

Stop the Genocide in Gaza!



Unidad y Lucha

ÓRGANO DE LA CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL DE PARTIDOS Y ORGANIZACIONES MARXISTA-LENINISTAS

Unity & Struggle

ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF MARXIST-LENINIST PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Unité et Lutte

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The Importance of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, ICMLPO, for the World Revolution

"The ideological struggle in the field of revolutionary ideology is urgent in order to overcome the onslaught of reaction. No communist, no vanguard party of the revolution, can fear these clashes of conceptions and ideas. Let the debate be opened, we must confront ideas, analyses, experiences, lessons, reasons to reach conclusions that allow us to move forward"
**(Communist Proclamation of the Workers and the Peoples.
ICMLPO, 1994)**

Among the innumerable contributions of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels to the development of Marxist-Leninist doctrine and the struggle for world revolution, the efforts of these two geniuses of humanity to build the League of Communists, the International Working Men's Association (IWA) and to create communist parties and organizations in various countries stand out.

Likewise, when speaking about the contributions of Lenin and Stalin to the proletarian revolution and the building of the socialist society, due importance is not given to the work they did to unmask opportunism and its variants in the workers' movement and to build the Third Communist International.

As we know, Marx and Engels played a decisive role in transforming the Congress of the League of the Just, held on June 2, 1847, into the founding congress of the League of Communists. Due to financial difficulties, Marx was unable to travel to London; it fell to Engels to defend the task of the renaming of the League and the need for an organization of workers committed to the aim of abolishing the capitalist system.

A few months later, on November 29, 1847, the second Congress of the League of Communists took place. On the proposal

of Marx and Engels, the first article of the statutes was worded as follows: "The aim of the League is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, the rule of the proletariat, the abolition of the old bourgeois society resting on class antagonism and the founding of a new society without classes and without private ownership of the means of production." The Congress also approved that the League should openly defend its theoretical principles and the ideas of scientific communism.

The task of drafting a manifesto with the new principles and program of the organization fell to Marx and Engels, which led to the appearance of one of the main works of Marxism: the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, first published in February 1848, two months after the decision of the second congress.

The years 1848 and 1849 were years of intense activity on the part of the League in spreading the principles of communism. However, in 1850, Marx and Engels had to confront differences within the League and drafted another important document, the Message of the Central Committee to the League of Communists, in which they affirmed the advance of communist ideas among the workers and called for the continuation of the struggle for revolution.

After the end of the League, Marx and Engels advocated the building of a new communist organization of the working class. This struggle was successful on September 28, 1864, with the founding of the International Working Men's Association (IWA). According to Engels, the main aim of the IWA "was to merge into one huge army all the active elements of the working class of Europe and America." Written by Marx in October 1864, the Inaugural Manifesto of the IWA contains the following passage: "If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfill that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure?"

In the statutes of the IWA, also written by Marx, we find the following formulations:

"Considering,
That the emancipation of the working classes must be
conquered by the working classes themselves; that the

struggle for the emancipation of the working classes means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule;...

"That all efforts aiming at the great end hitherto failed from the want of solidarity between the manifold divisions of labor in each country, and from the absence of a fraternal bond of union between the working classes of different countries;"

At the Congress of the IWA in Geneva in September 1866, Marx sent a very detailed report in which he stressed that the main task of the International should be to unify and concentrate the still dispersed efforts of the working class in the struggle for its demands in various countries in various countries, and he emphasized that, in addition to the workers understanding the importance of fraternity in the struggle, they should act as fighters in a single revolutionary army.

In short, the workers have numbers in their favor, since they are the great majority of society, but, in order to defeat the bourgeoisie, deep cohesion, solidarity and international organization are needed.

We believe that these small extracts from the efforts of Marx and Engels to create and develop the International are sufficient to highlight the importance which the founders of scientific socialism attached to a unified and organized action of the world communist movement.

Lenin and the Third International

V.I. Lenin was the main leader of the socialist revolution of October 1917 in Russia and the architect of the building of Soviet society, but his work to build the Communist International and develop the world revolution was no less.

Lenin was the first to denounce the betrayal of the working class and the bankruptcy of the Second International, when he exposed that the main social democratic parties that led the International supported the war and the bourgeoisie of their countries. He worked tirelessly for truly communist parties to unite against social-chauvinism and develop revolutionary tactics.

After several meetings and correspondence with left-wing socialists from various countries, Lenin managed to form a group of revolutionary Marxists, the Zimmerwald Left, during the first international socialist conference, which took place from August 23 to 26, 1915, in Zimmerwald, Switzerland. Lenin saw this small meeting of the left as the first step for the workers' movement to take a stand against the imperialist war and to definitively break with the opportunism of the Second International.

The second international socialist conference took place in April 1916, in Kienthal, Switzerland; the Zimmerwald left showed great unity in defending Lenin's theses, criticizing the International Socialist Bureau¹ and demanding the resignation of all parties that had ministers in bourgeois governments that promoted the imperialist war.

With the seizure of power in Russia and the proof that the Bolsheviks' positions on the war were correct, the conditions were created for burying the Second International and building a new International. Thus, even in the face of foreign military intervention, starvation, and saboteurs of the revolution, in January, 1919, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party decided to convene an international conference in Moscow on the future of the communist movement. The Moscow Conference concluded with the immediate convening of an international congress.

With Lenin presiding and the participation of 52 delegates from communist parties and organizations from 30 countries, the First Congress of the new and revolutionary International took place in Moscow from March 2 to 6, 1919. After an in-depth debate on the fundamental issue on the agenda of the Congress, a document on bourgeois democracy and the dictatorship of the proletariat was adopted, the constitution of the Third Communist International was approved, and an executive committee was elected.

A year later, from July 19 to August 7, 1920, in Petrograd, Russia, the Second Congress of the Communist International was held with the presence of more than 200 delegates from 37 countries. The Second Congress adopted documents on national and

¹ The International Socialist Bureau was the executive organ of the Second International, created by decision of the Congress of 1900.

colonial questions, on the agrarian question, on the fundamental tasks of the Communist International, laid down the conditions for the admission of the Communist International and advanced in the definition of the principles of organization and program.

The Third Congress of the Communist International took place from June 22 to July 12, 1921, in Moscow and elected Lenin as honorary president. The theses adopted at the Third Congress "The International Situation and Our Tasks", "On Tactics", "Structure, Methods and Action of the Communist Parties" are studied to this day by Marxist-Leninist parties all over the world.

On November 5, 1922, in Petrograd, 408 delegates from 58 communist parties and organizations opened the Fourth Congress of the Communist International. On that occasion, Lenin delivered his speech " Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution". The remaining sessions were held from November 9 to December 5, in Moscow, and resolutions were adopted on the tactics of the International, the tasks of the communists in the trade union movement and the organization of the Communist Youth International.

Analyzing Lenin's enormous contribution to the building of the Third International, J. Stalin wrote: "Lenin never regarded the Republic of Soviets as an end in itself. He always looked on it as an essential link for strengthening the revolutionary movement in the countries of the West and the East, an essential link for facilitating the victory of the working people of the whole world over capitalism. Lenin knew that this was the only right conception, both from the international standpoint and from the standpoint of preserving the Republic of Soviets itself. Lenin knew that this alone could fire the hearts of the working people of the whole world with determination to fight the decisive battles for their emancipation. That is why, on the very morrow of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, he, the greatest of the geniuses who have led the proletariat, laid the foundations of the workers' International. That is why he never tired of extending and strengthening the union of the working people of the whole world—the Communist International." (Joseph Stalin. "On the death of Lenin", *Speech at the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets: January 26, 1924*)

Under the leadership of Joseph Stalin, the following congresses of the Third International were held in Moscow: The Fifth

Congress, between June and July 1924; the Sixth Congress, between July 1 and September 1, 1928. In August 1935, under the chairmanship of Georgi Dimitrov, the Seventh Congress of the Third International was held. This was the historic congress that approved Dimitrov's important report, *The Struggle for the Unity of the Working Class Against Fascism*, in which he denounced the fascist offensive of the bourgeoisie to hold back the ever-deepening crisis of the capitalist system and stated that "fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital" and called on the communist parties to, "without renouncing their principles and program, promote the policy of the Popular Front to confront and defeat this offensive of the bourgeoisie" (translated from the Spanish).

For more than three decades, the Third International played a pivotal role in deepening the political and ideological unity of the international communist movement and spared no effort to promote world revolution.

As we see, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin devoted much of their energy to unmasking the anarchist, petty-bourgeois and opportunist currents in the workers' movement, overcoming the ideological confusion in the communist movement, formulating a revolutionary program and building an international organization... of the workers with the aim of building a new classless society without private ownership of the means of production.

Proletarian Internationalism and the Revolution

It is, therefore, a great mistake to think that for the victory of the revolution in one country it is enough to defeat the bourgeoisie and its government. In fact, as Stalin stated, capitalism has long been a global system of oppression and exploitation of workers and peoples, and national economies are links in a single chain, called the world economy. Moreover, the imperialist countries always act in concert with the local bourgeoisies to maintain the rule of capitalist monopolies and finance capital over nations, to create obstacles to the revolutionary movement and even to destabilize progressive governments. In reality, the national struggle is deeply intertwined with the struggle for the world revolution and the Marxist-Leninist parties, if they want to achieve

victory, must deepen their unity and collaboration in carrying out revolutionary tasks.

In fact, social-chauvinism², by completely abandoning the principle of proletarian internationalism and becoming a reactionary current in the communist movement, claimed exactly the defense of national interests in order to support the imperialist war and plunder of the bourgeoisie. In fact, as Stalin warned, one of the dangers of the degeneration of a communist party is precisely "lack of confidence in the world proletarian revolution; lack of confidence in its victory; a skeptical attitude towards the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries; failure to understand that without the support of the revolutionary movement in other countries our country would not be able to hold out against world imperialism; failure to understand that the victory of socialism in one country alone cannot be final because it has no guarantee against intervention until the revolution is victorious in at least a number of countries; failure to understand the elementary demand of internationalism, by virtue of which the victory of socialism in one country is not an end in itself, but a means of developing and supporting the revolution in other countries." (Stalin, *Questions and Answers*, June 9, 1925).

Developing and promoting proletarian internationalism is, therefore, a permanent task of a communist party, whether large and strong, or small and without resources. After all, every blow dealt to the world bourgeoisie by the working class weakens the class of exploiters and strengthens the working class and the struggle for socialism. In short, a true Marxist-Leninist, in addition to dedicating himself diligently to the tasks of the revolution in his country, must commit himself in the same way to the world revolution and support the revolutionary struggle in any part of the world in various ways. It means, as Comrade Enver Hoxha rightly

² "Social-chauvinism is an opportunism which has matured to such a degree, grown so strong and brazen during the long period of comparatively 'peaceful' capitalism, so definite in its political ideology, and so closely associated with the bourgeoisie and the governments, that the existence of such a trend within the Social-Democratic workers' parties cannot be tolerated." (V. I. Lenin. "The Collapse of the Second International." *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, June 1915)

emphasized: "If they [the Marxist-Leninist parties] act in unity and all strike at the forces of reaction together, if they expose all the intrigues which capitalism and modern revisionism concoct in various ways in order to put down the revolution and quell the class struggle, their triumph is assured. " (Enver Hoxha. Imperialism and the Revolution. 1978)

The Importance of the ICMLPO for the World Revolution

It was with this understanding that the Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations, in August 1994, in Quito, capital of Ecuador, decided to convene a meeting with the aim of combating the attacks of the world bourgeoisie on communism and organizing the most combative and class-conscious sector of the working class. Fifteen Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations³ were present and, after discussing the crisis of capitalism, the struggle against revisionism and the norms of operation, decided to found the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO) and the journal Unity and Struggle.

In our view, the decision to build the ICMLPO and join forces to denounce revisionism and deepen the political and ideological unity of the Marxist-Leninists had the same significance, for our time, as the creation of the International Working Men's Association and the Third International.

Of course there are differences, but for us the most important thing is to highlight what these events have in common. In fact, at all these times, capitalism was in a deep economic crisis, the bourgeoisie was carrying out a violent exploitation of the working masses, misery and poverty were growing in all countries and the contradictions between the main imperialist countries were

³ Communist Party of Germany (KPD), Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist), Communist Party of Chile (Proletarian Action), Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador (PCMLE), Communist Organization of Spain "October", Communist Party of the Workers of France (PCOF), Organization for the Construction of the Proletarian Party of Italy, Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist) -PCMML, Communist Party of Labor of the Dominican Republic (PCT), Revolutionary Communist Party of Turkey (TDKP), Revolutionary Communist Party of Burkina Faso, Revolutionary Communist Party of Ireland.

deepening with the intensification of the dispute over markets and sources of raw materials and the increase of imperialist wars. In all these epochs, capitalism proved incapable of solving the serious problems of humanity, and theoreticians and parties that called themselves Marxists, nevertheless denied its revolutionary character, promoted class conciliation and sowed pessimism and fear among the working masses.

In his article “The Collapse of the Second International,” Lenin analyzed the period that preceded the creation of the Third International:

"The collapse of the Second International has been most strikingly expressed in the flagrant betrayal of their convictions and of the solemn Stuttgart and Basle resolutions by the majority of the official Social-Democratic parties of Europe. This collapse, however, which signifies the complete victory of opportunism, the transformation of the Social-Democratic parties into national liberal-labor parties, is merely the result of the entire historical epoch of the Second International—the close of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth."

And:

"The proletarian masses—probably about nine-tenths of whose former leaders have gone over to the bourgeoisie—have found themselves disunited and helpless amid a spate of chauvinism and under the pressure of martial law and the war censorship." (V.I. Lenin, *op. cit.*)

Let us now see what the Communist Proclamation to the workers and peoples, approved in 1994 by the parties that founded the ICMLPO, says:

"In recent decades, the communist and workers' movement has been greatly shaken. The process of capitalist restoration that became widespread after the 20th Congress of the CPSU and culminated in the events in Eastern Europe, the former USSR and the betrayal of Albania, etc., are part of the action of imperialism, the reactionary, revisionist and pro-capitalist forces. Historical limitations, inexperience, lack of development of theory,

underestimation of the contradictions inherent in capitalist society, bureaucratization and isolation of the communist party from the masses, etc. did not allow the communists, the working class and the people to defend their conquests and prevent capitalist restoration."

And:

"Revisionism constitutes a danger for the revolutionary process, for the communist party and for the building of socialism. It is an essential task to combat revisionism of all kinds and in all areas. It is a danger against which the struggle cannot be downgraded or underestimated."
(ICMLPO. Communist Proclamation. 1994.)

In 2007, the ICMLPO adopted the document *The International Situation and Our Tasks. "The New World Order", capitalism and Imperialism*, which assesses the present-day character of capitalist imperialism, reaffirms the revolutionary character of the working class, raises the need to build the International, and concludes:

"The defeat suffered by the working class and socialism meant a setback of half a century: the disintegration



of the Soviet Union, the damage caused not only by attacks on the working class, but for various reasons. We see how defeat, setbacks and disintegration are used to sow the feeling that "struggle is useless", that "we are fighting for nothing", and thus propagate and legitimize pessimism, negative feelings....

"For the working class, defeat is not an inevitable fate. History moves forward with victories, but also with defeats of the revolutionary class. Whatever the degree of violence, whatever its duration, the defeat and retreat of the workers are part of this picture. What is important is that the workers learn the relevant lessons, not only from their victories, but also from their defeats. Despite the setbacks suffered, history and humanity are moving forward and the working class is maintaining its role as the motive force of this advance."

The role of the parties that make up the ICMLPO

In these precisely 29 years of its existence, the ICMLPO and its coordinating committee, despite numerous obstacles and difficulties, have effectively fulfilled their role. Throughout these years, the Conference has significantly expanded the number of parties and organizations in its plenary sessions and spared no effort to defend the revolution, socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat and to strengthen the ICMLPO as a Marxist-Leninist alternative in the midst of so many difficulties and divisions existing in the communist movement.

It has been three decades of hard work and important victories. Political and ideological confusion, although it still exists, does not prevail at the Conference, for the red blood of Marxism-Leninism and the firm struggle against contemporary revisionism, the bourgeoisie and imperialism runs in its veins. There is not a single continent without the presence of the ICMLPO and its positions are now propagated in various languages through resolutions, manifestos and the journal *Unity and Struggle*.

Recognizing the immense revolutionary role of the youth, the ICMLPO organized and held dozens of Youth Camps, the International Meetings of Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Youth, contributing decisively to thousands of young people having a Marxist and revolutionary understanding of the world and deepening

their commitment to the revolution on a world scale, as well as producing countless texts on the work of communists in their youth.

The advance of the women's struggle in recent years has found support and an instrument in the ICMLPO to combat male chauvinism and patriarchy in capitalist society. Persistently, the ICMLPO called on the parties to form delegations and participate effectively in the International Women's Conferences and organized three Meetings of Latin American and Caribbean Women's, building in practice a revolutionary alternative for the women's movement.

In order to develop a class and revolutionary consciousness in the workers' movement, the ICMLPO prepared various manifestos on May 1 and the document *The Daily Work of the Party of the Working Class Among the Masses*, organized meetings of trade union leaders in Europe and the Trade Union Meetings of Latin America and the Caribbean (ELACS), encouraged class solidarity among workers and guided the work of the ICMLPO organizations in the working class.

In these three decades, many organizations and parties found in the ICMLPO a precise and correct orientation with respect to the international political situation and the revolutionary tasks. Our own party, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) of Brazil, learned a lot in the plenary sessions of the ICMLPO, in bilateral meetings with the parties and, mainly, from the revolutionary practice and action of our brother comrades in their countries. Undoubtedly, the RCP is still far from the objective of winning over the majority of the working class and the exploited in Brazil; we have a long way to go, but we do not hesitate to state that much of our political and ideological commitment, the development and growth of our party in the last 20 years, is due to our adherence to the ICMLPO in 2000. For all this, we thank all the parties and comrades who, in July 1994, founded the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations. (ICMLPO) and that, for almost 30 years, they have remained faithful to the cause of the proletarian revolution and the principle of proletarian internationalism.

Criticism and self-criticism

Finally, we would like to pose a question: considering the role of the ICMLPO, have we, the parties and organizations that make it up, devoted enough energy and work to developing the ICMLPO?

We don't think so. We are too involved with national tasks and rarely discuss the decisions taken by the ICMLPO in our parties. A simple question is enough to conclude how incorrect this behavior is: what would happen to the international communist movement, to our parties, if in July 1994 the comrades who were in Quito, in the name of important national tasks of the revolution, stayed in their own countries? There is no doubt that the feeling that "the struggle was useless" and the pessimism about the world revolution would have caused far greater damage.

If we consider that the attitude of the comrades of the parties that founded the ICMLPO was the most correct, the most consistent with the principles of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism and the correct way to combat contemporary revisionism, we should reflect on whether, at the present time, our commitment to the plenary sessions and meetings promoted by the ICMLPO are in line with the need to build a powerful Marxist-Leninist movement in the world. There are various facts that show that our commitment to the ICMLPO is still weak. One example is the work with the journal *Unity and Struggle*.

Of course, our parties are facing many material difficulties, as this is the situation of the working class and we are parties and organizations of the working class. But, if we intend to strike deeply at the world bourgeoisie, which rules and controls immense and powerful means of communication, such as television, radio, cinema, Internet, etc., we cannot underestimate the work of agitation and propaganda and the strengthening of a Marxist-Leninist organization in the world.

The journal *Unity and Struggle* aims to spread Marxism-Leninism among communists, to train our fighters and fight for the political and ideological independence of the working class. Indeed, the journal is an excellent means to propagate the ICMLPO and its ideas in the international communist movement, upholding Marxism-Leninism as the future and the only guarantee of peace and happiness for humanity. But in order for the journal to fulfill this

goal, our parties need to devote more time to writing the articles that they send to the journal; each organization has to translate the articles and ensure the printing of the journal so that it is truly studied by the revolutionaries in all countries. Our experience shows that few activists read the journal in PDF format or online.

We also consider that in the national meetings of our parties it is necessary to discuss more deeply the meaning of the founding of the ICMLPO, of its existence for three decades, as living proof that the glorious army of the revolution is invincible, and to advance in the discussion of our next step in relation to the building of the Conference.

Furthermore, Marxism-Leninism is not and never has been a nationalist ideology; its goal is the destruction of world capitalism, the end of class society throughout the planet and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat as an indispensable step to bring humanity to communism.

In short, every party and organization of the Conference needs to participate more actively in promoting the world revolution; after all, our homeland will be closer to the revolution the weaker capitalist imperialism is in the world.

Central Committee
Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) Brazil
September 2023

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Declaration:**The Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta
(PCRV) Calls on the Working Class and the
People to Build a Broad People's Movement for
Revolutionary Change**

Our country, Upper Volta, known as Burkina Faso, is going through one of the most difficult periods in its history with the reactionary civil war that began in the form of attacks at least ten years ago and is spreading throughout the national territory. This reactionary civil war has catastrophic consequences for the working class and people and challenges all classes and social strata.

This situation is taking place in a context characterized at the international and subregional levels, in particular by:

- The deepening of the general crisis of the capitalist-imperialist system and the bankruptcy of the neo-colonial states, in particular those of the Sahel-Saharan strip that are facing an unprecedented security crisis due to the development of terrorism, the military occupation of these countries by armed terrorist groups, groups and foreign armed forces;
- The expansion of the armed terrorist groups into coastal countries (Togo, Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast);
- The exacerbation of the struggle between the different imperialist powers and the monopolies linked to them in Africa, one of the principal scenarios of confrontation in the world today. French imperialism, losing ground in its backyard and in a desperate situation, is looking with disapproval at the incursion of other imperialists, in particular Russians, Chinese, Turks, etc., into what it considers its private preserve. This bad stance of French imperialism is one of the reflections of the crisis of neo-colonialism that has been skillfully set in motion, and to which the people want to put an end;

- The demonstrations and struggles of the youth and peoples of the subregion that have developed in recent years for security, justice and against impunity. These struggles, which are increasingly anti-imperialist and anti-reactionary in character, express the struggle of the peoples of the subregion for genuine national independence, freedom, democracy and economic and social progress.

Our party, relying on the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and the Marxist-Leninist political line and its revolutionary program to enlighten the working class, made a profound analysis of the war knowing that "war is the continuation of politics by other means," that is, violence.

In its pamphlet entitled "The ongoing civil war in Upper Volta, known as Burkina Faso", our Party, after analyzing the actors and their aims, the causes and consequences of this reactionary civil war, put forward its alternative, which is to transform this counter-revolutionary war into a revolutionary war for national independence, through the national democratic and popular revolution and the building of a modern democratic republic.

The coups d'état of the Patriotic Movement for Safeguard and Restoration (MPSR 1 and 2) reflect the failure of the bourgeoisie and of the neocolonial army to stop this war, but also the contradictions of the neocolonial army formed by political-military groups for the depredation of wealth in association with their allies of the political-bureaucratic bourgeoisie, the comprador bourgeoisie and certain groups of the upper stratum of the petty bourgeoisie. Thus:

- The crisis within the Defense and Security Forces remains more acute than ever and the coup centers, under the instigation of the imperialist powers and the different factions of the reactionary bourgeoisie, according to their interests, are waiting for the right moment to take action. Meanwhile, armed terrorist groups are advancing in the country and blocking access to entire cities for weeks or even months. The humanitarian crisis is on the rise, with at least 2 million people who were reported internally displaced across the country in 2022;

- The high cost of living, the growing impoverishment, the questioning of democratic freedoms are the daily fate of the popular masses.

All this reflects the failure of the entire bourgeoisie and imperialism, which led to the progressive stagnation of war and chaos.

That is why our Party believes that the multiple transitions (coup d'état of January 24, 2022, coup d'état of September 30, 2022) cannot in any way solve the fundamental problems of the working class, the people and the popular youth.

The PCRV also invites the working class, the people and the popular youth to:

- reject the reactionary and counter-revolutionary plans of the powers and their lackeys;
- reject the coup-mongering, reformist and electoral illusions, and the illusions that we can rely on some imperialist powers to fight others;
- mobilize to fight armed terrorist groups and their local proxies;
- develop popular solidarity.

The PCRV invites the working class, the people, the popular youth, the democrats and the revolutionaries, during this transitional period, to continue to mobilize, to work for the establishment of a broad Popular Unity Movement for Revolutionary Change (MUPCR) around the following points:

1. Against the reactionary civil war, for the real independence of the country and the correct resolution of the national question;
2. For political freedom, individual and collective freedoms and against the fascistization of the power of the MPSR;
3. Against the high cost of living, impunity and corruption;
4. Against the humanitarian catastrophe;
5. Against the plundering of rural and urban lands and resources and for a just solution to the problem of mining.

Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta
July 2023

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF M-L PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS



Danish Imperialism and the Imperialist Alliances EU and NATO - in the Context of the Rivalry of the Imperialist Powers and the Imperialist Wars

This article is part of the analysis that the Central Committee of our party, APK, has put forward for discussion in our party and among its sympathizers and class-conscious activists, prior to our 10th Congress next year, to deepen our work and tactics in the class struggle in a complex situation. The sections presented here cover the current development of the imperialist alliances EU and NATO and Danish imperialism in the context of the sharpening of the imperialist contradictions and the imperialist wars, especially in Ukraine.

Denmark is a small imperialist power, with some big global monopolies that seek to maximize profits from exploiting the Danish and global working class. The Danish state actively participates in several imperialist wars and military actions to secure its monopolies and capital a piece of the pie of exploitation. At the same time, Denmark is subject to and interwoven with both the imperialist European Union and US imperialism. In imperialist countries like Denmark, the revolution of the working class is a revolution against imperialism's capitalist monopolies, their domination and state power, and against the entire ruling class for the working class to take power.

The imperialist alliances EU and NATO – in the context of the sharpening of imperialist contradictions

In January 2023, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen signed the third Joint Declaration on EU-NATO Cooperation to further strengthen and expand the strategic partnership between NATO and the EU. The third Joint Declaration builds on the unprecedented progress in cooperation between the two organizations since the previous declarations were signed in 2016 and 2018.

Already in 2002, the NATO-EU Declaration on a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) reaffirmed the EU's assured access to NATO's planning capabilities for the EU's own military operations. In 2003, the so-called "Berlin Plus" arrangements set the basis for NATO to support EU-led operations in which NATO as a whole is not engaged. And at the 2010 Lisbon Summit, NATO underlined its determination to improve the NATO-EU strategic partnership, as reflected also in the 2010 Strategic Concept.

The increased confrontation and rivalry between the imperialist powers leads to the strengthening and expansion of regional alliances and blocs such as the EU and NATO. However, this does not remove the existing contradictions between the imperialist and capitalist countries within these alliances.

US imperialism and NATO have increased their grip on Europe and the EU, including violently shutting off the Russian North Stream 2 gas pipeline to the EU and forcing greater dependence on US energy. The US, through NATO and its close co-operation with the EU Military Union, is building a military infrastructure from the Arctic to the Black Sea with US and NATO military bases. NATO is working on continued expansion with new member states in Europe up to Russia's borders, with Finland and Sweden being the latest examples. At the same time, the EU is also working to expand with new member states to secure its economic and military influence throughout the region. And Ukraine is a future target for both.

At the same time the EU is making its imperialist ambitions, strategy, and power of action increasingly clear through its Common Security and Defense Policy – the "strategic compass". The EU must strengthen its strategic independence and ability to cooperate militarily with other powers to protect the interests of the EU monopolies.

The EU's military union has been under construction for years, and with PESCO [Permanent Structured Cooperation] and the war in Ukraine, the EU's military union is now openly spoken of in the public debate. With the EU's "Strategic Compass", the supranational general staff and a "security council" where only the largest EU countries have veto power, are to be in place by 2025. The war in Ukraine is used as a pretext for speeding up the extreme militarization and rearmament of Europe. It was similarly used to change the Danish exemption from EU military co-operation with

a referendum rushed through in a very short time in 2022, which now has made Denmark a full-fledged part of the EU's military union.

The Defense Budgets of the EU countries are now being doubled and even tripled to finance both the demands of NATO and those of the EU, that as an imperialist power wants to be able to defend its own interests in what they call a framework of "strategic autonomy". This means golden times for the war and arms industry. Direct economic support from the EU to the arms industry is also increasing. And increased arms exports are linked to national and EU security, as the EU's internal demand alone cannot ensure that war production keeps pace with the latest technological developments.

The European monopolies need an even stronger supranational state power and apparatus that can secure them in competition with the US, China and Russia and give them more direct access to EU budget funds. Direct efforts are now being made – also with the support of the Danish government – for Treaty changes to introduce qualified majority voting in foreign and defense policy, as well as key economic areas such as debt and taxes. In a mixture of co-operation and rivalry, German and French imperialism seek to profit from this situation and dominate the EU and the smaller imperialist and capitalist states.

The EU's share of the global economy has almost halved in recent decades to 16 per cent. In addition to the general crisis of capitalism, the EU has fallen behind in the race in areas such as technological development, privatization of the public sector and the transformation of its energy and infrastructure. The entire EU's so-called "green transition" is part of developing and ensuring the competitiveness of EU monopolies globally. The strategy of the European monopolies is to continue to push the price of labor in the EU's internal market below the price of labor in the US. Not only is the "old" working class in EU countries experiencing this constant pressure on working and living conditions. Millions of cheap migrant laborers are being heavily exploited and taken advantage of.

While we see an economically weakened EU, characterized by various crises, inflation, stagnation and high unemployment, the big European monopolies have reaped super-profits. The monopolies have dictated a harsh neoliberal policy of reform and

austerity – which has been met by an emerging upsurge in struggles of the working class and youth at different levels in EU countries and with a consciousness of its own class strength.

NATO

NATO is an alliance for war established to secure US hegemony in Europe and to suppress any labor movement that could threaten the ruling class.

NATO is increasing its military budgets, its military capacity, and its war participation in the world. NATO is both a military and political alliance, a tool of the imperialist economic interests and of the war industry of the West/USA, and an instrument of power to secure conditions for the liberal and market-economy imperialist system. NATO has created a platform for a permanent alliance with an institutionalized power apparatus against rival powers – and works for international "law and order" – based on the system of power, control, and hegemony by US imperialism.

NATO's threat assessment (in the Strategic Concept 2022) towards Russia and China is first and foremost an expression of the imperialist rivalry and a struggle for the imperialist international world order of the power elites. The economic and political competition is wrapped in an ideological veil of struggle between the "free" (Western) world and "authoritarian" regimes labelled as systemic rivals. NATO's ideological campaign takes place as a cover for the exercise of power.

NATO has launched an ideological offensive – constantly repeated in the media – with warnings that we are living in a pre-war era. A new generation of young people is about to be indoctrinated and enrolled as future cannon-fodder and nationalism to replace the internationalism of the working class. An atmosphere of fear, uncertainty, and suspicion towards opponents of the war policy is being created. In the face of this, the development of police states and fascisation is strengthened.

NATO is trying to play a greater political role – regionally and internationally – In various multilateral organizations and in the EU. NATO countries are increasingly being required to coordinate their foreign policy and become more globally orientated, as we have seen in the Ukraine war, despite the conflicting interests of European monopoly groups and countries. As a supranational body, NATO demands the role of the forum for important

strategic and political issues. Even issues such as a country's choice of technical solutions and trading partners are defined as a security policy issue that poses a common threat if supplies do not come from "friends" and NATO allies.

The positions of Danish imperialism

Denmark is an imperialist country, closely linked to US imperialism economically and militarily through the US economic world order, investments, joint industrial projects, trade and NATO and bilateral agreements. The Danish governments often play the role of the US's "little bulldog", a puppet in international matters.

Denmark is also part of the EU of monopolies and subject to the imperialist Union economically, politically, and now also as part of the EU's military.

The Danish oligarchy with some large global monopolies, such as Maersk, NOVO and Vestas, dictate the policies of successive governments to their own advantage, with increased exploitation and super-profits that have reached new records in recent years. Through the state power, major new reforms are currently being implemented to further increase labor exploitation and ease the conditions for capital and big business.

Danish monopoly capital is increasingly centralized into fewer monopoly groups and fewer families. They have their own banks and private equity funds, such as Maersk and Danske Bank, which, through acquisitions of other companies, unilaterally subordinate Danish production and business to their interests, while at the same time exporting capital for increased investment in subsidiaries and production in other countries.

Also, Danish foreign policy is dictated by the interests of the monopoly groups. The largest Danish trade partners are the EU (Germany and Sweden being the largest), the USA and, as the 4th largest in terms of imports/exports, China. Also, the current government's decisions, laws, financial international "support", diplomacy and military ensure the Danish monopolies the best possible protection in the increased rivalry for markets, raw materials, technology and energy. This was shown recently when the Danish Foreign minister and the CEOs of the biggest monopolies visited China together.

Danish imperialism continues to exploit its former colonies Greenland and the Faroe Islands economically and geopolitically,

contrary to the wishes and interests of the people. Not the least, in Greenland there is growing opposition and resistance toward this. Greenland and the Faroe Islands are of strategic importance – militarily and in terms of raw materials for the USA, NATO and the EU, and Danish imperialism is trying to utilize this to its own advantage at the expense of the Faroese and Greenlandic people.

The situation of sharpening contradictions between the imperialists means that the US is demanding greater and greater involvement from Danish imperialism; not only through NATO, but also through bilateral and often secret agreements. Through these, Danish governments have allowed US military bases to be established in Denmark, in addition to NATO bases.

In military terms, the Danish Air Force and not least the upcoming F-35 fighter jets and Danish military airports are subject to the US and NATO. Danish harbors are reserved as military transit and supply ports for NATO. Denmark is earmarked as a staging area for armed forces and equipment from the US, NATO and the EU in a war situation. Denmark is a spy center for digital and satellite communications for the US National Security Agency (NSA) through a classified agreement.

Danish imperialism, its state power and government has placed Denmark in an extremely dangerous situation as a pawn in the imperialist rivalry and growing danger of war, making Denmark a bridgehead in the Arctic, North Sea, Baltic Sea and the Nordic region, in NATO's western flank.

Under the guise of the war in Ukraine, there is currently a growth of the military apparatus, increased military budgets, spread of cold war fear and militaristic idealization and manipulation of the youth. While health care, education and what is left of the welfare system are being bled dry, the new 10-year military and war budget has increased by DKK [Danish Krone, with 1 DKK = \$0.14] 143 billion with the Defense Agreement (in comparison, DKK 3 billion has been allocated for wage increases in the public sector). Denmark must meet NATO's 2 per cent requirement as early as 2025, paid for by Danish workers and taxpayers.

The Danish government has sent billions of kroner, military equipment, weapons, combat aircraft, training of soldiers to the Zelenski regime in Ukraine and has been part of keeping the war going. The military and economic “aid” to Ukraine is given with conditions and the utilization of benefits. Danish monopoly

capital is at the forefront, including when it comes to the reconstruction plan for the war-torn country. The state has decided to finance a safety net for companies' investments in Ukraine through the Danish Export and Investment Fund (EIFO). This applies to A.P. Moller-Mærsk, Aarsleff, Cowi, Danfoss, DFDS, Forsyning Danmark, Grundfos, Velux, and Vestas. Monopoly capital sees war-torn Ukraine as "the world's largest construction site", where Denmark is part of the EU's "reconstruction plan" to ensure future exploitation and plunder.

The content of the government's new foreign and security policy strategy 2023 follows the recommendations put forward by the Confederation of Danish Industry. The competitiveness of Danish capital and business must be strengthened globally – both economically and militarily.

In the intensified inter-imperialist rivalry between the imperialist powers, especially the US and China, Denmark must, on the one hand, politically follow and support the US/NATO and EU strategy, which identifies China and Russia as structural rivals and enemies. On the other hand, the interests and investments of Danish monopolies in Russia and China must be protected. In light of the increasing rivalry, the foreign and security policy strategy follows the EU's line of maintaining trade with China while competing and relocating investments, exploitation of labor and production and plundering of raw materials to Africa, Asia – not least India, Latin America and the USA.

Maersk has built up a large investment network in Africa, including power plants, harbors for its container ships, railways, grain storage facilities and compressed waste gas. With the aim of securing a monopoly on part of West Africa's energy system and infrastructure, Maersk Holding has raised money from PKA [Danish pension fund management], Pension Danmark and Doctors Pensions Fund through a joint fund (Africa Infrastructure Fund). Companies such as Arla, Vestas, Kamstrup and Grundfos also invest on the African continent.

The EU is investing in building infrastructure – roads, railways, energy supply, fiber cables, 5G mobile networks and climate projects etc. in Africa under the name Global Gateway strategy in competition with China's "Belt and Road". With earmarked investments of DKK 1,100 billion, both from public coffers and

private investors, the EU – and Denmark – will try to outcompete China with "better deals" than China's, with several countries.

Both the EU and Denmark are protecting their monopolies' investments in Africa with military missions and wars at the expense of the African countries and peoples. Denmark has actively participated in this in the Sahel and has ensured military protection for navigation in the Gulf of Guinea at the request of Maersk. The Danish Parliament has allocated millions to train soldiers in Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Ivory Coast. Nigeria is Africa's largest oil producer and one of the countries in Africa that is emphasized as a Danish area of interest.

It is not without reason that the Pacific region is a particular focus of the new Danish foreign and security policy. The rivalry between the US and China makes it a hub. Today, about half of the containers travelling the world's oceans cross the Taiwan Strait, making Danish shipping companies, not the least Maersk, and their security for profit a crucial issue. Danish foreign policy is therefore balancing on a knife's edge in the conflict between the US and China – and like French imperialism, it does not want to be involved in an escalated and possible armed conflict around Taiwan.

The so-called green capitalism – the "green transition" – the special "green and democratic" version of imperialism, crudely exploits popular agendas as a front for general imperialist profit. This is one of the areas Danish imperialism is focusing on as a growth area. This applies not the least to the wind industry's "BioSolutions" area, where Danish BioSolutions companies provide solutions mainly in the food, ingredients, agriculture, energy, and industrial sectors.

Denmark has entered into "Green Strategic Partnerships" with a number of countries: India, South Korea, Indonesia and South Africa. Also, the US is seen as a large market for "green solutions".

Brief conclusion

It is the aim of our party that these political theses will help us in developing our work among the working class and youth and in the mass movements toward sharper and more concrete propaganda and class demands in the struggle against our own imperialist ruling class, against all imperialisms and denouncing the

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propaganda of China, Russia, EU as peaceful or less aggressive imperialist powers, and to make it clearer that the struggle against imperialism, against imperialist wars, against the EU and NATO is a struggle against capitalism – a fight for revolution.

September 23, 2023

The Soviet Model, Nationalities and Ukraine (Dedicated to the young generations of communists)

I. History as a Weapon

The ongoing imperialist war in Ukraine is an extraordinary event that activated the imperialist propaganda machine of the opposing sides to justify their respective projects of domination. As always happens in such a scenario, the manipulation of history, if not its complete falsification, has been one of the arsenals that feed the aforementioned imperialist propaganda machine.

In this sense, Western academies and their press monopolies have tried to take advantage of the current military conflict by evoking the events that led to the disintegration of the USSR, highlighting that at that time Ukraine supposedly achieved its freedom and independence, because it had been under Moscow's control since it was subjugated and dominated by the Soviet government and Stalin.

The current war scenario and its motivation in the contradictions and interests of Russia, Europe and the United States as imperialist powers, constitute an opportunity for Marxist-Leninist revolutionaries and honest academics to claim the guiding role of history. In this regard, it is appropriate to highlight the ideas raised theoretically by Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin on the national question, the rights of nationalities, self-determination and socialism, which were made into state policy.

In assessing the stamp on history of revolutions in general and of the Bolshevik revolution in particular, Josep Fontana, a contemporary classic of critical historiography, states that "The history of humanity is there. It is full of periods of struggle for freedom and equality, of revolts against oppressors and of attempts to build more just societies, crushed by the defenders of the established order, who have always maintained, and continue to do so today, that subjection and inequality are necessary to ensure collective prosperity, or even that they are part of the divine plan. One such

attempt at social transformation, which began in Russia in 1917, has marked the course of the hundred years since then."¹

Another renowned historian of the 20th century, who until the end of his days defended the Marxist paradigm as a tool for historical analysis, considering the importance of the event that we commemorate in relation to the context created by the collapse of so-called "real socialism", observed that: "There is no way in which the Soviet era can be written out of Russian or world history, as though it had not been... The history of the Short Twentieth Century cannot be understood without the Russian revolution and its direct and indirect effects."²

The experience of the Soviet Union as a democratic confederation of republics, until it was aborted by the betrayal of the revisionist clique headed by Nikita Khrushchev in 1953, contained in itself one of the incontrovertible successes of socialism in power. It was a great mosaic of a country, whose republics were made up of nations with diverse cultures marked by the imprint of various empires from the Feudal Era to the beginning of the 20th century.

The betrayal by the revisionist clique that succeeded Stalin in Soviet power made possible the capture of the revolutionary state from within by the enemy and restored capitalism in the former USSR. They tried to justify this in the infamous "Secret Speech" to the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956, where the coup de grâce was given to the October revolution. But, as honest intellectuals have pointed out and the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary parties have affirmed, above this betrayal shine the successes of the great epic of the Soviet workers, nations and peoples.

For these reasons, in the context of today's world, it will always be relevant to defend, argue for and disseminate the policy of the Soviet Power regarding nationalities as one of its legacies, whose relevance is reaffirmed in today's world in the face of the long series of inter-ethnic and national conflicts within dozens of countries and regions on the globe.

¹ J. Fontana, 2017, p. 11.

² Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1994, pp. 83-84.

II. The Historical Relationship Between Russia and Ukraine Prior to the USSR: A Brief Synopsis

Ukraine and Russia have a common origin dating back to the 11th century, when Kiev was the center of the first Slavic state created by Scandinavians, called Rus. Meanwhile, the Crimea was linked to the Greeks and Tatars, and was dominated by the Russian and Ottoman empires. From the 17th century on, large areas of present-day Ukraine were part of the Russian Empire until its overthrow by the Bolshevik Revolution. The Russian Empire developed a program of Russification in order to weaken the national identity of the Ukrainian people, whose language was eliminated from schools.

The emergence of the Ukrainian state as such took place in the heat of the events unleashed by the Bolshevik revolution. On November 20, 1917, the Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed, and in 1921 it decided to become part of the USSR as the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic.

However, as a result of the wars and pacts between colonial empires, in which the Austro-Hungarian empire played an important part, former territories inhabited by the Ukrainian people (the so-called western Ukraine) ended up in the sphere of Poland until the end of the Second World War when the Red Army, the resistance and the anti-fascist front of the peoples in Europe wrote one of the most glorious pages in the outstanding liberation struggle of unprecedented internationalist solidarity.

The crisis of the revisionist regime in the USSR ended in its collapse in 1991, as a result of which the former Soviet republics formalized their independence, which Ukraine proclaimed in August of that same year.

The current war is linked to that latter event, which resulted in a realignment of imperialist forces. In the current contest between imperialist powers for the control and domination of countries, territories and resources, Ukraine has become a shock piece for Europe and the United States against present-day imperialist Russia, which is why Ukraine ceded its territory for placing military bases on the border with Russia, a provocation that served as a pretext to unleash the war.

Faced with this scenario, it is necessary to highlight the orientation of the ICMLPO: "The struggles between the imperialist countries and powers to divide up again and again an already divided world, to conquer new markets and areas of influence, is the fundamental cause for the outbreak of the war in Ukraine which, as we have already denounced, is a conflagration of an inter-imperialist nature. The ICMLPO condemns this war and the warmongers who promoted and fuel it; we express our solidarity with the people of Ukraine who are victims of the military invasion of Russian imperialism led by Vladimir Putin, of US imperialism – led by Joe Biden – and its allies – the members of the European Union and NATO – and of the reactionary regime of Vladimir Zelensky" (Declaration of the 27th Plenary of the ICMLPO, Santo Domingo, July 2022).

This brief account allows us to place the relations between Russia and Ukraine in an historical context, from which we have an appropriate framework to compare the balance that we present below on the experience of the Soviet republics under socialism, as a legacy that constitutes a theoretical-political weapon in the hands of revolutionaries and communists for our struggle for socialism in the world today.

III. Birth and Development of the Soviet Republic

With the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution, the territories of Central Russia formed a federal state system, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), but not all the republics that were part of the Russian Empire were part of the Soviet project: Poland, Finland and the Baltic states remained independent republics. The latter joined the USSR as federated republics in 1940.

In the case of the republics of Ukraine, Byelorussia and the so-called Transcaucasian republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, they established governments and constitutions along the Russian model of 1918.

In the heat of those first years of Soviet power established in the different republics and the RSFSR, which equally faced enemy aggression and hostility, bonds of cooperation and alliance were forged for the common defense. It was a question of the survival of the revolution, which was barely taking its first steps, in the grips of a terrible civil war imposed by the remnants of the old

tsarist regime with the belligerent support of the main capitalist and imperialist countries, as already stated.

After the victory in the civil war, the tendency towards the unification of these republics gained a new impetus, since the whole revolutionary process had been led by the Bolshevik Party, whose political-organizational conception recognized as equals the workers and peoples, regardless of the territory or nationality to which they belonged.

The Second Congress of Soviets, inaugurated on November 7, the same day as the Revolution, was the creative organ of the Soviet state through the Manifesto to the Workers, Peasants and Soldiers. This body adopted a series of decrees on November 8, 1917: on peace and on land; elected the CEC (Central Executive Committee), the highest organ of power between congresses of the soviets, formed the Soviet government, the Council of Commissars, headed by Lenin.

A number of measures were adopted in the following days, which were related to the national question: the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, on November 15, 1917; the Appeal to the Moslems of Russia and the East, December 7, 1917; Declaration on Ukraine, December 17, 1917; the Decree on Turkish Armenia of January 11, 1918.

These measures were later generalized through the "*Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People*," which supplemented the first acts of the Soviet republic. This declaration, adopted on January 3, 1918, at the CEC of the Soviets, was rejected



by the Constituent Assembly when it was established, thus decreeing its own death. It was ratified on January 12, 1918 by the 3rd All-Russia Congress of Soviets, the supreme organ of the new state. At this crucial moment of the Russian Revolution, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly by the Bolsheviks is often presented as an anti-democratic act by certain historians, who are generally silent about the above-mentioned refusal of this Assembly to recognize the balance of forces within it. The constituent Assembly obviously did not represent the pulse of society and the state of mind and interests of the people who were leading the crucial battles at those precise moments that would define the course of the revolution underway. To recognize such a Constituent Assembly in these circumstances would have been to try to impose formalism over the reality that the people, the true Constituent Assembly, were expressing through the organ that faithfully expressed their will and power, the soviets, as would be affirmed from now on.

The Declaration of *Rights of the Working and Exploited People*³, by virtue of what it stipulated, provided the initial basic guidelines of what would become the Soviet model of state organization:

"Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.

"The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics....

"The Constituent Assembly whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organizing most extensive fraternization with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

"Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the

³Taken from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1918/jan/03.htm>, accessed November 27, 2023.

working people and their authorized representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

“At the same time, endeavoring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.”

Another key moment in the building of the Soviet model of state organization was the scenario for the Third Congress of Soviets of Russia held in January 1918: a resolution on the federal institutions of the Russian Republic was voted on, which determined the system of organs of the Soviet state. In addition, this congress recommended working on the draft Constitution that should be presented for consideration by the Fourth Congress. The German aggression perpetrated in those days postponed these tasks until after peace was signed.

The first constitution of the RSFSR was adopted at the Fifth Congress of Soviets, held on July 10, 1918. This great legal instrument consolidated the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of the republic of soviets and consolidated the system of state organs: the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, Council of People's Commissars; local organs of power, congresses of regional, provincial, county and district soviets and their executive committees; urban and peasant soviets. Between 1919 and 1922, this constitution was adopted as a model for the constitutions of the Soviet republics of Byelorussia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, at their respective national and regional congresses.

The culmination of all the accumulated policy on nationalities was expressed in December 1922, with the signing of a Treaty to create the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which laid the foundations for a Constitution based on the principle of federation. The treaty was signed by delegates from the Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Transcaucasian republics.

In July 1923, the Central Executive Committee of the All-Union Congress of Soviets approved the draft Constitution, which came into force immediately. In January 1924 this constitution was ratified by the supreme authority of the new state, the Congress of Soviets.

The Constitution defined the USSR as a federal state composed of national entities organized politically into three categories: federated republics, autonomous republics and autonomous regions. It should be remembered that at that time both the Russian republic and Transcaucasia were each a federation in itself. In this way, the formation of the USSR was carried out on the basis of the national realities that each nation had built up to the moment of unification.

As can be seen, this was a system that not only guaranteed internal coherence in its operation but at the same time provided expeditious ways for complementarity by combining autonomy and federation; it implied the recognition of the various particularities and potentialities within the Union that was being constituted as a whole.

The Declaration and Treaty formalizing the existence of the USSR consolidated the voluntary union of the Soviet socialist republics into a single federal state, ensuring the coherence between the rights of the federation and the republics and between the system of state organs of the USSR and those of the republics, recognizing the right of a republic to freely leave the union; It also opened up to new revenues.

The creation of the USSR, as the result of a democratic, revolutionary process with broad participation of the peoples and nations involved, expressed the solution of the national question within the framework of proletarian internationalism.

IV. Lessons from a Defeat

In the light of the facts, it is indisputable that, at least during the first decades after the establishment of Soviet power, this model of state organization became the appropriate framework for the approach and solution to the burning national question within the framework of a multinational state such as the one that was being designed.

The model worked effectively for a long period without major setbacks, because the theoretical principles upheld by Leninist

doctrine guided the design and application of the national policy of the Soviet state, a theory and policy that were based on democracy and self-determination as incontrovertible guarantees of the rights of the nations that converged in the Soviet state.

The theoretical theses put forward by Lenin and Stalin to deal with the national question before and after the victory of the revolution proved their validity at least for a long time of the exercise of Soviet power. If the shadow of the old Great Russian chauvinist spirit, the ignorance of rights or the oppression of some nations within the framework of the Federation prevailed, changing the relationship of equality and solidarity, this can only be explained by the violation of the theoretical principles on which this colossal political work was built.

At this point, what is pertinent again in terms of a balance is to reflect on the circumstances and the process that put an end to democracy and the participation of the masses in the functioning of the different organs of the Soviet state, to the point of creating a hostile environment in which the nationalities felt themselves hostage to the state and the nation that controlled it, and therefore this state apparatus kept its federated character only in appearance.

How did that process happen and when did it start. The role played in all this by the high treason of the Khrushchevite clique has become sufficiently clear and has been sufficiently explained in Marxist-Leninist literature. But we must delve into the lessons of that great tragedy and in that sense we must take advantage of the access that we are beginning to have to sources from the archives of the former USSR, disregarding all the manipulation that surrounds this resource under the circumstances in which its opening has been taking place.

In any case, any honest assessment of the invaluable experience of the USSR in relation to the drama of the war in Ukraine will prove to the world the superiority of the socialist system, as these reflections confirm.

Communist Party of Labor (PCT) of the Dominican Republic
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The Party, the Masses and the Organization of the Revolution

The social revolution of the proletariat is an extraordinary feat in which millions of human beings take part and involve themselves voluntarily. In order for these events end victoriously, the existence and action of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, is necessary.

The working masses, the peoples and the youth, in all the countries of the planet, have historically led the struggle to confront nature for the satisfaction of their needs, food, housing, clothing; and, since the appearance of private property, history records the actions of the working masses in the struggle for their interests and rights. However, this contest, which is part of the class struggle, favors in its outcome the interests of the various groups of the propertied classes.

In various circumstances and places, this confrontation is sometimes intense, at other times moderate. Social peace was never recorded. The interests of the opposing forces were and are antagonistic, irreconcilable between those above and those below, between the exploiters and the exploited, between the oppressors and the oppressed. The attempts of various sections of the ruling classes to ease this confrontation, to reconcile these interests are only an effort to maintain and legitimize their rule and exploitation, to secure their privileges.

The working masses are the protagonists of history, of the incessant development of the productive forces; they always act in pursuit of the attainment of their interests and rights, the resolution of their urgent problems. In the process, they actively take part in the development and outcome of the major economic, social and political developments. However, historically, the beneficiaries of these events have always been the various sectors of the ruling classes.

These facts unmask the fallacy that history is the confrontation of the various groups of exploiters and oppressors, of

slaveholders, lords and capitalists; much less the dispute between the caudillos or leaders of the various sectors into which the ruling classes are divided and subdivided.

The confrontation between the caudillos, the kings and presidents, the emperors and the heads of the powers is for the appropriation of the wealth created by the workers. This expropriation is fought over by the various sectors of the ruling classes, placing them in economic, political and social conflicts. Although this confrontation is not antagonistic and even less irreconcilable, it sometimes intensifies to the level of military means, wars of aggression and conquest, inter-state conflicts, the exercise of power through the armed forces and police, through the imposition of bourgeois legality, through efforts to legitimize it. However, this violence of the oppressors incubates discontent and dissatisfaction, rebellion and insurgency, the revolutionary struggle.

Wars of conquest subject the peoples and countries and ultimately provoke the struggle for national liberation; the capitalists establish and defend by force of arms and coercion the exploitation and expropriation of the working class and peoples and the capitalist countries and lead to social inequalities, misery and hunger. Consequently, they nourish discontent and resistance, they create the conditions for the struggle for social liberation, material progress, emancipation and the building of a new order, the society of the workers, socialism.

These facts confirm the assertion that the working masses are the makers of history, but that they do not always do so for their own benefit.

This situation began to change when the workers seized power in old Russia in October 1917 and overthrew the tsars, landlords and capitalists and established the first socialist state, the people's power, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Since then, history has changed course.

The People's Struggle and the Winning of the Objectives of the Workers and Peoples

The October Revolution was the great feat of the workers and peoples. It took place under concrete historical conditions: the super-exploitation of the working class and other working classes, the oppressed peoples, nationalities and nations subjected to the designs of the tsars and capitalists of old Russia; the

establishment of despotism, of an authoritarian and dictatorial regime that eliminated the public freedoms, social and political rights of the working masses; the discontent and dissatisfaction of millions of human beings. It was an important experience of the masses in demanding and fighting for their interests; the important levels of trade union organization of the working class, the numerous strikes that contributed to the political education of an appreciable section of the workers; and, above all, the existence, activity and struggle of the revolutionary party of the proletariat; the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, which became the Bolshevik Communist Party, showed its readiness and determination to fight for the organization of the revolution. A nucleus of communist leaders took responsibility for applying Marxism in concrete conditions and enriched and developed it to new levels; it was the work of prominent communist personalities, among whom mainly Lenin and Stalin stood out.

In Albania the revolution was the result of the political-military confrontation of the working class, the other working classes and the peasantry. There were thousands of fighters who, raising the banners of the expulsion of the German Nazis, fought in the countryside and cities. It was the existence of the Communist Party of Albania, of a political and military General Staff, of a correct revolutionary policy. In that heroic struggle, the communist personality of Enver Hoxha stood out.



The liberation of the workers, peoples and countries of Eastern Europe that defeated Nazism was also the result of the participation of tens of thousands of workers in the anti-fascist struggle, of the organization and struggle, of the fights of the battle-hardened communist parties, of their correct leadership.

Historical experience recognizes that the participation of the masses, the determined struggles of millions of people, make it possible to achieve victory; It teaches us that these battles lead to people's power because of the existence, educational work and political leadership of the Communist Party.

The task of bringing thousands of the working masses into the revolutionary political struggle demands a consistent attitude on the part of the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

It is necessary to affirm and sustain the Party's connection with the masses.

The Communist Party is the political party of the working class, it takes up Marxism-Leninism as the principles that guarantee its existence and struggle. With this guidance, it unites itself physically with the workers, it organizes itself among them, it integrates itself with the best fighters. It has the ability to elaborate the strategy and tactics of the revolution, to draw up the political orientations for the fight for power, to lead its forces in their daily activity, to organize and lead the struggle of the workers and peoples for the achievement of their immediate rights, without losing the goal of the struggle for power. It has the willingness and determination to use all forms of struggle; It is clear about the need to politically educate the working class, the peoples and the youth.

The working class is the creator of wealth; in the epoch of capitalism, its labor power creates the fundamentals of the material goods that human beings require for their life, for social reproduction. Because it is situated at the center of the epoch, because it is in direct contact with the new scientific and technical discoveries, because it has historical experience in the long struggle for its interests, because it has opposed the chains of capitalism, because it is not tied to any form of property, it is the class best equipped to take up the leadership of the other working classes in their struggle for social emancipation.

In the dependent countries, the tasks of social and national liberation demand the formation of a worker-peasant alliance.

This unity and action can unite the other working classes, the patriotic sections of the middle classes and strata, it can lead them to victory against imperialism and, above all, it guarantees the continuity of the struggle towards definitive independence and the forging of the society of the workers.

In order for this process to develop uninterruptedly and to bring the workers to power, the Communist Party must work in the areas of theory and social practice; it must be actively involved in social and political life; it must present revolutionary alternatives to the working class and the peoples; it must always point out the path of the struggle for power; it must spread the ideals of socialism, the program of the communists for the building of a classless society.

The positions of social democracy and other theologians of the right proclaim the existence of a crisis of the organization and the trade union movement, of the social organizations, of the political parties. All of this claims, according to these assumptions, the existence of a single social subject, the citizenry, which constitutes the main actor of politics.

These theses support the ideas that the masses can achieve the satisfaction of their immediate interests on their own, can open paths and, eventually, achieve political power.

In all ways, these struggles of the working masses and youth are part of the process of the international revolution of the proletariat.

The confrontation of workers against capital takes place, regardless of the will of the people, in all countries. The strikes for trade union rights and the immediate needs of the workers are taking place in a recurring manner, as well as important and far-reaching general strikes. The organization and struggle of the working class, the peasantry, the other working classes and the youth are confronting imperialist domination, they fight the exploitation of the native bourgeoisies, they fight for freedom and emancipation, in various countries they are transformed into popular uprisings.

This is an objective reality; it shows that the working masses and the youth continue to be the protagonists of social transformation. Anyone who denies this situation is either blind and deaf or has deliberate intentions to hide or minimize the people's struggle.

However, the existence of a people's movement fighting for its rights is only one part of the revolutionary struggle of the masses for emancipation.

We maintain the need to bring proletarian revolutionary consciousness to this important social movement.

This task belongs to the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat, the Communist Party.

Historical experience shows that various revolutionary processes develop and can win victory over reaction and imperialism without the existence and struggle of the communist party. However, it also shows that these processes do not lead to full independence, they almost always lead to the ties of neocolonialism, under the dependence of another imperialist country because they are led by patriotic forces that, in general, correspond to the interests and action of the petty bourgeoisie and even sectors of the native bourgeoisies.

In the same way, historical experience highlights various victorious revolutionary processes that won popular power and began the building of a new world, the society of the workers, socialism, under the leadership of courageous communist parties.

The Communist Party is a historical necessity

The Communist Party is the political party of the working class, representing its immediate interests and the ultimate goal of burying the rule of imperialism and capitalism and building a new world.

The Communist Party organizes and fights with the guide of Marxism-Leninism, the revolutionary doctrine of the proletariat.

In order to fulfil the responsibility of organizing and leading the struggle for social emancipation, in the light of principles it elaborates revolutionary policy, theses and slogans, the program of social and national liberation.

The development of liberatory politics requires the study of revolutionary theory, the knowledge of the situation of the working masses, peoples and youth, of their state of mind and willingness to fight for their interests, the Marxist interpretation of the contradictions of society, of the balance of forces. Revolutionary politics is shaped by the tactical lines, by the proposals and activity of the Party itself.

The Communist Party raises the banners of socialism and communism, the program of the struggle against imperialism, the theses and orientations for the daily confrontation of the working class, the working masses and the youth against the internal ruling classes, against the bosses and the landowners, against the bourgeois government. It works for the organization and leadership of the struggles of the working class, the working masses and the youth for their immediate interests; it holds the activity of the political education of the masses high, in the very course of the struggle, but also in the life of the trade union and social organization.

The spread of Marxism-Leninism, concretized in everyday revolutionary politics, in the banners of social emancipation and socialism, allows the Communist Party to link up politically with the masses.

The political link with the masses must be supported by the organizational linkage, by the building of the Party within the social movement. If the Party is organized among the working class, if it is enriched by the militancy of the most outstanding social fighters, it will fulfill its responsibilities to organize and make the revolution.

The Communist Party is the vanguard of the working class because it places itself at the head of the struggle of the masses for revolution and socialism, because its theses and proposals are taken as their own by the workers, because they organize and fight under its guidance to confront the bosses and the government of the capitalists, because in its ranks are the advanced workers, the consistent social fighters.

The social struggle is a reality, it develops in waves. The existence and activity of the Communist Party strives to lead the struggle of the masses along the paths of revolution and socialism.

The masses are the forgers of history, the Communist Party is the theoretical and practical guide; this unity makes possible the organization of the revolution, the abolition of exploitation and oppression, the organization of the Revolution.

*Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador
Ecuador, October 2023*

Social Cuts, Inflation, Rising Unemployment... Capitalism in Reverse Gear!

The news of the gradual decline of our German society is piling up. While inflation was still at 0.5% in 2020, almost zero, it rose to 3.1% in 2021, then to 6.9% in 2022, and was 6.2% in July 2023. As this adds up, cumulative inflation since 2021 is now 17%!

At the same time, the unemployment rate is rising again, despite the so called “spring and summer revival” of the economy. In July 2023, 3.45 million people in Germany were unemployed, 239,000 more than a year earlier! At the same time, the vast majority of these people are desperately looking for a job so that they can get by at all given the rising cost of living. Instead of higher wages, there are more and more low-wage jobs and precarious working conditions. Collective wage increases do not compensate for inflation, resulting in losses in real wages.

In addition, the 2024 budget is to make substantial cuts in the social sector. Basic child benefits are to be slashed. Support measures for integration, education and early childhood education will be cut. The stipend for pupils and students has increased only minimally for years, far below inflation. In addition, fewer and fewer people are receiving stipends, and it is getting lower and lower because the income limits for parents are not being adjusted for inflation.

Health care and nursing care are being systematically ruined and privatized.

There is less and less social housing, because many old properties are no longer subject to rent control and hardly any new social housing is being built. The supply of housing is scarce, the housing shortage is great and rents are rising rapidly.

At the same time, the rich are getting richer. However, this is only because they live off the blood of society. There are constant tax cuts or discounts in energy prices for large consumers that are subsidized from the state budget at society's expense.

The system is rotting

There is nothing progressive left in capitalism. There is only regression.

Already in 2020, our organization for the building of a communist workers' party of Germany (Arbeit Zukunft) wrote in its declaration of principles:

"Constantly more accumulated capital can hardly be invested profitably. Capital flows more and more often into speculative business in order to achieve maximum profit. The gap between rich and poor has widened dramatically.

In the struggle for maximum profits, the competition between the large monopolies of different states is intensifying. In order to make the exploitation of capital possible in such a situation and to drive it further, social standards are lowered everywhere, exploitation is intensified, armaments and arms exports are ramped up. Local and regional neo-colonial wars have increased. Entire countries and economies are being destroyed and bombed into the Stone Age. The struggle for supremacy among the imperialist powers of the U.S., EU, China and Russia – especially aggressive U.S. imperialism – is constantly intensifying the threat of war. This violent imperialist competition and its consequences drive millions of people worldwide into flight – within affected countries, into neighbouring states, across continents.

The environment and climate are being ruined for maximum profit without any consideration for future generations.

In Germany, economic development is very contradictory. For a relatively rich country, shocking deficits are revealed in numerous areas of society. Education, culture and health care are in crisis. Agriculture and the environment are suffering under the exploitation pressures of capital. The wealth of the small stratum of monopoly capitalists and the rich, on the other hand, is growing unceasingly at the expense of the poorer part of the population – despite all the crises."

In fact, as the wealth and poverty of large sections of humanity increase, the exploitation of capital, that is, the making of profit, becomes more and more difficult. As capital responds to this with ever more aggressive demands for tax breaks, removal of "investment barriers," flexibilization of the commodity labour power, for state money, it increases poverty and thus its sales

problems as well as its exploitation difficulties. The state treasury becomes a self-service store for capital.

One example is the construction of a new chip factory by the Taiwanese corporation TSMC with the participation of Infineon, NXP (Netherlands) and Bosch, which was announced at the beginning of August. Of the 10 billion euros that the construction of this chip factory near Dresden will cost, the state and thus society will bear 5 billion. While there is "no money" for education, healthcare, basic childcare, nursing care, etc., a huge sum is available to secure the maximum profits of these corporations.

Another example are the German car companies like Daimler-Benz, VW, BMW and Porsche. Since the working households can less and less afford a new car, the cheap models are increasingly cut down and instead more and more expensive, showy luxury cars are sold. This increases profits in the short term, but leads to layoffs and a worsening of the situation of the working class. And in order for this luxury price strategy to actually generate enough profit, the state has to make electric cars affordable even for the middle class with subsidies. For example, the ID-3 from VW is available in Germany from about 40,000 euros, and in China in a slightly slimmed-down version for 16,000 euros!

Aggressively against the working class

In order for capitalism to somehow still make profits in its late stages, it must exist at the expense of society – at the expense of the working class. If society pays for the chip factory in Dresden



through tax money, why doesn't this factory belong to society? Capital itself shows that it is no longer able to advance the productive forces and the development of society by its own efforts. And since this is the case internationally and the competition among the international conglomerates is getting fiercer and fiercer, the attacks on the working class are getting more and more aggressive.

That's why so-called "progress coalitions" (the self-attribution of the actual German government) aren't working out either – except in flowery phrases. None of the promised "progress" is coming. For example, 400,000 apartments per year had been promised. Realistically, however, according to Federal Construction Minister Klara Geywitz (SPD), as many as 600,000 would be needed to meet the most urgent demand. But even the 400,000 will not be achieved. In 15 years, the number of social housing units has dropped from 2 million to just 1 million.

What works is subsidizing capital. You can see this most clearly in armaments. 100 billion euros in special assets (real debt) are a boon to the big armaments corporations, whose profits are exploding. Capitalism has become destructive.

Instead of "reforms" – elimination of capitalism

When people hear the word "reform", they now expect higher contributions, cancellation of benefits, worsening of their living conditions. The increasing exploitation difficulties of capital do not allow any other solution within the framework of capitalism. In order for capital to continue to exist, it must exploit the great mass of people, the working class, more and more and worsen their living conditions. And in the end armaments and wars are a "solution" to make the profit cycle possible. The fact that, in addition to this, the environment is also being destroyed and that we are also being put off there with constant promises and big goals shows how destructive this system has become.

Of course, we fight for every reform, for every small step forward. In reality, however, this usually means that only the worst is prevented and in return a slightly slowed down worsening comes. Therefore, we must combine the fight for small steps, urgently needed improvements, with the fight for the elimination of capitalism. Only if this system disappears, can there again be serious progress!

Preparation of the 1947 Draft of the Third Programme of the CPSU (b)

Introduction

The central objective of Lenin and the Bolsheviks was the formation of a communist society.

This is evident from the programme adopted by the Russian Communist Party in March 22, 1919. The document accepted that the dictatorship of the proletariat had been established in Russia having the support of the poorest peasantry and the semi-proletariat. It had in the main expropriated the bourgeoisie so that means of production and exchange became the common property of all the toilers.

It was imperative to establish a uniform national plan which could engage in the rational and economic utilisation of the material resources of the country.

So far as the handicrafts were concerned, producers' co-operatives were to be established which could carry out a painless transition to the higher forms of big mechanised industry.

In the agrarian sector, private property in land had been abolished. The state was inaugurating a number of measures to encourage large-scale socialist agriculture: establishing cooperative farms, state farms and agricultural communes.¹

It was recognised that only the first steps had been taken for the transition from capitalism to communism, so that until there had been a complete organisation of communist production and distribution of products it was impossible to abolish money. It was considered possible in the meantime to extend the area of transactions without the use of cash by the deposition of money compulsorily in the people's bank, the replacing of money by the use of cheques, and the issuing of short term notes which entitled the possessor to receive products.

¹ Programma i ustava VKP (b), (1919), Partizdat TsK VKP (b), Moscow 1936, 64 pp. This publication was printed in an edition of two hundred thousand copies.

The programme of 1919 illuminates the economic policies of the period of the civil war, known as ‘war communism’.

In those three years, from June 1918 through to March 1921, further expropriations took place of the small sections of the industrial bourgeoisie. Such was the case also in transport, communications and distribution.

In agriculture, private property in land had already ceased to exist; through the appropriation of agricultural surplus the socialist state controlled a part of the surplus; an attempt was made to bring the peasant farms under the purview of the plan.²

Some fifty industrial sectoral boards were established, termed *glavki*, which controlled industry under the formal writ of the Supreme Council for National Economy.

The attempt was made under war communism to abolish commodity-money relations. The expenses of enterprises were decided by centralised planning and covered by the state budget. The products of the enterprises were at the disposal of the central bodies.. Centralised financing was replaced by the centralised supply in kind. Distribution of products was conducted by the centralised allocation of goods. Commodity exchange was ended between town and country by decreeing the compulsory delivery of surplus grain. Taxation was abolished. The state distributed *gratis* housing, telephones, water, gas, electricity for workers and employees. Similarly, the urban populace was supplied differentiated food rations on the basis of class with priority given to the industrial workers performing dangerous and heavy labour.³

But commodity-money relations could not be abolished, instead they were driven underground. The state continued to print currency notes whose value continued to shrink. Working people were compelled to use the extensive black market for the bulk of their purchases.

It proved impossible to sustain the economic policies of military communism once the civil war ended. In its place the policies of the New Economic Policy were introduced which utilised widespread commodity-money relations until such time as the

² László Szamuely, *First Models of the Socialist Economic Systems: Principles and Theories*, Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1974. p. 11.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 17.

economy revived in the period 1925-26, when industrial and agricultural production returned to the levels of 1913. This laid the basis for the socialist offensives which established directive centralised planning, incepted socialist industrialisation based on the production of the means of production (with the lead being given to production of the means of production of Department 1), and introduced socialist collectivisation based on the poor and middle peasantry with the agricultural instruments and means of production remaining in the socialised sector. Collectivisation ended the existence of the last section of the most numerous class of the bourgeoisie, the rich peasantry.

In such conditions Stalin argued in his *Speech on the Draft Constitution of the USSR* in 1936 that the Soviet Union had achieved the construction of the foundations of socialism in the main. Stalin had earlier said in the 17th Congress of the CPSU (b) in 1934 that the task of building a classless socialist society remained for the future.

Extensive discussions took place at the 18th Congress of the CPSU (b) in 1939 on the building of the classless socialist society and the transition to the communist society.⁴ It was suggested by Voznesensky that, while it had taken two decades for the Soviet Union to construct socialism, a lesser period would be required for the transition to communism. Detailed discussions on this question were held at the congress and a commission was set up to draft a new programme for the party.

In conjunction with this, a new 15-year perspective plan was drawn up by Gosplan in two volumes for the period 1947-1953. This considered the need to surpass the per capita production of the capitalist countries in pig iron, steel, oil, electricity, machinery and the means of production and articles of necessity. In terms of social relations it was planned to raise the level of the workers and collective farm workers to that of the workers in the technical and engineering sectors.

The perspective plan for the transition to communism naturally had to be ended with the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union,

⁴ Vijay Singh, *The CPSU (b), Gosplan and the Question of the Transition to Communist Society in the Soviet Union 1939-1953*, *Revolutionary Democracy*, Vol. III, No. 1, April 1997. <https://www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv3n1/gosplan.htm>

but it was immediately resumed in 1945 on the lines suggested at the 18th Congress of the party in 1939 and subsequently.

Instructively in September 1946 Stalin argued that it was possible to construct communism in one country in the Soviet example.

At the foundation of the Informburo in Poland in September 1947 Malenkov stated that the CPSU (b) was elaborating a new party programme.⁵

That draft programme was published in the October, 1947 issue of the journal *Revolutionary Democracy* in English for the first time.

The version selected there has the notes of Stalin.⁶

Aside from the detailed discussions on this draft by the party leadership, Gosplan was involved in working out the implications of the new programme for the planning mechanism. Voznesensky argued in the Central Committee for a 20-year plan for establishing communism in the Soviet Union. This was necessary bring the preparatory steps to communism to fruition and to expand the productive forces and the construction of new, large construction work: railway lines, metallurgical factories. These would lead to the Soviet Union overtaking the advanced capitalist countries in terms of per capital industrial production.

The party authorised such a plan in August 1947. The Gosplan, the Academy of Sciences and local Soviet and Party organizations analysed the productive strength of the economic regions of the country and formed the framework of a perspective for the economy for the period 1951-70.

Gosplan was rightly concerned with the development of the forces of production.⁷ The relations of production were discussed

⁵ Informatsionnoe soveshchanie predstaviteleye nekotorykh kompartii, v Pol'she v kontse Sentyabrya 1947 goda, Ogiz Gosizpolit, Moscow, 1948, p. 153.

⁶ Stalinskoe ekonomicheskoe nasledstvo: plany i diskussii 1947-1953 gg. Dokumenty i materialy, Compiled by V.V. Zhuravlev and L.N. Lazareva, Rosspen, Moscow, 2017, 640 pages, pp. 118-138. See also the volume: V.V. Trushkov, Neizvestnaya Programma VKP (b), Moscow, 2018, 288 pp.

⁷ See also: M.I. Rubinstein, O sozdanii materialno-tekhnicheskoye bazy kommunizma, Molodaya Guardia, Moscow, 1952, 40 pp, and his Soviet Science and Technique in the Service of Building Communism in the USSR, FLPH, Moscow 1954, 236 pp.

by Stalin in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*. The significance of his remarks is that he sought to concretise the gradual steps necessary for the transition to a communist society in the Soviet Union. Stalin argued that the existence of group property in the collective farms and therefore of commodity circulation hampered the full extension of state planning to the whole of the national economy, especially in agriculture. It was necessary to gradually convert collective farm property into public property and replace commodity circulation with products-exchange between town and country (which meant the end of Soviet trade). This would be to the benefit of the collective farm peasantry as they would receive more products from state industry.⁸

After March 1953 the CPSU was guided not by Marxism-Leninism but the ideas fought by Stalin in *Economic Problems* and his related writings: Bogdanovism, Bukharinism, Trotskyism; and specifically in the realm of political economy the ‘market socialist’ notions of Notkin, Venzher and Sanina. The ideological rupture with Marxism-Leninism spread internationally in the bulk of the people’s democracies and the majority of the international communist movement. The Soviet state no longer carried out the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, formally positing this in 1961 when it was accepted that the Soviet Union was now the ‘state of the whole people’. Parallel to this the majority of the people’s democracies no longer carried out the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat after 1953.⁹

The programme for communist construction in the Soviet Union involving the development of the productive forces and changes in the production relations was ended. The question of having a higher rate of expansion of Department 1 for the purposes of social reproduction was downgraded. The perspective of the gradual conversion of collective farms to agricultural

⁸ I. Stalin, *Economicheskije problem sotsializma v SSSR*, Moscow, 1952, pp. 204-221. See also: N. Smolin, *Rudimentary Forms of Products Exchange*. <https://revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv13n1/smolin.htm>

⁹ Vijay Singh, *Some Questions of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the People’s Democracies*, *Revolutionary Democracy*, Vol. I, No. 1, (New Series), April 2022.

communes was terminated. The plan of replacing commodity circulation by products-exchange was swiftly discontinued.

The archives of the State Planning Commission, Gosplan, establish unequivocally that the foundations of a system of generalised commodity production was established in the years 1953 to 1958. Directive centralised planning, which had constructed socialism and which was being utilised for the transition to communism, was terminated and from March 1953 it was replaced by a system of “co-ordinated planning” involving the economic negotiations between the central and union republic governments. The state planning commission itself was divided into two organisations. The sphere of influence of Gosplan was reduced by expanding the powers of the directors of the enterprises, who were now required to accept that the criterion of efficiency was the principle of profitability. The commodification of the instruments and means of production was enacted both in industry and agriculture. While under the socialist system the products of industry were allocated under the plan, after 1958 these products were now designated as commodities which circulated in the state sector. Some twenty agencies were established under Gosplan to sell the commodities produced by Soviet industrial enterprises. In agriculture, following the example of Yugoslavia, the instruments and means of production, the Machine Tractor Stations, were sold to the collective farms. This signified that in the Soviet Union (and in People’s China) a section of the socialised means of production now became part of the group property of the collective farms (and later of the People’s Communes) thereby massively expanding the area of commodity circulation. In such a situation there was an inevitable reemergence in the Soviet Union of such categories as labour power as a commodity, surplus value, profit and the average rate of profit.

The programme for communist construction which was put forward by the CPSU in 1961 in the time of Khrushchev envisaged the further deepened expansion of commodity-money relations, including wide independence of the enterprises and profit until such time as there was a single communist form of property when commodity-money relations would become outdated. No concrete steps were proposed to bring about a single communist property, as had been in evidence in the 1919 party programme or right through to *Economic Problems* and the 19th party congress

in 1952. Indeed it was considered necessary that farming on the collective farms had to be based on the principle of profitability. As in People's China in the People's Communes it was proposed to submerge social property in the state sector into the semi-socialist group property of the collective farms. Earlier the Machine Tractor Stations, which Stalin had defended from the Venzher and Sanina suggestion to commodify them by selling them to the collective farms, had been vended to the collective farms in 1958. It was now the policy to merge the collective farms, the state farms and the industrial enterprises which would have at a wider level reduced the social property of the state farms and industry to group property.¹⁰ It contradicted the programme advocated by Khrushchev of building up a single communist property in the Soviet Union.

The CPSU and Khrushchev made the transition from the construction of commodity 'socialism' in the period 1953-1958 to projecting a commodity 'communism' in 1961.

October 2023



¹⁰ Programma Communisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuz in XXII S'ezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuz, 17-31 Oktyabrya 1961 goda, Stenograficheskiye otchet, III, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1962, pp. 229-335.

Liberalism Died, Raise the Flag of Socialism!

The ideology of the communists is "socialism," and the ideology of the bourgeoisie is "liberalism." The two social classes, proletariat and bourgeoisie, look at all developments from these two perspectives. "Liberalism", like any other phenomenon, has a historical background. It was formed about 300 years ago in the 17th century to combat tyranny and to oppose the oppression of the masses and minority groups.

As a theory against the violation of human rights and paying attention to the rule of law against the autocracy of the church and the kings of the time, "Liberalism" played a progressive role in human developments and raising the level of people's awareness. "Liberalism" stood up to support the freedom of individuals and minorities to rule over their own destiny. It provided the basis for the development and growth of repressed human talents, who were limited by the belief that everything was due to God. Sciences evolved and had a significant impact on people's lives. So "Liberalism" is one of the most influential political ideologies of the modern era. With its roots in the Enlightenment and with a strong tradition of defending individual freedoms and the rule of law and the market economy, "Liberalism" has had a significant impact on the formation of modern societies. It has contributed to the emergence of bourgeois democracies and constitutional governments, a state in which individual freedoms are protected and, to some extent, political power is controlled by parliaments.

Liberals argue that everyone has the right to individual freedom as long as they do not restrict the freedoms of others. This individual freedom includes freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and economic freedom. Economically, market laws also play a major role in liberalism. Liberals usually support a "free-market economy" in which the principle of "supply and demand" determines the price of goods. They say that competition leads to the production of the best products and services. They hail the free market as an engine for economic progress and personal development. Liberal theoreticians emphasise the value of free

competition and the free market. They state that this competition will lead to the prosperity and development of a society. In addition, “Liberalism” claims to strive for social justice and equal opportunities. In the era of globalisation of capital, we see the obvious bankruptcy of “Liberalism” and its failure to fulfil its promises. “Liberalism”, which today in the form of neoliberal policy has become a tool for looting and oppressing people, tries to promote the idea of free trade and economic globalisation. It argues that the free exchange of goods, services, and ideas increases the welfare for all and promotes peace among nations. International organisations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization are based on liberal principles. They claim to strive for cooperation among nations. Of course, one cannot fill people's bellies or run the country solely based on claims. Naturally, “Liberalism” is a good tool for the continuation of life for the class that has all the wealth. The rule of law means something different to a wealthy or prosperous person than to someone who goes to bed hungry at night. As a result of the rule of law, the rich rule over the poor and consequently must defend their own selfish and class interests.

Adam Smith, in explaining “individual liberty,” believed that every person is free to increase their welfare. But what is the reality? No poor child is born with a free ticket out of poverty. The statement “money makes money” is invalid for the majority and valid only for the minority who have wealth and who own the means of production. Adam Smith pictures the faces of the people who are “inherently selfish and profit-seeking” and extends it to the whole society, regardless of the fact that they are the product of a competitive capitalist society. Adam Smith does not promote the idea that a person must put his individual interest below the collective interests of the society. According to Smith:

“It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages.”

But these butchers and bakers were born and raised in a society that their ancestors built and provided them with all the social wealth that they also enjoy. These butchers and bakers are not

born in a cave or in a forest. They work at a certain level of development and progress, which is the historical achievement of the community and of past generations. Therefore, they are responsible to the community.

In his book *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill observes, “The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs or impede their efforts to obtain it.”

He believed that the limit of each person's freedom is the inviolability of another person's freedom. For this reason, he agreed with the freedom of hungry people to protest for bread in front of a bakery, provided that they do not attack the bakery shop to seize bread and not violate the baker's freedom. Apparently, a hungry stomach should have faith and decency and recognise this type of rule of law.

Anatole France quipped that “a rich person is as free to spend the night under the bridge as a poor person.”

So we see how this theory of “Liberalism”, which initially played a progressive historical role in society, faced reality in front of the barrier of the class struggle. In reality, “Liberalism” agreed only with the rule of law, with individual freedom, and with market competition for its own benefit. The issue of emancipation of nations was left out of the agenda of “Liberalism” as long as they threatened the interests of democratic constitutional governments in Europe. The liberals, who talked about “individual freedom,” “equal opportunities,” “rule of law,” “free competition,” etc., did not intend to apply these luxuries to everyone. They wanted democracy to divide the spoils among themselves only at the top of the socio-economic hierarchy. The “Chartists” movement, the first labour movement in the world against this bourgeois liberalism, presented its six demands under the title of the People's Charter in July 1839 to the House of Commons for approval. The demands included:

1. A vote for every man aged twenty-one years and above, of sound mind, and not undergoing punishment for a crime
2. No property qualification for Members of Parliament
3. Annual parliamentary elections

As we see, it was about a century later that workers and the poor without private property, were still deprived of the individual freedom of the right to vote. “Liberalism” defended individual

freedom for people, but the ideology did not apply for half of the world's population, namely women. "Liberalism" feared that women, who were poor and hungry and close to the working class, having the right to vote would upset the game of democracy. The Great October Revolution gave all Soviet women the right to vote. It was then that women around the world forced a retreat on the bourgeoisie and its liberalism and gradually began to enjoy their right to vote.

The victorious socialism in USSR challenged "Liberalism" and its many promises and deceptions. Attention should be paid to the following data:

Britain recognised women's suffrage in 1918, but only for women 30 years old or older. For men, this age limit was 20 years. In 1921, about one third of British women participated in national elections for the first time; Canada recognised the right of women to vote in 1917; Germany, Poland, Australia in 1918; United States of America in 1920; Sweden 1921; Ireland 1928; Spain 1931; France 1944; Italy 1945; Argentina, Japan, Mexico, Pakistan 1947; India, the largest democracy in the world in 1950, and in Switzerland, women also got the right to vote after a referendum in 1971.

Comparing the promises "Liberalism" gave to the people of the world 300 years ago to these historical facts illustrates the falsity of its claims. During this time, they controlled the rule of law in Europe and brought the nations of three continents under the wheel of colonialism. Their free competition was the freedom to



enslave other people and annex their lands, which was in stark and hypocritical contrast to the classical thought of “Liberalism”.

The passage of several centuries shows that “Liberalism” was only able to talk about individual freedom and the freedom of nations until the beginning of the European colonial system. After that, there was no sign of individual freedom nor of national freedom and liberation.

With the implementation of “Liberalism,” we see that when individual freedom becomes an absolute priority, it only leads to ignoring the needs and rights of large social strata, the strata that contributes to the national wealth of the country but without getting its share. Therefore, valuing individual freedom should be accompanied by a sense of social responsibility to reduce social inequalities and promote the common wellbeing of the masses, which liberalism stamps as “beggar breeding” and “encouraging and persuading laziness, lagging, and social scum.” In reality, liberalism propagates racial supremacy and fascism. The reality of the development of capitalism showed that liberal capitalism was able to concentrate power and wealth in the hands of a few, while the majority of people live in poverty and insecurity in these countries.

The free competition advocated by “Liberalism” also quickly led to the emergence of monopolies by controlling and supervising the markets and by the purchase of raw materials in the world. By being present in the stock markets and setting a non-competitive and exclusive price, the theoreticians of liberalism imposed the price of everything to the people of the world. With this policy, liberalism not only does not provide an opportunity, but it also encourages the unequal distribution of resources.

The idea of making the rule of the market absolute on the basis of “maximising profit” surrenders the fate of humanity to the blind activities of the market. The sanctity of “private ownership of the means of production” leads to ignoring other areas of social activities. These include environmental protection, education, and public health, development and strengthening of the arts, public tours and entertainment, social justice, cultural diversity, etc. The claim about free competition in the era of imperialism is a farce. Free competition was intended to make the majority of countries weak, destroy national identities, and allow for imperialist plundering.

The policy of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization, which is modern neoliberalism, is in complete contradiction with the basic ideas of the founders of the classical theory of “Liberalism”. These three colonial tools are only for enslaving nations. We are facing a different situation today. Let us see the words of Comrade Stalin on this.

“Earlier, the bourgeoisie presented themselves as liberal, they were for bourgeois democratic freedom and in that way gained popularity with the people. Now there is not one remaining trace of liberalism. There is no such thing as ‘freedom of personality’ any more, – personal rights are now only acknowledged by them, the owners of capital, – all the other citizens are regarded as raw materials, that are only for exploitation. The principle of equal rights for people and nations is trodden in the dust and it is replaced by the principle of full rights for the exploiting minority and the lack of rights of the exploited majority of the citizens. The banner of bourgeois democratic freedom has been flung overboard. I think that you, the representatives of communist and democratic parties must pick up this banner and carry it forward if you want to gain the majority of the people. There is nobody else to raise it. (Stormy applause.)

“Earlier, the bourgeoisie, as the heads of nations, were for the rights and independence of nations and put that ‘above all.’ Now there is no trace left of this ‘national principle.’ Now the bourgeoisie sell the rights and independence of their nations for dollars. The banner of national independence and national sovereignty has been thrown overboard. Without doubt, you, the representatives of the communist and democratic parties must raise this banner and carry it forward if you want to be patriots of your countries, if you want to be the leading powers of the nations. There is nobody else to raise it. (Stormy applause.)

“That is how matters stand at present.” (Stalin's speech at the 19th Congress)

Today, it is the duty of the communists to defend the right of nations to self-determination, to defend the struggles of nations

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against colonialism and imperialism, and to support the struggles of the peoples and the working class for liberation. Communists strongly oppose the right of individuals, companies and countries to be free to massacre, bomb, carry out aggression against countries, and occupy other people's lands such as Palestine. This "liberalism" must be eradicated along with its supporters.

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Criticism of the “Imperialist Pyramid” Scheme

I. Premise

The inter-imperialist war which is being waged on the backs of the proletariat and peoples of Ukraine and Russia has brought to light opposing and irreconcilable conceptions of imperialism expressed by organized forces (parties or groups) which have the communism as a reference point.

Imperialism is an essential question of Marxist-Leninist theory. The entire economic and political history, the phenomena of current social life, the facts relating to capitalism, the opportunism in the workers' movement, the tendency towards political reaction and war, as well as the need for the socialist revolution of the proletariat, are understandable only in the light of this theory, which guides revolutionary action.

It is not possible to offer a historical and political assessment of the current war, as well as the determination of its nature, which fits fully into the struggle between the great powers for a new division of the world, areas of influence, raw materials, etc., if one does not explain, in the most complete way, from the economic and the political side, the nature of imperialism as the highest and last stage of development of capitalism.

In recent years, positions of a revisionist, reformist and opportunist nature have openly emerged which separate or confuse aggressive political tendencies, military interventions, etc., with the economic essence of imperialism.

These are re-editions of the Kautskyan conception, which denies that imperialism is the highest and last stage of development of capitalism, arguing instead that it is a preferred policy of finance capital. This concept serves to demonstrate that the imperialists can carry out another policy, a non-imperialist policy, one without conquest, or plundering. The consequence of this are the calls in favor of "multipolarity" and "multilateralism", a mask behind which are hidden the interests of imperialist and capitalist

states, especially China, which are challenging US world hegemony.

Against these positions, the KKE (Communist Party of Greece), and in our country some communist formations that in one way or another share its positions, have advanced a sharp criticism supporting a vision of the imperialist system centered on a "pyramid" scheme.

We welcome the criticism of neo-Kautskyan reformism and opportunism, the denunciation and condemnation of the forces that deny the definition of imperialism given by Lenin, that support the "multipolarism" and rely on one imperialism to fight another. May there be the clearest separation from these forces!

We welcome these developments, but we ask: is it correct to interpret the imperialist system as a pyramid scheme? Is it a real contribution that allow us to understand the fundamental aspects of the imperialist system and its internal contradictions? What consequences follow from this scheme?

II. The pyramid scheme

Let us start with this explanation of the pyramid scheme to get to the heart of the issue.

"They [the opportunists, editor's note] arbitrarily use the assessment of Lenin in his well-known work Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism that a handful, a very small number of states are plundering the vast majority of the states across the globe. As a consequence imperialism is identified with a very small number of countries, which can be counted on the fingers of one hand, while all the others are subordinate, oppressed, colonies, occupied due to their subservience to the liberal viewpoint.

"Today, there are few countries which are at the top, in the highest positions of the international imperialist system (which is also illustrated by a pyramid scheme in order to show the various levels that the capitalist countries occupied). One could say that at the top there are a handful of countries, to use the Leninist expression. But this does not mean that all the other capitalist countries are victims of the powerful capitalist states, that the bourgeoisie of most countries has submitted to the pressure, despite their

general interest that it [the bourgeoisie, Editor’s note] has been corrupted. It does not mean that the struggle of the peoples must be directed against Germany in Europe while in the American continent it must be directed merely against the US.” (Article by A. Pappariga, former secretary of the KKE, for “El Machete”, journal of the Communist Party of Mexico, 2013.)

The KKE represents the world imperialist system as a pyramid, at the top of which are placed the most mature and powerful capitalist states, and at its lower levels, down to the base, are the other countries, including those of the peripheral "south" of the world. For example, the EU countries are included in this pyramid, including Greece itself which would occupy an intermediate position in the world imperialist system.

The "imperialist pyramid" has its own internal hierarchy, a network of asymmetrical interdependencies determined by the economic, political and military strength of the states, and sees positional changes (upward or downward) caused by the law of unequal development and by the change of the power relations between the elements of the pyramid, both above and below.

Let us continue with the statements of the supporters of the pyramid scheme:

“The number of states that are regional powers, satellites of strong imperialist powers, countries that play a particular role in the politics of alliances and political affiliation with one or another power of the pyramid is increasing. Inter-imperialist contradictions are at work in every form of alliance and all these multifaceted relations, which concern all the capitalist countries of the world without exception, constitute the imperialist pyramid.

“... Lenin, as is well known, used the "chain" scheme. The diagram, which we use on every occasion, is a way of helping the workers to understand the reality of imperialism as monopoly capitalism, as rotten and dying capitalism, in which all the capitalist countries are incorporated, according to their strength (economic, political, military etc.).” (KKE's Leninist Approach to Imperialism and the Imperialist Pyramid, 2015).

The pyramid shape describes the different forms of relations existing between these capitalist countries, as well as their alliances and internal disputes.

By adopting the pyramid scheme, priority is given to the existing relations between imperialist and capitalist countries rather than to the economic nature and characteristics of the specific countries. In other words, a structuralist vision of imperialism, formalist and mechanical, is adopted, which is in contrast to the vision based on a concrete analysis of reality and a study of its intimate contradictions, employing Marxist dialectics.

By using the pyramid scheme, the KKE and other militant forces do not escape the difficulties that this conception raises. Indeed, what does it mean to say that all the countries in which the capitalist mode of production dominates are included into the imperialist pyramid?

The supporters of the imperialist pyramid scheme vehemently reject any relation with Kautsky's theory of ultra-imperialism and claim to take Leninist positions, but this alleged rebuilding of financial monopoly capitalism looks a lot like the old Kautskyan formula of the international unification of national imperialisms.

In reality, the pyramid thesis is in contrast with the Leninist theory of imperialism, since it includes all capitalist countries, even the dependent and backward ones, in the pyramid according to a rank that depends on the economic and state strength of each country. There would be differences of degree, but not of quality.

In essence, since capitalism entered the phase of imperialism over a century ago, today there would no longer exist any non-imperialist countries on the face of the earth since the five main "purely economic fundamental concepts" identified by Lenin for a definition of imperialism would apply to all existing countries.

This abstract judgment is reiterated by the KKE on other occasions:

“These characteristics do not only concern the states at the top of the imperialist pyramid, but they are uniform; they concern all states, more or less strong, because the monopolistic and reactionary epoch of capitalism is uniform”. (G. Marinos, speech given at the 22nd ICWPO in Cuba, 2022).

Behind this pretense of uniformity, the KKE and the other political formations that adopt the pyramid scheme end up replacing the Marxist-Leninist method of analysis and the precise, timely and rigorous evaluation of the profound contradictions and antagonisms of imperialism with a vague and unclear formula, a bookish description of finance monopoly capitalism which eludes all the problems that the current epoch poses to the communists.

III. A distorted view of reality

The age we live in is that of imperialism and revolution, that is, of the domination of monopoly finance capital, the last stage of capitalism, its last historical form, which is followed by the revolutionary triumph of the working class and socialism. It is an era that embraces a complex of contradictory phenomena, typical and non-typical, small and large, distinctive of developed and backward countries.

We speak of a world imperialist system because capitalism has long since transformed itself into a world system of exploitation, oppression and financial strangulation of the vast majority of the world's population by "*a handful of advanced countries*" (Lenin, Preface to Imperialism). The bourgeoisie has carried out the division of the world for over a century, it has penetrated into all countries to exploit the labor-power and to export capital and goods, it has secured foreign markets, areas of influence and for investment of the capital, it plunders the sources of raw materials.

Imperialism has developed the productive forces and transformed the world in its image and likeness; it has dragged all countries, all peoples along the path of finance-capitalist exploitation; it squeezes surplus value from hundreds of millions of workers, accumulating enormous wealth.

The financial oligarchy exerts its power on enormous masses of laborers of all countries, from the metropolis to the most remote corners of the globe, chaining individual countries and individual national economies to the shackles of finance capital, exploitation and of oppression exercised by a minority of countries with a high level of capitalist development.

Undoubtedly the world has changed and three-quarters of the existing countries are no longer colonial, as they were in Lenin's time. Undeniably the number of imperialist countries has increased since the beginning of the 20th century. Capitalism is in

a state of permanent movement and uneven development, consequentially there is not a list of imperialist power defined once and for all. But the possibility that a capitalist country becoming imperialist is not yet a reality.

The development of the world economy during the period of capitalist “globalization” has resulted in some “emerging countries”, like China, Brazil, Turkey, India, Indonesia, South Africa, etc. are now in a position to accumulate capital and export it, thanks to the high rate of exploitation of labor power. This process was not so big as the monopolies of the imperialist countries, but it was not modest for their condition. During this period, China developed into an imperialist state while its capitalists and those of other countries came to an advantageous position and increased their share in some sectors of the world market (raw materials, manufacture, agriculture, etc.).

These developments and other factors lead to the view that presumably the situation is not what it used to be (that a handful of imperialists rule the rest of the world), but that we have a new situation with new regional powers, etc. The supporters of the pyramid scheme try to interpret this new circumstance. But they fail for different reasons, as we will see.

To understand the reality of imperialism, we have to distinguish between imperialist countries and dependent, colonial and semi-colonial countries, economically, technologically and financially dominated and *de facto* subjected to the former, without hiding this fundamental contrast behind the misleading consideration that the characteristics of the imperialist system no longer allow us to determine the actual nature of the different countries.

The many-sided relationships among states cannot be confused with the different economic nature of these states. There are still the dominant imperialist countries and the dependent capitalist countries, as well as the semi-colonial and colonial ones (the latter are few, but they too still exist), subject to imperialism.

From the exploitation and subjugation of the backward capitalist countries within the system of oppression and financial strangulation, it does not follow that they have all become imperialist (or sub-imperialist) countries since they have forms and varieties of relations or alliances with the imperialist powers. In reality, these are precisely the relations that amplify and strengthen their condition of dependency and backwardness.

Let us ask: to which countries do the existing monopolies belong? If one scrolls through one of the studies in circulation which fixes the largest international monopolies at a certain number, one sees that they belong to about twenty old and new imperialist and capitalist powers (USA, China, Japan, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Russia, Netherlands, South Korea, Switzerland, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Finland, Spain, Norway, Australia).

Which countries benefit from the majority of monopoly profits? Basically, the same group of countries.

In how many countries is financial capital concentrated? In a handful of countries that are the financial citadels of the world (New York, Shanghai, London, Miami, Taipei, Hong Kong, Singapore, Monaco, Zurich, Tokyo, Sidney, Paris, Frankfurt, Milan).

How many countries are financially dependent on the imperialist powers? Many of them.

How many are usurious states? A limited number. How many debtor states are there? A large number.

Which countries are leading the struggle for a new division of the world? They are the great imperialist powers (USA, China, Russia, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan, etc.) with their international alliances.

The reality of imperialism today confirms the Leninist analysis, disavowing the “pan-imperialism” and mystification of “mutual dependency” advocated by the proponents of the pyramid scheme.

One of the fundamental presuppositions of the imperialist pyramid scheme is the absolutization of one of the characteristics of imperialism, namely the formation of monopolies and the constitution of finance capital. It is an essential hallmark of imperialism, but it is not the only one and must be understood by taking into account its determining function both at the national level and in "*all economic and international relations*" (Lenin, *Imperialism*). Equally important are the export of capital, the division of the world among the great powers, etc.

It is necessary to analyze in a many-sided and comprehensive way the aspects and characteristics of imperialism, their quality, their proportions, their connections, their dynamics, the concrete forms of the monopoly stage of capitalism, without falling into

one-sided and sophistic approaches which embrace only one side of the phenomenon.

The replacement of the concrete analysis with the abstractness of the pyramid scheme leads to erroneous conclusions. For example, if in some countries subjected to imperialism there are capitalists who make some investments abroad, or are owners of businesses outside the borders, this does not mean that they too are imperialists, and no longer dependent, subjected to the international division of labor, with a growing presence of foreign capital, etc.

At the same time, the presence of transnational monopolies in the dependent countries does not indicate a qualitative leap in their economic base, but must be understood as a product of the capital export of the imperialist countries to sectors where profits can be maximized, raw materials plundered, etc. This does not change but aggravates the condition of dependence and backwardness of those countries, damages other sectors such as agriculture, causes environmental disasters, reactionary violence, etc.

The development of the productive forces and the process of internationalization of the world economy favor these phenomena, without changing the relationships of dependence and oppression. We must not confuse general tendencies with concreteness.

Even formally independent capitalist countries are dominated by imperialism and thus made dependent. Economic dependence is in fact fully achievable with the political independence of the different capitalist states; without doubt this occurs and is continuously strengthened.

The transformations and modernization of the capitalism of some so-called “developing” countries, even the participation of these countries in military aggression with troops or the adoption of imperialist policies (such as those of the IMF), does not mean that these countries are no longer subjugated by imperialism, that they are no longer exploited by international monopolies, by international financial institutions headed by a small number of imperialist powers.

As we have mentioned, the imperialist world system is a system of financial enslavement and oppression of peoples and most countries by a group of dominant powers. In the pyramid scheme instead all the countries of the world make up a single group that

includes both the imperialist countries and the dependent, oppressed ones. This highlights the lack of dialectics, as viewing the world through the lens of this hierarchical scheme leads to the denial of the qualitative difference of phenomena (for example, from the development of capitalism to imperialism), assuming that there is only a quantitative difference between the countries that make up the pyramid with distinctions in their power relations. This consideration prevents the qualitative differences from being recognized. Therefore, it becomes easy to lump everything together.

In other words, the supporters of the pyramid scheme confuse the character of the era with all the phenomena it embraces, which instead have different natures from country to country (imperialist and dependent countries, oppressors and oppressed, plunderers and plundered).

The world imperialist system, the single imperialist chain that strangles the proletarians and the peoples, has nothing to do with the pyramid scheme in which both the imperialist countries and the dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries are included. This scheme replaces the different phase of development of these countries, that is, the change of some fundamental qualities of capitalism into their opposite, with the ranking inherent the pyramid metaphor.

Marxism-Leninism does not put all the imperialist and capitalist countries, dominant and dependent, into the same bag, but distinguishes the imperialist, oppressive, exploiting countries from the oppressed, dependent countries and nations, exposing



the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois lies that try to hide the financial, political and military enslavement of the vast majority of the world's population by a minority formed by the most advanced, richest and most powerful capitalist countries. Otherwise, behind the formulas, in effect, they end up affirming generalizations detached from reality and the concept of "pure imperialism", which Lenin fought resolutely.

IV. The consequences of the pyramid scheme

What are the theoretical and political, strategic and tactical consequences of adopting the imperialist pyramid scheme?

In the first place, with the "imperialist pyramid" scheme one of the main contradictions of our era is neglected and even ignored: the contradiction between imperialism and the peoples of the dependent, colonial and semi-colonial countries of the world, which is deepening due to the plunder, exploitation and oppression, intervention and interference exercised by the monopolies and imperialist states.

Proponents of the pyramid scheme conceal the existence and development of this contradiction, dissolving it within the one between different imperialist powers.

But imperialism – together with the sharpening of the contradictions between imperialist powers and financial groups which today is expressed at the highest level in the all-out struggle for hegemony between the USA and China (which is not simply a fight for first and second place at the top of the pyramid) does not suppress the irreconcilable antagonism between imperialist and the peoples of dependent countries; on the contrary, it sharpens it in the current situation.

The objective contradiction between the policy of robbery and oppression of world imperialism and an independent development of these countries persists and worsens even where the national bourgeoisie, in addition to the *comprador* bourgeoisie, adapts itself to relations with imperialism (often trying to renegotiate their dependence on the main world brigands).

In these countries the interests of the national capital, which is intertwined with international capital, and the people and the working class are very different and opposite. While the former benefit from the imperialist plunder and are even accomplices (it is a fact that today no significant large capital group in these

countries can operate internationally without interdependence with imperialist finance capital), the latter are the victims.

This contradiction can only be overcome by the revolutionary struggle of the working masses of the dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries.

Secondly, supporting the pyramid scheme and ignoring qualitative differences ends up denying the international magnitude of the struggle that develops in the dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries, which is an inextinguishable and dynamic outbreak of the revolutionary mass movement.

The contrasts between the imperialist world and the dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries do not diminish, but are accentuated and often lead to open conflicts that assume an acute character: popular uprisings take place on the basis of the anti-imperialist struggle and the struggle against the exploiting bourgeoisie (in Latin America, Africa, Asia, etc.). The fundamental issues that led to large mass protests are unresolved in these countries, so the struggle movement is at a developmental stage in many dependent countries.

These circumstances are extremely important for the proletariat, because they deeply undermine the positions of monopoly capitalism, and strategically transform the dependent countries from reserves of imperialism into reserves of the proletarian revolution. Consequently, Marxist-Leninists stand firmly on the side of oppressed peoples and nations and support their national and social liberation movements.

The formation of a front of struggle between the forces of the proletariat of the imperialist countries and the working masses of these countries is of decisive importance in the present era. Outside this alliance led by the proletariat there is no possibility of victory against the organized forces of finance capital.

Thirdly, supporting the imperialist pyramid thesis advocates a direct transition to socialism in all countries, including dependent, semi-colonial and colonial ones.

For the supporters of the imperialist pyramid scheme, the era of democratic and popular revolutions is over because in the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution the problem of the direct transition to socialism concerns all countries where there is the presence of monopoly capitalism. Since finance capital is also present in dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries (if only

for the looting that it carries out there), the direct transition to socialism is theorized for these countries as well, without going through any transitional stage.

This thesis is based on the fact that the strategy and tactics of the communist parties are determined exclusively by the "epoch" in which capital and the proletariat live and fight against each other. It is precisely such an error that Lenin thoroughly criticized in some polemical writings against Pyatakov, who maintained that it was wrong to fight for the defense of democracy against reaction, for the self-determination of nations, etc., because by now we were living in another historical era, the "era of imperialism". Lenin unmasked the tendency towards "imperialist economism" of Bukharin, Pyatakov and Bosc which denied the possibility of carrying on the struggle for national and democratic rights in the imperialist era.

In the shadow of the "pyramid" emerges the renunciation of the hegemonic function of the proletariat on an international scale, the ideological and political inability to use the struggle for reforms by subordinating it to the struggle for revolution, to link the struggle for the socialist revolution to democratic and anti-imperialist tasks in a number of dependent countries.

The imperialist pyramid scheme contradicts the need for revolutionary strategy and tactics based on the level of development of each country and the objective revolutionary tasks facing the communists, including the creation of class alliances and popular fronts led by the working class.

It underestimates the importance of the revolutionary democratic tasks, the importance of the national, anti-imperialist and anti-fascist struggle in the revolutionary development of many peoples (for example, in the African countries which are pregnant with democratic and anti-imperialist revolutions).

With the thesis of the direct transition to socialism for all countries – a direct consequence of the adoption of the pyramid scheme – revisionist positions are not fought, but erroneous or unfounded tasks and strategies are envisaged for the dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries.

The democratic, national liberation and anti-imperialist tasks are separated from the socialist ones, with serious consequences for the revolutionary processes of the countries which have to go

through preparatory stages, more or less rapid, to reach the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The people's democratic revolution is the stage to pass through for numerous dependent, semi-colonial and colonial countries. The national question and the democratic revolution must not inevitably be led and resolved by the national bourgeoisie. They can be led and brought to success by the proletariat at the head of its allies, without the fundamental forces of the bourgeoisie, and without the latter having a leading role.

In the epoch of imperialism there is no insurmountable barrier between the democratic revolution and the proletarian revolution, but the former can and must transform itself into the latter; it is used for the transition to the second phase.

If on the one hand, the relationship between socialism, democracy and the national question is crushed under the weight of the pyramid, on the other hand it has harmful consequences to the actual practice of proletarian internationalism.

It must be remembered that the proletarians of the imperialist countries and those of the dependent countries do not raise identical demands and slogans, even though they have the same general objectives and the same final goal. The pyramid scheme creates the idea of the impossibility of national liberation struggles, of democratic and revolutionary wars, of the democratic tasks of revolutions in exploited and oppressed countries, of the struggle for self-determination and national rights, for the emancipation of peoples. And with this approach, internationalist support for these processes is also weakened.

But there is another big question. If the pyramid scheme were correct, and imperialism has turned into a single solid block, how could one single country (or a few countries) be detached from it? Where could the world imperialist front be broken if there are no weakest points in the Leninist sense, but only "more or less strong states" with "uniform characteristics" and substantial interdependence among them? Would a single, simultaneous world revolutionary act be necessary as the form for the transition from capitalism to socialism?

It is no coincidence that Lenin does not use the metaphor of the pyramid, but the imperialist chain. This image highlights the non-monolithic and unbreakable nature of the imperialist system, but subjects it to rupture at one or more points.

We must be very careful about the re-proposition in different forms, with new terminologies and images, of old theses that manifest the inability to understand the international proletarian revolution as a result of processes of a different nature and not contemporary, that denies the possibility of the revolutionary breaking of the imperialist chain at one or more points, usually the weakest in a chain under tension, and of the construction of socialism in one or more countries, albeit less developed ones and those surrounded by imperialism.

V. In conclusion

As we have seen, the pyramid scheme, despite being presented as a modern illustration of the imperialism, is in contradiction with several aspects of Marxism-Leninism and leads to wrong ideological and political consequences.

The fundamental theses of the Leninist theory of imperialism and proletarian revolution are deformed and denied by the pyramid description and its consequences. It is an anti-dialectical scheme that does not help communists understand and fight imperialism, putrid and dying capitalism. It is the wrong cure for a really existing opportunist and reformist disease, a medicine that has several contraindications, even fatal ones, as we have demonstrated.

We must fight against the denial and caricatures of Leninism, against its reduction to a few quotations or references without connection to the whole theory, strategy and tactics of the movement for the emancipation of the proletariat. At the same time, we must criticize and demolish all the clichés that are repeated uncritically, as well as the insertion of foreign ideas into Marxism-Leninism, due to the lack of ideological training and lack of assimilation of materialist dialectics.

The international communist movement is struggling to find its revolutionary unity. The heavy toll of revisionism which led to the defeat of the first experiences of proletarian socialism still weighs heavily on our movement, while old and new opportunist and social-democrat deviations appear and become more acute in this period marked by the imperialist war being fought in Ukraine.

The revival of our movement can only take place following a close theoretical, ideological and political struggle against all

these deformations and deviations, based on the defense of Marxist-Leninist principles applied to concrete reality.

It is not possible that on a fundamental issue such as that of imperialism, disinterest is shown, or an "intermediate line" is adopted; rather it is time to insist on the obligation to study in depth and definitively clarify the problems raised, sweeping away the confusion existing in the communist and workers' movement.

The critique of the "imperialist pyramid" scheme is not an academic one but it is necessary because it has profound effects on the analysis, strategy and tactics of the communists in the different countries and internationally.

The communists who are fighting to give to the working class their own independent and revolutionary party, to strengthen international cooperation of communist parties and organization on solid Marxist-Leninist foundations, cannot evade the task of achieving the most complete clarity on the question of imperialism and on the closely related question of opportunism.

We therefore invite the development of ideological and political debate and confrontation, in the spirit of the struggle for the unity of the (Marxist-Leninist) communists.

September 2023

Political Economy and the Electoral Situation: Neoliberal Continuity in the Epoch of Imperialism and the Proletarian Revolutions

Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, V.I. Lenin and Joseph Stalin have taught us—and the universal history of class struggles confirms this—that the political and ideological expressions of individuals, societies, and even revolutions are no more than so many results of the real material contradictions that emerge from the contradiction between the development of the productive forces and the stagnant and obsolete social relations of production.

Currently in Mexico, all the conditions are being created for the continuity of the so-called regime of the Fourth Transformation headed by Andrés Manuel López Obrador (4T – AMLO), whose main objective is to reverse the fall in the rate of profit, after the last cyclical crises of capitalism, using state promotion of large megaprojects that create better conditions for capitalist accumulation through industrialization and proletarianization of the southeast of the country. A central part of this process is the Interoceanic Corridor of Tehuantepec, developing rehabilitation works and new constructions in the ports of Coatzacoalcos and Salinas Cruz. These are expected to have the highest concentration of the activity of the movement of commodities; the objective is to implement a logistics platform that connects the ports of Salinas Cruz, Coatzacoalcos, Chiapas and Dos Bocas by more than a thousand kilometers of railways. Line Z will connect the Gulf of Mexico with the Pacific Ocean, Line FA from Coatzacoalcos to Palenque with connection to the Train Maya, Line K from Ixtepec to Ciudad Hidalgo that will connect with Central America, is of such magnitude that the objective is to compete with the Panama Canal in order to move 1,400,000 containers per year in Coatzacoalcos; the same task for the Port of Salina Cruz. This is one of the main objectives; it is not for the poor and their movement by train, as AMLO's presidential narrative claims.

Complementary to the mobilization of commodities, 10 poles of industrial development are being created, called "Well-being",

in line with the narrative that in Mexico — with the 4T regime — neoliberalism has ended and there is a "State of Well-being", although in reality there is a neoliberal bourgeois continuity.

These 10 poles of industrial development are Predio Coatzacoalcos I, Coatzacoalcos II, Predio Tequistepec, Predio San Juan Evangelista, Predio Salinas Cruz, Matias Romero, Ixtaltepec, San Blas Atempa, Ciudad Ixtepec, Santa María Mixtequilla, for which, according to the Government of the 4T, all the facilities, the administration of the lands along with tax incentives for the monopolies and their investors, are being given as concessions to private initiative. It is creating energy conditions, communications by highways; this is the role of the state administration at the service of capital. All the natural resources of Mexico in all areas will be used; for example, the Federal Electricity Commission has determined that four properties of these so-called 10 development poles have characteristics for the use of wind or mixed energy: San Blas Atempa, Santa María Mixtequilla, Ciudad Ixtepec and Chivela, where they plan to develop agro-industry, metals and textiles.

Having as its center the industrial production that on the basis of the exploitation of wage labor, it implies developing housing, shopping centers, etc., for the labor force; in short, a whole process to attract the labor force from the southeast of the country, but also the floating immigrant population that is already staying in Mexico. The process of proletarianization of southeastern Mexico will take Mexico to new levels of development of capitalist accumulation. We say new levels, because the accumulation of capital presupposes an increase of the proletariat, and as such the objective contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the productive forces and the relations of production, between capitalism and socialism, and these social relations today exist under the regime of the 4T as the embodiment of a capitalist-imperialist production process representing the economic interests of the ruling class.

Linked to the mobilization of commodities and industrialization is the development of the productive forces and new industrial branches in the center and north of the country, deepening the role that Mexico plays in the production chain of the automotive and agro-industrial industries, while developing the food

industry, medical equipment, electronics, the aeronautical industry, the potential of lithium, etc.

There has been a relative reactivation of the domestic market, without missing any opportunity for Mexico to be in better conditions in the capitalist-imperialist world market, as a bridge between capital for investment in the U.S. market at this time, already surpassing the Chinese. This takes advantage of the fact that there is a young labor force in Mexico, and "redistributing" the wealth to keep the proletariat in good condition (wage increases and various social supports but without violating the dominant relation of capital over labor), in better condition for wage exploitation.

In this sense, the increases in the minimum wage—on average 158%—are still among the lowest in Latin America; they do not change the fundamental character of capitalist production nor do they change the class relationship between exploiters and exploited. They do not change the class character of workers as wage earners, as modern wage slaves. On the contrary, wage increases do not hinder accumulation under capitalism, they go hand in hand with new levels of capitalist accumulation, extending the volume of investment, while at the same time the temporary growth of the active workers (until a new cyclical crisis of capitalism reaches us) leads to new levels of exploitation. This recreates what Marx wrote in *Capital*: under the 4T, the weight of the "golden chains" that capital has forged for the wage worker can maintain him without being so tight. This does not mean that we



are against wage increases; on the contrary, we constantly fight for wage increases, but at all times we put forward the general interests of the working class for their emancipation from wage exploitation. To be more specific, under the current AMLO-Morena administration, the general trend in the distribution of income between the remuneration of wage earners and profits as a proportion of the Gross Domestic Product has not changed; there are a series of small increases and decreases depending on the year, but in general there is a tendency towards a decrease in the proportion of remuneration of wages compared to profits. This general trend has not been broken under the current administration, even with the wage increases, because it takes place within the framework of an increase in capitalist production in recent post-pandemic years. By 1974, the remuneration of wage earners reached 40% of GDP; already in the middle of the neoliberal period in 1984 it fell to 31%; in 1994 it rose a little to reach 34%, to fall again in 1996 to 28%, rose again in 2002 to 31%, fell in 2020 to 29%, in 2017 to 26%, in 2022 the proportion rose to 28%. That is, the increases in the minimum wage that have taken place in the current AMLO-Morena administration does not essentially break with the general trend that has occurred throughout the neoliberal period in the proportion of income distribution of wages and profits with respect to GDP, because they take place in a context of record profits for the industrial and banking monopolies. This explains the confidence that AMLO-4T has already gained among sectors of the oligarchy and the transnational monopolies.

Under this regime, the strengthening of the big monopolies and the financial oligarchy is evident. By 2020, the year that the last cyclical crisis bottomed out, Mexico's 100 largest monopoly business owners received \$132 billion in profits. By 2021, they recovered quickly and added a fortune of \$220 billion, and for the year 2022 they increased their profits to \$254 billion, record profits in terms of their own accounting, comparable to the GDP of countries such as Portugal, New Zealand and Peru. This is the policy of "reasonable" profits and against corruption; for example, since the pandemic Carlos Slim increased his wealth by 42%, that is, \$25.5 billion, which corresponds to \$1 million per hour.

The banking sector follows the same trend of concentration, centralization and record profit growth during the current regime. Although it showed a drop in profits in 2020 (the year that the

crisis bottomed out) in relation to 2019, it quickly recovered in 2021, and in 2022 it received record profits since this data has been documented.

In 2019 this sector obtained 163,563 million pesos in profits, in 2020 it was 102,429 million pesos, and in 2022 it rose to 236,743 million pesos, during the first quarter of 2022 this profit margin was equal to 25 million pesos per hour.

And, parallel with all this, the militarization, paramilitarization and fascistization of the entire bourgeois state apparatus is growing, as evidence of the strengthening of the dictatorship of capital over the labor and peoples of Mexico.

Thus, although in the world capitalist-imperialist system Mexico is currently in 14th place in terms of GDP of \$1.42 trillion dollars (greater than Spain and Russia), nevertheless, the creation of this enormous wealth is concentrated in the profits of the financial oligarchy and the big monopolies at the expense of humanity and the exploitation and pauperization of the proletarian class. This is the essence of the class character of the 4T, the rest are the catchphrases of the fight against corruption and "regime change".

The policy of the "new Mexican humanism" and the "State of Well-being" of the 4T has made it clear that the "progressive" measures and measures of the "poor first" do not contradict the continuity of the neoliberal and bourgeois class. This neo-Keynesian policy has meant no cost to the profits of the capitalists; on the contrary, the bankers have made record profits under the government of the 4T, and the big monopolies have increased their profits to greater than the pre-pandemic level, with profits that far exceed those of previous years. This is the real material "success" of the 4T with a well-defined class content. It is a fact that the level of extraction of surplus value of the Mexican working class has grown in recent years.

For the social class that produces wealth, the proletariat, there has been an increase in wage exploitation; the regime of the 4T is a continuation of the previous governments and could not be otherwise, because what defines it is the mode of production, and not the form of government. The essence is wage exploitation, not corruption.

To raise the rate of surplus value, capitalism resorts to increasing the length of the working day (absolute surplus value). This

increases the necessary labor-time and consequently the rate of surplus-value.

The number of workers who work more than 48 hours in Mexico is on the rise; in 2005 there were 12.5 million and in 2021 there were already 15 million such workers. For 2022, according to figures from the INEGI [National Institute of Statistics and Geography], workers in Mexico who work from 49 to 56 hours are 14.3% of the Economically Active Population, and those who work more than 56 hours are 13.3%. In other words, more than 27% work more than the time limit formally established by law, that is, more than 16 million workers. Thus, one of the ways to raise the rate of surplus value, the tendency to extend the working day (absolute surplus value), has been strengthened in the current regime of the 4T.

Another way to extract a higher rate of surplus value is to reduce wages below the value of labor power, so that it reproduces itself in a diminished way by not being able to acquire the means of subsistence to reproduce itself with its wages.

With inflation, what has been most affected are the basic necessities for the working class; on average more than 60% of their salary goes to food; in 2022 the basic food basket [the monthly minimum needed to buy food] in urban areas registered prices of 1,975 pesos for one person (not for the family) according to figures from Coneval [National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy]. While the minimum wage was 149.69 pesos, in practical terms this means that a worker would have to work 13 days to barely pay for his food.

Increases in the minimum wage are less and less sufficient to replenish the labor force, and still the number of workers earning between 1 and 2 minimum wages is on the rise.

The reduction of the value of labor power on the basis of technical developments reduces the socially necessary labor time for the production of the means of subsistence of the working class (relative surplus value). In this way the necessary labor-time is reduced, and the surplus labor-time is consequently extended, and the rate of surplus-value is increased.

Gross fixed investment is an indicator that refers to the purchase of machinery or replacement of machinery during a given period, in this case one year. Under the current government, net

fixed investment averages 1 percent per year and the increase in the stock averages 0.4 percent per year.

In 2020, as a result of the deepest downturn in the economy, due to the crisis and the pandemic, there were negative data in gross fixed investment; in 2020 as in 2021, the figures averaged 1.9% in net fixed investment and 0.8% increase in capital stock.

These data mean:

1. That in 2022 the gross investment of 2018 had not been exceeded.

2. That workers have created wealth in this period globally, with practically the same stock of machinery and equipment.

3. That since the difficulties for gross fixed investment were constant in this period, the bourgeoisie had to increase the process of exploitation of the working class, by means of the intensification of wage exploitation, as well as the extension of the working day. Only a small sector of large transnational corporations and large monopolies concentrate technical developments (robotization, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, nanotechnology) to reduce the socially necessary labor time for the reproduction of labor power (relative surplus value).

Taken as a whole, during the current 4T regime, the three processes have been combined to increase wage exploitation, and these have been strengthened and developed to new levels.

The trend that has been expressed throughout the neoliberal stage of the increase in the rate of surplus value has not changed; the average rate of exploitation went from 4 to 7 hours, which is expressed in the necessary labor time that went from 1.6 to 1 hour to reproduce the labor power, the Center for Multidisciplinary Analysis of the UNAM states that this has gone to 40 minutes today. Whatever data is taken as a reference, the conclusion is the same: the increase in wage exploitation has developed to new levels today under the leadership of the political economy of AMLO-Morena.

The level of profits, concentration and centralization of profits is breaking records; now, the bourgeoisie needs to crown its success, and for this it fundamentally requires the continuity of the entire political system and superstructure, given the effectiveness it has shown for the ruling class, as they are creating better political and economic conditions to extend, deepen and perfect the exploitation of wage labor, modernizing and developing

capitalism in Mexico to new levels. We are just at the beginning of Mexico becoming an important link in the entire chain of world capitalist production. This will change the physiognomy of cities, roads, transport, culture, simplifying more clearly the contradiction between capital and labor, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

This path has already begun by proletarianizing the southeast of the country, strengthening industry by developing the productive forces and industrialization with new industrial corridors. But this path that has been initiated requires a political force or a combination of political forces from the so-called "division of powers" and from the entire constitutional organization and the Mexican bourgeois state. They must impose their dictatorship and "diminish" their internal contradictions and advance towards the solution of their contradictions by trying to prolong the life of the capitalist-imperialist system of production and to expand their hegemony over the working class, the poor peasants, the broad popular masses and the peoples of Mexico. They must contain our conscious, organized, orderly and planned intervention through the Proletarian Revolution, to put them in the dustbin of history.

This is what capital, as a substance with a life of its own, and the entire capitalist-imperialist system, has so far defined in the bloc that supports Xochilt Gálvez and in the bloc that supports Claudia Schembaun, as well as the movements that are being carried out by Marcelo Ebrard and Movimiento Ciudadano [Citizens' Movement]. The new parties and all those big and little personalities, both of the 4T, as well as of the fascist and pro-coup right and ultra-right, through some bourgeois party or in an "independent" way, aspire to occupy one of the 20,263 popularly elected positions, which will be contested on June 2, 2024 (among others: the presidency of the Republic, the 500 deputies and 128 senators of the Congress of the Union, 8 governorships and the Head of Government of Mexico City, among others). With this, the entire capitalist-imperialist system—and particularly the financial oligarchy—in Mexico, will try to grease the wheels of the bourgeois state, as the machinery of oppression and exploitation that administers all the general interests of the exploiters and oppressors.

The current scenario is an opportunity and a challenge for the working class; it is an opportunity to clarify that the only path of change that favors the working class and the popular masses is

not to hide our communist political objectives, slogans, and symbols, our tactics of the revolutionary accumulation of forces, of the united front of the proletariat and the peoples of Mexico: the National Assembly of the Proletariat and Peoples of Mexico. We point out that behind every political figure or party, there are well-defined class interests, beyond the immediate discourse. These personalities and parties embody economic relations, and in this case they are those of the ruling class, and the challenge for the working class is first to keep our forces organized, second to accumulate forces through mobilization, fighting at the national level, defending our unions, wages, labor, but mainly by strengthening the unity and extending the struggle to the national level, to elevate the forms of struggle and organization for the victory of our Proletarian Revolution.

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Member of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist
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On Prettifying Russian Imperialism and "Multipolarism"

A current among leftists who have not flung themselves into NATO's lap is attempting to argue "theoretically" that Russia is not imperialist. This is a cover-up of the nature of imperialism on a par with support for the war policy of NATO "democracies" from other left opportunists – only the other way round.

In economic terms, Russia is a second-rate great power, despite its size and military machine. Nevertheless, it is a gross theoretical error to claim that Russia is not an imperialist country, as sections of the anti-imperialist left are now doing.

Whether a state is imperialist or not cannot be determined solely by the capabilities of its military machine or its foreign policy rhetoric. That would be vulgar Marxism. The concentration of capital and the economic strength of the country are fundamental. But to be an imperialist great power, the country's size and access to resources are also crucial, along with the state's military potential.

Let's take a concrete look at some economic indicators for different countries.

Steel production is frequently used as an indicator of a country's economic strength, its level of development and self-sufficiency. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Soviet Union was the world's largest steel producer, with the United States in second place. Today, China produces ten times more steel than both Russia and the United States, both of which are surpassed by India and Japan.

Russia and the United States are thus greatly weakened in this area. But no one would argue that the United States consequently has ceased to be an imperialist power.

The US and most European imperialist powers are also mired in foreign debt, while Russia's foreign debt is relatively modest (some 18 percent of GDP). In this respect, Russian imperialism is in a better position than many of its rivals.

The Netherlands and Norway are examples of small but highly developed imperialist countries with limited military potential. They want to defend their foreign investments and interests with diplomacy and military force, but they are sparrows in the imperialist crane dance. Therefore, the Netherlands and Norway only can and dare flex their military muscle abroad as part of larger imperialist coalitions.

Japan is the world's third largest economy, but imperialist power Japan has only built up its offensive military capabilities in recent years. Admittedly, this has specific historical and political reasons related to the bombing of Hiroshima and the peace settlement in 1945. For now, Japan is forced to team up with the United States.

On the other hand, there are regional powers that arm themselves to the teeth by means of super profits in the form of ground rent and oil, but which have little industry of their own and relatively modest capital exports. The latter is due to underdeveloped productive forces and modest value processing of natural resources, dependence on foreign monopolies and technology, nepotism, corruption and feudal remnants, or to the fact that the country is simply so large that monopolies can reap an acceptable rate of profit in their own domestic market. In some of these regional powers, capitalist development has progressed to such an extent that they are attempting to break free of their semi-colonial status.

There are parallels between some of these countries and backward Russia under tsarism. But Tsarist Russia was also defined by Lenin as imperialist, albeit as imperialism's weakest link. This weaker monopoly of finance capital was partly offset by the monopoly of military power, he explained in *"Imperialism and the Split in Socialism"* (1916). Today, the depiction is reinforced by the nuclear monopoly of Russia and the United States, besides a select few imperialist or regional powers.

Russia today is a far more advanced imperialist country than Tsarist Russia was, despite a generation of disintegration and stagnation following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Obfuscating imperialism

We emphasize this because of a tendency on the part of the left that has not yet settled into NATO's lap, arguing

"theoretically" that Russia is not imperialist. Rather, the country is a "semi-colonial second-class nation", as Anders Carlsson writes in the Swedish newspaper *Proletären* (the Worker) in an article that several forces in Norway have embraced. The article is representative of an international trend among various "left" currents. Pål Steigan (former chairman of the Workers' Communist Party, AKP (m-l), in the 1970s) is among those who convey these views.

Carlsson's attempt at analysis contains many points, but nevertheless concludes incorrectly when, with reference to Lenin, he tries to claim that Russia is not imperialist in the economic sense, and consequently incapable of being an aggressive great power. This is an offshoot of the idea that, for the sake of peace, we need a "multipolar" world, in which other great powers contain US hegemony and its project for full spectrum dominance. The only other great powers capable of constituting a credible "counterweight" to the United States are Russia and China in collaboration with one another.

This idea of a multipolar world is akin to Karl Kautsky's theory of "ultra-imperialism", in which the imperialist great powers agree to keep the peace among themselves and allow the world's united finance capital to exploit the whole world in collusion and tolerance. In order not to be lumped in with Kautsky, the opportunists of today must try to prove that certain great powers are not imperialist, and can therefore choose to adopt a different and more "rational" policy.

The revisionists of our time are therefore obliged to paint Russia and China as "non-imperialist" great powers. The message is that these powers are trying to keep US imperialism in check, and therefore in a sense they are our friends! The conclusion is absurd, but it nevertheless resonates among some anti-imperialists.

People who call themselves Marxists and Leninists should know that it is not other great powers, but only the working class and the oppressed peoples of the world that can and must crush US and all other imperialist powers.

Capital exports in many forms

Russia's foreign investment and economic power is downplayed by the fact that it is largely an exporter of low-processed natural resources. However, the fact that Norway is predominantly a commodity exporter of natural resources like oil, gas and

fish does not prevent Norway from also exporting extensive capital through the Government Pension Fund Global and state-owned monopolies such as Telenor, Equinor or Statkraft, and without question it is an imperialist country. Like Russia, Norway too – but on a much smaller scale – has developed a high-tech industrial sector for weapons production, drilling technology and space exploration.

The transition of the capitalist free trade system into monopoly capitalism was what Lenin defined as imperialism, or the highest (and final) stage of capitalism. Central characteristics of imperialism are, according to Lenin, the merger of industrial capital and bank capital into finance capital, and the fact that the export of capital becomes more important than the export of commodities.

The net figure for Russia's direct foreign investment in 2021 was about \$66 billion, according to the World Bank. This is no insignificant amount, albeit small compared to the investments made by the United States and Germany. In 2013, Russian foreign investment contributed 23.4 percent of the country's gross domestic product, according to some sources. Before the Maidan uprising, the lion's share of Russia's foreign investment was concentrated in Ukraine. Russian enterprises controlled 80 percent of the petroleum sector and the military-industrial complex. For Russian imperialism, it is unbearable to live with the fact that the Zelensky regime, on behalf of US imperialism, has confiscated it all for the benefit of the EU and NATO.

Capital exports in the form of imports of labor force are an obvious example of imperialism. Several million migrant workers from the Caucasus and the Central Asian republics work in the Russian construction and service sectors. Foreign workers send part of their wages to their homeland, while other parts accrue to the imperialist host country. In 2013 these revenues were about \$37 billion, more than what migrant workers in Saudi Arabia or Germany "leave behind," Georgian communists write.

The figures hardly give the whole picture. The assets that various Russian oligarchs have plundered after the collapse of the Soviet Union have largely been placed in various tax havens such as Jersey, the Virgin Islands and Cyprus, but also in the property markets of major cities such as New York and London.

Personal union and other characteristics

The personal union between centrally placed people in banking, industry and the state apparatus is a typical feature of monopoly capitalism. In Norway, the revolving doors between government offices, banking palaces and industrial corporations, typically represented by the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises, can be seen by anyone. Top politicians and judges take part in smear trips paid for by top financial officials, such as when the current head of the Government Pension Fund Global invited key personalities in the Norwegian elite to a dream seminar in the US in 2019. What is different about Russia is that the nepotism there is even more evident and the "lubrication" trips have other destinations. Like Norway, Russia has a large state capitalist sector and state-controlled monopolies.

Relative to other great powers, Russian imperialism lags behind economically in spite of formidable oil and gas revenues. Russian companies and banks are far down the lists of the world's largest. The gas company Gazprom stands out, with more employees worldwide than any other company, 470,000. Rosneft and Lukoil are not far behind. All of these companies, often with mutual ownership of each other, have close ties to the Russian state apparatus. Gazprom is semi-privatized, much like Norwegian Equinor.

Sanctions from the West and the war in Ukraine have naturally changed the picture when it comes to Russian capital



investment overseas. But until very recently, Russian oil and gas companies had significant investments and stakes in real estate and energy projects in countries such as the UK, Italy and Germany.

Internationally, Russian financial institutions play in the second league, and are now largely blocked from conducting normal business in Western countries. Nevertheless, the Russian Sberbank has acquired significant shareholdings in Turkish as well as Serbian banks.

The arms industry and space technology are other fields where Russia is flexing its muscles. Russian companies in these fields have invested in large production facilities in India and Turkey.

A country that employs regular mercenary armies in wars of conquest is also a hallmark of imperialists. The Wagner Group operates in Ukraine and in many countries of Africa in the service of the Russian state and private interests. It is completely parallel to the mercenary army Blackwater (now renamed Constellis, after several mergers and name changes) that the United States used in Iraq. Wagner and Blackwater were established by former officers of the Russian and US armies, respectively.

These brief examples should be sufficient to show that Russia meets all the criteria for an imperialist state, even disregarding its nuclear arsenal and formidable arms power.

A multipolar imperialist world

Attempts at describing Russia or China as something different from other imperialist countries means to apologize and justify imperialism as a system. The propaganda of Moscow and Beijing would have us believe that these "defensive" great powers merely keep the aggressive United States at bay and will provide us a peaceful and better world. They do not refrain from spicing up the message with parallels to the Red Army's struggle against Nazism or with Chinese "socialism."

This is anti-Marxist nonsense. The reasoning is not unlike the theory of the "three worlds", which advocated that the oppressed countries had to ally themselves with the medium-sized imperialists against the two superpowers at that time, the United States and the Soviet Union.

The U.S. empire is on the wane. Other imperialists and regional powers, primarily China, but also Russia, want an end to the

unjust Western world order. During the press conference on the occasion of president Xi Jinping's visit to Moscow on March 21 this year, he and Vladimir Putin stressed that China and Russia would "work together to create a more just and multipolar world order." But this is not about them wanting to get rid of an unjust imperialist system that enslaves the peoples of the world. The close relationship between Russia and China "is vital to the modern world order," as President Xi put it. Multilateralism is about the fact that they want to be treated as "equal" great powers in relation to their relative strength in the international arena. The two heads of state say between the lines that the policies of dictates and sanctions of the United States threaten global transportation routes and food security. This message is acknowledged by many African countries, but it has nothing to do with Russian and Chinese concern for global justice.

When China and Xi Jinping, with Russia and Putin in tow, want "a multipolar world," it is a response and a challenge to a fading US world dominance. The multipolar world is nothing but the result of the uneven development of capitalism and a harbinger of new and even greater wars.

Contradictions between the imperialist powers are one of the fundamental contradictions of our epoch. A recurring mistake among progressives is to make this a principal contradiction, hoping to exploit the rivalry between the great powers by propping up the "lesser evil." This implies elevating what might be necessary tactics in a given situation, during a revolution or a national liberation war, to strategy. Thus, one disregards or downplays the other equally important fundamental contradictions: the struggle between labor and capital; the struggle of the oppressed peoples against imperialism and the contradiction between capitalism and socialism.

Anyone who claims that US imperialism and Western world domination can be tamed by supporting one group of great powers against other great powers is in reality running the errand of imperialism. The ones who will defeat imperialism are none other than the world's working class and the oppressed peoples.

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On the Survivals of Feudalism in Pakistan

The following editorial from an issue of 'Awami Manshoor' represents an insightful analysis of the feudal economic bases of the civilian and military regimes of Pakistan after 1947. Although the piece is over twenty years old it represents an instructive analysis of the survivals of feudalism and tribalism in Pakistan in the contemporary situation.

When general Musharraf came to power in October 1999, we had written in an editorial captioned 'Pakistan at a New Turning Point' that the military rulers that had come into power in 1958, 1969 and 1977 had not relinquished power of their own. Though general Musharraf has held elections in the country yet he is the real ruler. When the honoured general had arrived he had tried in a press conference to equate himself with Kemal Ataturk. He had also cited Chinese examples to show that he was a champion of the Sino-Pak friendship. He had spoken against the feudal lords. He had also shown the people the way to reforms. His military media in charge major general Rashid Qureishi, too, had talked about the controls of the feudal lords. But what happened? The prime minister of president Musharraf says that there is no problem of feudalism in the country and there is no question of reforms in the agrarian relations.

We had said in our October 1999 issue that today's Pakistan suffers not only from decadent feudalism but also from the primitive tribal system. Without destroying these Pakistan can neither progress nor survive. You cannot run a train by putting a horse in front of it. Such is our situation that the country's elected prime minister, who calls himself a champion of democracy, says that president general is his 'boss'. When an elected prime minister accepts the president as his boss then what democracy do we have and what kind of democracy is it? The situation is worse than even so-called democracy. Taking account of the past fifty years we emphatically say that not only these three years of the general's rule but even the coming fifty years of the future regimes and the

regimes that would come after, cannot bring even a so-called democracy unless feudal system is uprooted in Pakistan.

After the partition of the sub-continent, the so-called capitalist democracy could come to the part which constituted India but Pakistan could not enjoy it. The reason behind that was that the Indian part had developed industries and the power of feudal lords was smashed there. That is why after partition they could destroy the feudal system and bourgeois democracy could be initiated there to some extent. The so-called democracy in India is usually eulogised but we understand that a real democracy can only come under a regime of the workers and peasants and that is impossible without an agrarian revolution. Nehru became the prime minister of India with full powers in his hands. It is only the prime minister who gets all the powers in his hands in a bourgeois democracy. On this side, Qaede-Azam was the champion of bourgeois democracy but he too loved to have the post of a governor general under a feudal system which has all the powers concentrated at the 'top', and he became a 'boss'. The Supreme Court, the bureaucracy and the army were formed to run that system. Had he not died so soon it was possible that the Qaede-Azam too would have tried to get rid of the feudal system like mian Iftkhar-ul-din, Mumtaz Daultana, Khan Qayoom Khan, Zahid Hussain, M. Masood and Haidar Baksh had done. But the country continued to be ruled by the feudal lords. The later regimes, including that of Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia-ul-haq and now president Musharraf were founded on the foundations of feudalism. This bunch of feudal lords who are nourished by imperialism can also fake elections as a showing off but the power always remains with it and the parliament acts like a cage where these 'birds', which are the product of this decadent system, are allowed to twitter in their respective languages. If we evaluate our history we find that feudalism had its roots in the Mughal period. If we see feudalism in the pre-partition period we find that Shah Abdal Aziz and Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan (1746-1824) played an important role in creating a bourgeois mentality among the Muslims through the capitalist banking system. The British empire had tried to destroy the old system by giving property rights to 'revenue collectors' and they too became the masters of the landless peasants. Muhammad Ali Johar, Maulana Azad and Allama Iqbal could not understand the efforts of Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan. They could not

understand the economic and social power of the Muslims and all the powers dealing with the economic and social issues went into the hands of non-Muslims. When Pakistan came into existence this whole region was under the domination of feudal lords. The religious organisations united themselves with the feudal forces and further strengthened this system. And now we have a situation where 67.5 % population is under the control of these forces which have kept them as hostages. Unless this system is destroyed the ideas prevailing in Pakistan concerning way of life, society and politics cannot change. Such is the situation that the so-called reforms which were carried out during the times of Ayub Khan and Bhutto sahib were stopped by a sharia court from 23rd March 1990 onwards. Why did such a thing happen after all? Not just to keep Pakistan under the yoke of feudal lords but also to maintain the unity of the mullahs with the feudal forces.

This feudal system has made the people of Pakistan pathetic. We whine like sheep. We have lost the sense of differentiating between the butcher and the shepherd. We have lost all sensibility, the hallmark of a living nation, to understand our decisions and to put them into practice. We have come to the conclusion that whatever is happening will always continue to happen. We fail to understand that at the time of freedom the big landlords had usurped state power and the feudal system was bestowed upon us by the British colonialists. The sons of these very feudal forces dominate the scene in Pakistan today, especially in Punjab and Sind provinces. The Sirdari system which was present in 1947 continues to dominate in Baluchistan. Similarly, the tribal system continued its political domination in the Frontier province. The rulers of these provinces of Pakistan were neither interested in carrying out any change nor did they allow it to happen because the system was serving them and they were fleecing the people white. The reforms carried out by Ayub Khan and Bhutto were half-hearted and half done. Only certain privileged people benefited from these reforms. Very influential people were behind the failure of the reforms. They transferred their lands to relatives and children through spurious methods. Many of them secured their lands by joining Bhutto's party. In this way they continued to hold political and personal sway. The national and regional assemblies were under their influence.

After Jamali's ravings about general Musharraf and after calling him his 'boss' it becomes clear that feudalism in Pakistan is in secure hands. Jamali has even told the feudal lords that they should increase their holdings without any fear and trouble. Now there is no ban over it. Although South Asia, which includes India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, is free from feudalism the prime minister of Pakistan is a landlord, the chief minister of Sind is a landlord, the chief minister of Baluchistan is a landlord, and the chief minister of Punjab is a landlord. Commenting upon the situation prevailing in Pakistan an opposition leader, Kichloo Ali, of Baluchistan has said, 'What an irony that president Pervez Musharraf had pledged to smash feudalism but his prime minister is strengthening it.' – just 7% of the landlords own 40% of land. In this situation how can a peasant and a poor person raise his head before these feudal lords? The so-called reforms of Ayub Khan and Bhutto had allowed the landlords to keep big farms in the name of gardens and hunting grounds which were later used for cultivation. A minister in Bhutto's cabinet, Mustafa Khar, has said that he purchased 150 acres of land at rupees 4000 per acre and converted that into a farm, and by taking advantage of his ministership he managed to bring a canal through his land. In this way, the price of his land was increased enormously. Later, he sold a part of his land at a very high price.

After Prime Minister Jamali's statements, a sociologist who is an expert in his field and is presently an assistant secretary general in the UNO, has said that Pakistan cannot control poverty until radical reforms are carried out in the agrarian sector. He is least influenced by the claims concerning the development of Pakistan and says that feudalism is a barrier to all kinds of progress. It is a strange thing in Pakistan that here we have landlords in the government and landlords in the opposition. In this way, these robbers destroy the people turn by turn. Everywhere the feudal ideas are in sway. The bureaucracy and the army are full with the people having these ideas and they are becoming new small landlords and land owners. In this worse kind of situation the prime minister's statement concerning reforms in the agrarian sector will only please the big landowners and especially the big shortcomings present in the share-cropping system would not be removed. There is much weight in what Dr. Ishrat Hussain says in this regard. He says that whatever reforms were effected have failed. The

things which are responsible for these failures include loopholes in the laws, manipulations while implementing these laws, and also the influences and pressures of the land owners have played their role. On the one hand, the experts in the socio-economic field have arrived at a common conclusion and demand that unless feudalism and landlordism is totally done away with in Pakistan and if the land remains in a few hands, the agriculture economy will not progress. They put forward the examples of South Korea, Taiwan and especially that of India in this regard where after the demise of feudalism production has increased enormously. Such is the situation in our beloved country where it has stagnated for the last 56 years. The country is in the control of parasitic feudal forces. The imperialist powers, for their own interests, want this country to be controlled by these forces.

Then how the conditions will change? Will the feudal lords and their henchmen change feudalism? How is it possible that the rulers would behead themselves on their own? A long-drawn-out struggle is needed for that. Only the working class can accomplish this job through an unbreakable alliance with the peasantry and by taking along all other patriotic forces with them. This can be accomplished only through struggles and struggles alone, leading to a thoroughgoing revolution. To snatch back rights one does not go in for favors. Right is secured through struggle.

The Ideological Background of Fascism: The Assault on Reason

European thought between 1870 and 1914

Between 1870 and 1914 a series of economic, political and social processes took place in Europe that corresponded to the spread of a set of reactionary ideological currents that represented a turning point in European thought, a rupture and an ideological regression that would culminate in fascism.

Around 1870, the Second Industrial Revolution began, characterized by the use of new sources of energy (oil and electricity), innovations in the work process (Taylorism, assembly lines), industrial concentration (trust, cartel) and the emergence of new industrial powers. The enormous development of the productive forces in the main capitalist powers led to the need for the bourgeoisie to seek new markets to sell a gigantic mass of commodities that no longer found an outlet in the national markets. On the other hand, the enormous increase in production also forced the main capitalist powers to look for sources of cheap raw materials as a means of lowering costs and producing commodities at lower prices in a scenario in which competition between companies and countries was fiercer. If until the first half of the 19th century the United Kingdom was the main industrial power in the world, the situation changed markedly in 1914. On the eve of the First World War, the United States had become the leading industrial power, with Germany in second place and the United Kingdom falling to third place.

The development of capitalism in these years led to imperialism. The main European powers set out to conquer the African and Asian world. At the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) it was decided to divide up Africa, which was divided mainly for the benefit of England and France, although Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Italy and Spain also took part in the plunder. Most of Asia also remained in European hands. The U.S. and Japan joined in the imperialist looting and plunder. Obtaining raw materials and markets,

investing capital, and exploiting native labor were the reasons for the conquest and redivision of the African and Asian peoples.

The rapid growth of capitalism also had another consequence: the development of the working class. The industrial proletariat not only increased numerically but its class consciousness was strengthened. Between 1870 and 1914 socialist parties acquired a notable presence in European public life, both in parliaments and in municipal corporations¹.

All these changes would produce, as we said before, a transcendental ideological turn. During the first half of the 19th century, European thought had been largely nourished by the Enlightenment. Liberalism, Marxism, and anarchism, while responding to different class interests, were political ideologies that spoke of progress, equality, social justice, and emancipation. On the contrary, from 1870 onwards, ideologies reacting against the Enlightenment burst onto the scene; It is what we might call an irrationalist inflection. Xenophobic nationalism, racism, anti-Semitism and philosophical irrationalism spread throughout Europe at the hands of thinkers objectively at the service of the bourgeoisie, because it is the European ruling classes that were interested in the dissemination of ideological systems that served their class interests.

Nationalism

During the period of the bourgeois revolutions, nationalism had generally been linked to liberalism in the struggle against the old regime, but now it took on a xenophobic character, it became

¹ On the period 1870-1914, the following works are fundamental: Sánchez, Jose.: *El imperialismo capitalista: concepto, períodos y mecanismos de funcionamiento* (Capitalist imperialism: concept, periods and mechanisms of functioning), Barcelona, editorial Blume, 1977; Cole, G.D.H.: *A History of Socialist Thought. Volumes III and IV*. London. MacMillan & Co., 1956-1961; Hobsbawm, E.J.: *The Age of Empire (1875-1914)*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, United Kingdom, 1987; Kriegel, Annie: *Las internacionales obreras* (The Workers' Internationals). Barcelona, Martínez Roca, 1980; Lenin: *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in *Selected Works. Volume V*. Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1976; Burrow, J.W.: *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848-1914*. Yale University Press, 1992.

an intensified nationalism that saw other nations as an enemy². The change was related to the growing competition among the bourgeoisies, especially between the English and German bourgeoisie. At the beginning of the 20th century, the threat of European war loomed on the horizon. On the one hand was the Entente (France, England, Russia) and on the other, the Central Empires (Germany and Austria-Hungary)³. The growing rivalry between these two systems of alliances explains the spread of this intensified nationalism. It was a question of preparing the peoples for war, of sowing hatred towards the supposed enemy (France, England, Germany, etc.) and, of course, of combating the internationalist tendencies of socialism. In the face of the class struggle and proletarian fraternity, the bourgeoisie produced the poison of the foreign enemy and the sacred interests of the nation.

The ruling classes use nationalism as a factor of social cohesion, as an inter-class glue that groups the whole of society around the concept of the homeland and its symbols: the flag and the anthem. Appealing to feelings and emotions as opposed to rational thought, the bourgeoisie seeks a consensus without which it cannot implement its expansionist plans.

French chauvinism and British jingoism were characterized by an intensified nationalism and a warmongering jingoism that saw war as a form of national assertion and territorial expansion. Both formulations were disseminated through a mass press that managed to lower publishing costs and reach broad sectors of society, including sectors of the popular classes; also the extension of literacy and compulsory military service were instruments for nationalizing the masses⁴.

In Spain, this objective was not achieved because two instruments that were fundamental in other countries for the socialization of patriotic sentiment were lacking: the school and the army.

² On nationalism, E. Hobsbawm's book, *Nations and Nationalisms since 1780 is indispensable*. Cambridge University Press

³ For the formation of the systems of alliances that would confront each other in 1914, see P. Renouvin: *La crisis europea y la Primera Guerra Mundial (1904-1918)*. (*The European Crisis and the Great War*). Madrid, Akal, 1990.

⁴ A. Pizarroso Quintero: *Historia de la Propaganda (History of Propaganda)*. Madrid, Eudema, 1990. pp. 195-221.

The Spanish ruling classes saw public education as a danger to their interests and privileges. The workers had to be kept in ignorance and thus greater evils could be avoided. The State neglected its educational obligations and the result was that in 1900 about 70% of Spaniards were illiterate. It is difficult to acquire the feeling of belonging to a common homeland when you are denied the most elementary education. As for the army, in many European countries it contributed to the spreading of national sentiment by being constituted on the basis of compulsory military service for all citizens, regardless of their social origin. In Spain, it didn't play that role either. From 1875, the army was designed as an instrument to defend the throne and social order, rather than as an armed body to defend the nation against external attack. The gendarme army was used to brutally suppress social conflicts led by the working class and the peasantry. The popular sectors hated the military, which had become a reactionary and privileged caste. This animosity was aided by an absolutely unfair system of recruitment. It consisted of drawing lots each year for the quota of young people who had to join the ranks. However, if one was chosen, one could avoid it by paying a certain amount of money ("cash redemption"). In the event of war, this class mechanism also worked. And in this patriotic way, the offspring of the bourgeoisie boasted of Spanishness in the casinos, while the children of the workers died in Cuba defending the interests of the landowners who owned sugar mills. It was impossible for the nationalism of the oligarchy to have popular roots under these circumstances⁵.

One of the main vehicles for the expansion of nationalism was undoubtedly history. In all countries, this academic discipline contributed decisively to the creation of a certain image of the Nation, with its myths and heroes. The historical narrative created an identity that stretched from the dawn of time to the present day. In the period under discussion, one of the main representatives of historical nationalism was the German Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-1896), a defender of colonial conquest, anti-Semitic and in favor of an authoritarian and militarist conception of the state. His

⁵ J. Álvarez Junco: *Mater Dolorosa. La idea de España en el siglo XIX (The idea of Spain in the 19th century)*. Madrid, Taurus, 2001. pp. 533-563.

main work was *History of Germany in the 19th Century*, the first volume of which appeared in 1879 and over 26 years four other volumes appeared⁶.

Although with notable differences, it is clear that between 1870 and 1914 the European bourgeoisie managed to raise a nationalist dam against socialism and to foster a fairly generalized feeling of patriotic exaltation. The test of success was 1914, when the beginning of the world war was not answered forcefully by the working class, but here too a key factor came into play: the treachery of the Social Democratic leaders, who called for the defence of the fatherland and sacred union with the bourgeoisie. Only the Bolsheviks in Russia, who had waged a tenacious struggle against revisionism and opportunism, adopted a distinctly revolutionary stance, calling for the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war and revolution⁷.

Racism

The irruption of racism into European thought is directly related to imperialism. The conquest and plundering of the colonies had to be ideologically justified, especially if we take into account that within the left voices were being raised that condemned and denounced imperialism. The ideological pirouette of the bourgeoisie consisted in presenting the colonial conquest as a civilizing work of a "superior" white race over the "inferior" Afro-Asian peoples.

In 1863, Dr. J. Hunt, founder of the Anthropological Society of London, recorded in the minutes the contents of one of the scientific sessions [retranslated from the Spanish]:

"The following deductions were made.

1. That there are as good reasons to classify the Negro as a species distinct from the European as there are for making the ass a species distinct from the zebra; and if we take intelligence into consideration, there is a greater difference between the Negro and the Anglo-Saxon than

⁶ J. Touchard: *Historia de las ideas políticas (History of Political Ideas)*. Madrid, Tecnos 1983. pp. 531-533.

⁷ Lenin brilliantly analyzed the treachery of the Social-Democratic leaders in *The Bankruptcy of the Second International* (Lenin: *Collected Works*. Volume 21. Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1974. pp. 205-259).

between the gorilla and the chimpanzee.

2. That there are more numerous analogies between the Negro and the apes than between the European and the apes

3. That the Negro is inferior, intellectually speaking, to the European..."

The initial work of the so-called "scientific racism" was by the Frenchman Josep Arthur de Gobineau, who between 1853 and 1855 published the *Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races*, a work divided into six volumes dedicated to trying to show the superiority of the Aryan race. Gobineau's text decisively influenced the English essayist and naturalized German, Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927), who in 1899 published *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, in which he defended Aryan supremacy and tried to prove the supposed Aryan character of Jesus Christ; all with a strong anti-Semitic content.

The complicity of many institutions of higher learning with racism was extremely useful to the bourgeoisie in its defense of imperialist expansion. The logical corollary of the existence of superior and inferior races could only be the justification of the conquest of inferior racial communities. By grossly manipulating some of Charles Darwin's assertions contained in his brilliant book *On the Origin of Species*, social Darwinism made its way among sectors of the scientific community and many bourgeois politicians. Darwin referred to natural selection and the survival of the fittest, referring to evolution within the framework of nature; that is, he referred to a biological process, but that had nothing to do with human societies that are governed by laws and norms developed outside of Nature. Social Darwinists concluded that social evolution was the result of the victory of superior races over inferior races. The best example of this variant of racism can be found in the speech by the British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury on May 4, 1898 in the Royal Albert Hall in London, and reproduced in the newspaper "The Times" the following day [retranslated from the Spanish]:

"We can divide the nations of the world, roughly speaking, into living and dying. On the one hand, we have great countries whose enormous power increases from year to year, increasing their wealth, increasing their

power, increasing the perfection of their organization. The railroads have given them the power to concentrate in a single point the entire military strength of their population and to assemble armies of a size and power never dreamed of by previous generations. Science has placed in the hands of these armies weapons that increase the power, terrible power, of those who have the opportunity to use them. Side by side with these splendid organizations, whose strength seems to be unable to diminish and which sustain conflicting ambitions that only the future can settle by bloody arbitration, side by side with these, there are a number of communities which I can only describe as dying, although the epithet is doubtless applied to them in different degrees and with varying intensity.

“...For one reason or another, for political necessity or under philanthropic pressures, the living nations will gradually appropriate the territories of the dying, and the seeds and causes of conflict among civilized nations will quickly emerge... of course we must not suppose that a single living nation will be allowed to have the beneficial monopoly of curing or breaking up these unfortunate patients (laughter)... these questions may give rise to fatal differences among the great nations whose powerful



armies are facing each other... we are certainly not going to allow England to be put at a disadvantage in any readjustment that may take place (applause). On the other hand, we shall not be envious if the aggrandizement of a rival removes the desolation and sterility of regions where our arms cannot reach."

As can be seen, the British Prime Minister not only displayed extraordinary cynicism, but also possessed enormous foresight about the future. The conflicts among great nations would lead to "bloody arbitration"; In other words, in 1898 the war of 1914 was already in sight.

The bourgeoisie did not hesitate to play the card of racism to the fullest in order to justify imperialist expansion and the wars that this expansion entailed, with its share of expenses and blood at the expense of the popular classes; hiding behind the supposed civilizing work was the reality of the exploitation and plunder of the peoples of Africa and Asia⁸.

One of the most sinister episodes of racism was the exhibition of indigenous people, mainly Afro-Asians, in "human zoos" during the last decades of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century. Carl Hagenbeck (1844-1913), merchant and hunter of wild animals, was the initiator of these shameful practices when in 1875 he organized an exhibition of Lapps in Berlin and Leipzig.

In Paris, in 1877, one of these "anthropo-zoological specimens" was presented with 14 Nubian Africans. In Madrid, in 1887, an exhibition with 43 indigenous Filipinos was organized in the Palacio de Cristal in the Retiro Park, and in Barcelona, from 1897, this type of show was organized with black Africans. Norway, England and Belgium also hosted such activities. The fact of uprooting human beings from their natural habitat and showing them publicly in hostile contexts, under conditions of extreme humiliation, did not seem to matter to large sectors of society, much less to the authorities who allowed such events. The success of the 1878 exhibition in Paris, with 985,000 people in Paris visiting the

⁸ Among the books that denounced the atrocities of European colonialism and imperialism, the work of M. Ferro is fundamental: *El libro negro del colonialism (The Black Book of Colonialism)*. Madrid, La Esfera de los Libros, 2005.

exhibition of 1878, shows that the racist poison had deeply penetrated into many Europeans. Under a supposed scientific curiosity, human zoos sought to impress upon citizens that physical differences and differences of skin color were unequivocal proof of the inferiority of the peoples of Africa and Asia, who were presented as links between animals and the white man.

Anti-Semitism

Discrimination, persecution, hatred and physical violence against Jews run parallel to the history of Christianity. Accused for centuries of having killed Jesus Christ, the Jewish communities who settled in Christian territory were subjected to all kinds of prohibitions, forced to live in specific areas of the cities and periodically shaken up by waves of blind violence. The massacres of Jews at certain times in the Middle Ages, such as the 14th century, were used by the public authorities as an escape valve that channeled the anger of the popular masses towards an easily identifiable target and prevented discontent from turning towards political power. The Jews were, to use a colloquial expression, "scapegoats."

For centuries, the dispersed Jewish people maintained their traditions and developed a strategy based on the acceptance of arbitrariness and aggression, without responding with the violence that was exercised against them. Otherwise, they risked being annihilated.

With the victory of the bourgeois revolutions in Europe, a stage began in which legal discrimination against the Jews was progressively abolished and they were integrated with full rights into the new bourgeois nations. In Western and Central Europe, Jews became citizens, intermarriages were legalized, and many Jews abandoned their old traditions. In Eastern Europe, and

⁹ J. Sánchez Arteaga: *La antropología física y los "zoológicos humanos": exhibiciones de indígenas como práctica de popularización científica en el umbral del siglo XX (Physical Anthropology and the "Human Zoos": Indigenous Exhibitions as a Practice of Scientific Popularization on the Threshold of the Twentieth Century)*, in "Asclepio. Revista de Historia de la Medicina y las Ciencias" (Journal of the History of Medicine and Sciences), (2010), vol. LXII, no. 1, January-June, pp. 269-292.

especially in Tsarist Russia, anti-Semitism was still alive and there were periodic pogroms.

By the 1870s, anti-Semitism seemed to be a thing of the past, at least in the most developed countries, but this was a false impression, as two events showed.

Surprisingly, one of these took place in Republican France, that France which had established the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789 and which had swept away feudalism and the absolute monarchy by a revolution inspired by the principles of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity.

In 1894 the Dreyfus Affair took place. This captain of the French Army, of Jewish origin, was accused of espionage and treason without evidence of having given secret documents to the Germans, and he was sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island. The sentence laid bare anti-Semitic prejudices within the army, and the conviction created a huge social division in France between those who supported Dreyfus and those who opposed him. For 12 years, the convicted officer's family and progressive sectors of French society, led by the writer Emile Zola, fought a hard battle to get the case reviewed. Finally, in 1906, the Court of Cassation [supreme court for civil and criminal cases – translator's note] recognized Dreyfus's innocence, decided that he was rehabilitated, and re-enlist him in the army.

During this long process a fundamental role was played by the novelist Emile Zola. At the height of his prestige, on January 13, 1898, he published a long article, entitled "I accuse", addressed to the President of the Republic, in the newspaper L'Aurore (The Dawn), denouncing all the irregularities in the case. Sentenced to a year in jail for libel, Zola avoided prison by going to England.

Zola's attitude marked a turning point in the attitude of intellectuals towards political events, in the sense that their position, their demonstrations and their points of view had a significance in public life and were capable of creating opinion. Moreover, Zola's denunciation helped to create the conviction among the intelligentsia that political commitment was inescapable beyond their professional activity.

The second event took place at the other end of Europe. In 1902 a book was published in Russia entitled "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," an anti-Semitic libel about an alleged Jewish conspiracy on an international scale to take over the world. Although

the work was soon shown to be a forgery created by the tsarist secret police (the Okhrana) and the documents it presented were pure fabrication, the book was widely disseminated, especially after 1917, and contributed to fomenting anti-Semitic sentiments.

The Dreyfus affair and the publication of the Protocols were the tip of the iceberg of a phenomenon that was not a matter of the past, but a widespread sentiment in European societies. With greater or lesser intensity, whether it was hatred, prejudice or simply envy, anti-Semitism was present in the ideological and emotional universe of many Europeans. In addition, there was now a new component. Whereas historical anti-Semitism was fundamentally religious, the racial component was now insisted upon, as evidenced in this text by Eugen Dühring published in "The Jewish Question" (1880) [translated from the Spanish}.

"The origin of the general discontent felt towards the Jewish race is due to its inferiority in all intellectual fields. The Jews show a lack of scientific spirit, a weak understanding of philosophy, an inability to believe in mathematics and even in music. Faithfulness, reverence, respect, and all things sacred and noble are foreign to them. This is why this race is inferior and depraved... It is the duty of the Nordic peoples to exterminate these parasitic races in the same way that vipers and beasts of prey are exterminated."¹⁰

Why did anti-Semitism once again become useful to the ruling classes? There are a couple of elements that should be examined, at least as hypotheses. Between 1873 and 1896 capitalism went through a great economic crisis. It is not a question of mere economic difficulties, but of a deep depression¹¹. Shifting the blame to Jewish business owners and their machinations was an alternative to growing social discontent. And, on the other hand, there is

¹⁰ Eugen Dühring (1833-1921) was a German philosopher, economist and lawyer.

His conceptions, a mixture of positivism, mechanical materialism and idealism, were subjected to a devastating critique by Engels in his work "Anti-Dühring".

¹¹ Maurice Dobb: *Studies in the Development of Capitalism*. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950. pp. 300-319.

the fact that a part of the Jewish citizens identified politically with the ever-growing social democracy. The temptation to connect the Jews with an ideology that sought to destroy capitalism was very strong and useful for the bourgeoisie. Marxism thus became a hostile ideology that attacked the pillars of society—family, order, property, homeland—and behind it was hidden the Jewish goal of controlling the world. That the Protocols of the Elders of Zion appeared in 1902 and were regarded as a Bible by the Nazis is no coincidence.

Irrationalism in Philosophy

During the 18th and part of the 19th century, various philosophical systems had been formed that, from different positions, tried to solve the eternal philosophical problem of the relation between being and thought, reality and knowledge. Enlightenment reason, Kantian idealism, Hegelian dialectics and Marxism are among the most brilliant philosophical thoughts of all time, and the figures of Kant, Hegel, Marx and Engels had made Germany the homeland of philosophy. Studying philosophy in depth inevitably meant enrolling in a German university.

Although disputes among philosophers were frequent and acrimonious, as in other academic disciplines, the landscape changed radically with the appearance on the scene of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900). His entrance into the field of philosophy was like the outbreak of lightning on a placid summer day.

He was born in the German town of Röcken into a Protestant family and received a solid humanist education. He studied at the Universities of Bonn and Leipzig, and in 1869 attained the chair of classical philology at the University of Basel, a position he had to leave due to his mental problems. In 1889 he was committed to a psychiatric clinic, left in the care of his mother and sister.

His philosophical output can be divided into several periods. The first extended from his early studies in Leipzig to 1878. He was heavily influenced by the Pre-Socratics and by Schopenhauer. His main work of this period is "The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music". In his second period (1880-1882), which can be called positivist or enlightened, he wrote, among other works, "Human All Too Human", "Aurora" [or "The Dawn of Day"] and "The Gay Science". Finally, in the third period (1882-1900), in which he radically attacked and criticized Western culture, he wrote "Thus

Spoke Zarathustra", "Beyond Good and Evil", "The Genealogy of Morals", "The Antichrist", "Ecce Homo" and fragments of "The Will to Power", under the title "Transvaluation of All Values"¹².

Throughout his work we find a set of thematic blocks that articulate and give unity to his thought. The death of God, nihilism, eternal return, and the will to power. Through a style full of aphorisms, sharp phrases and judgments, Nietzsche subjected Western philosophy and European values (Christianity, democratic egalitarianism and socialism) to a devastating critique. In the face of a morality that he considered decadent, he defended a vitalism embodied in the Superman and the will to power. Hatred of the revolution and contempt for the masses of the people are a constant in his political thought. The world is a struggle, and in that struggle the rule of a "master race" over the "herd of slaves" must be reaffirmed. With Nietzsche, irrationalism burst into philosophy, glorifying war, the victory of the strongest over the weak, and the dominance of instinct over reason¹³.

It has often been claimed that Nietzsche's philosophy greatly influenced Nazi ideology. Without forgetting that the thought of the German philosopher was partly manipulated by Hitler's followers, it is evident that some of the approaches and statements of the author of "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" inspired the National Socialist worldview. The idea of turning Nietzsche into an apolitical or "anarchist" thinker is based on a biased analysis of his work. On the contrary, a rigorous interpretation exposes his openly anti-democratic and reactionary character¹⁴.

We quote below, as a sample of what we say, some passages from his works [translated from the Spanish]:

¹² J. Ferrater Mora: *Diccionario de Filosofía* (Dictionary of Philosophy). Barcelona, Ariel/Círculo de Lectores, 1994. Volume III. p. 2556.

¹³ G. Lukács: *El asalto a la razón. La trayectoria del irracionalismo desde Schelling hasta Hitler*. (The assault on reason. The trajectory of irrationalism from Schelling to Hitler). Mexico, Grijalbo, 1972. pp. 249-323.

¹⁴ On this question, the book by N. González Valera: *Nietzsche contra la democracia. El pensamiento político de Friedrich Nietzsche (1862-1872)* (Nietzsche against Democracy. The Political Thought of Friedrich Nietzsche) is especially interesting. Madrid, Montesinos, 2010.

"Widespread education leads to barbarism. The 'social question' arises, since the educated people demand for themselves the well-being enjoyed by a few.... Why does the state need widespread culture and enlightenment? Because by doing so, the masses are led to believe that, under the aegis of the state, they will find the right path for themselves—without the need for a Führer. But the German spirit will escape from this pseudo-culture"¹⁵.

"The workers' problem. The stupidity which is ultimately nothing more than the degeneration of the instincts, and which today is the cause of all other stupidities, consists in the fact that there is a workers' problem. The first imperative of instinct is that there are certain things that are not questioned. If you want slaves, it is idiotic to educate them to be masters."¹⁶

"War divides the chaotic masses into military hierarchies; above the lower stratum—that of the slaves—the warrior society rises in a pyramidal form. The purpose of the whole imposes its yoke on each one, starting in the most heterogeneous natures a kind of chemical transformation, which makes all kindred. In the upper classes, what it is all about is much better perceived, that is, the advent of the military genius, the founder of the state.... I would say that the warrior is a means to the coming of the military genius, and that his work is only a means for that same work of genius."¹⁷

Therefore we think that the characterization of Nietzsche's thought in the "Abbreviated Philosophical Dictionary", edited by M. Rosental and P. Ludin, is basically correct [translated from the Spanish]:

¹⁵ Lecture by Nietzsche, quoted in M. Penella: *Nietzsche, la utopía del superhombre (Nietzsche, the utopia of the superman)*. Barcelona, Peninsula Editions, 2011. p. 121.

¹⁶ F. Nietzsche: *Cómo se filosofa a martillazos (How one philosophizes with hammer blows)*. Mexico, Grupo Editorial Toro, 2004. pp. 128-129.

¹⁷ Lecture by Nietzsche, quoted in M. Penella: *Op. cit.* p. 130.

"Nietzsche's reactionary, inhuman philosophy, imbued with hatred of the workers, proclaims the cult of strength and the 'blond beast' and corresponds like no other to the ideology of the fascists. His philosophy was widely exploited by the Hitlerites and is always at the service of the pro-fascist ideologues of imperialism."¹⁸

Conclusion

The fascist parties and organizations that emerged after the First World War and took power in much of Europe were not absolutely innovative in ideology, as has sometimes been stated. The cult of violence, the glorification of war, anti-Semitism, nationalist fanaticism, imperialism and the exaltation of the white race were components that were already present in European culture before the outbreak of the world conflagration. As we have seen, a change took place in the thought and intellectual life of Europe around 1870 and continued in succeeding years. Enlightenment thought gives way, not totally but significantly, to an irrationalist tendency in thought that appeals more to feelings, emotional drives, and the primal instincts of the human being.

Throughout my teaching life, I have heard many students ask how it was possible that in a cultured and developed country like Germany, the homeland of Hegel, Goethe, Beethoven, Marx and Schiller, among other great geniuses, Nazism could triumph and a man as mediocre as Hitler be acclaimed by crowds.

The underlying issue goes beyond the existence of educated, enlightened and intellectually brilliant elites. Fascism cannot be understood without the catastrophe of the world war, the economic crisis unleashed in 1929 and the impact of the Bolshevik revolution. But there was also an ideological substratum in broad layers of society that shared the messages launched by fascism. This substratum had undoubtedly been formed in the period that we have briefly addressed.

If we analyze the Holocaust, it has been many years since scientific historiography made it clear that the Nazis were able to exterminate 6 million Jews because they had the collaboration of

¹⁸ M. Rosental and P. Iudin (editors): *Diccionario filosófico abreviado (Abbreviated Philosophical Dictionary)*. Havana, Editora Política, 1964. p. 381.

officials, police, military and ordinary people in the occupied countries. Without this collaboration, and the Danish case is a good example of this, the Holocaust would not have been possible or, at least, would not have reached the dimensions that it did.¹⁹

It was French officials who arrested their Jewish compatriots and some of the worst massacres committed by the Germans in the Soviet Union were perpetrated by Ukrainian collaborators. That was the general trend in occupied Europe during the World War II. Anti-Semitism was not created by the Nazis, it was already present in European society. It had been going on for a long time, but it experienced a strong boost between 1870 and 1914.

And so it was with fanatical nationalism and racism. In its imperialist phase, capitalism pushes for war and the bourgeoisie no longer needs the progressive values it used in its struggle against the Ancien Régime. On the contrary, in order to lead the working masses into struggle against the workers of other nations, the ruling classes spread ideological currents that sow hatred among the peoples. The irrational replaces the rational. Capitalist imperialism transforms the ideological superstructure of European thought to a large extent, thus corroborating the theses of historical materialism.

Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist)
Madrid, September 2023.

¹⁹ The most exhaustive study of the Holocaust is by Raul Hilberg: *The Destruction of the European Jews*. Yale University Press, 2003.

The Arab Region at the Center of Imperialist Conflicts¹

Towards a revision of traditional alliances

In recent years, the situation in the Arab world has witnessed many important events that our party has followed with great interest. It is our duty today to continue to follow with the same interest, and perhaps more, the changes that continue to occur in this region. We are not exaggerating when we say that we are at the dawn of a new phase in the Arab world and the Middle East that will present certain distinctive characteristics. The changes taking place in the world are also reflected in this region, where all the major capitalist countries, old and new, are present, struggling and competing for the region's wealth, its markets and its strategic locations. As a new landscape is emerging in the world based on changing power relationships, a new landscape should also emerge in the Arab region and the Middle East.

What distinguishes this new landscape is that the divisions, the bloody conflicts between the different reactionary regimes in the region which have characterized all the past years are in the process of attenuating or even disappearing, except in certain countries such as Sudan. which is once again threatened by civil war. We can say that the cards are being shuffled again and new equations, which could be realized even partially, appear on the horizon. International changes have something to do with this.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is striving to play a central role in this process through its new de facto leader, Mohammed bin Salman, just as it has played a central role in all previous reactionary projects. This is a role which provides for the renewal of Wahhabi reaction in accordance with current changes and

¹ This text is the 2nd part of the general report presented by comrade Hama Hammami at the 6th Congress of the Workers' Party, held in Tunis on July 7, 8 and 9, 2023. The 1st and 3rd parts respectively developed the analysis of the Central Committee of the part of the international situation and the situation in the country.

international balance of power, with the perspective of transforming the Kingdom into an active and effective regional power in the region, no longer content with the role of faithful disciple/agent of the United States, carrying out what it is told.

One of the elements of the new situation in the region is the emergence of China, which continues its breakthrough as an influential economic, commercial and financial player, not only on the international scene but also in the Middle East region, where its interests are developing, including within the Zionist entity (occupied Palestine). This is evidenced by its intervention in a remarkable manner, to calm the conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia and bring them to the negotiating table and rapprochement, which had an impact on the bloody conflict in Yemen, in which Saudi Arabia and its allies are directly involved in the fight against the Iran-backed Houthis.

It is no secret that this refractory approach constitutes a sort of distance from the United States, which has built its strategy in agreement with the Zionist entity to play on the Sunni-Shiite conflict and works towards the construction of an “Egyptian-Saudi-Gulf-Israeli” alliance against Iran, which supports Syria and Hezbollah in Lebanon and maintains good relations with Russia and China. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia played a decisive role in the final minutes to bring Syria back into the fold of the Arab League, despite Qatari-Moroccan opposition and Egyptian hesitation.

In doing so, Saudi Arabia wants to appear as a “unifier”, which opens the door for it to play the role of “leader” of the Arab countries, or rather of Arab reaction. Saudi Arabia has also worked to normalize its relations, on the one hand with the Iraqi regime, which played the role of “mediator” by organizing the first meetings between the Saudi and Iranian parties, and on the other hand with Turkey and Qatar which still support the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Saudi-Turkish rapprochement, coinciding with the worsening economic and financial crisis in Egypt, which led to a decline in its role, had an impact on the situation in Libya, where the sound of weapons has relatively calmed down, even if the situation is still the same and the settlement is difficult in the near future. It remains, with Iran, a major player on the Lebanese scene, contributing to the formulation of the details of any decision.

Saudi Arabia intervenes alongside the United States in the Sudanese crisis to put pressure on both sides of the conflict, the military institution on the one hand and the Rapid Support Forces on the other. On the other hand, we recently saw Saudi Arabia refusing to follow the U.S. position following the visit of Biden, who came to ask it to increase its oil production; rather, it aligned itself with the Russian position.

Leadership conflicts between Arab countries

But this does not mean that the road is paved for Saudi-Wahhabi reaction. There is Qatar, which wants to remain a major player in the region and on the international scene, because it wants to appear as a “facilitator” of negotiations between the belligerents in the conflicts that arise here and there, and under U.S. aegis, of course, as happened with the Taliban. There is the United Arab Emirates, which is seeking to play a leading role. We have seen disputes erupt between the UAE and Saudi Arabia in Yemen. There is also Egypt which, although it is going through internal difficulties in addition to its problems on the Ethiopian side, in particular concerning the sharing of the waters of the Nile (Renaissance Dam), but which continues to weigh in any equation. There is the Maghreb region which is experiencing a permanent crisis between Morocco and Algeria on the question of the Sahara, which practically determines the alliances of each party. Furthermore, instability has always characterized Saudi-Iranian relations.

Of course, we must not forget the role of foreign powers, notably U.S. imperialism which, with the support of its two main allies, the Zionists and the British, remains the dominant power in the region and seeks to influence each new equation so that its interests are not affected. Generally speaking, what we see is the existence of this struggle to “lead” the reactionary Arab front, whatever its outcome. Mohammed bin Salman may be seeking to become the “King of the Arabs,” as someone put it. This is not something new if we look at it from the perspective of history. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has always been, especially since the fall of the nationalist tide, at the center of reactionary imperialist projects hostile to the Arab peoples.

Mohammed bin Salman admitted this during his visit to the United States of America, stressing that the spread of Wahhabism

in the region and the world is to sabotage the struggle of the Arab and Islamic peoples, hinder their liberation and keep them subjugated. U.S.-Western hegemony responded to the request of “Western friends, led by the United States”. But what distinguishes the current efforts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to “rule” the Arabs and play the role of regional power is this attempt by Bin Salman to give Wahhabism a new form with a deceptive and falsely modernist appearance, and give the Kingdom some room for maneuver, even minimal, in its relationship with the United States, whose influence is declining internationally, with the end of the unipolar world and the emergence of new competitors, led by China.

Decline of the popular movement and acceleration of the normalization process

There is no doubt that these changes are occurring in a difficult situation facing the Arab people and the Palestinian people in particular. Internal and external counter-revolutionary forces succeeded in aborting the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions, without the resistance in these two countries having ceased. Libya, Syria and Yemen have also been depleted and thrown, with the complicity of the forces of destruction in the Gulf and the Middle East (Turkey in particular), into devastating civil wars that have led to the migration of millions of people of these countries and the destruction of their economic and natural potential.

On the other hand, while the second revolutionary wave that began in the Arab world in late 2018 led to the victory of the Sudanese people over the Muslim Brotherhood military junta, in power for three decades, in a complex process of fighting and coups the military state was established. It is characterized today by the explosion of a destructive reactionary conflict between the two pillars of the old regime, namely the military institution and the militias of the Rapid Support Forces, a conflict which threatens to plunge the country into a civil war with disastrous consequences.

As for the uprisings in Lebanon and Iraq, despite the considerable efforts made to unite the masses on the basis of their just demands, the scourge of religious sectarianism and regional and foreign interference has prevented, in the absence of revolutionary leadership, these uprisings from continuing, radicalizing and achieving victory. In Algeria, the months-long popular movement,

during which Bouteflika and some of the symbols of his regime were overthrown, ended with "elections" in which the military-bureaucratic junta formulated new equations to continue to control the destiny of the country and the Algerian people in light of the serious tensions with neighboring Morocco and the disagreements on the question of Western Sahara. As usual, the absence of a unified political leadership around a program of revolutionary change played a decisive role in the failure of the Algerian popular movement to achieve its fundamental goals.

On the other hand, what is happening today in the reformulation of relations in the Arab world is part of an unprecedented development of the public normalization movement with the Zionist enemy at the expense of the Palestinian people and their national cause, which we seek to bury definitively. In the last days of his reign, Trump reached an agreement with some regimes in the region as part of a political bargain, which is a feature of the U.S. administration in general, and which reached its peak with this populist pro-Zionist.

Thus, the King of Morocco, Mohammed VI, concluded a barter with this administration so that it recognized the "Moroccan nature of the Sahara" in exchange for a total commitment to the wave of normalization carried out by the puppet regime of Ma-khzen, which signed a security/military cooperation agreement with the Zionist enemy. The Sudanese military regime followed the same path, bartering the removal of its country from the list



of "states supporting terrorism" and the opening of the tap of "economic and financial aid" in exchange for acceptance of the normalization and the opening of the doors for the resulting Zionist entity to take control of the agricultural potential of the country in particular.

As for normalization on the side of the Emirates and Bahrain, it has taken very advanced steps in their alliance with the usurping entity. This normalization was based on the idea of "countering the Iranian threat to the security of the region". We know that the Gulf puppet regimes continue to play the role of sponsors for imperialist and Zionist projects in the region with the aim of burying the Palestinian cause and undermining the rights of the Palestinian people (economic normalization, Deal of the Century, etc.). This is part of the recomposition of the region within what is called the "New Middle East", in which the Zionist gang entity would hold a dominant position (starting to realize the dream of a common market from the Middle-East).

It is within this general framework that the changes that we mentioned at the beginning fit, which show the nature of the new landscape that is being prepared and the calculations of each party participating in it, in particular the Saudi side. This new landscape will only produce a dark age that will bring together all the Arab tyrants. But this does not mean that the way is open for Saudi and Arab reactionaries to do whatever they want to the Arab people and especially to the Palestinian cause. The Arab peoples will not give up, even if their struggle experiences moments of decline, even if apathy, frustration and despair seize certain sectors at this or that stage. Likewise, the Palestinian people and their resistance, who continue to impose new realities on the ground, will not capitulate. In a word, tyranny, poverty, hunger, corruption, occupation, devastation and systematic destruction of the Arab peoples and their potential are all factors that will not allow them to accept humiliation and submission. On the contrary, it is certain that the Arab peoples will continue to face this situation and fight until they achieve victory.

Tyranny is a corollary of social evils

The Arab puppet regimes and the reactionary classes that constitute their social base practice the ugliest forms of tyranny, repression and subjugation of their people. Freedoms are

eliminated in most Arab countries, whose people are governed by monarchical, military or authoritarian regimes. Prisons still house thousands of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience. The rights of organization, expression and demonstration are eliminated.

Political tyranny is a cover for dependence, exploitation and corruption. Our region, despite its natural, underground and agricultural wealth and potential, is still mired in an organic dependence on foreign capital, and the economic, social and cultural structures are still backward, fragile and dependent on the lobbies of a rentier economy of a family and class nature. Manifestations of marginalization, poverty, illiteracy and persecution are increasing. Women and ethnic, religious and cultural minorities are the main targets of repression.

There is no clearer proof of this than some alarming figures published by official international bodies: the number of poor people in the Arab region in 2022 is around 130 million people (one third of the population), according to statistics from the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). This figure is expected to increase in 2024. The Arab region also recorded the highest unemployment rate in the world in the same year, at 12 percent. As for the illiteracy rate in the Arab region, it is estimated in 2022, according to the Report on the Unified Arab Economy, at around 24.6 percent, the highest rate of all regions of the world at present except for sub-Saharan Africa (33.9 percent). The labor force participation rate of Arab women in 2020, according to the International Labor Organization, reached 18.4 percent, the lowest rate in the world compared to the global average of 48 percent.

In addition to all this, certain Arab territories are under occupation (Iraq, Syria, Libya, etc.) and are vulnerable to looting by the occupiers. We have seen several movements, particularly in Iraq, rejecting the occupation and demanding the departure of U.S. forces. There are also frequent movements of the Golan population, particularly the Druze, to confront the Zionist occupation. In Western Sahara, progressive forces are still confronted with abuses which particularly affect activists and opponents of the occupation. Palestine and its holy sites (Jerusalem) are subject to an ongoing process of Judaization and Zionization, in addition to assassinations, displacements and arrests.

The protests never stopped

It is inevitable that all these factors will push the Arab peoples back into the arena of struggle. The movements and protests have not diminished, but continue in one form or another in the majority of Arab countries. But here we are talking about their transformation into massive uprisings aimed at overthrowing reactionary puppet regimes, liberating homelands and achieving unity on solid foundations based on national sovereignty, freedom, equality, democracy and social justice. As for the Palestinian people, despite the strong wave of normalization and despite the destructive role played by the authority of Mahmoud Abbas, all forms of resistance continue in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in the dungeons of the occupation, where the prisoner movement takes place which continues a fierce struggle in defense of the cause and identity. The Palestinian armed resistance succeeded in imposing a new reality on the occupier, as numerous testimonies affirm. Among the developments that will play a decisive role in the Palestinian reality is the positive development we are witnessing in "unity on the ground", as the movements include all regions of occupied Palestine, including the 1948 territories and the West Bank, which is under the authority of Mahmoud Abbas and his security services, which constitute a guard for the occupying army in accordance with the "Dayton Accords". "For security coordination", and the "Weapons Unity", the resistance factions were able to establish a common operations space to coordinate their actions. On top of all this, the situation in Palestine is evolving politically to the detriment of the forces of appeasement, complicity and capitulation represented by Abbas' authority. It is a conviction which is taking root more and more deeply in the consciousness of the Palestinian masses, especially at a time when the Zionist entity is led by the ultras of Zionist extremism, who do not hide their intentions to eliminate the Palestinian people, and perpetuate the occupation of their land.

Liberation and unity: watchwords of the coming phase

The Arab people need liberation and unity, freedom from the Zionist occupation of Palestine, the Golan and some villages in southern Lebanon, as well as from the U.S., Turkish, British,

French and Spanish occupation of several parts of the Arab world. They must also be freed from all forms of neocolonial economic, political and cultural domination and must evacuate all bases, fleets and military forces established on their lands. They must also get rid of all reactionary systems, classes and groups that govern them in close association with foreign colonial powers.

There is no doubt that this objective will only be achieved by these people, first and foremost the workers of the cities and the countryside, the masses of the marginalized and the deprived, the majority of women, young people, intellectuals, creators, and ethnic, religious and cultural minorities who have a real interest in liberation and emancipation. Revolutions in Arab countries are generally national, democratic, popular and social revolutions, although each of them has its own characteristics. They will not achieve final victory if they are not united into a single chain, even if these revolutions are difficult to achieve in one go. It is more likely that revolutions in Arab countries will occur when conditions ripen in one or more links in the chain. This can greatly help the maturation of other links due to the proximity and similarity in conditions.

The Arab revolutions need revolutionary leadership. This has been confirmed so far by various local rebellions, uprisings and movements. The major weakness is the absence of this type of direction. This is what has allowed reactionary regimes, with the support of external colonial and reactionary powers, to abort or sabotage them, to drown them in blood or divert them. This requires that we all attach the greatest importance to the development of the subjective factor of revolution in our countries, whatever the sacrifices that must be made. The revolutionary, patriotic and progressive forces are still fighting on different fronts to improve the conditions of struggle and change the balance of power in favor of the working masses, despite the scale of the sacrifices and violations they face in various countries. But these forces still require enormous efforts to develop. There is no doubt that the first condition for success is the clarity of the political line: as long as the vision is clear, progress in organization, activity and establishment among the masses becomes possible and effective. There is no clarity of political line without intellectual and theoretical clarity, and here the responsibility falls on the Marxist-Leninist forces to accomplish this mission.

A complex situation that requires rigorous analysis

The situation in the Arab countries (and in the Middle East in general) is extremely complex, which makes it imperative to grasp the contours, the details, to analyze them in order to reach the necessary conclusions and solid action programs for the strategic and tactical levels. There are many external and internal enemies in this region due to its geographical position, enormous wealth, markets and strategic centers. This makes taking a correct stand in these situations akin to finding a hair in a pile of dough. The weakness of the patriotic and progressive forces sometimes pushes them to make choices and alliances with uncertain consequences, due to the confusion between enemy and friend, thinking that this will help them overcome their weakness, without realizing that each intervening force, whether foreign or Arab, has its own calculations. Of course, all this does not contradict the principle of clearly defining the enemies and making a classification which allows us to designate the main ones to confront them first. But what must be guaranteed for the success of this mission is the independence of the vision, program, tactics and strategy.

We will not address all the issues related to this problem, because they are numerous and varied, and ultimately, they are the responsibility of the parties and organizations concerned. But there are some questions of a general nature that concern us all in the Arab countries. These questions fall within the international domain. In short, there is no doubt that U.S. imperialism and its Zionist protégé, together with their Western allies, are the main enemies of the Arab peoples. This is something that does not need to be proven.

A less and less discreet presence of China

But any coherent revolutionary party should not just designate the main enemies, because it is its duty to have a global vision of the situation and the nature of the forces in conflict in the region. By analyzing the international situation, we have demonstrated the hegemonic imperialist role of the rising Chinese power and the "peaceful" economic, financial and commercial methods that it uses to take its place in the constellation of imperialist powers, with the ambition of take first place from U.S. imperialism in the not-too-distant future. These methods, which are currently

based on the idea of "money and trade first", are misleading and encourage certain political forces to consider China as a "friend", and put forward the idea that: "Chinese (or Russian) hegemony is better than U.S. hegemony", as if it were a question of preferring one hegemony to another. In this regard, it is enough to give a concrete example to demonstrate the error of this position, the example of China's relationship with the Zionist entity.

The position of the Chinese leaders on the Palestinian question does not differ from the position of the rest of the imperialist powers who envisage the "two-state solution" and refer to the Oslo Conference. This is what we see through the "four points" contained in the program of the current Chinese President, Xi Jinping, aiming at "managing global affairs in a peaceful and participatory manner". In a nutshell, China only views regional countries, including Palestine and its Zionist occupier, as part of the Belt and Road Initiative and the benefits it can derive from it. This is what we clearly understand from the intervention of the Chinese ambassador to the United Nations in 2017, when he declared: "China regards Palestine and Israel as important partners in the Belt and Road Initiative. She is ready to work within this concept of development for peace with the aim of pushing Palestine and Israel to engage in cooperation that benefits both sides." For us to understand the truth of these remarks, it is enough to highlight the economic and commercial development between China and the "Zionist entity" in recent years, at the expense of the Palestinian people and their despoiled homeland.

Since 2020, China has become the largest exporter of goods to the "Zionist entity". The value of Chinese investments in the entity amounts to \$19 billion US, divided between the advanced technology (High Tech) sector and infrastructure projects. In addition, China has invested in the port of Haifa and in the tramway, notably in the "Red Line", which will connect the settlements of the occupied Palestinian coastal plain. In the same context, in 2014, the Chinese company Bright Food purchased 56% of the shares of the Israeli company Tnuva, which allowed it to acquire the company for two and a half billion US dollars². Based on these facts, China can only be treated as a hegemonic imperialist state,

² See the article: "China and Palestine: From Guns to Belt and Road" by Hamid Falih, published June 14, 2023 on babelwad.com

and the contradictions between it and U.S. imperialism can only be exploited by taking this reality into account.

It should be noted here that, contrary to the growing Chinese presence in the Arab Levant and the Middle East in general, we note a persistent weakness of this presence in the countries of North Africa, whether on the economic, financial or military level. China is the world power most absent from the Libyan scene, despite its close relations with the former Gaddafi regime. As for the rest of the countries, its presence is insignificant compared to that of traditional European and U.S. imperialisms with economic, cultural and military influence in the region (the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and the AFRICOM forces with their headquarters in Germany).

What about Russian imperialism?

Note also the beginning of the emergence of Russia through the strategic partnership agreement signed in early June 2023 between Tebboune and Putin in the context of Algeria's search for alliances to protect it from harassment by the United States of America and France, aligned with the Moroccan regime on the Sahara question. Remember that Algeria submitted a request for membership to the "BRICS" some time ago, at the same time as it concluded important agreements with Italy to provide it and through it Europe with larger quantities of natural gas to compensate for the interruption of Russian supplies to the Old Continent.

What we said about China can be said about Putin's Russia, which certain "progressive" forces applaud because it opposes U.S. imperialism, without examining the nature of this opposition. Russia only intervened in Syria to defend its interests, and it sought to coordinate with other imperialist powers, led by the United States, so that there would be no "conflict of interests". The Wagner militias at one point became a major military and political player in eastern and western Libya, alongside the rest of the intervening regional and international powers.

Russia also maintains advanced relations with the Zionist entity, despite some tensions that have arisen in these relations due to the war in Ukraine, during which the Zionist entity has refrained from publicly, clearly and completely aligning itself with the United States and the European Union in order to preserve its interests with Putin's Russia. The main areas of Russian-Israeli

cooperation are space research, transport, agricultural and industrial technologies, information and communication technologies, metal processing sector, etc.

A Clear vision and independent line

These are two examples that are of interest to international relations. It is possible to cite other examples which concern relations with regional powers such as Turkey, Iran, Arab regimes, etc. What should lead is an independent vision based on concrete class analysis, whether local reality or regional and international reality. Anyone who has such a vision will not make a mistake, even if tactical calculations and the balance of power force him to exploit certain contradictions to his advantage. But in all cases, these tactical calculations must not be transformed into a strategic line.

What we said about relations with international and regional powers can also be said about internal forces. The Arab political scene is full of currents. Religious right-wing movements, in particular, occupy a prominent place. It is therefore imperative to develop an independent vision of the different internal political forces and movements in order to determine how to deal with them according to the concrete conditions of each country. The situation in Palestine is not the same as in Tunisia; that in Lebanon or Morocco is not the same as in Syria, Iraq, or Egypt, etc.

On this basis, our party is called upon to play a more active role at the Arab level. This activity must include all intellectual, theoretical, political and practical areas. Since our last congress, our party has undertaken numerous initiatives to communicate with the Maghreb and Arab left-wing and progressive forces. It has issued numerous statements on the situation in the region with the following parties: the Workers' Democratic Way in Morocco, the "We Can" Movement in Mauritania, the Lebanese Communist Party, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Popular Unity Party of Jordan, the Jordanian People's Democratic Party, the Sudanese Communist Party, the Palestinian People's Party, the Kuwaiti Progressive Movement, the Egyptian Bread and Freedom Party, the Egyptian Socialist Popular Alliance, the Algerian Socialist Workers' Party, the Bahraini Progressive Forum, the Collective of Sahrawi Human Rights Defenders (CODESA).

A joint Maghreb declaration on the security/military agreement between the Moroccan regime and the Zionist enemy was also issued with the signature of left-wing and nationalist Tunisian forces. What is required of us is to develop these relationships and bring them out of the circle of discussion, by publishing joint declarations and organizing remote intellectual meetings up to the circle of organizing joint work in the field.

Our parties and organizations are called upon to develop intellectually, theoretically, politically, organizationally and on the ground. Defending Marxism-Leninism and disseminating its principles is an essential issue in determining the compass for understanding our contemporary world. As for the political level, our parties and organizations must keep in mind the issue of revolution and power as the goal to be achieved, and draw up the necessary plans accordingly, and not be content with the role of "ordinary" opposition, not to say "reformist" opposition which drowns in everyday life and forgets the main objective under the pretext of "difficult circumstances" and "imbalance of power relations". There must first be the will to make revolution and seize power. When the will is there, the means will be found, as Lenin said.

July 2023

From Multipolarity to the Pyramid: Endless Confusion in the Debate on Imperialism

There was once the thesis of "*collective imperialism*". It was put forward when "globalisation" was at full speed. According to this thesis, all imperialist states were collectively dominating other countries. War between imperialists was a thing of the past. In Germany, for example, this thesis was defended by a section of the German Communist Party (DKP), and its spokesperson was Leo Mayer. The economic basis of this thesis was the transition to "*transnational*" monopoly capitalism. It was argued that, as the property structure had acquired a "*transnational*" character, new "*supranational*" formations had also emerged at the state level. Thus "*transnational capital*" was pitting nation states against each other in order to secure more favourable conditions for itself. Thus inter-state contradictions were not absent, but the "*supranational organisation of transnational capital*" prevented these contradictions from assuming dangerous dimensions...

It is hard not to be tempted by the allure of superficiality, of being constantly "confirmed" by appearances. But we will not dwell on the thesis of "*collective imperialism*", for this thesis has already been refuted by life. However, the richness of life leads to the emergence of new types. One of them is, for example, the advocacy of replacing the "*unipolar world*" with a "*multipolar world*". We will first dwell on this argument, and then, using the example of the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), we will try to concretise the fact that justified criticism of the wrong is no guarantee of the right answer.

How many poles do we have?

In the discussion that we will analyse, the issue is based on the metaphor of "*poles*". For example, questions are being put forward such as "*Is today's capitalist world unipolar, bipolar, multipolar or non-polar? Which of these is better for the workers and peoples?*".

In discussions based on polarity, the post-World War II period is taken as the axis and a classification is generally made as follows: Bipolarity between 1945-1990, unipolarity between 1991-2008 and multipolarity since 2009.¹ Some, however, see the current situation as a transition from unipolarity to multipolarity rather than multipolarity. They argue that US hegemony is still extraordinarily dominant, that states like China and Russia are trying to break this unipolarity while the US is resisting it, and that the establishment of multipolarity would be beneficial for the working classes and peoples. This is what Putin and Xi Jinping are propagandising day and night!

First of all, the following question must be answered: Is unipolarity possible against the backdrop of imperialism? We know that the phenomenon of imperialism requires at least two rival imperialist states, because a monopoly cannot eliminate the competition of which it is the product. It can limit and suppress competition for a while, but it cannot destroy it. In order for this or that imperialist to eliminate all other imperialists, it must liquidate the uneven development of capitalism and the material relationships and contradictions that make this development possible. In this sense, the answer to the question is clear and unipolarity is not possible.

However, there may be a very special period in history, and as such, its transience is obvious from the beginning. For example, post-1989/1991, i.e. the first years following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the "Eastern Bloc" was such a period. In the given balance of power of that period, the US could fill the vacuum left by this collapse, and indeed it did. As an article in *Foreign Affairs*, the leading US foreign policy journal of those years, put it, a "unipolar moment" was possible. Its author, Charles Krauthammer, made the following assessment:

"The immediate post-Cold War world is not multipolar. It is unipolar. The centre of world power is the unchallenged superpower, the United States, attended by its Western allies." However, in the very next sub-heading he feels the

¹ Goldberg, J. (2023) "Weltordnung zwischen Globalisierung und Nationalstaaten" ("The World Order between Globalization and National-States"), *Z magazine*, 134, 18-27, sf. 21

need to add: "No doubt, multipolarity will come in time."²

For the purposes of our question, it does not matter whether this moment lasted until 2008 or not, as the rough classification above suggests. What is important is that multipolarity is not a desired state, but a reality of our times, and it has to be so by its very nature. So, for example, the US-China confrontation is part of the struggle for hegemony between certain imperialist states on a world scale.

But what if some of these poles are not imperialist? For example, if, as the DKP claims, there is an "anti-imperialist power" among them, or even a "power on the road to socialism"? When you identify the phenomenon of imperialism essentially with the USA and do not see Russia and China as imperialist powers, you will naturally look favourably on any development that undermines or weakens the USA and its allies. Especially if, like the DKP, you do not see Russia as an imperialist power, but as one of the countries "forced to pursue an anti-imperialist foreign policy"³(!), in the face of the aggression of the Western imperialists, it is easy as pie to be "hopeful"⁴

The analysis is as follows: On the one side, there are countries with a clear imperialist character (the USA, Germany, France, Britain, Japan and their international organisations such as NATO and the EU). On the other side: "There are capitalist countries which are often forced by imperialist aggression to adopt an anti-imperialist foreign policy. These include, among others, Brazil, South Africa, the BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation."⁵ And finally,

² Citation by Goldberg, *ibid*, sf. 22 (original article: Krauthammer, Charles, "The unipolar moment", *Foreign Affairs*, January 1990.)

³ In his speech at the "20th Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties", Günter Pohl, Secretary for International Affairs of the DKP, argued that Russia's foreign policy in Syria and Ukraine/Donbas is "objectively anti-imperialist"! See. <http://solidnet.org/article/20-IMCWP-Written-Contribution-of-German-CP/>

⁴ Such hopes are not confined to Germany, but also exist in various leftist and even Marxist circles in other countries.

⁵ From Party Chairman Patriarch Köbele's speech at the 25th Party Congress, "In what age do we live?". See. Köbele, P. (2023) "In welcher Epoche leben wir?", <https://www.unsere-zeit.de/in-welcher-epoche-le-ben-wir-4778511/#more-4778511>

China as "*an anti-imperialist power on the road to the construction of socialism*"!⁶

When the situation is read in this way, the conclusion is not surprising: "In this context, when we speak of the need to hail the trend towards 'multipolarity', this has nothing to do with illusions. This is not yet a stage in which socialism is going from triumph to triumph. But it is a stage which will probably pave the way to it. It may be a stage in which the relationship of forces between imperialism and anti-imperialism is more balanced. And it is beginning to be felt quite clearly by many peoples outside Europe that this is progress."⁷

The nice thing is that such analyses are made in the name of not calling "everything imperialism" and having a more distinctive point of view!⁸ But the sad part is the narrow-mindedness, the superficiality in the theoretical comprehension of some circles claiming to act on behalf of the left and even Marxism-Leninism, moreover, the evaluation of the open confrontation, i.e. direct war preparations of the big imperialist states from such a blind angle, as well as the demagogic discourses of imperialists such as China and Russia in this process being undertaken, even "hailed" and made an occasion for "hope". When this picture is taken into consideration, there is nothing strange in the circulation of wrong analyses of imperialism.

Of course, this is clear: The growth of the conflicts between imperialists and the sharpening of the contradictions between them may create new opportunities and possibilities for the working class and labouring peoples. However, for those who look at the issues not on the level of states but on the basis of classes and class struggles, what is essential is the necessity of a level of organisation and struggle that can make use of these possibilities and opportunities. If the working class is not organised and does not have a strong class movement based on that organisation, if it does not have an independent political line and a party that guarantees it, these opportunities will be exploited not by the working class and working peoples, but by the monopoly bourgeoisie in this or that country; moreover, they will turn into tools

⁶ Köbele, *ibid.*

⁷ Köbele, *ibid.*

⁸ Here, in one aspect, there is a reference to the KKE in Greece.

for making the workers and labourers follow the interests of the monopoly bourgeoisie.

Therefore, as long as the mentioned class balance of power remains unchanged, "multipolarity" ultimately means the sharpening of inter-imperialist contradictions much more than today, the emergence of new proxy wars⁹, the strengthening of political reaction and militarism, the spread of the poison of nationalism, the dragging of peoples into new disasters and so on. Are these not already the dominant tendencies? Under the given conditions of class power relations, is it not obvious that exposing all the forces and tendencies behind the preaching of "multipolarity", revealing the inner face of their struggle and warning the peoples is the only revolutionary way? To "salute" this reality by internalising the discourse of one of the poles is nothing but an eclipse of reason caused by the loss of class perspective.

The imperialist pyramid

For the Communist Party of Greece (KKE), of course, one cannot speak of such an eclipse of reason. On the contrary, for the KKE the imperialist character of China and Russia is quite clear. For example, according to the KKE, opportunists in Greece and other countries of the world *"argue that the capitalist restoration in the socialist countries is better because it abolished the Cold War and the world has therefore become multipolar, i.e. it has many centres and new powers", "but they 'forget' the fact that these new 'centres' and 'powers' are based on the development of capitalist relations of production, on the dominance of monopolies in the economy, i.e. that we are facing new imperialist powers on the rise"*. In the same way, the KKE does not consider the identification of imperialism with the USA to be correct. Furthermore, it criticises many right-wing opportunist and superficial approaches to the debate on imperialism. For example, it rightly criticises *"the propaganda of imperialism as something different and separate from capitalism, as a political concept detached from the economic basis*

⁹ The post-coup developments in Niger indicate that a new proxy war in Africa may break out at any moment.

of capitalism", and correctly determines that many wrong analyses of imperialism derive from this.¹⁰

But, as has been pointed out, justified criticism of the wrong answer does not guarantee a correct one. And this general truth also applies to the KKE. As a matter of fact, while defining its position in these debates, the KKE came up with an interesting concept, for which it uses the "imperialist pyramid" as a metaphor. The pyramid, in a way, reflects the hierarchical structure of the dominant relations in the imperialist world system. At the top are the most powerful imperialist states; this power diminishes as one moves down the middle and bottom of the pyramid. With an emphasis that may seem strange, the KKE draws attention to the concept of the "*international imperialist system*". In fact, the metaphor of the "*imperialist pyramid*" is used in brackets in various KKE texts as an explanation for the "*international imperialist system*".

But why this emphasis on the "*international imperialist system*", while it is clear and obvious in the face of the historical fact that capitalism is a system that develops through the world market? The reason is that the KKE believes that a new situation has emerged in this context. This is such a new situation that, they consider, Lenin's metaphor of "*chain*" and "*a handful of imperialist states*" no longer reflects today's reality.

We have to look at the issue a little more closely. According to the KKE, "*Greek capitalism*", although it has "*strong dependencies on the USA and the EU*", is "*at the imperialist stage of its development*" and "*occupies an intermediate position*" within the international imperialist system (i.e. in the middle of the pyramid).¹¹ Yet, not only Greece, but all the capitalist countries in the pyramid are in the "*imperialist stage*" of their development. Their power may differ depending on which level of the pyramid they are positioned, but they are all imperialist in one way or another!

The KKE criticises the arguments that the capitalist countries, for example Greece, are "essentially occupied by Germany" and

¹⁰ See. The speech by Aleka Pappariga, the Party Chair: Pappariga, A. (2013) "*On Imperialism – The Imperialist Pyramid*", <https://inter.kke.gr/de/articles/On-Imperialism-The-Imperialist-Pyramid/>

¹¹ Pappariga, *ibid.* The KKE programme contains almost the same definition.

that "its regime is neo-colonial". For such arguments exclude the monopoly bourgeoisie of that country from being the target (this is a correct criticism in one respect), and they ignore the fact that capitalism in that country is *"in the imperialist stage of its development"*. According to the KKE, those who fail to see these facts *"identify imperialism with a very small number of countries, a handful of countries"* and *"consider all other countries as dependent, oppressed, colonial countries"*.¹² Yet, today, there is not only dependence, but also *"interdependence"*.

If asked what development has made the pyramid concept necessary, the KKE's answer is essentially the following: *"In the last decade of the 20th century the situation began to change. Two factors, mutually influencing each other, but with their own relative autonomy, stand behind this."*¹³ One is the change in economic policies after the 1973 crisis, i.e. the abandonment of *"neo-Keynesianism"* (followed by privatisation, the restriction of social rights, increased capital exports, etc.). Secondly, the *"opportunities offered to imperialism"* by the collapse of the USSR and the Eastern Bloc (*"capitalist restoration"*); the launching of *"a new wave of attacks by capital which met with little resistance"*, and the *"creation of new markets in the former socialist countries"*. This development had consequences: *"The unity of the leading powers vis-à-vis socialism began to unravel"*, *"a new round of inter-imperialist contradictions was opened in the division of new markets"*, which led to wars in the Balkans, the Middle East and North Africa. *"At the end of the 20th century, there were three imperialist centres that emerged after the world war: ... EU, USA and Japan. Today, the number of imperialist centres has increased and new forms of alliances have emerged, such as the Russia-oriented alliance, the Shanghai alliance, the BRICS, the alliance of Latin American countries ALBA, MERCOSUR, etc."*

In conclusion: *"It is not only those at the top who pursue an imperialist political line, but also the countries at lower levels, even those who are dependent on the bigger powers as regional and local powers, pursue such a line. Turkey, for example, is such a power in our region, as are Israel, the Arab states and the powers that are instrumental in the seizure of new territories by monopoly capital in*

¹² Pappariga, *ibid.*

¹³ Pappariga, *ibid.*

*Africa, Asia and Latin America. As a result, we are confronted with the phenomenon of dependence and interdependence."*¹⁴

There is no need to question the obvious, namely that all capitalist countries are part of the international imperialist system. Likewise, it is also obvious that the balance of power between capitalist countries may differ and that this may change as a result of uneven development. What we criticise is the characterisation of all countries within this system as imperialist. In other words, the problem is that the difference between the capitalist countries is reduced to a quantitative difference and the qualitative difference between them in terms of their stage of development and position is neglected. And hence the relations of dependence between them are explained rather as "*interdependence*". Of course, no less important is the fact that, since it is claimed that all capitalist countries are in the imperialist stage, the phenomenon of dependent countries and oppressed peoples has disappeared along with the objective contradictions that brought them into existence.

For the reasons stated and unstated, the face of the world economy has changed in the last decades, the world market shares of the Western imperialist countries, especially the USA, have declined, a country like China has become an imperialist power in the meantime, especially the "*countries on the threshold*" (i.e. countries that have not yet become an imperialist power, but have ceased to be the backward capitalist countries of the past), that capitalism is developing rapidly in many countries, that there has been a great increase in the export of capital from imperialist countries to capitalist countries, especially during the period of "*globalisation*", that this has stimulated an extraordinary growth in the accumulation of capital in those countries, that on the other hand there is a new phase in the internationalisation of the production process and the reshaping and deepening of the division of labour in the capitalist world economy, etc... These are developments more or less known to those who follow the world economy and its relations.¹⁵ If this is the case, it can be said that

¹⁴ Pappariga, *ibid.*

¹⁵ We do not mention factors such as the impact of these developments on the classes and their struggles because they are not the subject of this article.

although the bourgeoisies of these countries have imperial ambitions for their regions due to capital accumulation, these developments alone do not yet make, for example, Greece or Turkey an imperialist state/power. However, the KKE objects to this! It says it does and has done so. How?

The KKE's argument is as follows: First of all, these countries are not colonies or semi-colonies or victims of strong capitalist states, as is commonly believed. There are monopolies in these countries, the monopoly bourgeoisie works on its own account and sometimes together with the states at the top, and exports capital to various countries of the world, especially to its own regions. For example: *"Those who speak of subjugation and occupation do not see the export of capital from Greece (which is a characteristic feature of capitalism in its imperialist stage) ... Capital is exported for productive investment in other countries and, of course, to European banks."*¹⁶

Let us quote from another text which makes the same point: *"The fact is that the accumulation and concentration of capital has for many years led to the formation and development of monopolies, which constitute the core of capitalism in its imperialist stage... It is precisely this development which forms the basis of the KKE's analysis in developing its strategy and the tactics derived from it. The party programme approved by the 19th Party Congress underlines the following points: The Greek bourgeoisie initially benefited from the counter-revolutionary change of power in the Balkan countries and their accession to the EU. The Greek bourgeoisie has achieved a significant accumulation of capital and has recorded a strong export of capital, which through direct investments has contributed to the strengthening of Greek companies and monopolies.... This development, which expresses the further maturation of the material preconditions for socialism¹⁷, is not limited to Greece alone, but covers the whole of the capitalist countries. The development of monopoly capitalism in recent decades confirms this."*¹⁸

¹⁶ Pappariga, *ibid.*

¹⁷ We do not touch upon the aspects of the analysis of what is happening in relation to the stage and the path of the revolution, for they are not the subject of this article.

¹⁸ KKE (t.y.) *"Der Diskurs soll mit Argumenten und nicht mit Verleumdungen durchgeführt werden"* (*"This Discussion should be*

Speaking at an international meeting in Cuba in 2022, KKE Politburo member G. Marinou emphasised that the five characteristics listed by Lenin in summarising imperialism should not be limited to the countries at the top of the pyramid: *"These characteristics are not peculiar only to the states at the top of the imperialist pyramid, on the contrary, they are holistic, they are peculiar to all states, more or less powerful, because the monopoly and reactionary epoch of capitalism is a whole."*

It seems that in the discussion of imperialism we come round and round to the same place: to the confusion that arises today in analysing the characteristics of imperialism identified by Lenin...

The approach to Lenin's five points

It was said earlier that the eclipse of reason in the DKP and some left circles does not apply to the KKE. However, it seems that the paths of the two parties somehow overlap in dealing with the characteristics of imperialism expressed by Lenin in his five points. While the DKP claims that China and Russia are not imperialist based on these points, the KKE claims that all capitalist countries are imperialist by referring to the same five points! It must be stated at the outset that what makes this overlap possible is the positivism that permeates the very soul of the modern revisionist tradition.

In this respect, the criticism of the DKP is essentially valid for the KKE. The positivist reading sees only the factual in the five points summarised by Lenin, i.e. monopoly, finance capital, export of capital, etc. However, looking at these points, what is equally important for the discussion of imperialism is the context of the factual, its impact and what it leads to. For example, what is essential and decisive is not the emergence of monopoly per se (monopoly existed even before capitalism), but the fact that the monopoly emerging at this stage of capitalism *"plays a decisive role in economic life"*. Or international capitalist unions may also appear in the period of free competition in this or that individual investment, but what is essential for imperialism is that these unions are able to *"share the world among themselves"*. Similarly, in the

Carried out with Arguments and not with Slander"), <https://inter.kke.gr/de/articles/Der-Diskurs-soll-mit-Argumenten-und-nicht-mit-Verleumdungen-durchgefuehrt-werden/>

history of the world, certain powers have shared certain regions among themselves, but what is essential in imperialism, as analysed by Lenin, is the "*division of the whole world*", its "*completion*" and the necessity of "*redivision*".

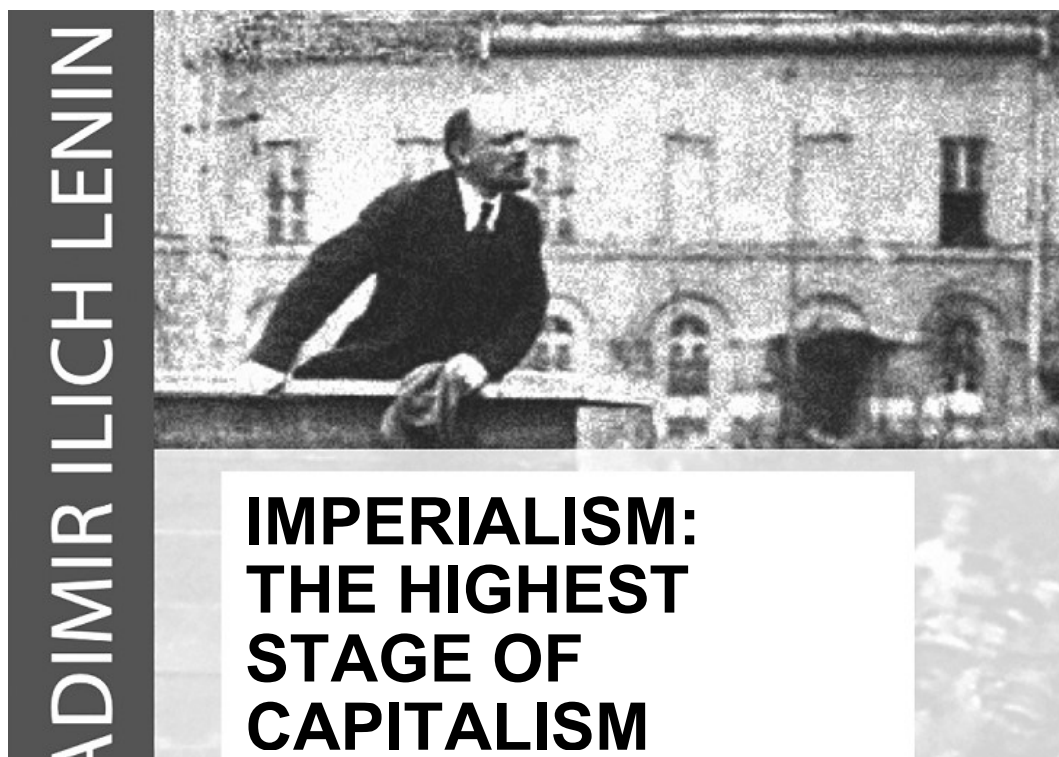
In short, what is new with imperialism is the emergence of a relationship of hegemony, domination and power based on the leaving behind of the free competitive period of capitalism in a paradoxical manner¹⁹. The ground on which this power relationship is based is, of course, the phenomenon of monopoly. However, phenomena can be understood correctly together with their formation and attributes: Monopolies, yes, but monopolies that now play a decisive role in economic life on a world scale. Financial capital, yes, but a financial capital corresponding to the financial oligarchy, etc. The main thing is not the presence or absence of monopoly, financial capital and capital export in this or that capitalist country, but their position, market share, investment and sanction capacity vis-à-vis the great imperialist powers and monopolies in terms of the relationship of domination. Therefore, it cannot be determined whether a country is imperialist or not only by looking at this or that feature of imperialism identified by Lenin; on the contrary, for this, it is necessary to look for the totality of these features in the relation of domination to which they correspond and to see whether this material relation is dominant in the economic and political life and foreign relations of that country. When this is not done, the totality of the characteristics of imperialism turns into an empty expression.

Furthermore, with this approach, there is a difference, which is not insignificant, between the imperialist capitalist countries which evolved from free competitive capitalism to monopoly capitalism as a result of the internal laws of its development, and the countries which made the transition to the imperialist stage under "*advanced*" historical conditions when imperialism dominated the world and the division of the world by imperialist monopolies and states was already completed. The development of capitalism in the second type of countries takes place under conditions where the first ones already dominate in the economy, market shares, spheres of influence and technology. They do not develop outside

¹⁹ Paradoxical, because a monopoly stifles competition but cannot eliminate it.

the monopolies that dominate on a world scale, but alongside and often through them. Only at a certain stage of their development, i.e. from a point where they can achieve a capital accumulation, market share, military power and technological advantage/superiority that can be differentiated from the imperialist monopolies and states that dominate the world, can they show activity as an imperialist power.

In other words, they can emerge as an imperialist power to the extent that they can break through and surpass the imperialist monopolies standing against them at a certain level and field. The heart of the matter is the breaking/overcoming of the existing monopoly/monopolisation that dominates in various sectors, fields and subjects. For a capitalist country that has not reached this level of development, the fact that its company in this or that sector is a monopoly, has finance capital or exports capital does not automatically make that country imperialist. To think otherwise is to approach Lenin's theory of imperialism with a positivist understanding, to deny the internal unity of the characteristics of imperialism as it emerged, to forget that the development of today's capitalist countries takes place under the conditions of the age of imperialism, and therefore to abstract the speed and forms of their development from the existence and tendencies of imperialism, in short, to miss the point.



In Imperialism, Lenin, quoting the German economist Kestner on the consequences of the emergence of the cartels, after quoting him as saying that the cartels not only made high profits, but also "*secured a **dominating position...** which did not exist under free competition*", went on as follows: "*The words which I have italicised reveal the essence of the case which the bourgeois economists admit so reluctantly and so rarely, and which the present-day defenders of opportunism, led by Kautsky, so zealously try to evade and brush aside. Domination, and the violence that is associated with it, such are the relationships that are typical of the 'latest phase of capitalist development'; this is what inevitably had to result, and has resulted, from the formation of all-powerful economic monopolies.*"²⁰

That is why, for Lenin, "*imperialism is monopoly capitalism*" and never capitalism with monopolies! And it is for this reason that liberal economists today deny not the existence of monopolies, but their abolition of free competition! And for the same reasons, the uneven development of capitalism, resulting from competition and anarchy in capitalist production, acquires with imperialism the characteristic of a spasmodic development. The peculiarities of China's development into an imperialist power are a striking example of what is emphasised here.²¹

The positivist point of view, on the other hand, ignores both the historical and the historicity of the historical. It reduces Lenin's analysis of imperialism to a simple statement of fact: There are monopolies, there is finance capital, there is the export of capital. Therefore, many capitalist countries can get away with saying that they are in the "*imperialist stage*"! First of all, these features are the features of the evolution of free competitive capitalism into

²⁰ Lenin, Imperialism.

²¹ For instance, it is no coincidence that the US, in its competition with China, seeks to maintain its dominance in chip technology, and to this end, pays special attention to counter-attacks and sanctions. As this footnote was being written, it was reported that US President Joe Biden was to issue a new decree banning US capital from investing in Chinese companies (companies operating in China or controlled by the Chinese government) operating in the area of certain semiconductors, quantum computing and artificial intelligence.

monopoly capitalism. In this respect, they express features that differ, contradict and differentiate from the point of comparison, that is, from free competitive capitalism. Secondly, under the conditions of world capitalism, in which imperialism, monopoly capitalism and therefore its specific features and tendencies have been around for more than a century, the emergence of the aforementioned features in this or that capitalist country is not only an understandable development, but also not contrary to the tendencies of imperialism. For these reasons, the noted capitalist development does not make these countries directly imperialist.

Why? Because the monopolies, finance capital, etc. in those countries are not formed under the conditions of a freely competitive world capitalism. On the contrary, the monopolies and finance capital in these countries are formed and try to perform under the conditions of a given world economy in which economic and financial power, world markets, spheres of influence and technological possibilities are shared by the big imperialist monopolies and states, in which a concrete and specific power relationship prevails relatively. Why is this point important? Because the monopolies, etc. in these countries are not formed in spite of the big imperialist monopolies and finance capital; on the contrary, with exceptions, they emerge and try to grow in co-operation with them, leaning on them as their small partners, sometimes even as their extensions.

In countries whose capital accumulation processes are so conditioned and disadvantaged from the beginning, is it not possible that this or that group of finance capital, this or that monopoly, even on a small scale, gain a market advantage for itself? In a historical process in which capitalism is expanding on a world scale, such exceptional possibilities and opportunities can and do arise. However, exceptions confirm the rule. In short, approaching Lenin's five characteristics of imperialism by abstracting them from the given material relations of today's imperialist capitalism, and in particular from power relations, is nothing but a positivist reading of the theory of imperialism.

'Global south' and 'interdependence'

Undoubtedly, in the last 40 years, capitalism has developed on a world scale, especially in the period of the "globalisation" boom, i.e. when Western finance capital, intoxicated by the

triumphalism of the post-1989/91 turn, left no market untouched and shifted its production processes to foreign countries, especially in those "*on the brink of development*". This phenomenal spread of capitalism and capitalist relations in a relatively short period of time had many-sided effects both on these countries and on the world economy. For example, it is worth mentioning that along with this capitalist development in the non-imperialist countries, there has taken place a significant level of industrialisation and capital accumulation. Depending on the level of accumulation, the monopoly bourgeoisie in these countries, as is known, turn to the export of capital, especially to neighbouring countries, make investments concentrated in this or that sector, and face opportunities for the expansion of their market share. In the words of the Chairman of the Board of Directors of TÜSİAD, the organisation of Turkey's big capitalists, "*All over the world, supply chains are changing, production centres are shifting. There are very important opportunities for economies that can read this process correctly*".²² Moreover, the emergence of a new imperialist power such as China increases the options of the monopoly bourgeoisie of these countries and they are able to gain a bargaining power that they did not have before, especially against Western monopolies.

As a matter of fact, for some time now, the "*countries on the brink*", i.e. Brazil, India, Mexico, South Africa (Turkey is one of these countries with its own specific contexts), have been able to make more confident decisions in the confrontation of the big powers, especially vis-à-vis the Western imperialists, and for the time being they are in a position to take advantage of the sharpening of the contradictions between the major imperialist countries. India is a concrete example of the growing options for economic and political co-operation. India is the 6th largest economy in the world. In the given circumstances, it does not feel obliged to follow this or that major imperialist power. It is already turning to various special economic, political and military co-operation with each of them.

²² Bloomberg (2022) "*Turan: Üretim merkezleri kayıyor, önemli fırsatlar mevcut*", <https://www.bloomberght.com/turan-uretim-merkezleri-kayiyor-onemli-firsatlar-mevcut-2315805>

According to the KKE, such situations are indicators of the "*phenomenon of dependence and interdependence*". "*Interdependence*" does not fundamentally change if one of these countries is a member of a particular imperialist alliance. Greece's membership of NATO and the EU, for example, "*limits the ability of the Greek bourgeoisie to act independently*", but "*interdependence*" does not disappear in this case either, it only turns into "*unequal relations of interdependence*" (!).²³ And again we read that "*interdependence*" also applies to the classical imperialist states: "*Even if one or several states are at the top [of the pyramid] and are at the forefront of capitalist internationalisation and the redivision of markets, they continue to exist in a regime of mutual dependence with other countries. Germany, for example, may be the leading power in Europe, but the export of its capital and industrial products depends on the ability of European countries and China to buy them.*"

²⁴

Let us skip the dependence mentioned in the last quotation. Apart from being the subject of inter-imperialist relations, this is a type of "*dependence*" that has existed since the world market, economy and export/import relations have existed. It is natural that at the present level of interconnection of the world economy, such mutual "*dependencies*" have increased. But even here, there are serious differences of possibilities among the capitalist and even imperialist states in overcoming the disadvantages arising from this kind of mutual "*dependence*". When the inter-imperialist contradictions break up the forms in which they have hitherto existed, when they undergo a reformulation corresponding to the new level of intensification of contradictions (this is in a way what is happening today!) and when open confrontations come to the fore, this mutual "*dependence*" will also become unrecognisable. The word "*de-risking*", the goal of reducing interdependence in strategic fields and sectors, which the Western imperialists are talking about these days, is an indication that the change we have mentioned has already begun as a process.

But to come to the main point, as is often the case, the secret is in the contradiction! It is precisely in the above contradictory statement ("*unequal relations of interdependence*") that the point

²³ KKE, *ibid.*

²⁴ Pappariga, *ibid.*

of importance for our subject and our point of objection is expressed. If there is an unequal interdependence, and if there are other factors that condition this inequality, then in this relationship one side is dependent and the other side is not. The real difference in "*interdependence*" is precisely this inequality. In this respect, the claim of "*interdependence*" here also functions to cover up the dependence of one side.

Let us not go any further; the question is where to place these developments. Obviously, the BRICS group cannot be viewed only through the prism of the "*Global South*", as China and Russia are not there for charity. The BRICS engagement of these two imperialists is obvious: among other things, to strengthen their hands against rival imperialist states by backing up the countries of the "*Global South*" in a wide range of areas, from raw materials to geopolitics. Many examples can be given to show that competition in this field has increased in recent years. For this, it is enough to look at the composition of the international summits and conferences organised by the big imperialist states. Another striking point in this context is that China and Russia are able to successfully exploit the justified anti-colonialist reactions against the Western imperialist states in these countries and pay special attention to creating the image that they are not colonialists like the Westerners and to demonstrate this in practice through infrastructure investments or the opportunities offered within the framework of the BRICS group.²⁵

It must be emphasised that the developments summarised above are only one side of the coin. On the other side, there is the development and positions gained by the Western imperialist countries in the last 40 years, i.e. producing with extraordinary rates of exploitation in countries where labour power is cheap, reducing the cost of reproduction of labour power in their own countries, imposing monopoly prices, obtaining a level of capital accumulation incomparable with the developing capitalist countries, renewing

²⁵ At the time of writing, the statement of the Russian-African summit in St. Petersburg, hosted by Russia, that the parties would jointly oppose "neo-colonialism" and work for the completion of the decolonisation process in Africa, as well as make efforts to compensate the former colonies for the losses they suffered at the hands of the colonial powers, was just one recent example of this.

their monopoly position in technology, etc. As a result, monopolisation, monopoly domination, level of accumulation, excess capital and swelling in the financial sector, etc. in the classical imperialist countries have reached dimensions incomparable from those in Lenin's time. Today, for example, the Apple monopoly alone has a financial power greater than the GDP of many countries. Therefore, while drawing attention to the capitalist development in various countries of the world and the monopolies and finance capital formed in them, one should not overlook the level of centralisation and concentration of capital in the imperialist countries, and the new possibilities this offers them.

In this way, one can see that the development in the imperialist countries has an aspect that makes the development in the "*Global South*" relative precisely in terms of the phenomenon of monopoly and the relations of domination rising on it. Of course, these countries have made a significant capitalist development compared to their past positions, but the relativity of this will be understood automatically when the classical imperialist countries, not their past positions, are taken as the point of comparison. In terms of criteria such as monopoly position in key and strategic sectors, especially technology, market dominance, spheres of influence, capital accumulation and reserves, military, financial and diplomatic sanctioning power, the difference between the classical imperialist countries and the capitalist countries that have developed in recent decades has not fundamentally changed. The metaphor of the "*pyramid*", with its distinction between those at the top and those at the bottom, does not seem to deny this difference, but by defining all of them as imperialist, one turns this difference into a quantitative difference between qualitatively identical ones. However, in real life, in other words, in the harsh conditions of competition in world capitalism, it is experienced again and again every day that this difference is not just a quantitative difference. On the contrary, to use Hegel's expression, quantity is also quality, that is to say, precisely this quantitative difference creates a qualitative difference in terms of imposing the relationship of domination and hegemony, which is the nature of monopoly.²⁶

²⁶ It goes without saying that our quantitative/qualitative distinction here does not mean that the imperialist countries are not

It must not be forgotten that the current picture of the power relations and distribution of the world economy, which is much more intertwined than yesterday, will not be permanent. Just as the prediction that "there will be no more wars" made on the basis of this intertwined state has come to naught, similarly, it should not be thought that the opportunities and development possibilities offered by this state today will always remain the same. Yes, the market shares of the classical imperialist countries are not increasing as before. On the contrary, they are showing signs of decline in various sectors. Their former position in the world economy is beginning to be shaken. Their capacity to limit competition and impose themselves is weakening. However, this trend cannot be considered unidirectional or permanent. On the contrary, it is sharpening the contradictions of imperialism by provoking the resistance of those who have lost ground. When the sharpening reaches a certain point, i.e. when the change in power relations accelerates and reaches a stage unacceptable for this or that imperialist centre, the general framework that makes the present course possible will be rapidly transformed and the language of force and violence will be spoken with all its destructiveness.

Then, at the latest, it will become clear who is an imperialist and who is not!

Labour Party (EMEP), Turkey
October 2023

capitalist. For, if imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism, the difference between imperialist capitalist countries vis-à-vis ordinary capitalist countries derives precisely from their capacity, as countries which have reached this highest stage, to establish and impose monopolistic relations of domination and hegemony. The conditionality of the emergence and crystallisation of this capacity with the attainment of the highest stage of capitalism indicates that it exhibits not a quantitative but a qualitative characteristic in the above-mentioned sense.

The Electricity Market and the Lie of “Green” Capital

The critical transition to renewable energy sources has been set up to fail by the economic restructuring of the electricity sector, which prioritizes market profits over anything else. The plummeting costs and rising profits of renewable sources have led much of the media to believe that the long-awaited market solution to climate change is just around the corner. The various multinational firms such as BP, Exxon, and Shell all announced their new commitments to investment in green energy and capital. However, those promises are either outright falsehoods or undelivered promises as the oil giants recede from these pledges in the face of changing market conditions. Concessions like these in the face of pressure from the market is by now a regular habit of the energy firms. While the market’s quarterly and yearly movements disincentivize socially and environmentally necessary actions, the market structure itself prevents full renewable adoption, particularly in the sub-field of the electricity market. Here the market is not merely a weak incentive, but an active impediment to the complete adoption of renewables.

To briefly explain how most markets function in the United States, we must first understand the concept of marginal cost and merit order. While there are many different market mechanisms for trading electricity, a recurring structure is through the merit order of each generator’s marginal costs. In a centralized market (the structure implemented in most of the US), the owners calculate their bids based on their generator’s marginal cost, which is defined as the cost to produce another unit of energy given some existing production in the unit. This can more simply be thought of as the cost of running the generator without the cost of building the plant, starting it, or running it without any demand. These bids are sent to a system operator, a regulatory organ that then organizes the bids from lowest to highest cost and dispatches them to produce power until the demand is met. The cost of electricity is set at the price of the most expensive unit required to

supply demand, which in theory incentivizes each owner to make their production as cheap as possible to ensure they bid in and to ensure that they are maximizing profits.

This is a massive simplification of electricity markets, which in reality are frequently subject to external conditions like fluctuations in predicted demand and failures of generating units, as well as a great deal of variance in the specific structure of the market, some of which allow bilateral trading between two private parties, or allow the generators to self-dispatch. Nonetheless, the basic “logic” of the market persists between them all: the cost of electricity is set by the most expensive unit required to supply demand.

How does this affect renewables? The key feature of renewables — as far as the market is concerned — is their near-zero marginal cost. This means that a seller can potentially enter a market serviced by non-renewables and make out like bandits, producing the energy for next to no cost once the renewable plant is built, but get paid the cost of producing with coal or natural gas. This hasn’t been lost on the energy firms of the world, hence the continuing pledges and occasional actual investment in renewable resources. So why have our brave entrepreneurs not led us yet into the green future? Again, this relates to the market’s structure. As renewables enter the market, they will slowly “outbid” the natural gas and coal plants and drive them out of the market, driving down the price of electricity. The profits of the renewable plants will decline in proportion to their share of the electricity production, until the approximately zero marginal cost of renewables is reflected in the price and any opportunities for profit is fully destroyed. In reality, the market will never reach this point as the projected return on investment of building a renewable plant will likewise decline and put a stop to further integration. This is the essence of the self-cannibalization problem. As Marx said in the *Manifesto*:

“The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connexions everywhere.”

Can we honestly then expect the owners of power plants to sabotage their own market, even for the sake of the planet? They will make enough solar farms and wind turbines to collect their

pay, and pump out carbon dioxide and methane to produce all the rest.

The extent of this problem is a matter of some debate amongst economists. The maximal power production share that could be assigned to renewables without the investments keeling into the negative is modeled at 80%. This relies first on the economic absurdity that any capitalist would invest in a “zero-profit” project, and furthermore relies on the political absurdity of a carbon tax, which has been exposed by former Exxon lobbyist Keith McCoy as a red herring set loose by the gas companies (in addition to a litany of other crimes, lies, and bribes committed and dispensed) to slow the climate response. As is typical of political discourse, all potential solutions are “incentives” a la the aforementioned carbon tax, but even other “incentives” seem unlikely, as they would at the outset require a governing body committed to combating climate change. Recent developments such as the approval of the extraction of the Willow oil reserves in Alaska’s North Slope and the ousting of former Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Richard Glick over his desire to more thoroughly review the necessity and environmental effect of natural gas projects all took place under the Democratic Party, widely aggrandized as the “greener” of the two American blocs. Whatever the Democrats may believe of themselves or want others to believe of them, their actions demonstrate that they intend to carry on much as they have been, and are not interested in making any proactive, drastic, or indeed *necessary* moves to combat climate change. Even if they were, any of their proposed measures would be fought tooth and nail, first by the sellers of all forms of electric power to either keep themselves in the market or to ensure their profits remain as high as possible, and then by the gas and oil lobby to prevent one of the largest markets for their product from drying up.

What then is the solution? If the market poses a problem, then the simplest solution is to remove the market. This is not as drastic or artificial a measure as it might seem, as monopoly (either private or public) was the most prominent form of electricity distribution in the entire world. Mexico, the US, and much of continental Europe used vertically integrated, closely regulated municipal monopolies and utilities, and the UK, Australia, and Chile along with most of South America had nationalized grids. Chile is a

country of special interest, because the waves of marketization and privatization that overtook all the previously mentioned countries began there. After Augusto Pinochet overthrew the social democratic Allende government in 1973, with the aid of the UK and the US, Chile embarked on a project of mass privatization of previously government-owned enterprises under the advisement of the “Chicago Boys,” a group of neoliberal economists trained at the University of Chicago under Milton Friedman. Among those industries was the nation’s electricity generation and transmission, which was promptly marketized via the 1982 Electricity Act. The market quickly devolved into oligarchic monopoly, in effect creating very large private firms that stood in the way of changing any regulations to their detriment, to say nothing of outages and wild price swings. However, to the rest of the world and the economists in charge of the project, the key goal of making money off power generation had been achieved, and other countries soon followed suit. The United Kingdom and Australia fully privatized their generation over the course of the 1990s, along with much of the US, though this process was and is incomplete given the decentralized management of utilities in this country.

Despite the lessons learned during the Chilean experiment, these market measures were by no means clean or gentle, then or now. The placement of the electrical grid in the hands of private corporations is a risky business, as these corporations don’t see electricity as a common good necessary for the functioning of modern society, but as a source of profit to be exploited. A recurring theme is the emergence of “market power” wherein private firms with large shares of the market can influence supply and demand and create huge price spikes and rake in massive profits. Despite nearly twenty years of market creation and regulation, one such exercise in market power unfolded in the California energy crisis, in which Enron coordinated their plants to shut down during peak demand, causing outages while nonetheless allowing them to “rake in” premiums for the power they continued to provide. Enron had carried out the same activities in Canada, though with less disastrous results.

In the present, the price of electricity in the UK and Texas has skyrocketed in response to various political and environmental conditions. Over the winter of 2022–2023 the price of electricity in

the UK soared into the price caps, as it did in Texas in 2021–2022, and the companies providing power were only too happy to charge these prices that in no way reflected the capabilities of people, or indeed most businesses, to pay. This necessitated either a lowering of the price cap in the UK’s case or a wave of loans for firms to cover the costs of electricity in the case of Texas. Nor has the fun stopped: this summer, Texas’ energy prices doubled over a projected heatwave, and investors were helpfully directed to the stocks through which they may best profit from this reversal of fortune. This will likely be a recurring theme through the next decade — the energy marketeers profiting off the climate crisis they had a pivotal role in creating.

Why did most of the capitalist world elect to pursue this market form, given how easy it is to abuse? While much of the process unfolded out of view of the public eye, a typical claim is that markets will tend to increase efficiency and lower costs overall, minus a few incidences of obvious price gouging, of course. In the US, this has been proven false, with consumer prices rising and customer welfare declining, and any efficiency gains going directly into the pockets of generation owners. This is topically demonstrated in the occupied territory of Puerto Rico, which recently had their grid transferred into private hands. Instead of taking seriously their mandate to update and maintain the (admittedly aged and nonfunctional) grid, the company has elected to continue reaping the profits while the outages worsen. The real reason for the adoption of markets and deregulation is the ability to make money. This comes to us from a leading analyst of the United States electricity market, Paul Joskow, speaking on the eve of widespread deregulation and marketization about the concerned parties pushing for markets:

“[The reform efforts] have been led by large industrial customers interested in lower electricity prices and by the independent power providers and new electricity marketers who can profit if reforms allow them to sell directly to end-use customers at prevailing wholesale market prices...”

The goal of all this was not efficiency or price reduction. It was to free up the billions of dollars of revenue to go out and seek profits, which were found at a greater human and environmental cost than we can afford. The market cannot save us. We will not “naturally” uncover a market solution to the climate crisis, in the

energy sector or anywhere else. This infrastructure is a social good, a product that serves the whole of society, not the piggy bank of a select few companies. As Stalin writes in *Dialectical and Historical Materialism*:

“An instance in which the relations of production do not correspond to the character of the productive forces, conflict with them, is the economic crises in capitalist countries, where private capitalist ownership of the means of production is in glaring incongruity with the social character of the process of production, with the character of the productive forces. This results in economic crises, which lead to the destruction of productive forces. Furthermore, this incongruity itself constitutes the economic basis of social revolution, the purpose of which IS to destroy the existing relations of production and to create new relations of production corresponding to the character of the productive forces.”

The generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity must be taken from private enterprise and placed into the hands of the working class and a socialist state. Nationalization, under capitalist social relations, will still see electrical systems operated on the law of value and will only serve as a minor band-aid to the overall contradictions inherent to capitalism. To truly solve the issue, a new economic model that puts human needs at its center must be built.

Marxist-Leninists and the War

Historically, Marxism has taken a position in relation to all social questions; it has never been neutral or indifferent, since the study of problems with the Marxist method always brings forth class answers to any question and necessarily leads to taking sides, because Marxism implies taking up the position of the proletariat. It always makes its analysis take sides, no matter how many complexities must be assessed and resolved.

An issue of great importance and relevance in today's world, which therefore requires advancing in evaluations and analyses in order to reach practical conclusions and orient ourselves in a convulsed world, is war.

"In reality, war is a social-historical phenomenon, arising at a certain stage in the development of human society and linked to transitory and transient conditions of social life.

"With the advent of private property, classes, and the state came the need for special detachments of armed men, that is, an army. War became a means of conquering other people's lands and subjugating weaker peoples.

"On the basis of the study of the history of wars, particularly wars of the imperialist epoch, Lenin arrived at the scientific classification of wars. Marxist-Leninist theory starts from the fact that there are two types of wars: just, liberating wars, which do not pursue the ends of conquest, and unjust wars, wars of conquest. The objectives of just wars are: the defense of the country against external aggression, the liberation of the people from capitalist slavery, the liberation of the colonies and countries dependent on the imperialist yoke. Unjust wars seek to put an end to the conquest and subjugation of foreign countries and foreign peoples."¹

¹ Marxist Philosophical Dictionary.

Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin left us many analytical documents on the war, in which the bases and references for Marxist-Leninists are studied in depth and on which we must base our analyses.

Lenin tells us in his work "Socialism and War":

"Socialists have always condemned wars between nations as barbarous and brutal. Our attitude towards war, however, is fundamentally different from that of the bourgeois pacifists (supporters and advocates of peace) and of the anarchists. We differ from the former in that we understand the inevitable connection between wars and the class struggle within a country; we understand that wars cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished and socialism is created; we also differ in that we regard civil wars, i.e., wars waged by an oppressed class against the oppressor class, by slaves against slave-holders, by serfs against landowners, and by wage-workers against the bourgeoisie, as fully legitimate, progressive and necessary. We Marxists differ from both pacifists and anarchists in that we deem it necessary to study each war historically (from the standpoint of Marx's dialectical materialism) and separately. There have been in the past numerous wars which, despite all the horrors, atrocities, distress and suffering that inevitably accompany all wars were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy most harmful and reactionary institutions (e.g., an autocracy or serfdom) and the most barbarous despotisms in Europe (the Turkish and the Russian). That is why the features historically specific to the present war must come up for examination."²

This statement supports the historical position of the Marxist-Leninist communists on the phenomenon of war and places it in its full dimension. After analyzing and having applied in practice the premises defined theoretically, Lenin gives us unequivocal examples of what the Marxist method means against the compliant opportunism of social democracy and the errors of anarchism. It

² Lenin. Socialism and War.

places us in a parameter of reference: legitimate, progressive wars, and reactionary wars.

Engels, who participated directly in armed confrontations, made theoretical and practical contributions to understanding the phenomenon of armed struggle, providing the following criteria on the relationship between the economy and the development of war.

"... in a word, the triumph of force is based on the production of arms, and this in turn on production in general – therefore, on ‘economic power’, on the ‘economic situation’, on the material means which force has at its disposal."³

These elements, seen as a general basis for scientific analysis, present us with the dialectical relationship between the level of economic development and the forms of war, and also allow us to assess particularities of the advance of the capitalist economy towards imperialism and towards the inevitable imperialist wars with their own technical and operational expressions, as a consequence of economic expansion. The crises and the need for the monopolies to encompass new areas lead to the inter-imperialist confrontation for a new division of the already divided world, to the economic, political and military oppression of the dependent and weak nations by the great powers and to the increase of the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie and its monopoly corporations on a global level. This is to guarantee the increase of the wealth of the highest layers of the big international monopoly bourgeoisie and the financing of wars, with the loss of the historical rights and benefits for the majority, from whom they even take their lives; this creates a whole series of more sophisticated violent phenomena as a conclusion to the generalization of the use of scientific and economic progress to resolve the fundamental contradictions. For this reason, Lenin, following in the footsteps of Marx and Engels, stated:

"War is the continuation of politics by other (i.e. violent) ‘means’. This famous dictum was uttered by Clausewitz, one of the profoundest writers on the problems of war. Marxists have

³ Engels, *Anti-Dühring*.

always rightly regarded this thesis as the theoretical basis of views on the significance of any war. It is precisely from this point of view that Marx and Engels always examined the various wars."⁴ Hence, for us, the links between politics and war are clearly determined, as well as their relation to the economy of an epoch.

Why Deal with the Subject of War?

The processes of expansion of open war in the world, as a mechanism to resolve the fundamental contradictions of the epoch and the fight between imperialist blocs, are increasing the threats of new violent scenarios. These can affect our countries with their consequences, so we consider it necessary to review these issues, to prepare for the imminent deepening of wars and work to consolidate the tactical lines of unified action of the Marxist-Leninists worldwide, deepening the internationalist perspective in order to try to advance in the midst of active, changing and violent scenarios. Imperialist war, war of aggression; or the anti-imperialist war, war of national liberation; civil war, war between classes, are a growing reality in the world today and will be even more so in the future; thus we must study how to transform them in a progressive sense, in Lenin's definition, implementing revolutionary actions to try to give them an advanced content with our contributions.

An important point to take into account is how the military conception is evolving; from the wars of barricades, modern, guerrilla wars, trench warfare and insurrections, to proxy wars, or "smart" wars, information wars; using drones and robots, aggressions that are generally waged on the territory of dependent countries, such as Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Ukraine, etc. These tend to continue as proxy wars between powers, being in general imperialist wars that every day are shortening the distances between the main contenders, financiers and promoters, such as the U.S. bloc. militarily represented by NATO, and the China-Russia bloc, the imperialist blocs that are fighting today, or are preparing to do so. In eastern Europe, they are fighting over the area of Crimea and the Donbass in Ukraine, further east preparations are increasing in the China Sea, in the conflict over Taiwan; in Africa, where the traditional imperialist

⁴ Lenin. Socialism and War.

powers that controlled these territories are losing ground and the emerging imperialist powers are advancing over them, one mainly relying on military methods, the other on economic methods, but without ruling out the combination of both.

As for the human basis of the war, we can see that every day the imperialists are strengthening the armies of mercenaries, who are highly skilled, with modern weapons, with attractive salaries, recruited worldwide through "security companies". This is a clear expression of another imperialist monopoly branch to impose reactionary wars of re-division of the world. In the future, these must be opposed by just wars, waged by the immense armies of the people in arms who are defending their sovereignty and their class interests. There are enough examples in the world, some of which are still resisting and fighting with popular support, without surrendering to imperialism, mainly Yankee imperialism, which has not been able to destroy them during decades of aggression.

The destruction caused by the war can be seen in a drastic way in the territory of Ukraine, which is suffering highly destructive attacks by two imperialist opponents who are fighting to re-divide the spoils of a country led to chaos by a leadership with reactionary conceptions and which even boasts of its fascist affiliation. However, this colossal violence does not end there; the threats have been spreading to other territories. In addition to continuing preparations in other countries in Europe, it is advancing in Africa and Asia, also having its expression in the diplomatic, political, communicational, economic and psychological spheres.

In the political and diplomatic sphere, this contradiction has been seen in a preeminent way in the UN Security Council, where



the struggle for the new re-division of the world between imperialist powers has already reached an open form with the verbal clashes in the UN, so it is important to analyze the meaning of the proposal to eliminate Russia's veto power in the Security Council.

The struggle for a new re-division of the world already divided during the Second World War is being seen, as we have said, in the attempt to reconfigure the map of imperialist influences by means of war and also in the diplomatic and political field. This is taking shape in the proposal to remove the veto power from the successor of one of the three powers that sat down to re-divide the world at the Yalta conference. This created the UN itself, the areas of influence and sanctions on the losers, which is also the first or second nuclear power.

It is worth referring again to Lenin to explain the validity and relevance of the Marxist-Leninist analysis of imperialism and wars:

"It is almost universally admitted that this war is an imperialist war. In most cases, however, this term is distorted, or applied to one side, or else a loophole is left for the assertion that this war may, after all, be bourgeois-progressive, and of significance to the national-liberation movement. Imperialism is the highest stage in the development of capitalism, reached only in the twentieth century.... Formerly progressive, capitalism has become reactionary; it has developed the forces of production to such a degree that mankind is faced with the alternative of adopting socialism or of experiencing years and even decades of armed struggle between the 'Great' Powers for the artificial preservation of capitalism by means of colonies, monopolies, privileges and national oppression of every kind"⁵

The policy of the Marxist-Leninists in relation to imperialist war has the same basis as that which led Lenin to propose a break with the Second International because of its inconsistent attitude in saying that it was against the war, but it approved the credits to maintain it. The Second International led to a social-chauvinist, non-communist attitude, which led the Zimmerwald left to

⁵ Ibid.

propose to the workers the revolutionary option of turning their arms against their own bourgeoisie. By breaking with the social democracy of the Second International, which endorsed the financing of the war in parliaments, it took on a truly communist attitude that led to the great October Socialist Revolution and to uprisings of revolutionaries against the imperialist armies in several countries.

In these unjust wars, the proletarians are forced, like lambs to the slaughter, to defend the interests of the big monopoly corporations that sell weapons and all kinds of destructive technology to satisfy the interests of capital accumulation and territorial control of two imperialist blocs. The one is led by the U.S. and the E.U., represented by NATO, which maintains its puppet Zelensky, deepening the destruction of Ukraine and handing over of its remains to US corporations; the other is led by Russia and China, expressed by the Russian Federation in this war, receiving direct or indirect support from China and other countries.

From Lenin's point of view, it is an imperialist war, not only because the parties causing it are imperialists, but because it serves the interests of the imperialists to the detriment of the people of Ukraine, regardless of their political position. Their country is being destroyed and will then be redistributed to the liking of the big corporations that today are selling new weapons to replace the old ones of the Soviet era and are introducing the NATO doctrine of the dictatorship, cashing in on all this, and tomorrow also cashing in for the "rebuilding" of what they themselves destroyed.

The proletariat must also bear in mind that, during the First and Second World Wars the Soviet state, with Lenin at its head and later with Stalin, was forced to reach agreements with its enemies in the treaties of Brest-Litovsk and of Ribbentrop-Molotov. Stalin himself sat down at Yalta with Churchill and Roosevelt in order to gather forces for a later counter-offensive, but they never forgot the central approach:

"What they need, as the workers of all other nations need, are not anarchic phrases about revolution, but the serious, slow, obstinate, persevering and systematic work of clandestine propaganda and agitation, aimed at preparing a mass uprising against

their rulers."⁶

Given the imperialist character of these wars and therefore the unjustness of their basis, we must always think about how to transform them into just wars, that is, revolutionary wars.

In conclusion, we must try to identify possible scenarios for the future:

1. Prolongation of the regional wars for another few years and the progressive incorporation of new countries into the war without producing a direct confrontation between the leading states of the imperialist blocs.

2. Re-division of the world by means of a negotiated pact between the dominant imperialist powers.

China-Russia Bloc:

China: Asia

Russia: Eurasia.

Both: Africa.

U.S.-E.U. Bloc:

USA: The Americas.

E.U.: Europe.

Both: Oceania.

3. Revolutionary intervention of the proletariat, transforming the popular protests and the imperialist wars into revolutionary wars, advancing to people's democracy towards socialism, through the seizure of political power and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

4. Beginning of the third world war in all regions, a direct confrontation between blocs and a nuclear response.

"... force, however, plays yet another role in history, a revolutionary role; that, in the words of Marx, it is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one, that it is the instrument by means of which the social movement forces its way through and shatters the dead, fossilized political forms."⁷ F. Engels.

"Socialism can only be built with the worker-peasant alliance in power and the people in arms."

***Political Bureau, PCMLV.
Venezuela, October 2023.***

⁶ Walter Gerard. *Lenin*

⁷ Engels, op. cit.