7th Congress of the Comintern and to this day puts forward the path to socialism as through a "peaceful revolution" literally at the ballot box. The "Communist Party" of the US is purposefully ignoring the class character of bourgeois democracy. This is why with the deaths of Foster and later Gus Hall, the last vestiges of militancy in the CP died as well. Rank opportunism having claimed victory in the CPUSA.

The distortions of Marxism-Leninism by the 7th Congress of the Comintern must be studied and fought against to rebuild and bring about Socialism-Communism.

*Timothy Dirte is the Educational Secretary of the Party of Communists USA and Editor-in-Chief of "The Communist".*

