

Workers of the World, Unite!

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Report from Bangladesh

Bangladesh became independent in December 1971. The middle classes that came to power were not well-organized, weak, disoriented, and spineless. They did not have any previous thinking about running the state.

Suddenly, under the rule of the immature middle class of Bangladesh, there was ample opportunity for plunder. Taking advantage of this opportunity, in various ways, the ruling political party Awami League and its affiliates, even apolitical people, became the owners of immense wealth in a short period of time through massive looting, corruption, and terrorism. The wealth of non-Bengalis was looted and occupied without hindrance, looting of public and private factories, looting of property of many Bengalis outside the ruling party and looting of various government properties became the primary process of acquiring wealth. Along with that there was hoarding and smuggling. This is how the new ruling class formed in independent Bangladesh. Due to this an unprecedented anarchy has appeared in Bangladesh since 1972.

These rulers without any planning were completely incapable of controlling the new situation. From the very beginning, the government was not prepared to tolerate even the slightest opposition or hint of opposition. By creating an armed force called 'Rakshibahini', a reign of terror was created everywhere, even in rural areas. Thousands were killed. Countless non-Bengali workers were killed in different areas including Khulna, Chittagong, Parbatipur, Syedpur, Pabna. Non-Bengalis were evicted from their homes. Activists of various leftist political parties were killed. People's lives were ruined in the face of insane terror.

Two aspects of the class character of the ruling class of Bangladesh are very important. In the first place, they are predominantly business bourgeoisie, a kind of middleman. Due to this their character lacks determination and the tendency to opportunism is strong. Aggressive nationalism is a form of reaction that arises from the opportunism of the middle class in the special circumstances of the region. This is the second important characteristic of the ruling class in

Bangladesh. Awami League, BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat are the parties of this ruling class. Basically, despite the group differences, each of them possesses the characteristics of the above class.

Class supremacy largely determines the character of the state. The government, as its manager, manages the system of governance directly. Therefore, change of government does not mean change of state, it does not mean change of basic social and economic power. Change of government may bring about some changes in the style of governing, but despite the change of government, the class that is in power remains.

Although the two main political parties of the ruling bourgeoisie in Bangladesh, the Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), have been in government power alternately, the role of those in the government and the opposition is the same no matter which party is playing which role.

In a democracy, holding a general election is a simple matter. The greater the lack of democracy in a country, the more complicated the general election is, because less democracy means more conspiracy. Conspiracy fills the void of democracy.

The Present Political Situation

The Bangladesh Awami League has been ruling Bangladesh for the last 14 years (2009-2022) under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina. This period of Sheikh Hasina's rule is characterized mainly by her 'Blood and Iron Policy.' Police, RAB (Rapid Action Battalion), government intelligence agencies have killed thousands in the name of 'crossfire' during this period and hundreds have gone missing. Tens of thousands of political opponents have been prosecuted and arrested.

The Awami League (AL) came to power in 2009 in an election held on 29 December 2008, heavily supported by US imperialism and the Indian government. From the very beginning they planned to defraud people of their voting rights. They abolished the provision of parliamentary elections under the caretaker government through the 15th amendment to the constitution on June 30, 2011. Anti-government news and statements in the media were virtually prohibited. Multiple TV channels, and newspapers and magazines were shut down. Through the control of advertisement, of public and private enterprises, lawsuits against journalists and editors, threats and intimidation by different agencies, the Awami League government

completely controlled the media. The Special Powers Act, the Anti-Terrorism Act, the Speedy Trial Act, Section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code, and the Digital Security Act were used extensively against anyone who opposed or criticised the government.

This has been made easier, firstly, by the collapse of the organization of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the main anti-government ruling class political party, which was in government before the Awami League came to power. The collapse of BNP was due to the widespread theft, corruption, looting and mischief that it did while in power, and their lack of emphasis on maintaining organizational strength. Secondly, the democratic and revolutionary forces were unable to build any real resistance because of a weak political and organizational situation. Thirdly, to keep Sheikh Hasina in power, the imperialist countries, especially India, adopted various tactics and continued with their conspiratorial activities.

The Awami League again formed the government on January 5, 2014 after being ‘elected’ in a voterless election. The national parliament has 300 seats for which elections take place. In addition, there are 50 seats reserved for women where no direct election takes place. In the 2014 ‘election’, no voting was held in 153 seats, because there was only one candidate in each of these constituencies. Different government agencies under the direct instructions from the PM’s office forced all but one candidate to withdraw their nominations in these seats. In some cases, the Election Commission did not even bother for any legality and simply declared the winners. In the remaining seats, most of the voters did not vote. So, that was no election, and the Awami League continued with their rule by virtually eliminating the electoral process in 2014. It was relatively easy, as people at the time were not enthusiastic to vote in the election. But what happened in the last national election held on December 30, 2018 was much more horrible than in 2014. Behind that was detailed planning and long preparation.

Since 2013, hundreds of opposition activists have been abducted and killed in captivity, shot in the legs and permanently paralyzed by torture, and thousands of opposition leaders have been jailed in thousands of cases – the Awami League taking over control of the constituencies with police help long before the election.

Then, on the eve of the election, the government appointed deputy commissioners (DC) of the districts as returning officers for the election and summoned them to a meeting at the Prime Minister’s

Office in Dhaka and instructed them on how to conduct the election. Although it was completely out of order, the Chief Election Commissioner said he had no information about it. When the candidates submitted their nomination papers, these returning officers across the country cancelled 786 out of 3085. Among them were many candidates of the opposition BNP-led alliance. There is no doubt that this was done as per the instructions at the meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office.

The people of Bangladesh wanted to vote in the December 30 elections, through which they wanted to put an end to the fascist misrule of the Awami League. They wanted democratic rights, justice for crime in the country, and an end to terrorism and corruption. They wanted to use the election as a way to achieve this goal. Large numbers of working people from Dhaka city and surrounding industrial zones returned to their areas to cast their votes. This desire of the people to vote has not been noticed in this way in the last few decades. There was a possibility of an uprising of the people at the time of the election.

Faced with this strong desire of the people for change, the main section of the ruling class led by the Awami League could not rely on rigging the election only on the day of the election. They made no attempt to restore the electoral system that was ousted in 2014. On the night before the election, with the help of the Election Commission, the bureaucracy, the police and the army, the goons of the Awami League stuffed the ballot boxes with 30% to 50% of the ballots. An environment of fear was created so that voters did not go to the polling stations. Those who went to the polls were chased away if they were not members of the Awami League. Voting was delayed by deliberately creating gatherings at the polling station entrance, and the polling stations were closed during lunch hours. Voters could not enter many polling stations after noon. The police force controlled the whole process. Local Awami League leaders and activists controlled the polling stations under the supervision of the police and cast fake votes. The army patrolled the area outside in vehicles, but did not enter the polling station, despite complaints from voters. Rather their presence created fear among voters, which was conducive to vote theft. The Election Commission simply parroted that the election was going well, no problem anywhere.

In fact, with the election looming in late 2018, masses of people and the state apparatus were facing each other. The state apparatus

decided to prevent the people from voting – in doing so the electoral system was completely overthrown. By making the electoral system ineffective and effectively overthrowing it, Awami League's return to power was ensured. Through this, the most reactionary, undemocratic, plunderer and terrorist section of the ruling class of Bangladesh has been able to continue to govern.

On the night before the election, on 29 December 2018, what happened was a coup d'état against the people of Bangladesh. The coup d'état was organized by high-ranking military officials, police forces, military and civilian intelligence agencies, the Election Commission and the bureaucracy. In other words, the state apparatus organized this coup. The media provided all kinds of support. Generally, a coup d'état is organized to overthrow one government and establish another, leaving the existing state structure intact. Through this, one section of the ruling class overthrows another section. But the people were removed from the entire election process through the coup d'état that took place in Bangladesh ahead of the elections. As a result, the path of change chosen by the people through elections became completely ineffective.

Thus, the present Awami League government has come to power by overthrowing the electoral system completely. It is not possible for such a government to remain in power without the use of force, without fascist repression, and without the support of any imperialist power, and that defines the present political situation in Bangladesh.

Conditions of the Working Class

Last year, the government shut down 25 state-owned jute mills and six sugar mills. As a result, more than 50,000 workers, hundreds of thousands of jute farmers, sugarcane farmers, working people and small traders have become unemployed. Schools for the children of the workers operated by the mills have also been closed.

The government says the loss-making mills must be closed. However, there has been no investigation into the reasons for the loss of mills. The workers and farmers are not responsible for the losses in the jute mills and sugar mills. Responsible for these losses are the policies of the government since 1972 and the corruption and looting by bureaucrats-businessmen-politicians. Under the direction of the imperialist financial institutions like World Bank, IMF, ADB [Asian Development Bank], etc., they are implementing the policy that hinders the development of domestic industry.

The closure of state-owned mills makes it easier for privately owned mills to exploit workers at very low wages. The government recently decided to lease the jute mills to private investors. Both local and Indian investors are bidding for these mills now. Our trade union organization has been organizing and leading the jute mill workers in two important centres.

Apart from the low wages of workers in Bangladesh, it is only by considering the safety of their lives that one can better understand what kind of exploitation and oppression of workers has been going on in Bangladesh.

In this context, it is necessary to talk about the situation of the garment industry. Although garment workers have made a significant contribution to the economy of Bangladesh, their condition is not good. The number of women workers in garment factories is much higher. There is no other industry with so many women workers. The labour of women workers is bought cheaper than that of men. Therefore, the rate of profit is higher. Beginning in the late seventies, the industry expanded rapidly from the nineties.

The ultimate example of the brutality of garment industry owners is the lack of security in the lives of the workers. The industry is owned by ministers, deputy ministers, members of parliament, and those led by the ruling and non-ruling bourgeois political parties. There is no supervision by the Department of Labour or the International Labour Organization (ILO).

The news of the death of hundreds of workers due to fire in the garment factories are published regularly in the newspapers. For a few days after such an incident, some statements, writings, and protests are published in the newspapers. But all this has no effect on the government or the garment industry owners. They remain indifferent and take no action. A few days later, another fire breaks out in another factory and the same thing happens again. It is important to note here that fires do not occur only in garment factories. Fires are not as widespread and frequent as in the case of garment factories, but they do occur in other industries as well. Catastrophic fires often occur in slums housing the poor in the city.

Hundreds of workers died when a garment factory building collapsed. Hundreds of workers were killed when a Spectrum Garment Factory collapsed in Savar in 2005. Many workers died when the Phoenix factory building in Tejgaon collapsed in 2006. The biggest and most destructive incident of its kind took place in 2013 when the

Rana Plaza building collapsed in Savar. 1134 workers were killed. The number of injured workers in each case is innumerable.

Although these accidents occurred due to faulty electrical system, lack of safety measures for workers during fires, defects in building construction, etc., the owners have not taken any remedy for a long time and the government has not paid attention to this. One of the major pieces of evidence of the criminal character of the state of Bangladesh is that the factory owners have never been punished by the courts or the government.

The main reason for all this being possible is that the workers do not have trade union rights. There are hardly any rights for the workers in the garment factories. They do not have any appointment letters, regular eight-hour work hours, weekly holidays, increased wages for overtime, provident fund. There is no provision for medical help and education of children, even proper bathroom facilities in factories – nothing.

The wages of these workers are much lower than in any other industry in the country except for the tea workers. The owners of this industry are reckless from the beginning. One thing needs to be specifically mentioned here in this context – safety in the lives of the workers while working.

At the beginning wages were incredibly low, only three hundred to four hundred Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) a month. Workers have been waging a continuous movement for wages from the very beginning till today. As there are no factory level trade unions, workers



have been forced to block the roads. This situation has changed a little after a long struggle. The minimum wage for workers is fixed at BDT 8,000. Moreover, there are many complications in paying these wages. Our trade union organization has been demanding a monthly wage of BDT 20,000, which may be considered as a living wage. This is now getting popular among the garment workers, and other organizations are also now demanding it.

Not only garment workers, but all types of workers in Bangladesh are in the same situation. It can be said without any doubt that the condition of the workers in Bangladesh is worse than the condition of the workers in most other countries in this region.

Conditions of the Rural Workers

The number of agricultural workers has increased due to the breakdown of the peasant society. The field of work of the rural people has expanded and the opportunities have increased. In the past people in rural areas used to be engaged in agriculture. The situation has changed. Economic activity has diversified. The use of machinery, improved irrigation systems, chemical fertilizers, high yielding seeds are being used in agriculture. Poultry, cattle, fish farms, vegetable farms and various orchards have sprung up in the rural areas. People are getting employment in these fields. As a result, the infrastructure in rural areas has changed.

With the change in the structure of employment the number of rural workers continued to increase. This has created significant change in the remnants of feudal society. The way landowners used to dominate the countryside and control the power is not the same as before. Instead, power is now in the hands of rural traders who own various types of farms, as well as land. They are also well-connected with the administration. As a result, a middle class or rural bourgeoisie has now emerged in the countryside that did not exist before the independence of Bangladesh. Instead of the zamindar moneylenders, these rural bourgeoisie now control the rural economy, politics, administration, and society.

The introduction of radio, television, mobile phones, etc. has also changed the attitude and thinking of the rural people. Evidence that they have learned to look beyond the village to the outside world, even outside the country, can be found in the migration of millions of rural people as workers. All in all, there is now a situation where the wages of rural workers have gradually increased. The daily wage has

been three to four hundred taka or in many cases more, without any movement, with the introduction of various economic processes in the countryside. Unlike factory workers, these rural workers do not have to make any movement for wage increase.

But despite all this, there is a huge problem of employment in rural areas. That is why people from villages are not only moving to cities including Dhaka in search of work, they are also going abroad in large numbers. The condition of those who live in villages due to lack of work is bad. They do not have three meals a day. There is no famine in Bangladesh now, but there is no end to human suffering due to lack of food. They suffer from various diseases due to poor nutrition. People from rural areas come in droves to other cities including Dhaka. Even if they get a job, the life they live on with a small income is inhumane.

Conditions of the Workers Abroad

Millions of people from Bangladesh have been working abroad in the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, the United States, Canada, Australia, and various European countries. They are mainly employed in industrial establishments. Besides, among those working abroad are educated people in various fields including doctors, engineers, teachers, and scientists. Most of these highly educated people live with their families in those countries. They do not send any money to the country. But the families of millions of people who work as laborers abroad live in the country and they send regular remittances to them. Billions of dollars of foreign currency sent by them are deposited in Bangladesh. The economy of Bangladesh is largely dependent on the foreign exchange earned in this way.

According to the data published by the Department of Statistics, the employed population over the age of fifteen is more than 100 million and the unemployed more than 40 million people. Every year 1.6 million youths enter the labour market of Bangladesh. Of these, more than half a million workers go abroad every year since 2016. The current number of these workers working abroad is about 10 million, which is again about 10 percent of the total number of workers in the country.

This situation is indicative of a deep crisis. This is because the people of the country going abroad for employment means lack of jobs in the country, unemployment in the country. There are no accurate statistics on the amount of open and hidden unemployment in

Bangladesh. However, it can be said that the way the people of this country go abroad for employment is a barometer of unemployment here.

These workers send about \$20 billion US to the country every year. This amount of foreign exchange is 8 times the total foreign aid Bangladesh receives. This is 6 percent of the country's GDP. In 2021, the amount was \$2.2 billion US. Thus, due to the remittance of foreign currency by the workers working abroad, at present the reserve of foreign currency in Bangladesh is \$40 billion US. These unskilled workers working abroad make a huge contribution to the country's economy.

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the per capita cost of Bangladeshi workers to go abroad is higher than that of any other country in the world. But the income of Bangladeshi workers is less than that of workers from other countries.

These workers are suffering from various problems at home and abroad, but the lack of appropriate initiatives by the government to solve them is also noticeable. They sell land and take loans to go abroad. It takes them a long time to recover the cost. Many families are thus caught up in the debt trap and thrown into financial crisis. The government has not taken any initiative to reduce the cost of going abroad. In addition to this, the workers have to pay registration fee, welfare fee, smart card fee etc. in the government office. There is no question of reducing these fees. In addition to the countries where the workers go, they have to pay visa fee, work permit fee, attestation fee etc. This is accompanied by the cost of air travel. While abroad, these workers have to work hard in a difficult environment. Besides, some of them are subjected to various kinds of torture by the owners/authorities. But despite this plight of workers working abroad and their enormous contribution to the country's economy, there is no proper recognition by the government.

The global economic crisis has erupted since the outbreak of the corona virus. As a result, according to the International Organization for Migration, 0.4 million workers working abroad returned to Bangladesh in 2020 alone. The same situation was seen in 2021. Back in the country, these workers are in crisis due to lack of work. This has an impact on Bangladesh's foreign exchange earnings. The situation caused by the corona virus has shown that if there is a severe and widespread economic crisis due to various economic recessions, wars, epidemics, etc., there may be massive layoffs abroad. In that

case, what will happen to the workers of Bangladesh working abroad? If they return to Bangladesh that will aggravate the problem of unemployment in the country. There is no doubt that this will add to the crisis in the country's economy.

National Minorities in Bangladesh

There are not only religious minorities in Bangladesh, but there are also ethnic and linguistic minorities. But in Bangladesh minorities are usually referred to as Hindus. It is the same for Muslims in India. So, the problem of minorities here generally means the problem of the people belonging to the Hindu religion.

From the very beginning a kind of extremist nationalism (chauvinism) has been predominant in Bangladesh. This fierce nationalism is the nationalism of the Bengalis of Bangladesh. It was from this nationalist position that Prime Minister Sheikh Mujib, father of the current Prime Minister, told Chakma leader and member of parliament Manabendra Larma in 1972 that there was no such thing as a minority in Bangladesh. So, there is no question of their special rights. Not only that, but he also told them to become Bengalis.

Hindus are part of these Bengalis. Although Hindus are a religious minority, they are an ethnic majority. Therefore, among the Bengalis who are in power in Bangladesh, there are also Bengali Hindus. The rule of Bengalis is more important than the rule of Muslims in Bangladesh. It is not difficult to understand the situation of Bengali-speaking Hindus and Urdu-speaking Muslims in Bangladesh. Hindus in Bangladesh have the same disadvantages as any religious minority in a class-divided society, although the disadvantages are far less than those of ethnic or linguistic minorities.

Hindus make up 9 percent of the population in Bangladesh. Their employment is more than 9 percent. Their presence is everywhere in the administration. There are many Hindus working in the police department from SP, OC, sub-inspector to constable. There are many Hindu employees in all levels of administration. The presence of Hindus in the judiciary is also good. Besides, the presence of Hindus in all fields of journalism, medicine, education, literature, and culture is noticeable. On the other hand, except for a handful in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, there is no presence of minority ethnic groups like Santal, Garo, Rakhine, Hajong etc. and Urdu-speaking Muslims in these arenas.

Just as many nationalities live in the hilly areas of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, so do many nationalities live in the plains of Bangladesh. Among them are Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Santal, Orao, Koch, Khasi, Barman, Bhojpuri, Manipuri, Mandi, Munda, Rakhine, Rajbangshi, Hajong etc. None of them has any constitutional or state recognition. They are all victims of plunder and torture by the aggressive nationalist ruling class. In addition, millions of Urdu-speaking people living in various camps are currently deprived of even the most basic rights.

The constitution written for an independent Bangladesh utterly disregards the rights of nationalities other than Bengalis. The language, culture, and way of life of the people of the minority nationalities in Bangladesh and above all the occupation rights of their land are in jeopardy. In areas where they once had a majority, people of non-Bengali ethnicity have been made a minority by artificially relocating people from the plains. They have lost their traditional land rights everywhere. It has become difficult to maintain one's identity and socio-cultural existence. National minorities are losing land not only due to land grabbing but also due to various state initiatives, especially national parks, eco-parks, reserve forests, social forestry, expansion of military camps and installations.

Ethnic conflicts and animosities and the resulting conflicts are very ancient. This conflict could be seen even before the class division of the society. But after the class division, this conflict and enmity gained a new dimension and was associated with the process of exploitation. Contradictions among nations became a form of class exploitation and oppression. As a result, the level of exploitation and oppression of ethnic minorities is much higher than the level of exploitation and oppression of the majority population. The ruling class of the majority nation not only persecutes the minorities to a greater extent, but also often identifies them as enemies and propagates them among the majority masses and uses that propaganda to cover up class exploitation of the majority masses. That is to say, the ruling class also uses ethnic exploitation and oppression for the purpose of class exploitation in general. Therefore, the people of a nation that exploits and oppresses the minorities as a majority nation are not free themselves; they are also victims of class exploitation.

In a class-divided society, the people belonging to the majority and the minority nations are all imprisoned in the prisons of the ruling class because of their interconnectedness in class exploitation and

torture. There is no other way to liberate those who are exploited, those who are oppressed, whatever the race of the majority and the minority, without fighting against the rule of the ruling class. There is no alternative to the united struggle of the majority and minority people for their real liberation; there is no other way of emancipation from class exploitation and oppression. Based on this principle, the majority Bengali people in Bangladesh have to unite with all kinds of ethnic and linguistic minorities and wage a political struggle for liberation from the rule of exploitative rulers.

Our party works in a number of organizations to organize the national and linguistic minorities of Bangladesh.

Condition of Women

The overall condition of a country is revealed in the treatment of women by the society and the state. Based on the reports published in newspapers, the statistics given by the human rights organization Ain O Salish Kendra shows that 3587 women have been raped in Bangladesh in the five years from 2015 to 2019. 278 persons have been killed after the rape. Eighty-six percent of them are children and adolescents. Girls between the ages of 6 to 12 have been the victims of most rapes.

According to a report by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, there were 942 incidents of rape in 2018 alone, of which 182 were victims of gang rape; 63 persons were killed after the rape; 19 were victims of acid attack, of whom 3 died. There were 145 abductions; 488 women and children were killed in different incidents; among them 102 were killed for dowry; 87 housemaids were tortured, among them 56 were killed and 4 were forced to commit suicide. 14 women committed suicide due to harassment. It needs to be mentioned here that not all the incidents of rape and other forms of violence against women in the country are reported in the newspapers.

According to the statistics of the human rights organization Odhikar, from 2009 to 2019, a total of 8055 women were raped, among them 5059 were girls. During this period, 457 women were victims of acid violence, 1784 women were killed for dowry, 1716 women were injured in torture and 118 committed suicides. From 2011 to 2019, 2830 women were sexually assaulted. Among them, 40 were killed, 284 were injured, 322 were assaulted, 59 were abducted and 129 committed suicides.

Women workers who go to work abroad are also being tortured. From 2015 to 2019, about three hundred thousand women workers went to Saudi Arabia to work as domestic workers. A large part of them is being subjected to various forms of torture including rape. In the first 9 months of 2019, the bodies of 118 female domestic workers from different countries in the Middle East were brought to the country; of these, 36 committed suicide as a result of torture. During this period about 900 Bangladeshi women workers have returned to the country after being subjected to various forms of torture including rape.

Violence against women is a serious form of crime. Bangladesh has now become a sanctuary for criminals in the way the state and the government itself are indulging in various kinds of crimes. The government, the courts, the law enforcement agencies do not do their duty properly but do the opposite and worsen the situation. Thus, violence against women in Bangladesh is increasing. In the 50 years of independence, this situation has been created by the looters of Bangladesh, the corrupt terrorist ruling-exploiting class.

Crime is not punished in Bangladesh; there is no such thing as justice. In this country and society, corruption has reached a climax. If there was a healthy political situation in the country, if there was a government in the interest of the people, such a situation would not have arisen. The movement to stop violence against women in Bangladesh today is inextricably related to the movement for the emancipation of the people and the establishment of a democratic Bangladesh.

Organizing the Students

In order to weaken the resistance against exploitation and oppression, the ruling classes are using the education system in such a way as to create anarchy in education and distort the thinking of the educated to keep them away from the democratic and socialist struggle.

In the last decade, fascist attacks have been carried out everywhere in education institutions. The government-backed student organization, the BCL [Bangladesh Chhatra League], established a reign of terror through the attacks, torture, and murder of student activists.

Public universities are the main area of attack on the campus, because the ruling Awami League knows very well that mass movement against them can start from these public universities. Student

halls have been turned into torture cells. Joint attacks of the police and the BCL were made on the protesting students. According to newspaper reports, more than 70 students have been killed by the BCL in the last ten years. Public universities across the country have lost 24 students.

Recently, a united resistance of the student community has started to form against it. It is now the urgent duty of all concerned to consolidate this resistance and unite the entire student body. The student organization affiliated with our party is a leading factor in these efforts.

Condition of the Healthcare Systems

The healthcare system of Bangladesh is in a backward, unorganized, and anarchic situation. A large part of the health sector in the public sector is under the basic management of the colonial structure and a highly corrupt bureaucracy. This is a strange situation where most of the doctors and other health workers work in the government while most of the manpower of private commercial medical services come from among them. As a result, the skills and professionalism of the staff are being wasted and misused.

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the plundering ruling class has destroyed any accountability of government institutions. There is no priority in the medical or healthcare for the people in the budget of Bangladesh. They prefer projects like the Karnafuli Underground Tunnel in Chittagong over the treatment of the people. They have no problem spending billions for it. Therefore, although the annual and development budget allocates generously for various mega projects, the budget allocation is much less than required in the medical sector. Health sector allocation is 2.5% of GDP. Moreover, the lack of necessary supervision in the management of the medical system adds to the suffering of the people.

Commercialization of medical and health services since the 1990s led to the situation where the healthcare in Bangladesh is hugely dependent on the private sector. According to the 2016 data of the Department of Health, the total number of beds in 1214 government hospitals in the country is 49,414. On the other hand, the total number of beds in 5023 private hospitals is 87,610. In other words, 36% of the total hospital beds are under the control of government hospitals and 63% are under the control of private hospitals. There are about 3 hospital beds per 10,000 people. The doctor to

population ratio is 1:2,000 and the nurse to population ratio is 1:5,000. Citizens pay most of their health care bills as the out-of-pocket expenditures as a percentage of private expenditure on health: 96.5%.

True well-being cannot be achieved simply by seeking medical treatment. It has to do with many things. These include quality of life, social environment, expansion of education, cultural advancement, social harmony, etc. In order to have a comprehensive healthcare system that can lead our people towards ideal well-being, we must move towards a non-discriminatory, balanced, planned and democratic society.

We closely work with doctors, trade union activists, student and youth leaders in a platform that works on people's right to health.

Enforced Disappearances and Extra-judicial Killings

In order to consolidate their power, the current regime has resorted to enforced disappearances, torture in custody and extrajudicial killings. Law enforcement agencies are being used to crack down on opposition leaders and activists. As a result, members of these forces have adopted the policy of abducting and killing civilians without due process outside the legal process.

Enforced disappearances is a crime against humanity. The ruling class is using it as a tool to retain power. The disappearance is being carried out in the name of national security against those whom the government has identified as enemies. Disappeared persons are simultaneously victims of torture and extrajudicial killings. Many have been missing for years and their family members have been waiting for them to return. Affected families are facing various forms of oppression. There are allegations that law enforcement and members of various intelligence agencies are threatening and harassing them.

According to the human rights organizations 3844 persons were killed without trial from 2001 to 2019. Another report states that 2336 persons were killed extra-judicially from January 1, 2009, to January 31, 2020. More than 560 persons who went missing from January 2009 to December 2021 have been identified as victims of enforced disappearances.

In 2019, a member of the central working team of our front and trade union organizer was picked up from near Dhaka. To date, no trace of him has been found.

According to the International Covenant on the Protection of All Persons from Disappearance, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 December 2006, disappearance is the arrest, detention or denial of arrest by state agents or individuals or groups on the basis of state approval, keeping the person out of the protection of the law by concealing his position. The Convention recognizes disappearances by force as a crime against humanity under international law. Bangladesh has not yet signed the convention. From this it is understood that Bangladesh indirectly approves the issue of disappearance for political reasons.

Attack on Freedom of Expression and Muzzling the Media

In addition to the right to freedom of expression, the government has taken away the right to assembly. Meetings have been banned in the open spaces of Dhaka. At present there is virtually no place for public meetings in the capital Dhaka. Everyone is forced to hold any protest meeting or assembly on the sidewalk, causing inconvenience to pedestrians. They have made it compulsory to obtain police permission to hold rallies or processions, or even private gatherings.

In some cases, police have arrested opposition leaders and activists on charges of plotting sabotage. Meetings, rallies and processions of opposition political parties and dissidents are taking place in the face of obstruction and attacks by the police, and student and youth organizations of the present regime. In many cases, the police and the leaders and activists of the ruling party are simultaneously attacking the meetings and rallies of the opposition.

The government has filed and continues to file numerous harassment cases against opposition political leaders and activists across the country. Numerous opposition leaders and activists are being held in the country's prisons for political reasons, and the prisons have more than three times their capacity. The judiciary is virtually under government control and political opponents of the government are being deprived of justice in the courts due to the intervention by the government.

The fascist government's interference in the media has become widespread. Over the past decade, the government has made it increasingly difficult to develop independent media and practice journalism in the public interest, through direct attacks on journalists, the enactment of harassment laws, and the legalization of cadre-partisan journalism.

In almost all cases, the perpetrator/offender remains safe and outside the net of law. In the last two decades, 32 journalists, publishers and writers have been killed in Bangladesh. None of the 11 notorious journalist murderers in the last decade have been prosecuted. The mystery of the 2012 murder of journalist couple Sagar-Runi has not yet been solved. According to the human rights organizations between January 2009 to January 2020, 15 journalists were killed in the line of duty, 1024 people were injured, 308 people were humiliated, 69 people were attacked, 34 people were arrested, 36 people were threatened, 6 people were tortured and cases were filed against 246 people.

Over the past decade, in addition to physical assaults and death threats, various laws have been enacted and enforced to interfere with the freedom of the press. The most notable of these is the Digital Security Act 2016. There are several sections of the law which could seriously undermine independent journalism and freedom of expression.

In addition to harassment, there have been two other dangerous processes in the last decade that have hindered the practice of journalism. Law enforcement agencies have been seen directly interfering in news coverage. In particular, the electronic media and law enforcement are often seen as complementary. For example, the law enforcement agency is supplying phone conversations of opposition politicians or dissidents to the media all the time and the media is promoting it. Also, a cadre of partisan journalists has been created by providing various financial and material facilities. Instead of ensuring the accountability of the government, this group considers flattery of the ruling party as the main responsibility of a journalist.

In this process, the media does not act in the public interest, but in most cases has become a tool of fascist rule.

We Need to Organize

Under the bourgeois regime, revolutionary socialists of Bangladesh must mobilise the people to end all forms of oppression, not just for wage increases, but for human rights, trade union rights and other relevant rights. It is necessary to organize a movement to reduce the level of exploitation in the economic life of all workers including peasants.

The people from all walks of life, from rural to urban areas, are now facing an extreme uncertainty. They want an end to this

uncertainty; they want a fundamental change in society as a whole and in governance. The electoral system in Bangladesh has been demolished by the ruling regime. Elections have no role to play in the path of democratic change in this country.

We want an end to the fascist regime that has been established in the country. We want a democratic environment where workers, peasants, oppressed nationalities and peoples can freely speak, organize, hold rallies, processions, movements, and struggles for just and democratic demands.

The ruling class is completely enmeshed with the imperialist system. Domestic fascist rule and imperialism are tied in the same knot – the resistance movement against one and not the other is meaningless. Simultaneous and united movement against this double enemy of the people will pave the way for the liberation of the people of Bangladesh.

The ruling class and the workers, peasants, middle-class, working people in different parts of the country are now confronting each other. The rulers have been violating their own constitution and the government has become fascist. The existing constitution has completely failed to provide security of life and property to the people and to protect their democratic rights.

The end of this predicament is a historic necessity for which we will have to fight resolutely.

May 18, 2022

1822-2022**The struggle for the true
independence of the Brazilian people**

On September 7, 1822, the independence of Brazil was proclaimed. However, it was a formal independence, as the emperor remained Don Pedro I, son of Don João VI, who had taken his place when he returned to Lisbon. On April 7, 1831, Don Pedro I also returned to Portugal, passing the throne to his son, Pedro II, at the age of five.

However, the class structure in the country changed little: on the one hand, there were the rich classes – large slaveowners, big merchants, mine owners and a mercantile bourgeoisie – on the other, the indigenous, the slaves, the poor whites and mestizos, small merchants and workers.

Between 1840 and 1890, coffee accounted for 61.5% of Brazil's foreign sales, sugar 10% and cotton 4.2%. Investments in the economy by British capital were growing, taking control of the ships, railways and industries that were beginning to emerge, as well as 50% of coffee and sugar exports.

It was also at this time that the foreign debt arose. From 1852 until the end of the Empire, Brazil had already received 11 loans worth £60 million from England, the leading capitalist country at the time. This was money to be paid by the people, but used for the benefit of the big landowners, the emperor and his court. Many of these loans were taken to support the War of the Triple Alliance against Paraguay in 1864, leaving Brazil more dependent on England, in an inhumane war that only favored the English empire.

That is why for the last 28 years, in Brazil, two gritos (cries) were opposed to each other on September 7. This year, 2022, on the one hand, the ruling classes will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Grito of Ipiranga, having as its main symbol the dead heart of Emperor Pedro I. On the other hand, thousands of living hearts, representing millions of the Brazilian people, will take to the streets to ask:

200 years of (in)dependence for whom? It is the 28th cry of the excluded.

After all, how can we talk about independence, when 33 million Brazilians are going hungry and more than half of the population, 125 million people, are living in a situation of food insecurity? The numbers are not made up; they are the result of a serious investigation carried out by the Brazilian Research Network on Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security (PENSSAN Network) between November 2021 and April 2022, going through 12,745 households in 577 municipalities of the 26 states and the Federal District. This is a sad reality in a country that is the world's fourth largest producer of grains and the second largest exporter (data from Embrapa – Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation).

Reformism or revolution

The PT [Workers' Party] boasts that, in its 13 years of government, it has taken Brazil off the UN Hunger Map and promises that the country will return to this status with the election of Lula in 2022. However, it forgets that it took four years of neo-fascist liberal rule for everything to fall apart. It is a test, but the most blind person is the one who does not want to see that compensatory or palliative policies are useless without profound changes in the economic structure of society. This structure was established by Europeans (particularly Portugal) creating a dependent and associated economy, whose ruling classes rejected any development with a minimum of autonomy, severely punishing those who tried to establish it, such as Vargas, Juscelino and Lula himself; they suffered imposed suicide (Vargas), questionable death (Goulart), suspicious accident (Juscelino), imprisonment (Lula) and impeachment (Dilma).

However, they insist on following the same road, despite the clear and harsh lessons of history in our country, as in others that were (and continue to be) dominated by the capitalist center, led for almost a hundred years by the United States of America. Only the conscious and organized people, People's Power, can ensure a break with the neocolonial model. It is not enough to win elections, with or without a majority in Parliament (the Armed Forces are there to keep the train of exploitation on its tracks) or, as the old Mao said, *the power of the bourgeoisie comes from the barrel of the gun*. Or is it by chance that Bolsonaro has done everything possible to get the military to take control of the TSE [Supreme Electoral Council] and

threatens not to recognize the election result if it is unfavorable to him?

In fact, what happened in 1822 was not a cry for liberation on the banks of Ipiranga Creek. It was nothing more than an arrangement, already sung by Don João VI when he returned to Portugal in 1821, when he told his son: “***Pedro**, if Brazil is separated from **Portugal**, it is **better** for you, that you will respect me, than for some of these adventurers.*”

The arrival of the Portuguese court in Brazil in 1808 was the result of the contention between England and France for the domination of Europe (and the world). Allied with England, Portugal was invaded by France and, under English guidance, Don João VI fled with his Court to Brazil, establishing here the seat of the kingdom, which became a mere instrument of English politics.

Victorious, England became a dominant power and sought to negotiate directly with the Portuguese colonies, going on to support the movements for independence. With the Declaration of Don Pedro I, in 1822, Don João VI initially tried to resist, but it did not take long to negotiate his acceptance of independence, compensating him with compensation from the government of Brazil. This consisted of taking a loan of 1.4 million pounds that the Portuguese Crown had contracted with England, another 600 thousand pounds to pay Don João VI himself for the properties he had left behind in Brazil. And thus began the Brazilian foreign debt.

In 1823, Emperor Don Pedro I called a constituent assembly. Realizing that the deputies were approving some rights for the people,



the Constituent Assembly was dissolved and the Army was ordered to arrest and exile several of his opponents.

Worse, after that independence, Brazil signed an agreement with Portugal approving of the continuation of the policy of slavery of African peoples and maintaining the odious trade in human beings. Therefore, during the reign of Don Pedro (and also of his son, Don Pedro II), blacks were enslaved and frequently subjected to punishments such as pillories, plates of iron, chokers, chains and hot irons. On January 7, 1831, Don Pedro established the Penal Code of the Empire, which, among other atrocities, punished with the death penalty any black man who committed an “offense” against the lord or member of his family and prohibited them from even participating in religious activities. Workers who were considered free lived in poverty and abusive taxes were levied on Brazilians to sustain the monarchy.

The current military-fascist government has the same contempt for the Brazilian people as the emperor had for those who fought for justice in our country, as evidenced by the flagrant increases in food prices and the growth of the exploitation of the workers.

Yesterday it was Portugal that stole our wealth; today it is the minority of the rich, the millionaires and large corporations that steal our iron ore, invade the lands of the indigenous peoples, pay low wages to the workers and perpetuate racism in our country. Therefore, on September 7, we must pay tribute to Zumbi, Tiradentes and Friar Caneca who showed that in order to win freedom and a new life it is necessary to fight, because the emperors and those of the rich class simply want to maintain wage slavery and benefit from the pain and suffering of 200 million Brazilians.

Nothing has really changed, as our country has continued to be a mere exporter of raw materials and is unable to industrialize. The local bourgeoisie has never rebelled against this domination, because it preferred (and still prefers) to take advantage of the crumbs of its association with foreign capital and national secularism. And it continues to this day, thwarting attempts at a minimum of independence and autonomy, as we discussed above.

The Real Cry!

Thus, on September 7, 2022, the combatants and fighters of the people took to the streets not to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Grito of Ipiranga, but to shout the Cry of the Excluded. The

Coordination declares that the suffering of the Brazilian people is “*a picture of inequalities fostered within the political and economic game that gives priority to the public debt. In the federal budget executed in 2021, Brazil paid 1.96 trillion in interest and amortization of the public debt, which represents a 42% increase in the amount spent last year.*” To change this reality, the Coordination calls on everyone to occupy the streets, plazas, forests and rivers this September 7, strengthening the Movement for Life in the development of a popular project.

This is a presidential election year. The candidates of the bourgeoisie, who are given plenty of space in the big media, promise to solve the problems of the people, as they have been claiming for so many years, but life only gets worse. To counter this mystification, we complement the call of the Cry of the Excluded with the words of the candidate of Popular Unity (UP) for President of the Republic, Leonardo Pericles, who does not promise to solve the problems of the people, because he knows that he cannot deceive the population, nor does he want to do so, but he points out the paths to victory of this greater goal: “*We need to increase the mobilizations including rural workers, indigenous peoples, women, blacks, youth, the LGBT community, finally, together with the working class, so that the popular consciousness advances and so that the majority understands that under the rule of the bourgeoisie and capitalism, the working class, the poor of this country, will never have their rights guaranteed. Therefore, we must fight to put an end to the current capitalist system and struggle for people’s power and socialism.*”

“Independence or Death!” For the Brazilian people, this is not a cry to be celebrated, but must continue to be shouted everywhere that the people are suffering until the winning of true independence.

September 2022

The Reactionary Civil War in West Africa Sahel-Sahara: A Plot against the Struggles of the Peoples of the Sub-Region

The reactionary civil war affecting Upper Volta, known as Burkina Faso, has led to a major political turning point in the evolution of the national political situation. This war constitutes an important political obstacle on the road to revolution.

It is testing and challenging all classes and social strata and the political and social organizations in the country.

It is necessary for the Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta (PCRV) to properly analyze this war as well as the international, sub-regional and national context from the beginning, in order to clearly determine:

- What is its nature and what are its characteristic features;
- Who are its actors and what are the objectives of each of them;
- What are the possible outcomes?

This is essential in order to correctly define the strategic orientation of the Party as well as the specific tasks that flow from it.

Only in this way will the Party be able to mobilize, orient, organize and lead the working class and people to fight against the reactionary civil war, and to pave the way for the revolution, transforming it into a revolutionary war.

In the framework of this article we limit ourselves mainly to the West African sub-regional context of the reactionary civil war.

The Reactionary War Imposed on the Peoples of the Sub-Region: Its Characteristics, Its Actors and Their Objectives, Its Particularities in the Different Countries of the Sub-Region.

– The war that is developing in the West African sub-region is an unjust war, a reactionary civil war.

According to Carl Von Clausewitz, war is always the continuation [of politics] by other means, especially violent ones.

What policy is the current war in the sub-region the continuation of? Answering this question correctly allows us to clearly determine the nature, the character of this war.

This policy is one of aggression against the peoples and countries of the Sahel-Sahara sub-region (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Chad, etc.) by imperialism, in particular French imperialism and its local allies, by armed terrorist groups and their local allies. Its objective is to occupy countries, to exploit and oppress their peoples and to plunder the resources of the countries concerned.

That is why this war, which imposes reactionary violence on the peoples and countries, is a reactionary civil war.

This unjust war has serious economic, political, humanitarian, social, moral and psychological consequences. It threatens the very existence of the countries and leads to a major political turning point in their evolution.

This war has a transnational character. Armed terrorist groups operate on both sides of the state borders. It has an international character: the imperialist coalition led by French imperialism is an important player in this war; the terrorist groups also have international support and work with major traffickers (of drugs, cigarettes, weapons and various military equipment, etc.) from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

– The main actors of this reactionary civil war and their objectives.

The armed terrorist groups – whose complex history is made up of splits, mergers and alliances – that are currently operating in the sub-region are: the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (GSIM) and Boko Haram.

These armed terrorist groups have exploited the bankruptcy of the neo-colonial states that are unable to play their sovereign role, the social fractures (national crises, community crises, etc.) and the implosion of Libya, in order to establish themselves in these countries.

Their main objectives are to:

- On the political level: the overthrow of the powers that be and the creation of Islamic states. The occupation of the entire Sahel-Saharan area and the extension to the countries of the coast where they already exist. The attack on the interests of the Western powers and their values of civilization, the school, symbol of their cultural domination.

- On the ideological level: the forced Islamization of the populations (including by force of arms). The imposition of Salafist Islam as a unifying element. Attacks against traditional religions, Christianity and shirk [idol worship – *translator's note*] conveyed in particular by the Islamic brotherhoods. Attacks on Western-style schools and education.

- On the economic level, the creation of economic areas under their control to:

- Exploit the natural resources including gold;
- Control trafficking routes and enrich themselves through trafficking (of drugs, cigarettes, gold, fuel, weapons, etc.);
- Take national and Western hostages in order to collect ransoms;
- Take tribute from the populations of the occupied areas, plunder their food and livestock, etc.

- Set up a mafia-like war economy with the participation of the bourgeois, business owners and crooked and corrupt local politicians.

Imperialism, mainly French imperialism, under the pretext of the fight against terrorism, and the appeal for help launched by the present-day reactionary powers, is taking an active part in the war, in reality to:

- Strengthen its political and military domination in the sub-region;
- Defend its economic, geopolitical and geostrategic interests as part of the struggle for the redivision of the world.

Against its will, French imperialism, which is in decline, has been forced to resort to a coalition with U.S. imperialism and the European Union in order to support it and to oppose the penetration of China, Russia and Turkey in what it considers its back yard, its zone of influence.

The imperialist powers, particularly France, have murky links and complicity with the armed terrorist groups, as evidenced, among other things, by their attitude to the presence of these armed terrorist groups in northern Mali (Kidal), from where they set out to plunder the countries of the subregion.

All these facts make the situation created by the development of the reactionary civil war very complex; this complexity is further accentuated by the particularities of the situation within each country; particularities related to the political, socio-cultural, socio-economic history, the history of the settling of each country (political

instability, military coups, non-jihadist armed rebellions, and national and community crises with clashes with non-jihadist armed groups, etc.).

The evolution of the Reactionary Civil War at present clearly shows that French imperialism in particular and its local allies are at a strategic impasse, as French political and military strategists acknowledge. This is linked to a multiplicity of factors, political, diplomatic and military (logistics, intelligence, operational nature and capabilities of the armed forces of the countries of the sub-region considered as auxiliary troops of France and having no strategic autonomy, bankrupt and corrupt powers considered incompetent by E. Macron, etc.). The armed terrorist groups have taken advantage of this situation and are redoubling their aggressiveness in their attacks against foreign troops, local security forces, civilian populations and symbols of the neo-colonial administration.

The French political and military strategists believe that it will take at least a decade to “militarily reduce the hard core of terrorism at least enough to prevent it from destabilizing other states and, at the same time, to deter sympathizers and the undecided from joining it.” They thus don’t foresee any military victory against the jihadist armed groups and thus consider that the reactionary civil war will last for a long time.



It is therefore illusory for the peoples to count on the imperialists, their local allies, their strategists and military to defeat the jihadist armed groups, to put an end to the reactionary civil war.

The peoples of the sub-region, who are suffering the terrible consequences of the reactionary civil war (massacres, looting, expulsion from their land, hampering of production, closure of schools and deprivation of basic social services, humanitarian crisis with millions of internally displaced persons and refugees, etc.), are beginning to become aware of and organize themselves to fight against it.

- They increasingly denounce imperialism, particularly French imperialism, and demand the departure of the foreign troops;
- They are organizing powerful demonstrations to demand from the current administration the security of the people and their property, and the security of the country;
- In some places they are trying to organize themselves independently and to arm themselves to take charge of their own destiny and security and for a real change in their favor.

This is a good trend of evolution at the level of the peoples that the revolutionaries and communists must take into account in order to:

- Help the peoples better understand the real stakes of the reactionary civil war and to reject any illusion of relying on some imperialists to fight others.
- Help the subjective conditions mature in order to better organize the peoples and to provide them with the revolutionary leadership indispensable for transforming the reactionary civil war into a revolutionary war for the victory of the revolution.

September, 2022

The New Nordic Socialism – Cooperative Social Democracy

There is a growing interest in socialism and in the understanding that capitalism and imperialism are not able to solve the huge and growing problems of today; there is a search for alternatives and ways to achieve them. Therefore, we also see the launching of new opportunist theories of socialism at an ever-faster pace, hostile to the scientific socialism of Marxism-Leninism.

APK is taking part in that debate, standing on the foundation of scientific socialism, with a strategy and program for the revolution of the working class, with the working class as the leading and main force in the class struggle today, in the revolution and as the new ruling class under socialism – all elaborated and concretized in our program “The Manifesto for a Socialist Denmark” and the main documents of the ICMLPO.

The constant rebirth of reformism

In Scandinavian countries such as Denmark, generations of workers have been infused with the Social Democratic Party's reformist, class-collaborationist policy, which has covered their lives, literally speaking, from cradle to grave. For several decades, in the so-called Nordic welfare societies, increasingly better living conditions were created for a large part of the working class and the population. With the existence of the then socialist Soviet Union as a living reality from 1917-1952 and a very strong and comprehensive union organization at that time, which fought for reform demands, the bourgeoisie and the employers chose to join forces with the Social Democratic party and the labor aristocracy in the top leadership of the trade union movement and made a “class-collaborationist contract” that ensured them social peace in order to ensure a very intense exploitation of labor and high profits. Only a very small part of the value created went to public welfare. The welfare model turned out to be a short-lived historical parenthesis.

The Social Democrats today are in a long-lasting crisis. This has accelerated, not the least since the bourgeoisie terminated the “class-collaborationist contract” at the end of the 20th century, with the collapse of Soviet revisionism, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the “New World Order” of US imperialism, in which the Social Democratic party adopted completely open neoliberal positions. But the Social Democratic party has a chameleon-like ability to reinvent itself as the defender and protector of the working people. Today, they are once again trying to stand as the bulwark against the increased inequality and exploitation and the growing development of a social and economic crisis. However, they cannot do this alone, without first aid from the opportunist parties that play an active role in the constant rebirth of reformism.

On the political left wing in Denmark, in particular the parliamentary support-party of the Social Democratic government, the Unity List and the political forces around them are launching a pluralist range of socialist theories such as “Red/Green Socialist Europe,” “Nordic Socialism,” “Communist - and Eco socialist counter-growth” and “Communism for the 21st century.”

These political currents speak radically about the need for a rupture with capitalism before the climate catastrophes have wiped out the planet and all of humanity. But what they offer in practice is, and has been, to shield the old Social Democracies and their governments as “better than bourgeois governments” and divert all steps in the class struggle into purely parliamentary roads. In the trade union movement, they have taken over the old role and positions of the revisionists as the fire extinguishers for the top leadership of the trade unions and of the labor aristocracy.

Since its foundation in 1989, the Unity List has not been able to agree on a program for socialism due to the existence of different main currents and factions within this party: the classless platform of democracy of the Left Socialists (VS), the anti-monopoly democracy of the revisionist Communist Party of Denmark (DKP) and the undefined world-socialism and anti-communism of the Trotskyist currents. The theory of a special “Nordic socialism” is an attempt to create a common theoretical platform for a third way between capitalism and socialism, between a reform path of social democracy and a revolutionary path of a socialist revolution. It is an attempt to theoretically substantiate and provide arguments for the policy that the leadership in the Unity List has developed and pursued over many years.

At the same time it is an attempt to intervene against a growing realization on the left and in the working class that the Unity List is not and does not have the answer and cannot respond to a rupture with capitalism and the building of socialism but is merely a modern form of Social Democracy.

Although this anti-Marxist-Leninist theory is launched as a Scandinavian phenomenon, due to specific historical features and current conditions, it is part of an international fashionable trend: that of co-operative enterprises and democratic public ownership as the new form of peaceful path to socialism. It has elements from the ideologues of the U.S. left in Bernie Sanders' think-tank such as taming monopoly capitalism and introducing the old Nordic social democratic so-called welfare model that collapsed decades ago. It also has elements from currents such as Collaborative Democracy (socialist reforms) that we also find in sections of the Labor Party in the UK.

It has elements from the red/green anti-capitalism of the Party of the European Left, which basically wants to create a more democratically competitive ecologically and socially just capitalism and to transform the European Union from within into a socialist Europe free of US imperialism. The Unity List is a member of the Party of the European Left along with 18 other European parties, including Die Linke in Germany, Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece. The bankruptcy of this policy was fully demonstrated by the Syriza government in Greece, which in opposition to a referendum, capitulated to the pressure from the EU monopolies, followed their austerity dictates and totally betrayed the working class and the population.

Socialism as a transitional society

According to "Nordic Socialism," Danish society today is a hybrid between capitalism and socialism. Where both coexist in Denmark! Where the capitalist form of production and private ownership of the means of productions remain dominant now, but that they coexist with socialist ownership in cooperative companies and democratic socialist forms of production. It states that it is possible, within the framework of the capitalist system, to make the two – capitalism and socialism – change places in a new form of socialism without the elimination and abolition of capitalism, private property, the ruling class, and its state. That this can be done through social reforms and democratic control, where socialism gradually becomes prevalent through the pressure of the grassroots popular movements, the trade

union movement, and the ballot box revolution, which is intended to bring parties that promise this to power and be the guarantor of this taking place.

This is an experiment and theory which has already been tried in practice with disastrous consequences and defeats by “Eurocommunism” in former Yugoslavia, modern revisionism in the Soviet Union and in the former Eastern European “People’s Democracies.”

Marx and Engels have shown how different modes of production and property relations are expressions of the different classes that exist within a class society. What matters is which class is the ruling class and thereby the determining factor in the development of society in the specific period, as we live in class societies until the final classless communist society.

Socialism itself is a transitional society in which classes and strata still exist, and with class struggle for a revolutionary development and process towards communism. Historical experiences shows that it can only be implemented if it is the working class that is in power; if there is a socialist state of a completely different nature from the capitalist one through which this development can be organized, and which can keep the former exploiting class down and eliminate it as a ruling class.

The question of power and which class is in power is central. After Khrushchev managed, at the head of modern revisionism, to seize power in the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik Party, and the working class no longer was in power, both capitalist and socialist



ownership and production relations existed. But only for the time it took to break down socialism and restore capitalism. Society changed character, it was no longer socialist, but a state monopoly capitalist society, until it collapsed and free-market capitalism was fully restored.

Do we see features in today's Denmark and the capitalist world that contain the seeds of new socialist modes of production and organizations? Yes. There is an increasing internationalization of the working class, of the socialization of production, of the process of technical development, of the control by the global monopolies of a coherent chain of labor, raw materials, transport, logistics and markets. A development that Lenin describes in his work "Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism," pointing out that it draws the capitalists, against their will and consciousness, into a new social order that forms the transition from completely free competition to complete socialization.

The high degree of socialization will also be able to promote the construction of socialism after the socialist revolution of the working class. It is in increasing contrast to the property relations under capitalism, where wealth and private property are concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. It is held back by the laws of development of capitalism and the anarchy of short-term profit and are therefore unable to facilitate the solutions of the growing problems such as the current crises: climate crisis, energy crisis, inflation, people displaced and dying due to famine, natural disasters, imperialist wars and increasing poverty. This is part of one of the main contradictions under capitalism and part of the fundamental contradiction between labor and capital.

The Nordic features of the cooperative movements

The working class has its traditions and revolutionary experiences to build on, but it has been many decades since they coincided with the ideas of the Social Democratic Party, which is revived in the theory of Nordic socialism – that the working class can buy and or vote its way to socialism.

Particularly Nordic features and the way forward today are stated as the extensive cooperative movement and the existence of cooperative business. They were progressive in their historical context when they emerged at the beginning of the last century. They meant prosperity for the individual small peasants and farm laborers with a small

plot of land to support their families in the rural areas and for groups of workers in the cities. They became important for the development from a farming and agrarian society into a modern industrial society. But they were never socialist, and today we live in a completely different time, where the former cooperative movement has developed into monopoly groups such as ARLA [Arla Foods is a Danish-Swedish multinational cooperative based in Denmark – *translator's note*] and Danish Crown. Today there are no small farmers left, but large industrial farms with capital groups behind them and landlords who have crept out of hiding.

The cooperative movement, which was one of the flagships of the Social Democratic labor movement, has not been able to exist outside of capitalist development, as an isolated island. It is claimed that in today's Denmark in the private sector there are large pockets of democratic ownership, where broad population groups own and manage companies. In addition to the big agricultural and food monopolies, these are companies such as the cooperative energy supply, housing and insurance companies. In the financial sector, reference is made to cooperatively-owned credit institutions and banks and, not the least, to the billion-dollar pension funds which serve as a cover-up for a state-run redistributive machine for capital and gigantic robbery from the working class and population. Today these cooperatives are interwoven with global investment funds; they function and operate according to the principles of the capitalist market economy and as an integral part of the capitalist economy, despite an annual general assembly as a democratic veneer where all the "common owners" can show up for some snacks and free speaking time.

Today, a new cooperative movement is emerging, with new petty bourgeois joining their companies into cooperatives to survive in increasingly fierce competition. The state subsidizes entrepreneurs to start new businesses, but they only have two options – grow or die. The Unity List has developed a major reform program to promote this development, arguing that the democratically controlled and collectively owned companies stand stronger in the capitalist competition than traditional companies. Another development, especially among the youth, is workers employed on day-laborer terms as their own "one-person company" in large global firms such as the Wolt couriers or Uber. Here the struggle is to become employed and organized as part of the working class.

The relatively large public sector (in which about 1/3 of the workforce in Denmark, Sweden and Norway are still employed) is supposed to be another specifically Nordic socialist characteristic and proof of the validity of the theory of Nordic Socialism. The size of the public sector is a historical feature, but today after decades of privatization, the policy of public-private partnership and with a health service that is on the edge of collapsing it is riddled with holes. It has never been socialist and can never be in a capitalist society under capitalist state power. When Nordic Socialism states that the public sector is owned and controlled by democratically elected bodies – parliament, municipalities and regions, and thus indirectly by all citizens of society – then it is pure imitation of bourgeois demagoguery about bourgeois democracy and the class character of the state.

This theory is a rehash of Social Democratic reformism and utopian socialism, which says it will raise the problems and challenges of the time in a new way, in sharp contrast to the experiences of Marxism-Leninism and socialism. It presents itself as standing in opposition to modern revisionism, Eurocommunism, and anti-monopoly democracy, but contains and repeats the failed basic elements of these – the revolution and the class struggle replaced by peaceful transition. The socialist economy replaced with competition between capitalism and socialism. Socialist democracy with the working class as the ruling class and its communist party replaced by the pluralistic basic democracy of all classes.

We must fight reformism and opportunism

As Marxist-Leninists, we know that revolutionary situations do not succeed spontaneously, that they are like an open window that can either be slammed back by reaction or can develop into a socialist revolution. That It depends on the consciousness, organization and ability of the working class to play a leading role and to put itself at the head of a broader alliance of popular classes and strata and its ability to see through the maneuvers and preparations of the working class to repel the violent blows of the bourgeoisie. For a socialist revolution to take place, the working class must have its strong Communist Party, which has the strength and ability to bring its revolutionary consciousness to the working class, rally a majority of the working class around it – and, not the least, that it manages to isolate the reformists, revisionists and opportunists and remove their mass base. In Denmark this also applies to a significant extent to the upper

layer of the labor aristocracy, which sits at the top of the leadership of the trade union movement.

There is no doubt that the working class and youth need something as a real alternative that can hold their faith, hope and dreams of another future that can create revolutionary energy and power and political and ideological clarity.

For the communists and Marxist-Leninists it is an ongoing task to work determinedly to spread the knowledge and understanding of scientific socialism even further. Our party must ensure that revolutionary theory, politics and historical experience are available in Danish, that we bring socialism forward in our daily agitation and propaganda and work and combine this with our political platforms and slogans and show a revolutionary path. As Danish communists, we do not have to find a new special Danish socialism; on the contrary Marxism-Leninism is an international theory on which we must work and develop the tasks of a revolutionary path, proletarian revolution and socialism in our country under the existing specific conditions and developments.

July 30, 2022

The Context of Inter-Imperialist War, the Current Economic Crisis, the Peoples and the Revolutionary Forces

I.

It is pertinent to address the question of the war in Ukraine. Although it is an act of aggression by a power against a people, a nation, which has always been rejected by revolutionaries in all epochs and circumstances, that conflict expresses at the same time a scenario of inter-imperialist confrontation. In respect of this it is our duty to contribute to the better orientation of the workers and peoples. In addition, the effects of the war on the world economy impacts the lives of our peoples.

Faced with the reconstitution of Russia as a power, the US and United Europe advanced in their strategy of encircling Russia, with the support of the dominant fascist elites in Ukraine.

The amount of economic, military and political resources demonstrated by the US and Europe clearly show that this is not a Russia-Ukraine conflict, although the development of military operations is focused on Ukrainian territory.

The international character of this conflict with the major intervention of the Western powers, points to an unprecedented form of inter-imperialist military confrontation, with the deployment of troops on the ground of only one of the belligerent sides, while the other participates through the troops of the host country of the territory and resources in contention.

The revitalization of NATO has been at the center of the whole conflict through the entry into this alliance of countries bordering Russia and the subsequent entry of the Nordic countries, after the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The process of reviving NATO has been accelerating in a context in which global economic crises are increasingly frequent and profound, and where, in addition, the differences, struggles and rivalry between powers, hidden in the context of the new configuration after the fall “of the walls”, has become increasingly evident.

It is clear that the apparent equilibrium that emerged under the guise of the so-called new order was being questioned by the evolution of events. According to the law of unequal development, in the last 20 years the pre-eminence of China as a superpower has been seen, Russia has consolidated its revival as such, while the US has lost its privileged position of unipolarity that it embodied in the period immediately following the debacle of the USSR.

One of the main fronts on which the struggle between the imperialist powers is being waged is trade, in which the loss of ground by the US monopoly groups in relation to China has been maintained.

The balance of forces among the imperialist powers has been pushing towards a new redivision of spheres under their respective control, as sources of natural resources, markets and influence and political control. This happens by virtue of the fact that as “the cake” was distributed through the formation of the so-called “new order”, it can no longer continue to function in a context in which the contradictions that express the current balance of forces among these powers no longer fit.

As the ICMLPO correctly stated in 2007: “the new order is both an order of the rich countries, and that of US imperialism at the peak of its ‘unrivaled’ power. But at the same time it stated that “The concentration and centralization of capital means, above all, the growth and aggressiveness of the needs and demands of the monopoly groups...” (ICMLPO. *The new world order, capitalism and imperialism. The international situation and our tasks.* Quito: Ediciones de la Revolución ecuatoriana, 2007, p. 23).

To all this we must add the current economic crisis, whose magnitude and scope are unpredictable, according to different analysts and academic centers, regarding its tendency to worsen, especially when the difficulties in the US economy are observed.

In such a context, the aggression of imperialism on the peoples, nations and countries; as well as the danger of regional or general wars, will continue to be on the order of the day, and it is in that context that we must place the war in Ukraine.

While it is true that the Ukrainian people are denouncing and resisting the Russian imperialist occupation, these just feelings are being used by the leading fascist clique, which only acts as a dog of war in the service of the interests of US imperialism and the European powers in their rivalry against imperialist Russia.

By its nature, imperialism is the tendency to aggression, domination and war, especially under the conditions of serious economic crises such as the current one.

This is what the ICMLPO stated in 2007: “The reconquest of the world, the inevitable struggle between the great powers... together with the generalization of aggression against the rights of the workers and peoples, the contention and struggles of the capitalist monopoly groups against their rivals are converging; and the rivalries and struggles of the great imperialist countries to increase their zones of influence and be the world hegemonic force.

“It is inevitable that the conquest of the world and the markets by the capitalist monopoly groups and the great imperialist countries will take on particular importance” (pp. 25:27-28).

Evaluating the prospects at a time when the so-called “new order” was beginning to falter, the correct analysis of the ICMLPO, recognizing the limitations of that time to specify in the analysis particularities in the way the battles and struggles between the powers would take place once the conditions marked by a unipolar world had been overcome; then it stated:

“It would be premature and incorrect to claim that the current political-military polarization will take place tomorrow, (but) it is impossible to foresee currently how and in what manner the evolution will take place. But we can foresee the following: events are evolving in the direction of eliminating the system of opposing blocs, which means, without a doubt, that the great powers will begin a struggle



for a new redivision of the world, which increases the danger of a general war” (p. 40).

Current developments confirm the correctness of these conclusions. To outline guidelines of orientation, as well as the tasks and responsibilities of the communist movement in the framework described, what is involved is “Integrating the problems of the anti-imperialist struggle with the struggle of the working class; the participation of all organizations of the working class in this struggle; the work among the people to develop this struggle, with a sense of responsibility and a consistent militant organization” (ICMLPO. 2007, p. 122).

Condemning the Russian occupation of Ukraine, denouncing the war as an inter-imperialist confrontation which the fascist elite of Ukraine serves and reiterating solidarity with the Ukrainian people, is the orientation according to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and the interests of the Ukrainian people and the other peoples of the world.

II. The current economic crisis

Crises must be analyzed as an integral part of the cycle of the evolution of capitalism, hence its cyclical character. “The crisis destroys companies, productive forces, creates unemployment, and on the basis of rebuilding what has been destroyed, a phase of economic growth appears. Crisis, recession, recovery and boom are phases of capitalism. It is the Marxist theory confirmed by experience (Salazar, The revolution remains a problem waiting for a solution, 2021:50).

The ongoing crisis, although aggravated by the pandemic, began much earlier in 2018, and has been considered the most serious of the 21st century.

From the theoretical and historical point of view there is a general context of revolution. Beyond technological innovations and their impact on social relations, the evolution of contemporary society runs according to “the law discovered by Karl Marx of the non-correspondence between the development of the productive forces and the social relations of production. This is a fundamental aspect of the current crisis of the capitalist system.” The capitalist system has revolutionized the means of producing wealth, taking them to unprecedented levels. The indisputable advances achieved by the capitalist system in the ability to produce wealth have occurred at the same time that, together with the colossal wealth created, greater

poverty, exclusion and marginalization are created among the working and popular classes” (Salazar, 2021: 41).

It is this extreme contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production that has given rise to social revolutions, but this outcome means that the working and popular masses must have the subjective factors of political organization, consciousness and leadership that make them possible.

That is precisely the agenda that activates the revolutionary movement, promotes the organization of the masses in the context of struggle, empowers that organization and those struggles more and more, with the perspective of accumulating revolutionary forces, to the extent that all this experience has as its relevance and strategic objective to demonstrate the capability of its political power to overthrow bourgeois-imperialist rule and transform society in a revolutionary way.

Without the mature subjective factors there is no possibility of revolution, and if those subjective factors are seen mainly in the capacity for action of the mobilized masses, a brief reflection on this matter is appropriate.

III “The leading force and the popular masses are a historical concept”

The revolution “is a task that must be taken up day by day and under certain conditions. It is an event that flows from lesser to greater, with advances and possible setbacks, according to the changing conditions.” Not seeing it “as a task and a daily purpose leads to a work without perspective...” (Salazar, The revolution is still a problem waiting for a solution, 2021, p. 15).

The important changes that in the movement of workers and the people demand are “the democratization of political life, especially freedom of association, which is an essentially political struggle since it aims at two pillars of the neocolonial model imposed on our nations; it questions the manner in which the international monopoly powers are prepared to plunder national wealth” (p. 31).

The work to promote the development of the revolution needs “to distinguish between the real popular masses, those who come into action; and the potential ones, who despite their oppressed condition, for one reason or another are kept in a passive situation, one of contemplation, and patient and systematic work must be developed to involve them”.

Thus, “several hundred people constitute the popular masses when the struggle is just beginning; but to create a revolutionary situation, the concept of popular masses must involve tens of thousands in action; and hundreds of thousands, millions, will be necessary to constitute a majority for a victorious revolution that can overthrow the minority that holds power.

“The leading force, the working class, also follows in that direction. The number is important, but in principle what counts is that it has the capability for action, a clear perspective of the course, and to be able to bring about unity with other sectors around a program that starts from their interests, and includes those demands that correspond to the political and social needs of the majority and the historical moment” (op. cit. p. 32).

The Bolsheviks led by Lenin were a minority at the beginning of the revolutionary process in Russia 1917. “But they were linked to the working masses and interpreted the immediate needs of the majority, summed up in the slogan For bread, land and peace. Between February and October that party became the leading force of the revolution, took political power and established socialism. In short, the important thing is to recognize that the struggle of the working and popular masses in general is the field in which the embryo of the revolution is created, it is the field where it develops. The question is to work on that ideal systematically and consistently.”

IV

In the light of historical experience and according to the current evolution of the capitalist system and imperialist domination in our countries, the tendency is to sharpen the fundamental contradictions in Latin American societies, which in many cases are expressed between labor and capital and between the nation and imperialism.

In this way, we continue to believe that in the context of imperialist domination in our countries, “the liberation of wage labor is included in the perspective of national liberation,” and therefore the strategic work for the overthrow of bourgeois power and the revolutionary transformation of the societies in many of our countries implies a program of people’s democratic revolution. Good theoretical judgment and the systematization of our national political experience will make it possible to guide ever better the course of the objectives, goals and tasks in each phase of the revolutionary process.

September, 2022

The Communists and the National Question

The 100th Anniversary of the Formation of the USSR

On December 29, 1922, a Conference of Plenipotentiary Delegations of the Socialist Republics of Russia, Transcaucasia, Ukraine and Belarus, with the mandate of the workers and revolutionary governments, approved the Treaty of Creation and the Declaration of the USSR, thus forming the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Each of the republics had its own Constitution.

In 1924, the first Constitution of the USSR was approved, the rules, rights and obligations of the Republics of the new Soviet State were established. In that Constitution, while affirming the will to unite in a single State, the right of separation from the USSR was established and that the change of borders could only be carried out with the consent of each Republic.

December of this year, 2022, marks the 100th anniversary of this extraordinary event that gave rise to a new situation, unprecedented in the annals of humanity.

The old tsarist empire, like other empires and states that existed at that time, included in its territories several countries and nations, various nationalities and peoples who endured national oppression, tyranny, the subjugation of their cultures and the exploitation of the workers by the possessing classes of the dominant nation and certain sectors of the landlords and capitalists of the subjugated nations themselves.

The Tsarist empire was branded a “prison-house of nations.” These circumstances were the result of wars of conquest over centuries, which transformed dozens of countries and nations into “part” of Great Russia; the condition of subjugated peoples and nations was the result of the military occupation by the armies of the Tsar.

As a result of the victory of the Bolsheviks in the October Revolution of 1917, the proletariat, in alliance with the peasantry, won power in Tsarist Russia, transformed itself into the ruling class and from that position began the building of a new society. In that process it made significant progress.

The Soviet power freed the productive forces from the hands of feudals and bourgeois, placed them in the hands of the state organization led by the working class, by the dictatorship of the proletariat. It elevated the working class and the peasantry to the condition of the ruling classes and leaders of society of each of the countries, which had been exploited and dominated by the Russian landlords and bourgeoisie for centuries. It expropriated the expropriators, eliminated private ownership of the means of production, solved the problem of employment for the workers of all nations and nationalities. The workers of the city and the countryside worked decisively and voluntarily in the building of the new society; they created wealth in order to transform a backward country into the second industrial power of the time. The dictatorship of the proletariat placed education, health, social and spiritual welfare in the hands of the workers and peoples, destroyed the patriarchal conceptions of women, established full rights and equal conditions between men and women workers.

The Soviet Power placed on an equal footing the social and national organization of all the peoples and nationalities that were part of the great multinational state that constituted the USSR. National oppression, the “Russification” of different countries and regions, ethnic, gender and cultural discrimination were eradicated. National differences and cultural disparities were given special treatment in order to overcome them. The backwardness of the productive forces was brought into correspondence with the development of the centrally planned economy, with the policies of the satisfaction of the needs and rights of the workers.

The Soviet of Nationalities was formed, in which the Soviets of workers and peasants of all the Republics and Autonomous Regions that made up the USSR participated on an equal footing.

The colonial ties, the oppression of the peoples and nations by the ruling classes of Russia were destroyed by the proletariat of Russia, united to the proletariat and peoples of each and every one of the republics and autonomous regions. A new state was born.

In this great multinational state, several dozen nations and more than a hundred nationalities and ethnicities coexisted fraternally. Unified in the process of building the new world, the various nationalities of the USSR established the society of the workers and, simultaneously, gave multifaceted impetus to their own national cultures, to their own identities. The vast majority of nations formed their own republics and the nationalities developed into autonomous regions.

This was possible because, in each of the republics, the working class exercised the role of the ruling class and leader of society.

In these circumstances, the national culture, mother tongues and social and material progress developed. The hundreds of peoples that formed the USSR experienced many-sided development. There is no doubt that mistakes were made, that there were deviations, including abuses, by certain officials who assumed nationalist poses and practices, but the fundamental thing was the flourishing of the peoples and nations on an equal footing, in the great task of building the new world.

Public education was always carried out in the languages of the nationalities, universities and academies were created for the strengthening of their own cultures, books were published by the millions in all the languages of the vast country that formed the USSR. Several of these languages were on the verge of extinction and were revitalized.

The achievements of the USSR were guaranteed by the dictatorship of the proletariat, by the existence of socialism and the powerful development of the productive forces.

The USSR faced the siege and conspiracy of the internal reactionary forces and of the capitalist world, the pressure of the imperialist countries that struggled to undermine and destroy it and carried out an economic and political siege in order to bury the new world.

In contrast, the working class and the peoples of the world looked with hope and sympathy at the revolutionary process unfolding on



the part of the workers and peoples of the USSR under the correct leadership of the Communist Party. The homeland of socialism was recognized on the five continents.

In a few years the great imperialist countries were forced to recognize the existence of the USSR and one by one they established diplomatic relations.

The construction of socialism in the USSR mobilized tens of millions of workers from the city and countryside. The revolution brought down feudal serfdom and capitalist exploitation and, in that scenario, millions of soviet peoples worked decisively and enthusiastically for the building of the new world.

The USSR was established by the Communist Party in each and every nation and republic. The working class rose to the status of ruling class and leader of society in its respective republic and region.

After several decades, after the rise of modern revisionism to power in the leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviet State, the workers and peoples of the USSR lost their rights, saw the new capitalists reborn and with them the restoration of exploitation and oppression.

In 1991, after the rise of Boris Yeltsin to the government, the USSR began the process of disintegration.

The USSR disappeared as such, several of the republics that formed it separated. What was called the Russian Federation was formed.

With this the socialist society that had been built in the USSR collapsed, private ownership of the means of production, factories, banks, mines and land was reconstituted. Powerful capitalist groups were formed and seized political power.

Workers' rights, stability, living wages, social security, education and health and workers' housing disappeared.

Sovereignty, the right of nations and nationalities to self-determination were transformed into quarrels and wars; nationalism resurfaced.

Several analysts claim that socialism did not confront and even less solve the national question; according to them it only kept it repressed.

These analyses ignore the essence of the national question grasped and acted upon by the communists and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

From Marx and Engels to Lenin and Stalin the communists linked the national problem to the class struggle. They always considered nationalism as an expression of the interests of the bourgeoisie; they demanded from the working class the assumption of a correct policy in favor of the independence and self-determination of nations without hitching themselves to the chariot of the bourgeoisie and the landlords.

What happened after the October Revolution, the formation and destruction of the USSR affirms these concepts. Depending on which social class leads society and the state, the national question will be dealt with for the benefit of the interests of workers and peoples or for the benefit of the privileges of the capitalists and imperialism. If it is the working class and its party, the different nations and nationalities will live fraternally, on an equal footing; the right of self-determination of the peoples and nations, the right to decide for themselves their own course, shall be fully respected. If the bourgeoisie and imperialism form the ruling classes of society, the interests of capitalists and monopolies will always prevail, the conflicts of nations, nationalities and tribal formations will always be instigated, manipulated by imperialism and its servants.

The nation

Clearly, Marx and Engels did not elaborate the conception of the nation; however, several references to this question cannot be ignored in various works, which became the basis for the most comprehensive analysis of the national problem developed by Lenin and Stalin.

They emphatically pointed out that “the nation is, above all, a strictly political formation that can welcome into its bosom different nationalities and abstracts from them through the concept of citizenship”, which, as is known, is an idea of the bourgeois revolution that became a reality in the framework of the capitalist state.

In the Manifesto of the Communist Party, published in 1848, it is expressly stated that the proletariat in the struggle for its emancipation must establish itself as the ruling class within the framework of its own country.

The Manifesto of the Formation of the International, written by Marx and Engels, called on the working class of Poland to take up the struggle for national independence. Similarly, Marx supported Irish independence and called on the English workers to support the Irish workers in their independence struggle.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, when the workers' movement was growing and developing in Europe under the slogans of proletarian internationalism and international revolution, various expressions of nationalism appeared; the landlords and the bourgeoisie brandished the slogans of national independence with the aim of safeguarding and expanding their interests and benefits, in order to drag the working class behind their aims. This was a concrete question that could not be avoided by the socialists.

Lenin took a position, in an integral way, for the right of nations and peoples to self-determination, to decide their destinies for themselves, to constitute nation states and even the right to separation.

Lenin was the Leader of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party and confronted the landlords and the bourgeoisie who ran the vast tsarist empire responsible for the subjugation and oppression of hundreds of peoples and nations. He called on the workers, the peasants of all Russia to rise up against the Tsar and to fight for socialism.

In the context of the debates among socialists, the national question was topical and there were not a few "theorists" and "Marxists" who contradicted Lenin, among them, Rosa Luxemburg with whom an stimulating debate unfolded.

In several writings and works Lenin defended with conviction the right to self-determination of peoples, extending it to separation as another state.

These teachings educated the militants of the Bolshevik Party; they became banners for the workers and peasants of the various nations and peoples of Tsarist Russia; they were the inspiration that led the communists to form the USSR in 1922.

Stalin dealt with the national problem in an early and timely manner; he gave guidelines for the work of the Party.

We owe to Stalin a systematic work on the national question. These teachings were concretized in social practice, in the formation of the USSR, its vicissitudes and problems; they were a guide to deal with the development of nations and nationalities of the Republics and Autonomous Regions that formed the USSR.

Stalin's definition of the concept of nation serves as the basis for the Communists' theses on the national question:

"A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture."

The nation rises and takes on a life of its own with the capitalist state. The class of capitalists plays a preponderant role in its formation, but its base of support is made up of the subordinate classes. The body of the nation is made up of the ruling classes and the oppressed classes that have given their consent, that have added their contingent to the great enterprise of its formation. The subordinate classes, involved by the bourgeoisie in the project of the nation, formed a political and military shock brigade, in the troops that won national independence; the ruling classes, the bourgeois were the captains and the beneficiaries, who built the nation-state to preserve and develop their class interests.

The nation encompasses the whole community and has common historical, cultural, psychological, linguistic, economic and territorial features, but it is not a homogeneous entity.

In the various capitalist countries the nation is divided into antagonistic classes, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat; in the dependent countries, the nation, the society, is also divided into antagonistic classes: on the one hand the bourgeoisie associated with and dependent on imperialism and, on the other, the working classes with the working class as the main protagonist of economic, social and political life. This means that the process of development of nations is marked by the class struggle, by the confrontation of the antagonistic interests of the classes.

The capitalist state constitutes the stage for the continuation of the process of development of the nation. It is a bourgeois nation that includes all social classes: the capitalists and the workers.

The process of the formation of nations is marked by historical vicissitudes. Several human communities were acquiring common features: survival for dozens and hundreds of years in the same environment, in a common territory, living with the same problems and facing them in order to survive, united by the same general interests, of subsistence, expansion, defense, among other aspects. They were creating and nurturing cultural, religious and psychological identities; they gave rise to a common language; later that language reached the levels of literary language. With the development of the productive forces, with the emergence of the market and above all with the advent of industry there was an important impulse; the bourgeoisie assumed the leadership of society and gave the final brushstroke to the emergence of modern nations.

The modern nation is ultimately a product of capitalism. This is not to say that the process of its formation is limited to the capitalist mode of production.

The nation expresses the characteristics of concrete human communities: spiritual and cultural goods, a common history, ideas and customs, myths and legends, art, literature, religion; the unifying literary language; the territory and history of its formation; and the organization of the internal market, of a common economic life established within the framework of State regulations. In reality, the nation is formed in correspondence with the creation of the National State.

In society, the dominant ideas are those belonging to the classes that hold power; national culture is shaped from the ideology, ideas and proposals of the ruling classes. In the capitalist states, the dominant national culture is today a reactionary culture, as decadent as is bourgeois society; because it is subjected to imperialism, it is constantly denationalized. Within this national culture there are, however, spiritual values that have a progressive character, that are the expressions of the classes subordinated by development, that are the manifestations of history that records heroic and important events in the process of the historical formation of the nation, that are the expression in the dominant culture of the ideas and proposals of those below. Beyond that, in every nation-state there are oppressed cultures, those that correspond to the working classes, to the oppressed and dominated classes; this is a culture that is fundamentally progressive, patriotic, revolutionary, although in it there are also present backward, reactionary elements that correspond to the influence of the ruling classes and their ideas, to the weight of the traditions of feudalism. In the multinational states there are also the cultures of oppressed, dominated nationalities, which also, in the main, have a progressive character.

Interculturality

In multinational states, the social relations of production, life and its cultural manifestations, institutions and traditions establish, in fact, links between peoples, nationalities and nations.

These relationships are part of interculturality. This interculturality works independently of the will of the people; it is part of the economic base and superstructure of society. Under capitalism, this interculturality is intertwined with the ideology of the ruling classes, with their economic and cultural interests, with the institutions and legitimacy that maintain that domination; it is, therefore, an interculturality of subjection by the dominant nation of the dominated nations, nationalities and peoples, whether or not they are minorities. It should be considered that there are situations in which the dominant nation is not necessarily the majority nation.

This means that interculturality, in these cases, is one between the dominator and the dominated, ethnic and cultural segregation that is expressed in social, economic and political discrimination. On the part of the dominated peoples, resistance and/or rebellion, insurgence, and the proposal of an interculturality among peers are always raised at different levels. This confrontation is part of the class struggle between the capitalists and the workers, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between the nation and the peoples against imperialism.

The term interculturality is of relatively recent use; according to several authors and political representatives of the bourgeois and petty bourgeois political parties, interculturality must be built starting from the present moment. We maintain that interculturality is of long standing and that the task now is to tear down the foundations of these unjust intercultural relations and build others, in correspondence with the interests of the majority of the population of the nation, nationalities and peoples, made up of the workers of the city and the countryside.

In the multinational states, an intercultural experience is established between the dominant nation and the oppressed nationalities. It is an interculturality in which the interests and privileges of the dominant nation prevail and in which the rights and interests of the dominated nationalities and peoples are subjugated. This is a reality that will not substantially change within the framework of capitalism. For this change to take place, the social revolution of the proletariat, the overthrow of the class domination of the bourgeoisie and imperialism is necessary.

The Epoch of Imperialism and the Struggle for Social and National Liberation

The rise of capitalism to its highest stage, imperialism posed, for the working class and the peoples, for the proletarian revolutionaries the need and the task of merging the struggle for social revolution with the battles for national liberation.

In all countries the working class faces its direct enemies, the class of capitalists. In the imperialist countries, the capitalists exploit and oppress the workers of their own countries and beyond, they extend their tentacles to billions of workers all over the world. In the dependent countries the working class confronts the bourgeoisie of its own country, which is becoming the support of imperialist domination, which plays the role of securing and defending the domination of the monopolies.

The struggle for the interests and rights of the working class is waged, on a daily basis, in each country and confronts the immediate bosses, the native capitalists and, objectively, the imperialist monopolies.

The strategic objectives of the working class and its party are the elimination of the exploitation and oppression of the capitalists, the liberation from the yoke of imperialism.

Patriotic positions and the struggle for national independence have ceased to be, fundamentally, the slogan of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, as they were in the past. They are unable to fulfill that role. Now their interests and their existence are tied to the links with the imperialist monopolies.

However, there are sections of the bourgeoisie that brandish patriotic slogans with the purpose of dragging the workers and peoples behind them. That role has to do with the renegotiation of dependence and in some cases with the objectives of changing the imperialist master, of leaving the subjection to one imperialist country to shelter under the sphere of another imperialist country. This circumstance can be seen, above all, in Africa and Latin America, where the United States is losing ground, with the approval of sectors of the bourgeoisie to China, which is contending, for now by economic means, for a new redivision of the world.

The struggle for the social revolution of the proletariat in our times places on the agenda the struggle against imperialism, that is,

the struggle for national liberation and the breaking of the chains of capitalist exploitation.

The exploitation of the capitalists cannot be fought and eliminated if imperialist domination is not consciously combated and, correspondingly, one cannot fight for national liberation without decisively confronting its partners and servants, the native bourgeoisie.

This means that the party of the proletariat must decisively assume the banners of national liberation, fight consistently to unmask the “patriotic” proposals of sectors of the bourgeoisie and to achieve the leadership of the working class, the peasantry, the other working classes in the struggle against capital and imperialist domination.

Ecuador, September 2022

Hands Off Ukraine!

On 24th February 2022 the Russian state led by Vladimir Putin began the war against Ukraine. Russia is a country of monopoly capitalism and imperialism. It is linked to social imperialist China which is an ally of Russia. Ukraine is a dependent country allied to United States, the EU, UK imperialism and NATO. The US and its allies through Ukraine are engaged in a proxy war against their Russian rivals, using neo-Nazi forces such as the Azov battalion. The occupation of parts of Ukraine and the ongoing war demand condemnation of Russia, and the defence of the right of self-determination of the Ukrainian nation.

Russia fulfils the features of imperialism, monopoly capitalism is highly concentrated, capital export is substantial, the merger of trust and banks means that finance capital exists which is exported to the dependent countries. Politically, Russian imperialism has been evident in its foreign policy. Russia intervened in Libya after the removal of Gaddafi; it participated in the war in Syria, building air and naval bases in that country; it is active in the Central African Republic and Mali. Russia gave its support for western sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the Security Council of the UN. In 1999 the Ulyanovsk-Vostochny Airport was permitted to be used by NATO for sending transit materials to Afghanistan. Later in March 21, 2012, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin announced that the centre would be used for air transportation by NATO aircraft of certain cargoes to Iraq and Afghanistan. The cordial relations of Putin with Le Pen, Orban and Trump are not unknown.

In what is called the Russian “near abroad” imperialist impact has been observed in South Ossetia, Abkhazia; from Moldova, Transnistria was broken away, and a military base established there; Belarus, Kazakhstan, and also the Donbas ‘People’s Republics’ established in Ukraine. In all these countries and regions the Russian paramilitary network of mercenaries, known as the Wagner Group, considered to be close to Putin, has played an active role. The invasion of Ukraine is an integral part of Russian imperialism.

US and German imperialism after the break-up of the Soviet Union exerted to expand their influence in central and eastern Europe. They jointly through NATO annexed the German Democratic Republic, smashed multinational Yugoslavia, broke Czechoslovakia in two, and incorporated some 14 new states into NATO. At the same time US imperialism has sought to subordinate German imperialism which over decades has forged economic ties with Russia. It is clear that the US led by Biden, has acted in continuation of the aggressive policies of Clinton, in following a policy of confrontation with Russia.

Through the Maidan events of 2014 the elected pro-Russian leader Yanukovych was removed by a coup and replaced by the pro-US Yatsenyuk. Following from this, western economic interests were expanded at the expense of the Russian oligarchs, particularly in investments. The US edged out the interests of Russia and the Russian national minority. In response to the Maidan coup, for security concerns, Russian capital annexed Crimea, which had been part of Ukraine since 1954. The Minsk agreements of 2014 and 2015 which would have given Donetsk and Lugansk autonomy under a federal Ukraine were not honoured. The second agreement had been brokered by France and Germany. It was argued by the Ukrainians that autonomy could only be granted once Russian troops were withdrawn from eastern Ukraine.

Historically Donbas and Lugansk have been Ukrainian areas. The 1897 census shows that Russians comprised just 18% of the population of these two regions. The Soviet Union under Stalin established Union Republics on the basis of areas of linguistic affinity, and this was also the case in Soviet Ukraine. The territorial integrity of Ukraine coming down from Soviet times continued when it became an independent republic in 1991. In eastern Ukraine due to industrialisation under tsarism and Soviet power the percentage of the Russian population rose, declining after the end of the Soviet Union. In 2001 the Russian population of the Lugansk region was 39%, and 38% in the Donetsk region. The Ukrainians of the Donbas region also speak Russian. This has led the Russian state to claim that residents of the Donbass are Russian which is not the case. (It is as though Catalonia was regarded as Spanish as most of the people of Catalonia also speak Spanish in addition to Catalanian.) Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev the russification of Ukraine was initiated. Under the latter leader a fictional 'Soviet nation' was sought to be created to replace

the multi-national Soviet Union. The statistics do nonetheless suggest that Russians clearly formed a substantial minority in these two regions after the formation of independent Ukraine. Their rights were not respected. After 2014 they were a target of the Azov Battalion which led to many deaths.

In Lugansk and Donetsk, the Russian minority came to rely on the Russian state in order to counteract the attempts of the Ukrainian state to reclaim its influence and authority in the Donbas area of the Ukraine. Russian capital set up ‘People’s Republics’ in a section of the Donbas. Russian passports were given to sections of the people in the occupied Donbas. Ukrainians retained their Ukrainian passports. The ‘communist movement’ gave its support to Russia even though the Russian military maintained its firm overall control. The elimination of communist commanders such as Alexei Mozgovoy, who genuinely wished to build people’s power in eastern Ukraine, jointly benefitted capital in Russia and Ukraine. The Russian state did not permit communists to stand for elections in Donetsk in November 2014 while in Lugansk no party was permitted to engage in political activity under conditions of martial law.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine was directly preceded by a talk by Putin in which he attacked Lenin and Stalin and the Bolsheviks for their nationality policy which had, distinct from the Russians, created the state of Ukraine. Putin argued that there exists a common Russian nation which includes the Ukrainians, (Little Russians), Belarussians (White Russians) and the Great Russians. Putin denied that Ukraine ever existed as a separate nation and blamed the Bolsheviks for creating it. Lenin had severed ‘Russian land’ and created the state of Ukraine.

This corresponds to extreme right wing and fascist thought in Russia which has long demanded the annexation of large chunks of Ukraine.

Stalin had defined a nation in the following manner: “A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.” It was a definition which was accepted by Lenin and the Bolsheviks. The different languages which emerged from ancient Rus imply the existence of three nations: the Russians, the Ukrainians and the Belarussians

Lenin had advocated the formation of the Soviet Ukrainian state as correctly pointed out by Putin. It would be part of a voluntary

union of republics based on the right of self-determination. This was the foundational basis for the establishment of the Soviet Union. After the Great Patriotic War, under Stalin parts of western Ukraine were added to the Soviet Union which had historically been a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire and had later been occupied by Poland after the first world war. At the same time the unity of the Ukrainian national territories was completed by the addition of Carpathian Ukraine.

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation, which supports the war on Ukraine, was not to be left behind in the attack on the nationality policy of Lenin and Stalin. The CPRF argues that six industrial regions of Russia which had never been part of Ukraine, including Lugansk and Donetsk, were added to Ukraine by Lenin. (Vyacheslav Tetekin, What is Happening in Ukraine? *New Worker*, No. 2152, London, pp. 5-6). This is incorrect as the census statistics between 1897 to 2001 do not bear this out .

Maxim Latur argued:

“At the end of the 19th century (1897 census), Ukrainians dominated on the territory of modern Donetsk and Lugansk regions (Eka-terinoslav and part of Kharkov provinces). Russians made up 18%. Thus, the assignment of the south-eastern regions of Ukraine to the “primordially Russian territories” looks extremely doubtful. *From a de jure* point of view, for almost 100 years, the territories have belonged to Ukraine, both as part of the Ukrainian SSR and as part of an independent republic. So *de facto* – the territory was initially dominated by the Ukrainian-speaking population, and the Russians were only the second ethnic group” (M. Latur, Minsk anti-war resolution ,



Novorossiia, Russia-Ukraine 2014 , Social statistics , Ukraine. In: <http://left.by/archives/3035>. Translated from the Russian). (These statistics are corroborated in eds. Klaus Bachman and Igor Lyubashenko, *The Maidan Uprising, Separatism and Foreign Intervention*, in the article by Adam Balcer, ‘Borders Within Borderland: The cultural and ethnic diversity of Ukraine’, Frankfurt am Main, 2014, pp. 87-118).

In contrast to Putin, Lenin and Stalin accepted that there existed a Ukrainian nation: Lenin was of the view:

“He who justifies the capitalists who “are leading us into war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine,... (e.g. calls the throttling of Poland and the Ukraine a ‘defence of the fatherland’ of the Great Russians)... is a lickspittle and a boor, who arouses a legitimate feeling of indignation, contempt, and loathing”. (“On the National Pride of the Great Russians”, Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 104 *et passim*)

Lenin continued:

“The independence of the Ukraine has been recognized both by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the R.S.F.S.R. (Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic) and by the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). It is therefore self-evident and generally recognised that only the Ukrainian workers and peasants themselves can and will decide at their All-Ukraine Congress of Soviets whether the Ukraine shall amalgamate with Russia, or whether she shall remain a separate and independent republic, and, in the latter case, what federal ties shall be established between that republic and Russia.” (“Letter to the Workers and Peasants of the Ukraine Apropos of the Victories Over Denikin”, Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 292 and 295)

And Stalin averred:

“And only recently it was said that the Ukrainian Republic and the Ukrainian nation were inventions of the Germans. It is obvious, however, that there is a Ukrainian nation, and it is the duty of the Communists to develop its culture. You cannot go against history. It is obvious that although Russian elements still predominate in the Ukrainian towns, in the course of time these towns will inevitably be Ukrainianised.” (Stalin, *Works*, Vol. 5, pp. 48-9)

The rise of the Russian language in eastern Ukraine came about with industrialisation under Tsarism and the Soviet Union which developed the enormous iron ore and coal deposits in this region as well

as the metallurgical industry. The Donbass was the premier industrial base of the Tsarist empire and the Soviet Union until the second industrial base of the Soviet Union was constructed beyond the Urals in Magnitogorsk in the Stalin period.

What is the character of the ongoing war? At one level the war is an inter-imperialist war involving on the one side the US, the UK, the EU and NATO and on the other side, Russian imperialism. At the other level, the war, after the Russian military assault on the sovereign nation of Ukraine, is a national war of the Ukrainian people against Russian imperialism. Democratic forces cannot support the right-wing regimes of these two countries. In the case of Ukraine the state is dependent on western capitalism, and has promoted neo-nazism. In the instance of Russian imperialism, the State under Putin operates within the confines of Russian reactionary, Fascist philosophers such as Ivan Ilyin and Alexander Dugin. Putin further has the support of the Khrushchevite Communist Party of the Russian Federation. Putin thus is supported by both ‘communists’ and fascists in Russia.

It is important to give solidarity to the forces opposing the Putin war in Russia in practical ways. It is necessary to support the Russian communists who have taken internationalist positions against Russian imperialism in the course of the invasion of Ukraine. They correctly point out: “States that are in the vanguard of anti-communism cannot carry out any ‘denazification’. States that are confidently following the path of establishing an open terrorist dictatorship over the working people, suppressing social progress and even bourgeois democracy, are not and cannot be ‘antifascist.’ Their policy is directly opposite to the policy of anti-fascism”. (Statement of the United Communist Party –Internationalists)

In Ukraine, despite the reactionary regime, there is ongoing national resistance to the Russian invasion. Unity of the working class, peasantry and working people is a categorical political imperative in order to form a democratic national united front against imperialism. Only a genuine national front which opposes the reactionary forces of imperialism and local reaction can take the Ukrainian nation forward to freedom.

Hands off Ukraine!

Stop the war!

INDIA – HANDS OFF UKRAINE!

Down with the imperialism of the US, UK, EU, NATO and Russia!

Long the unity of the Russian and Ukrainian democratic forces!

Russian imperialism to pay reparations to Ukraine!

May 18th, 2022

Yemen's Humanitarian Catastrophe and Media Censorship

Yemen is a country that is fighting for its independence, and except for a small number of countries that support the struggles of the Yemeni people, including Iran, other countries, especially those claiming to defend human rights or to investigate war crimes, such as the expansionist European Union, or countries such as Sweden, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, have adopted the silence of death and deliberately turned a blind eye to this. This is because the human rights theme of these countries, which pretend to be “anti-war crime fighters,” has a different narrative based on their imperial interests. The degree of incitement of their humanitarian sentiments depends on the degree of their colonial and marauding interests. One day, a reporter asked then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright about the sanctions on Iraq, which killed more than half a million Iraqi children: “Were the sanctions and the invasion of Iraq worth it?” This representative of U.S. “human rights”, who also approved and promoted the Iran-Yemen embargo and did not value the lives of Iranians, explicitly defended this crime. This is the opinion of all the leaders of the European Union, Britain and the entire Anglo-Saxon imperialist front. Their approach to human rights is purely business-like.

In Yemen, the people are fighting against an occupying force. They have been able to put an end to the influence of Saudi Arabia, which ruled Yemen and considers it part of its territory. Saudi Arabia has set its greedy eyes on other countries on the Arabian Peninsula, such as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and even Oman. This is why the seeds of discord and conflict with Saudi Arabia is sowed everywhere. No one supports Saudi Arabia becoming a big power in the Arabian Peninsula. They rejoice at Saudi Arabia's weaknesses and failures in the Yemen war because it undermines the implementation of its intentions towards them. The lying imperialist media outlets are either silent about the struggles of the Yemeni people and the crimes committed by their collaborators in Yemen, or the fighting people of

Yemen are considered agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The fact is that the influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Yemen is limited and with the iron wall that the savage governments have drawn around the Yemeni people, there is no possibility of helping these people, either with food or military. The lying media claim that only “Houthis” are involved in the struggles. If at first this reference did not have a specific meaning, today it means that it is an ethnic and religious war against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, a war between Shia and Sunnis, while this is not essentially the case. The fighting force, Ansarullah, is a front, including not only the Houthis, but also people with other ethnic and religious affiliations have the right to participate only if they fight for the freedom and independence of their country. Ansarullah is the united front of the Yemeni Peoples’ struggle.

Saudi Arabia, which arrogantly wanted to stop the “Houthi activities” in a matter of weeks and crush their resistance, has been plagued by its aggression in Yemen for nearly eight years now, and with the most modern U.S., British, German, French weapons and Israeli and British and NATO advisors it is still unable to break the will of the Yemeni people. On the contrary, its imported mercenaries have been regularly defeated on the battlefield, and even among their allies, including the United Arab Emirates, there is a disagreement over the proportionality of their influence in Yemen. The will of the people who are fighting for their freedom and independence cannot be shattered. The U.S. experienced this in Vietnam, the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia in Yemen. Thousands of civilians, especially children, have been victims of the atrocities of the Saudi coalition since the Yemen war began. Saudi Arabia is bombing the residential areas, towns and the entire historic city of Sanaa in order to destroy the identity of the Yemeni people. This is a war crime, and UNESCO must take appropriate measures to prevent this crime.

According to the International Division of Tasnim News Agency, the Saudi-led Arab aggressor coalition has besieged Yemen by sea, air and land for seven years, bombing residential areas every now and then, resulting in thousands of civilian victims, especially innocent children, as well as the destruction of residential areas, Infrastructure and markets.

Even al-Mayadeen news publication in Beirut reported that Taha al-Mutawakkil, Minister of Public Health and Population in the

government of Sanaa, said that the number of Yemeni victims had reached 47,000.

This number has clearly increased today. The sea blockade of Yemen to prevent food and medicine from reaching the Yemeni people is an inhumane crime

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Guterres, in order to carry out his political duties of giving service to the United States, immediately made his way to Kiev, Ukraine, to talk with the murderer Zelensky and declare his support for Zelensky's crimes. But he is useless for the people of Yemen. He has not travelled to Yemen even once during the past several years to see the scope of Saudi Arabia's atrocities and to witness what the war has done to the Yemeni people, who are one of humanity's oldest ethnic groups and have an ancient civilization.

As of November 18, 2021, the U.S.-Saudi aggression has killed more than 3825 and injured 4175 children from the beginning of 2015 to the end of November 2021. The human rights report said that the number of children with various disabilities caused by the attacks of the aggressor coalition has reached 5,559; more than 3 million Yemeni children are suffering from malnutrition, while more than 300 children die daily and more than 3,000 have suffered congenital malformations. The Saudi aggressors, by bombing residential areas, a clear crime against humanity, have destroyed 1,128 primary schools and educational centers, 8,326 farms, 136 sports centers, 250



archaeological sites and 50 media centers. According to a report recently published by the United Nations Development Program, by the end of 2021 **the number of Yemeni victims was estimated to be about 377,000**, 60% of whom are indirect victims of war who have died from starvation, outbreaks of diseases and a lack of medical or health facilities. Last week, it was announced that half a million Yemeni children are at risk from food shortages. According to this report, in al-Mughraba district, a remote area in Yemen’s northern Hajjah province, families have turned to eating the leaves of a local tree in order to survive, boiling them to form a bitter paste and make it a little more digestible. Al-Mughraba is one of 11 regions in Yemen that were identified with famine conditions in late 2020. Mothers who themselves suffer from starvation have dry breasts and cannot feed and save their children. No country in the world, or UN officials, is trying to open Yemen’s ports to food so that civilians do not die. Boy-cotting and starving people, killing them by lack of food, are part of the Saudi-Western strategic policy of bringing the Yemeni people to their knees. They are intentionally violating their human rights, but they are loudly pretending to defend them. Efforts must be made to deliver food supplies to Yemen and to pressure international agencies to find legal and globally regulated ways to deliver supplies to the Yemeni people.

The Role of the United Arab Emirates

Geopolitically, the UAE intends to monitor and influence the southern part of Yemen and the port of Jeddah, as this important area of shipping and global sea transport is very sensitive from the perspective of political geography. In competition with Saudi Arabia, the UAE is willing to take control of southern Yemen by dividing Yemen into north and south, controlling the south and ending Saudi Arabia’s influence in the south in the Arabian Sea. The cooperation of the invading forces in Yemen is a calculated partnership and coalition. With its policy, the UAE intends to make Saudi Arabia responsible for all the costs of aggression, but to take a greater share in the looting of Yemen, and not to get involved openly but be an important actor behind the scene. In this regard, UAE officials, who have always feared Saudi expansionism, have entered into negotiations with French imperialists and Israeli Zionists and reached agreements with them. The control of the Arabian Sea gives the UAE an important role in controlling the Bab al-Mandab and the Red Sea.

Partisan warfare on the ground and in the air

The Ansarallah Front, along with its victories in partisan warfare on the ground and even moving the war into Saudi Arabia, achieved a kind of partisan warfare in the air by developing new technology and purchasing arms from Iran. All the soft and vital facilities of the UAE and Saudi Arabia, western companies, construction and financial monopolies and the entire tourist industry etc. in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Hijaz, Aramco, and other cities are in the range of Yemeni drones and missiles. These major blows by Yemenis have brought the Saudi and UAE governments to their knees and have made them exercise caution. The pleasant breeze that is now coming is the crushing of the current world order. This break-up of the current order greatly diminishes the power of NATO, the United States, Israel and their collaborators in the region and opens a window for the freedom and independence of the Yemeni people. This geopolitical change in the world will change our entire Region and will help the Yemeni people.

September, 2022

“Multilateralism,” a Key Instrument of Chinese Imperialism’s Foreign Policy

1. The Chinese Conversion to Multilateralism

Since 1986, the Chinese revisionists have used “multilateral diplomacy” as an integral part of their foreign policy.

The theme of multilateralism made its official entrance into Chinese political discourse with the report on the work of the government presented by Zhao Ziyang on the occasion of the launching of the VII five-year plan (1986-90).

During the 1980s, capitalist “reforms” and the opening to the market were the driving forces behind China’s move toward multilateral institutions and its growing diplomatic activism.

In the 1990s, the Chinese “conversion” to multilateralism developed with a progressive participation in international organizations and forums, especially of an economic nature. In fact, the new Chinese strategy required a more extensive and diversified participation in various multilateral forums, to avoid isolation and international condemnation. In this way China, increasingly linked to the international capitalist market, was drawn into the spider web of imperialism, as an integral part of it.

This strategy developed especially after the events in Tiananmen Square (1989), also to promote an image of “responsible power” and to begin to redesign a global order more favorable to the rising Chinese superpower.

Hence the re-evaluation of multilateralism, traditionally seen as a vehicle of external pressure and interference, and the start of a process of gradual development of this policy.

In the following years, the growing economic power of the Chinese dragon enabled Beijing to pursue greater diplomatic and foreign policy activism.

Since the 15th Congress of the CCP (1997), in the name of pragmatism the revisionist leaders of the CCP have formally adopted “multilateralism” as a guiding principle and operational tool in their international affairs, relations and initiatives.

New theses on multilateralism were further elaborated during the 16th Congress of the CCP (2002) in order to expand activism in international affairs and to make China accepted as the challenger of US global power.

At the same time, multilateralism has become an essential requirement to ensure long-term economic development, political stability and social peace, both within China and on its borders.

2. The Development of Chinese Multilateralism

In recent decades, the development of the struggle for world hegemony between U.S. imperialism, which is in economic and cultural decline, and the rapidly rising Chinese one (economically it could reach and surpass the USA in a few years; militarily it is continuously strengthening), has reshaped the pragmatic use of multilateralism by the revisionist leadership in Beijing.

Consequently, Chinese multilateralism has constantly evolved, with its own characteristics, under the pressure of its monopolies and dominant groups that want to transform economic force into political-military force to win more favorable positions in the struggle for the re-division of the world.

Chinese multilateral politics thus passed from a conception focused above all in the crucial Asian region (the APEC, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the creation of the free trade area with the ASEAN countries, the Boao Forum, the Six Nations dialogue on North Korea, the creation of the Asian Investment Bank to support huge projects such as the “Belt and Road Initiative” (BRI), the cooperation between BRICS, the numerous bilateral agreements that are very advantageous given China’s economic power, are examples of this approach), to expressions with a broader base, characterized by China’s entry into global forums and institutions, traditional haunts of imperialist leaders (e.g. WTO, G-20 as a member state, G-8 as an observer). Even within the U.N., China has developed its participation in “peace missions” in dozens of countries (Afghanistan, Haiti, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Sudan, etc.).

Multilateralism has thus become a central element of Chinese ambitions to continue rapid development and in a few decades to build a new international order in which China is no longer in a “strait-jacket” but holds a decisive and predominant position.

The development of Trump’s isolationism and the crisis of U.S. multilateralism have offered new strategic opportunities to

imperialist China to establish itself as an advocate of “inclusive” economic globalization, of international order and of multilateral architecture, in opposition to protectionism.

Indeed, China has developed rivalry with the US using the same international organizations hitherto run by the Yankees, but at the same time it has worked to change the balance of power within them, undermining norms and agreements that favor the superpower currently led by Biden.

The concept and practice of Chinese multilateralism have developed amidst the clash of interests and values between the U.S.-led Western powers and the rising medium and large powers (BRICS and other capitalist states), which want to escape U.S. domination and gain a status appropriate to their growing economic, political and military weight in the international hierarchy.

The multilateralism pursued by China therefore seeks to push through in the tensions that are shaking the current system of international relations; its rhetoric hides the struggle for hegemony between imperialist powers, and behind its diplomatic mask there is the old strategy of alliances and blocs.

3. The Current Phase of Chinese Multilateralism

With Xi Jinping’s rise to power in 2013, China has shifted to a major foreign initiative, of which the BRI is the most obvious manifestation. The current phase of Chinese multilateralism, more active and assertive than in the past, was expressed by Xi Jinping during the World Economic Forum in January 2021, who criticizing hegemonism and unilateralism emphasized a consensual system of global governance, based on universal consultation and rules. A utopian imperialist world, in which differences “are not a pretext for antagonism and confrontation, but rather an incentive for cooperation”.

Chinese propaganda is based on the revisionist rhetoric that the old U.S.-led postwar international order has become increasingly unsustainable, while the trend is towards a multipolar world and globalization. Hence the push for the “development of a community with a shared future for humanity” (Xi Jinping, report to the 19th Congress of the CCP) to be achieved by reforming the liberal-democratic institutions to create an environment more favorable to the interests and ambitions of Chinese imperialism.

Despite the official narrative, the “true multilateralism” with Chinese characteristics is both strategic and opportunist, part of a counter-hegemonic design.

The U.S. and China are constantly struggling to extend their influence internationally, the tension in the South China Sea and on Taiwan is growing, albeit for now the two superpowers don’t want go to a direct war (China needs time to strengthen itself; it has an interest in armed conflicts taking place in other regions of the world in this period). This struggle also develops within multilateral agencies in which China is resolutely defending its decisive interests.

The Chinese multilateralism that has emerged in the last twenty years must be understood in combination with the discourse on “multipolarism”. Both are part of the strategy to extend Chinese influence and dominance, especially among “developing” countries, creating an image of China as a benign world power on the rise.

Through multilateralism China is gradually gaining power at the regional and global level, pursuing the penetration of its capital through bilateral agreements with dependent countries of Africa, Asia and South America (in which Beijing gets the “dragon’s share”) while striving to form a world political structure that corresponds to its strategic aims.

Despite the deceptive propaganda on fair, transparent, democratic diplomatic relations, on “mutual benefit”, “win-win cooperation”, etc., in fact an exclusive and competitive “bipolar” model is emerging, based on regional or international institutions hinged on two great imperialist powers, U.S. and China, which are challenging each other: the first to maintain hegemony, the second to win it. It is an inter-imperialist struggle for supremacy within the dying imperialist system.

4. Class Vision of Multilateralism

From a revolutionary class point of view, what is the “multilateralism” supported by the Chinese revisionists and their followers?

At the root of multilateralism (and multipolarism), there is Kaustky’s reactionary theory of ultra-imperialism, which deceives the masses with the hope of the possibility of permanent peace in the capitalist system (i.e. the peaceful division of spheres of influence and colonies), which hides the profound contradictions inherent in imperialism, in the name of the bourgeois perfection of imperialism, of full integration with it.

Chinese multilateralism is the further development of the “Five Principles” of peaceful coexistence promoted by Zhou Enlai since 1954, which have completely replaced the principles of proletarian internationalism, including the coexistence of exploited and exploiters, oppressed and oppressors, the abandonment of revolutionary struggles, the relations with fascist and reactionary regimes (over the years, Pinochet’s Chile, Franco’s Spain, the reactionary factions in Angola, Taliban’s Afghanistan, etc.), the encouragement of the free world market, etc.

Furthermore, Chinese multilateralism continues and deepens the anti-Marxist and reactionary theory of the “three worlds”, which was aimed at mitigating the contradictions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, at eliminating the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution, at suffocating the class struggle and the national liberation struggles of the peoples against the imperialist yoke to achieve the goals of cooperating with the US in the fight against the revisionist USSR and putting China at the head of the “third world” states, painting it as their main defender.

Multilateralism is based on typically bourgeois concepts and practices that reflect the political and legal philosophy of the project of a liberal international order. Therefore, it is completely alien and in contrast to the Marxist-Leninist conception of the world and of society.

The foundations of modern U.S.-led multilateralism were laid at Bretton Woods in 1944, with the creation of major international organizations, including the United Nations (UN), the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), institutions that have strengthened the exploitation and oppression of dependent, semi-colonial and colonial peoples and countries.

From the moment Mao’s China steered its course towards the United States of America, defining the Soviet Union as its main enemy, it also began to enter or openly support many mechanisms of the imperialist political game.

At the basis of multilateralism there is class conciliation, the attempt to mitigate the class struggle, to deceive the working class and the oppressed peoples with captivating formulas. Behind the demagoguery of the “search for suitable solutions” in a phase of international change, multilateralism preaches collaboration and social peace between exploiting and exploited classes, between oppressed and oppressor countries, between oppressed and oppressing nations.

The Marxist-Leninist conception of social differentiation is based on the theory of classes and the class struggle, up to the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Multilateralism, on the other hand, is based on the relationship between states, or apparatuses of the dictatorship of the ruling classes, whose existence shows that class antagonisms are irreconcilable.

By supporting multilateralism the Chinese revisionists deny the objective character of the existence of class contradictions (starting with those existing in China); they try to reconcile antagonistic classes; they credit the idea that imperialism and capitalism are factors of progress and peace in the world.

For the Peking revisionists – who for decades have replaced the essence of the revolutionary theory of classes and class struggle with bourgeois concepts and practices – it is not the popular masses, the classes, who are the subjects of the process and historical action; the class struggle is no longer the driving force for the development of the antagonistic society.

Their position is not accidental: they must try by all means to convince the proletariat and the peoples that class contradictions and those between imperialist and capitalist powers are compatible within the framework of the bourgeois system, that the solution of the existing dramatic problems must be found in greater understanding, mutual and better cooperation between the ruling classes, in the coalition with the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Multilateralism does not question the capitalist social relations of production, now predominant in China, but defends them. It therefore reflects the interests of the exploiting classes which are inevitably in contrast with the demands of social progress; it is a liberal methodology which has the evident purpose of convincing the proletariat to resign itself to its condition as an oppressed class, to become a docile instrument of bourgeois politics.

At the same time, multilateralism is the most flagrant denial of the principle and practice of proletarian internationalism, which is replaced with Chinese nationalism and solidarity with the oppressors of the peoples. In particular, the function of multilateralism is to promote and support the process of integration of the dependent countries into the institutions and mechanisms dominated by the imperialist countries.

Behind these typical concepts of Chinese foreign policy and actions there is the financial oligarchy of the Asian giant which is

frantically seeking to invest capital abroad, striving to conquer markets and spheres of influence, seeking to establish its hegemony everywhere. This is a policy that cannot go ahead without the intensification of the exploitation of the Chinese working class and laboring masses.

5. The Mask of Imperialist Ambitions and War Preparations

For decades China has abandoned its phraseology of a “revolutionary power” and adopted a position as a power defending the capitalist-imperialist system. Its international policy, as well as its domestic one, is a means of consolidating the power of the exploiting classes.

If Khrushchevite revisionism declared the end of the struggle against imperialism and for “world integration”, Chinese multilateralism is the mask of the unbridled ambition of the Chinese imperialists who want to replace the United States in the political and economic domination of the world.

This dangerously deceives peoples about the goals of Chinese imperialism and tries to attract the ruling cliques of dependent countries under this banner.

Under the ideological as well as practical aspect, multilateralism is in flagrant contrast with the interests of the proletariat and with the scientific principles that express the objective tendencies of historical evolution. It tends to maintain imperialism, not to overthrow it in order to suppress any exploitation of one human being by another, any oppression of the peoples.



The views and positions of the Chinese revisionists are counter-revolutionary and align with those of the bourgeoisie of the Western imperialist and capitalist states, with which they collaborate and compete.

But despite the efforts of the revisionists, multilateralism does not eliminate class contradictions, nor those between imperialist powers, much less those between imperialism and the oppressed peoples.

Today's capitalist-imperialist world is objectively more and more fragmented, divided, in conflict. The fact that some countries are emerging and others declining, given the inequality of economic and politic development (and not because of the struggle for self-determination and sovereignty, as the revisionists claim) does not mean that the world is safer.

On the contrary, this very inequality of development makes re-armament, conflicts and imperialist wars inevitable for new divisions of the world and spheres of influence, markets, sources of raw materials, transport routes, etc. The discourses on multilateralism are only a screen behind which the great powers hide the preparations for new wars, deceiving the peoples.

6. Conclusions and Perspectives

The conception and practice of multilateralism have nothing in common with communism, but are aimed at diverting the proletariat and the peoples from the struggle for the revolution and socialism.

The ideological and political battle against all those who promote and defend the concepts of multilateralism, "multipolarism", bourgeois "rules of international law", interclassism in the field of international relations, is an important aspect of the struggle against revisionism and opportunism in all its variants that continues to cause serious damage to the International Communist Movement.

The lack of understanding of multilateralism and its ideological and political function highlights the lack of understanding of imperialism and its activities in the international arena.

There are forces and currents that limit their analysis and understanding of imperialism only (or mainly) to its aggressive, militaristic or openly hegemonic foreign policy, such as that of the US.

There are others who argue that China and Russia play an anti-imperialist role because they clash with the United States of America,

and therefore consider these powers as allies of the peoples and points of support for the development of dependent countries.

These serious errors in understanding imperialism – the highest and final phase of capitalism – which usually accompany the support of the theses on the multipolar world and the politics of multilateralism, inevitably lead to underestimating the capacity and danger of imperialist powers such as China and Russia; in other cases they lead to concealing or justifying the causes of the inter-imperialist war, to justify rearmament and to put themselves at the service of the imperialist powers opposing the USA with social-chauvinist arguments to divide the proletariat and pit them against each other.

The parties and organizations that define themselves as communists, but which consider a new “peaceful coexistence” desirable and possible in the context of sharpening of the contradictions between imperialist powers; who dream of a “non-aggressive” imperialism, or one whose aggressiveness can be channeled through multilateralism; who preach the theory of the “balance” between imperialist powers and the related “security architectures” in the so-called “multipolar world”; who rely on one imperialist power to fight another, betray the cause of the proletarian revolution and transform themselves into forces subordinate to the bourgeoisie.

The historical experience of the communist movement shows that there cannot be an “intermediate” line or ground between those who support Marxism-Leninism and those who support opportunist and revisionist theories, strategies and practices; between those who fight for the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and those who support multilateralism, social peace and false bourgeois democracy.

Any centrist attempt to hold diametrically opposed positions and tendencies, to establish an “intermediate” line on questions of principle, is not only useless, but also leads to ideological degeneration and reactionary results in the political field. Towards the social-imperialists and social-chauvinists, no other attitude is possible than an implacable struggle.

The new international order for which the communists are fighting is founded on the revolutionary alliance between the working class and the oppressed peoples and has as its goal socialism and communism, the classless society.

The unity we fight for is a true, Leninist unity. It is completely illusory, dangerous and misleading to think of reconstituting a

powerful International workers' and communist movement, a new Communist International, without a complete and definitive ideological and organizational separation from modern revisionism and opportunism which aim to divert the proletariat from the revolutionary struggle.

One cannot fight imperialism, cannot fulfill the revolutionary tasks of proletarian socialism, and cannot build the revolutionary unity of the workers' and communist movement, without freeing oneself from imperialist and chauvinist pressure and influences, without recognizing and denouncing the revisionist and opportunist failure, without breaking openly and clearly with these currents and their national and international organizations.

This dutiful separation, favored by the sharpening of the main contradictions of our epoch, is historically inevitable and necessary to develop the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

Today more than ever it is necessary to maintain complete theoretical, political and organizational independence, firmly adhering to the principles of communism in order to forge the most solid international union of the revolutionary proletarians of all countries.

The defense and development of Marxism-Leninism, the unmasking and relentless struggle against all forms of revisionism and opportunism within the communist and workers' movement, the living practice of proletarian internationalism, are fundamental aspects of the struggle to advance cooperation and conjunction of the revolutionary parties of the proletariat.

The ICMLPO, which is based on a clear Marxist-Leninist platform and has always fought for the international unity of the communists, plays an essential role in creating a strong center of attraction for the revolutionary proletarian forces

This is why it invites the parties and organizations of all the countries that fight for socialism and communism to join with it for the constitution of a powerful International Communist Movement, which will project itself into the reconstruction of the Communist International.

August 2021

Inter-Bourgeois Contradictions, Class Struggle and the Tasks of the Proletariat in Mexico

As we are taught, the classics of the science of the proletarian revolution, the determination of tasks for the advancement of the Proletarian Revolution, depends on the development of the objective and subjective conditions of the revolutionary process in each society. In addition, it is common knowledge that the class struggle is not linear, there are periods when it advances slowly and imperceptibly and at other times giant steps are made. In the case of Mexico, we are emerging from a period of demobilization, of dispersion of the working class and the popular masses, a situation which, in our view, we are gradually overcoming; everything indicates that in Mexico we will enter a new period of reactivation and increase of the class struggle of the proletariat and the peoples.

Economic depression and the danger of a new crisis

As in the rest of the world, alongside the pandemic of Covid-19, in March 2020, the Mexican economy entered a period of crisis. This led to a fall in the economy of 8.5% of the GDP and in 2021, there was a growth of 4.8%; thus to reach the level of growth prior to the crisis a growth of at least 3.7% is needed. However, the projections for this year point to a growth of less than 2%. This has left the Mexican economy in an economic depression, with prolonged stagnation, high rates of unemployment and underemployment, as well as a high level of inflation.

In the first three quarters of this year, inflation has been breaking previous records, surpassing 8.5% during the third quarter of 2022. It has been much more serious in relation to the products of the basic basket whose prices have been above 25%. So far the Government of Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) has implemented “anti-inflationary plans” that have consisted of tax benefits for the large monopolies that sell popular consumer products, so that their profits are not affected, without any mechanism that guarantees that they do not increase the prices of their goods. The second announcement of new anti-inflationary measures, this October, was to agree with the main food-importing supermarkets that they will no longer have to follow

the health rules to introduce food products into the country, a measure that will undoubtedly have an impact on a greater deterioration of the health of the proletarian masses. Mexico has high rates of diseases related to food consumption habits. This agreement that has been made will allow food of the worst quality to be imported in order to maintain the workforce, affecting as little as possible the profits of capital.

Mexico is a country economically dependent on US imperialism, with remittances from migrants the first source of income. The impact that we expect with the recession in the US economy will be very serious. This dependence will continue to deepen due to the development of the megaprojects of the current government, in particular the Trans-Isthmus Corridor, which seems to be more like a right of way made as a concession to US trade and the loss of sovereignty over the territory that that commercial route will occupy.

It is a fragile economy. The continuation of the loss of purchasing power of wages due to high levels of inflation, low level of growth, more than 55% of the economically active population underemployed, are the main factors that define the objective situation in Mexico. This, in the face of the world scenario of a new crisis, puts our country at risk of a new and profound crisis which, much more than previous crises, will lead to the deterioration of the living conditions of the working and popular masses.

Sharpening of the inter-bourgeois contradictions

During its four years of government, the self-styled Fourth Transformation (4T) and its National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) party headed by AMLO, managed to hegemonize political and ideological control of the workers and peoples of Mexico, keeping them demobilized and divided. Also, AMLO, MORENA and the coalition of parties and people who promote the so-called 4T positioned themselves as the representatives of the interests of the whole of the financial oligarchy and the national bourgeoisie. They displaced sectors of the bourgeoisie that had governed in previous six-year terms; in particular, the tendencies which during this period were grouped together as a right-wing fascist, pro-coup opposition in the parties: National Action Party (PAN), Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI), Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD). and Citizen's Movement and in various employers' groups and "NGOs" of "civil society". These have suffered defeat after defeat in the electoral

field despite the fact that they have tried to usurp the banners of struggle of the working class and the peoples. This forces us not to lose sight of them, because now they seek to appropriate the popular demands to continue influencing, as they have until now, the course of the country's political economy.

The hegemony of the 4T during this period also was achieved by including representatives who just a few years ago were leaders of the PRI, PAN and PRD; thus MORENA is experiencing a very accelerated rightward shift. There is almost nothing left of its initial façade as a reformist and progressive party. In its process of internal change, it removed the majority of its cadres linked to the popular movement; it left aside many of the banners that MORENA raised during the 2018 presidential campaign, as now the right-wing policy that it is implementing now contradicts them. To cite a few examples: militarization has been consolidated with the handover to direct administration of strategic sectors such as customs, ports and airports by the Army and the Navy. The Army and Navy have benefited the most from the Federal Budget, which if approved – according to the 2023 budget as now proposed – will have increased more than 50% during the four years of the current administration. The National Guard has come under the command of the Army; the presence of the Army in the streets has been extended until 2028 and about 500 new barracks have been built for the National Guard throughout the country.

The implementation of all the structural reforms imposed during the previous presidential administrations remain unchanged despite the fact that MORENA fought them when it was an opposition. The implementation of the current megaprojects represents the new face of the Plan Puebla Panama or Mesoamerican Project that has been established for many years to benefit the interests of US financial capital. The so-called 4T is therefore the continuation of the capitalist-imperialist neoliberal political economy.

A few months ago, the unity and hegemony achieved by MORENA and the 4T began to be affected by the presidential election, which will take place in 2024. By becoming the representative of the whole bourgeoisie and the capitalist-imperialist mode of production, it also took on all the contradictions inherent in a social class with divergent interests subordinated to the maximization of profits. For now the main candidates to succeed AMLO who are contesting for the candidacy of MORENA are: Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo, current

Head of Government of Mexico City; Marcelo Ebrard Casaubón, current Secretary of Foreign Affairs; Adan Augusto López Hernández, Secretary of the Interior, and Ricardo Monreal, President of the Political Coordination Board of the Chamber of Senators. All of them are being pushed by one or another internal group of MORENA, supporters of the 4T and national and imperialist bourgeois sectors. The various journalistic leaks as well as the alleged or certain hacking of the computer system of the Secretariat of National Defense (SEDENA), by the so-called: “Guacamaya Leaks”, have as a backdrop this quiet inter-bourgeois struggle for control of the government and the State, and mainly of the economic policy of exploitation, oppression and domination.

There is a risk of economic crisis and anti-crisis measures. The deepening of neoliberal policy, but above all the contention for the presidential replacement in 2024, are causing cracks within the Mexican financial oligarchy and its government. Although they are not irreconcilable differences, if they influence the exercise of the dictatorship of capital, they contribute to the weakening of the current government and can even lower the still very high (about 54%) popularity of AMLO’s government. These inter-bourgeois contradictions will continue to sharpen, as the 2024 elections approach and as the danger of a new economic crisis grows or a crisis erupts.



Greater poverty and public insecurity mark daily life in Mexico

Despite strong doses of propaganda claiming that the current government has benefited the poorest sectors of the country, the reality is that the sector that has most benefited has been finance capital. The bankers especially have obtained profits as never before during the government of AMLO. The official data by the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) and the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) indicate that in the last two years, there have been more than 5 million new poor people in the country with a perspective of growth of the population living in conditions of poverty and extreme poverty.

Covid-19, having already gone through its fifth wave in the country, with more than 330,000 dead, showed the deplorable conditions of the health and social security system of the working masses. This situation has not been addressed under the current government; not only is there stagnation in the budget for public health, today the plan to reduce social security services will make health care more precarious, especially for the working class and the popular masses in Mexico.

The levels of insecurity that our country is going through are higher than during the two previous administrations. Organized crime and drug trafficking have corroded an important part of the institutions of the Mexican State; there have been more than 130,000 violent deaths and 30,000 disappearances so far under the current administration.

The persecution and assassination of social and trade union organizers, defenders of human rights, defenders of land and territory and journalists remain a current issue. Among these there are high-impact cases such as the assassination of our comrade Tomás Martínez Pinacho.

Deepening of the class struggle

The advent of a self-proclaimed “left” and progressive government, with a highly populist discourse, that made innumerable unattainable promises within the framework of a bourgeois government, provoked a great illusion of change among the proletarian and popular masses in Mexico. AMLO’s government, the self-proclaimed “Fourth Transformation” – to equate it with the transformations caused by the Independence War of 1810, the Reform Laws against

the conservatives and the Revolution of 1910 – knew how to take advantage of the health situation, to reduce the class struggle and social mobilization to levels lower than have been seen for several decades in the country. During these last four years, the mobilizations of workers, peasants, inhabitants of the belts of misery of the cities, were not only marginal but were attacked from the pulpit of power of the Presidency of the Republic, calling them conservative and illegitimate, branding them as corrupt without any foundation. Only the struggle of the women managed to continue with mobilizations since 2018, denouncing the feminicidal State that has prevailed and been consolidated during the period of the 4T.

However, the economic, social and political factors surrounding the current reality – of which we have cited only a few examples – are leading to a new situation for the workers’ and people’s movement in Mexico. Especially beginning this year, 2022 has been a period in which several factories and important proletarian areas of the country carried out strikes and work stoppages in defense of their labor rights and achievements and their immediate demands. There were profoundly significant demonstrations and combats for the workers’ struggle and its leading role in the country. Particularly in the City of Lázaro Cárdenas, Michoacán; in the agricultural fields of San Quintín; in Matamoros and Tamaulipas, there were the mobilizations and the strike of the STRM [Union of Telephone Workers of the Mexican Republic] against TELMEX [Mexican telecommunications company] and mobilizations of various university unions. An important bloc of unions of workers of public institutions are suffering an onslaught by the attempts to liquidate their workplaces and their labor rights as a result of the supposed “republican austerity” as well as against unionized workers of institutions such as CONACYT [National Council of Science and Technology], INAH [National Institute of Anthropology and History], IMTA [Mexican Institute of Water Technology]. Unions such as SUTIN [Nuclear Industry Workers Union], SUNTNAFIN [Single National Union of National Finance Workers], ARTES-INBAL [Union of the National Institute of Fine Arts and Literature], SUTIEMS [Syndicate of the Union of Workers of the Institute of Middle and Higher Education], SUTCONALEP [Single Union of Workers of the National College of Professional Technical Education], etc., have been joining the street struggle during this period. Several important unions have their strike calls in force, such as the STUNAM [Union of Workers of the

National Autonomous University of Mexico], the National Independent Union of Baccalaureate Colleges and SUTiems. The continuity of the historic and heroic Strike of the Union of Workers of the News Agency of the Mexican State (SUTNOTIMEX), which this November 16 will celebrate 1000 days on strike, constitutes the most important strike in the period of the Government of the 4T, the longest strike in the history of the struggle of the workers of public institutions in the country. There have been mobilizations of the parents of the 43 students of the Rural Normal School “Raúl Isidro Burgos” of Ayotzinapa, Guerrero, of the CNTE [National Coordination of Education Workers] and the SME [Mexican Union of Electrical Workers], and the mobilizations promoted by the CNI-CIG-EZLN [National Indigenous Congress – Indigenous Governing Council – Zapatista Army for National Liberation]. Since September of this year, there have been strikes and mobilizations of students from the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN), UNAM [National Autonomous University of Mexico], the Chapingo Autonomous University and various rural normal schools grouped in the FECSM [Federation of Socialist Peasant Students of Mexico], as well as other public normal schools; there were no actions by some of these groups during the last four years. The peasant movement expressed its dissent, mainly in the south and southeast of the country, principally against the megaprojects, but still with local actions. There have been mobilizations of retirees and pensioners, transportation workers, neighborhood residents, etc. All these and other proletarian and popular contingents have been growing and strengthening our class struggle, reviving the street struggle in defense of our conditions of life, health, work and study and of our democratic freedoms and political rights.

Let us regroup our forces, resume our mobilization and advance in the revolutionary accumulation of forces.

In this scenario of reactivation of the mass movement of the country, the central task of the Mexican proletariat is to advance in regrouping its forces, to revive it as a national force, linked to the struggles of the students, women, poor and indigenous peasants, incorporating the struggles for demands, scattered and spontaneous, into a single plan of struggle. With the mobilization, let us bring these struggles to victories for their demands, recover confidence in the strength of the working class, in the role of the

masses as the makers of history and break with the refusal of the State to resolve these demands.

The progress of the process of unity of the mass movement of the working class and the Mexican people must lead to the revival of the perspective of a single movement throughout the country, to a single organized and mobilized effort with a program of struggle; that is, a United Front, in the form of a National Assembly of the Proletariat and the Peoples of Mexico. This revival of the unitary process must be based on the organizations of struggle that have persisted in this period, for now: the National Popular Assembly, the expressions of the CNI-CIG-EZLN, the Conference of Resistances, the New Federation of Workers and the Broad Social and Unitary Front-National Meeting of Trade Union, Peasant and Civil Society Leaders; and in the various expressions of the United Front at the local level (such as the Meeting of the Peoples of Oaxaca), or by sector or issue (of women and in defense of the territory).

The revival of the unity of the mass movement in our country, in addition to advancing in its economic demands, must become a political topic, which takes up the struggle for the general interests, such as the repeal of structural reforms, the demilitarization of the country and the defense of our natural resources, land and territory that are being wiped out by the construction of megaprojects in the south and southeast of the country, with the perspective of advancing towards the victory of the Proletarian Revolution.

This strengthening of the process of reviving unity, bringing victories to the economic demands and fighting for general demands, must create the conditions to build a unitary agreement of all the forces of the movement in order to intervene with a political platform of the workers of the countryside and city, and of the peoples of Mexico with their own campaign and an independent worker-popular candidacy for the 2024 elections. Achieving a unitary intervention under this perspective will allow us to put forward a position that differentiates us and denounces the fascist pro-coup right and also denounces and differs from the oligarchic and pro-imperialist 4T. This is a complicated scenario to achieve, but it is now essential to focus our efforts on that perspective.

October 2022

Populism in Morocco and Our Position as Marxists

I recently watched a video of a debate between Belgian philosopher Chantal Mouffe and France Insoumise leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon, in which they discussed several political issues and ideas, including populism. What caught my attention the most was Chantal Mouffe's insistence on the need to build what she calls "a left-wing populism", of which she presented some characteristics, in order to confront right-wing populism.

Does this appeal by Chantal Mouffe really bring something new that can challenge Moroccan Marxists, or is it just another appeal to divert our attention as Marxists and take us away from the essential of our theoretical and practical concerns?

Such a topic would not have appealed to me without my keen interest in social movements, not only from a theoretical point of view but also from a practical one. Indeed, this question is at the heart of our concrete experience in Morocco following the Hirak (mass movement) of Jarada (former coal mining center in Morocco) and the Rif as important examples of social movements. But what relationship can there be between social movements and populism? And what position should Moroccan Marxists take on populism?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to recall what populism means, and what are its manifestations today in political thought in general and in our Moroccan situation in particular?

1. Populism as it appeared in the Marxist literature.

The concept of populism was clearly used in the Russian literature. It is these Marxists who defined what populism is and presented its main characteristics. This is because Russia was a fertile ground for the emergence of populist political forces as an organized force, even before the emergence of the Marxist movement, namely Russian social democracy.

Narodnik was the most important populist organization that was active since the 1870s; the word Narod in Russian means people. This

organization came mainly from the circles of the urban petty bourgeoisie, and advocated the revolution of the peasants, who constituted the overwhelming majority in the society. This movement gave rise to the Party of Revolutionary Socialists, founded in 1901, which in turn called for a peasant revolution for the establishment of democracy and a kind of typical Russian socialism, based on the traditions of “mir”, i.e. peasant communities based on collective ownership of the land.

Unable to mobilize the peasant masses, the populists were reduced to isolation, which facilitated their repression. They then fell back on terrorist and individual actions, hoping that these would incite the people to rise up. They ended up abandoning revolutionary work among the peasants or workers and even helped to discredit it in the eyes of the masses.

To combat their negative influences in society, the Marxists, led by Plekhanov, fought a tough theoretical and political battle. They founded the “Emancipation of Labor” group in 1883, which later became the Russia Social Democratic Labor Party (RSDLP). It held its first congress in 1898 and its second in 1901 under the leadership of Lenin, after the arrest or deportation to Siberia of the members of the Plekhanov committee. Populism was defeated ideologically and politically and social democracy was constituted as a revolutionary party that gave the political struggle its class character by relying on the working class and its strategic alliance with the peasants.

In his remarks on populism, Lenin wrote: “If we reject all the soft words that the populists say about the people and their interests, and if we examine their rhetoric closely, we discover the lies and deceit of the petty bourgeoisie.”

II. Populism is coming back today in a new suit with multiple contents.

In the last decades, populism has come back to life and has spread to several regions, especially in Western Europe and South America and, to some extent, in Africa and the Arab world.

The interest in populism has increased as a model of thought and mode of governance after signs of the disintegration of the political system of the capitalist state, mainly democracy.

In the face of the high rate of boycott of elections and popular referendums, there has been a decline in the influence of parties and their inability to mobilize their bases and the masses and propose

relevant programs of economic and social change. In response to the popular upheavals caused by the structural crisis of capitalism, multiple forms of populism have emerged in the fields of political and philosophical thought.

Among its theorists, we can quote Yves Michaud, who devoted his book entitled “Against Benevolence” to the study of populism, starting from two observations. He notices that on the one hand, there are voices that go more and more in favor of new parties that call for the elimination of the old political class, and on the other hand, the strong boycott by citizens who are disinterested in politics that can no longer convince them.

According to Yves Michaud, “populism thrives because, on the one hand, it captures and diverts the demands of certain social categories, in particular the most relevant and widespread ones, which it covers with a demagogic charge, and on the other hand, it presents its programs as an alternative to what it sees as a conspiracy of the elites, of the system and of the clique of dominant parties.”

Jan-Werner Müller, answering the question what is populism, writes: “My thesis... to present it differently, I think that it is not enough to consider populism only as an ‘anti-system attitude’ and ‘against the elite’, but it should also be added that it is ‘against pluralism’. All populists claim that ‘they and they alone represent the real people.’”

“Populists see the elites as immoral, corrupt and parasitic, always in confrontation with a harmonious and morally pure people. According to this view, these elites have nothing to do with the people.”

In recent decades, Ernesto Laclau (1935-2014) and his wife Chantal Mouffe are considered the most influential thinkers in political circles, including left-wing circles. They are considered the ideologists of left-wing populism. Chantal Mouffe, in particular, argued for the need to build this populism to confront right-wing populism. She is considered “the mother” of Podemos, to which she humorously retorted in a video: “...rather her mother than her grandmother”.

For his part, Laclau considers that what distinguishes populist movements is their lack of fixed ideological foundations and their reliance on vague and shaky characteristics of the concept of the people.

According to Laclau, “Populism always seeks to formulate a set of contradictory and unanswered demands.” He denies any unity of

the phenomenon of populism, which he sees rather as an attempt to express these demands.

According to Antonio Negri, one of the most important Italian thinkers with his theory of “the multitude”, Laclau is a brilliant theorist of populism, but from an idealist and non-class point of view: “Ernesto Laclau brilliantly explains that the people is not formed spontaneously or naturally, but is formed by representative mechanisms that translate the pluralism and heterogeneity between individual particularities forming a unity. And if this unity can become real through its identification with a leader or a dominant group, and in some cases with a model, this perception still seems to me to depend on a particular aristocratic idea that addresses the deepest and most connected issues of the modern history of the state.”

Antonio Negri also considers that “the intellectual occupies the center of Laclau’s thought” when he speaks of the formation of populist movements, but it is the intellectual in the general sense and not in the sense of Gramsci, where the class question occupies a fundamental place.

Going back in an interview to the book she wrote with Ernesto Laclau, “Towards a Radical Democratic Politics” (2009, originally published in 1985), Chantal Mouffe specifies that “they had written this book in the early 1980s, when left Marxists and social democrats did not know how to deal with social movements, environmental issues, feminism and the struggle for gay rights.

“With Ernesto Laclau, we adopted two theoretical sources: Antonio Gramsci, on the one hand, and poststructuralism, on the other (Derrida, Foucault and Lacan). We have shown that politics is always about constructing identities, which is a very strong idea in the present time. In Podemos, it is reflected in their critique of the traditional vision of the left that wishes to represent vested interests. No, says Podemos, these interests must be constructed. As a result, Podemos wants to appeal to a wider audience than the ordinary left-wing audience. They want to win over the voters of the conservative right-wing Popular Party. The whole political strategy of Podemos is to question the fundamentals. They are looking for a centrality that has nothing to do with the center. This would be the new hegemony, according to Gramsci’s concept... Politics would be the creation of identities through the transformation of subjectivities.”

In politics, according to Chantal Mouffe, there is no compromise, but a conflict; and on this basis the division into two camps is

organized: “Us” and “the Others”. But this confrontation is not a war between two enemies, but rather a conflict between two adversaries. If the enemies share no common symbolic space, the two adversaries do, but they want to organize it differently.

For Chantal Mouffe, Podemos is a left-wing populist movement. She believes that left-wing populism has become a necessity to confront the right-wing populism that has taken root in Europe because of the compromise between the center-right and the center-left. This compromise has eliminated any distinction between the programs offered to the voter, who has already lost confidence in the whole system, including democracy.

Right-wing populism has been able to mobilize “its people” against the designated enemies, who are the immigrants, the displaced and the foreigners. This is why Chantal Mouffe proposes to mobilize other people in place of the former, which would contain the immigrants, and would identify its adversaries as the multinationals and the solid cores of neoliberalism. The conflict should intensify and take on a left vs. right political expression, not a moral good vs. evil character.

“The question of feelings in politics is central, which is not at all understood by the rational and consensual left. For politics to mobilize feelings for democratic purposes, it must have a bias.”

III. General conclusions

1. The populism of Narodnaya Volya and then of the revolutionary socialists was characterized by the denial of the leading role of the working class in the revolution and its substitution by the concept of the people formed mainly by peasants. But with the failure of this political line, populism switched to individual and isolated terrorist acts of the people in the hope of inciting them to the struggle. In the last analysis, Russian populism is considered as a petty-bourgeois current, unstable, which harmed the proletarian revolution, and which deserved to be fought by Marxists. After the victory of the Bolshevik revolution, the populists passed over to the counter-revolution, except for a part that joined the Bolsheviks.
2. With the political crisis of the imperialist system, populism has taken on a right-wing character. It was embodied in the Nazi or fascist state in Germany, Italy and Japan. At this point, it took on the character of racism and class hostility to communism on an

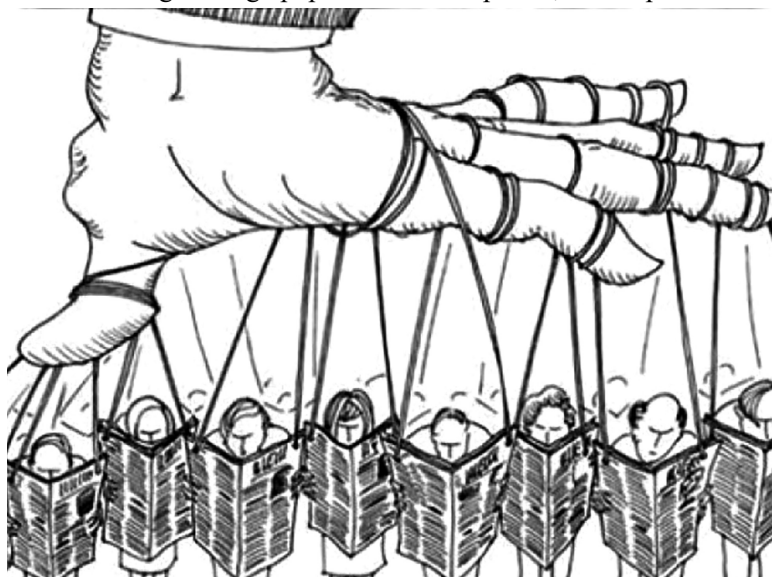
international scale, and to the communist parties and the working class in the countries of Western Europe and the United States of America. But this adventurous populism led these countries to ruin and facilitated the coalition against it of all its opponents, including the USSR; this precipitated its defeat, although it continued to smolder under the ashes.

3. The same right-wing populism, having changed its skin and not its essence, has emerged from the shadows at the time of the sharpening of the imperialist crisis. It is spreading to the political arena in France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Austria and others. This strong rise of right-wing populism is no longer a marginal or passing phenomenon, but has become an endogenous fact of the development of capitalism and the demands of the bourgeois state to manage its political crises. More than that, this right-wing populism has become a global phenomenon for which the US administration has found a political spokesperson in Donald Trump, whose rise reflects a strong change in the strategy of the Republican Party. It has chosen to ally itself with the far right because of the threat posed by the left-wing populist current of Bernie Sanders in the heart of the greatest imperialist power, the USA.
4. The evaluation of the experience of the parties of social democracy and Eurocommunism has shown their total failure and their definitive transformation into forces at the service of the strategy of the interests of capital, which only demand futile and superficial reforms. These parties have cut themselves off from their electoral bases and have become more and more marginal in political life. Thus, analyses have appeared that openly call for the need to abandon these parties and build a left-wing populism that must use the same mechanisms that right-wing populism has successfully implemented. The proponents of this policy believe that they can keep the essence of the strategy of the traditional left-wing parties, namely to dominate the political field with the help of “left-wing people” and to transform the state from the inside with reforms of a new type, not by declaring class struggle and rupture within society. This was the strategy of Podemos, and also of Syriza, which governed in Greece and voluntarily submitted to the diktats of the European troika, in the end, implementing the policy of capital towards the Greek people.

5. In the dependent countries, we find almost the same strategies applied by right-wing and left-wing populism. In some countries, left-wing populism appeared before right-wing populism. But what is certain is that populism is a widespread political phenomenon with deep roots that allow its regeneration and development. If we limit ourselves to the last two decades in our Arab and Maghreb region, we find that the revolutionary processes that broke out after 2010 carry in them and in their course several stigmas and characteristics specific to right-wing and left-wing populisms. This was the case for the movements of the first wave and it continues for the following waves of this process.

The main characteristic of the second wave of the revolutionary process today is the qualitative change in the protest movements. Indeed, they are becoming social movements, where the inhabitants of a village, a city or a province rise up and form a kind of almost independent and frank self-organization against the political parties and the system in general.

6. The strategy of populism, as we have observed throughout history, is a strategy of struggle to impose its hegemony on the apparatus of the State, from within the system, through democracy. This allows the resolution of the contradiction between the two opposing camps, namely the people of the right and the left. When right-wing populism takes power, it improves the



functioning of the state, as an instrument of domination, in order to serve the interests of capital, and therefore resolve the crisis at the expense of the left-wing people. In the opposite case, when left-wing populism takes power, it manages the affairs of the state in full respect of the principles of capitalism while mitigating the repercussions of the crisis and perhaps trying to solve it at the expense of other peoples.

As for the revolutionary populism of the left, it is only populism of the revolutionary phrase. History may have given its final verdict on Narodnaya Volya, but what we know from the experience of progressive regimes such as the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, Tomas Sankara in Burkina Faso and so many others only confirms this idea... The experience of these regimes shows that they are besieged and condemned to death by internal and external reactionary forces and that they have no solid class base that could constitute the basis of their power and resistance. All they have to do is cut welfare to see the flip-flop of their left-wing people who leave them prey to the enemies.

IV. Populism in Morocco

In what preceded we tried to show in a succinct way the evolution of the concept of populism, either in terms of historical experience, or in terms of intellectual and philosophical production, or in terms of crystallization into political programs and practical action plans. We try, in conclusion, to bring out the main characteristics of populism as we have observed it. In the following, we will discuss the phenomenon of populism in the Moroccan case.

In order not to go too far back in the historical context, we will restrict our remarks to the period following the establishment of the French and Spanish colonizations in Morocco. At that stage, political life underwent a kind of evolution and dynamism in the sense that political activity constituted a new field that began to separate itself from the old fields of intellectual and ideological activity. A field that was interested in the daily problems and practical activity of the people and its diverse components, among others, the emerging phenomenon of colonial reality. The political field became a field of new independent practices with appropriate discourses, despite the persistence of the religious and patrimonial discourse. The change also concerned the way of working and the organization of those who

intervened in the public life, we saw the emergence of associations, parties and trade unions.

If we were to define the concepts of right or left at that time, we would consider all those who side with the dominant social strata, namely the system (makhzen), the semi-feudals and the representatives of colonialism as belonging to the right. And all those who oppose the colonial presence, the domination of the makhzen, and the plundering and exploitation of the semi-feudals are of the left.

While the Moroccan social formation in the 1930s and beyond began to organize itself along the lines of a social formation in which modern social classes were the reflection and result of the establishment of a new mode of production, this was the mode of production of dependent capitalism. Political parties as political expressions of social classes were not yet established despite the existence of the core of the Moroccan Communist Party, which remained a party project rather than a real Moroccan workers' party.

In the second half of the last century, and perhaps even slightly earlier, the demand for Moroccan independence was a central demand that became the backbone of the formation of the unity of the Moroccan people. This demand constituted the first cleavage that split the population into two blocs: those who demanded and fought for independence, and those who were at the service of French colonialism and whose interests merged with it. Thus, there appeared in Morocco a spokesman for the people of the left, which was the national movement with its two components, the resistance and the liberation army.

Because it was the rising force that would impose itself on the political scene, we consider it to be the core of left-wing populism, which was to mark the political life of Morocco for a long time after its formal independence.

In the subsequent phases, the “left-wing people” would be the object of a sharpening of contradictions; we witnessed a deep separation, a polarization, on the one hand, of left-wing people gathered around a program behind a new leadership formed mainly by the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP), and on the other hand, of right-wing people that began to express itself with difficulty, and to take shape behind a new leadership with the support and strong backing of the Moroccan state. This project is still continuing today.

As a preliminary conclusion, we consider that the formation of left-wing populism in Morocco preceded that of right-wing populism.

Moroccan left-wing populism had the same characteristics that we previously observed in various global experiences, with the particularity that at one point in the conflict, this left-wing populism led by the UNFP combined armed violence with participation in elections in order to take part in the existing institutions. This experience led the UNFP, and subsequently the Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires (USFP), to take part in the institutions of the regime and become part of the “dominant clique,” as Yves Michaux puts it.

Today the political situation is characterized by a strong polarity. If we consider only the electoral phenomenon, we see that the political landscape in Morocco is split into two poles: 20% participation in elections against 80% boycott among all voters.

This polarization is confirmed after each election: in the 20% bloc we find all the parties that called for participation, whether they are from the majority or the opposition; in the 80% bloc, we find the majority of the people and the parties that called for a boycott. Morocco, like the countries of the region, has also experienced its revolutionary process that broke out in its first wave on February 20, 2011, which reinforced the bloc of “80%” (Boycotters) to adopt the method of direct protest and to present its demands and defend its rights in the street. Today, a new evolution has taken place, embodied by the emergence of social movements as a form of counter-power.

Based on these developments, we are witnessing a resurgence of the phenomenon of populism in Morocco, both on the right and the left:

- Right-wing populism is in a race against time, sensing the imminent danger, but it still suffers from the historical failure of all the attempts of the makhzen (the Moroccan state) to provide it with support and reinforcement and also the factors of evolution. To cite only the last example, we take the case of the Party of Authenticity and Modernity (PAM) which suffered a huge failure after February 20, 2011, and the attempt to bring back to life the former party of the son-in-law of the king, the party RNI (National Rally of Independents). But the new impetus given to right-wing populism is the work carried out within civil society, within the framework of the Human Development Initiative (INDH) with the creation of associations of neighborhoods, villages, cities, valleys and plains, associations of “human development”, structuring and training them in a fascist spirit and

perspective, as sleeper cells, ready to confront “the people of the left.

- As for left-wing populism, it is now trying to renew its discourse and take advantage of its partners around the world such as Podemos, Syriza, etc. Its discourse is characterized today by the denigration of any reference to class analysis or any adoption of a proletarian political line and to deny any role of the working class. According to the leaders of this left populism, the working class no longer has a historical mission because it has undergone profound transformations and is no longer the same as it was in the 20th century. According to these left-wing populists, the proletarian political line is only a vestige of history, and socialist change is now the task of the middle classes, who have become the spearhead of the said reforms. These must be carried out within the institutions and in agreement with the political system in place. For this left-wing populism it is imperative to limit the protests and social movements, and to prevent their radicalization, that is, to contain the contradictions so that they remain between adversaries who are all partners in the same state. This left populist discourse tries to renew itself, advocating the need to create a great left party, pluralist and unifying, which accepts and adopts the organization of currents within it.

V. General conclusion

For Moroccan Marxist-Leninists, armed with the lessons of history, the principled stance towards populism, both right and left, has not changed. On the contrary, the conviction has deepened that the working class has an essential role to play in bringing about change and taking power in alliance with the poor peasants and the disinherited. If left-wing populism chooses the field to defeat what it calls right-wing populism, it does so by masking the class nature of this conflict, and by propagating the illusion of the neutrality of the state, which is above classes and can be improved and reformed from within.

Marxist-Leninist forces believe in the necessity of waging the class struggle for the interests of the working class, which requires the building of the independent party of the working class as the organization for class warfare. These Marxist-Leninist forces should be alert to the negative role that left populism plays within social movements and the maneuvers it uses to manipulate these movements and

build the so-called “left people” in order to join into the dominant system.

However, Marxist-Leninists should be aware of the new elements of struggle, which have been revealed by recent international and national developments, and which are being used by populism with some success where the communist movement has failed.

Social movements left to their spontaneity can be turned aside or be used by manipulators to serve undeclared objectives contrary to the aspirations of those concerned; they can remain speckled and accumulate no experience over time. Therefore, the independent party of the working class can and must in the future, and through its nuclei today, play the role of cement for these social movements and facilitate their networking across the country, and help them transfer their experiences through time and allow them to accumulate achievements of any kind and importance. The existence of this party is necessary for the masses to learn, through their own experiences, that they are the only ones to create history, and that the change in which they do not participate in the direction and orientation will be usurped and used by their class enemies, as has been the case in the revolutionary processes underway in our Maghreb and Arab region.

El Titi El Habib
February 28, 2022

With thanks to comrade Jamal Berrajaa who participated in the translation of the article and comrade Mortadha Labidi who revised it.

Imperialism and War

Norway is Training Ukrainian Soldiers

Little by little, Norway is becoming more and more directly involved in the war between Ukraine and Russia. Ukrainian personnel are receiving training in handling materials that Norway have sent to Ukraine. Of what is known, field artillery M109 and Mistral are included. This is in addition to Norwegian cooperation with the UK on arms delivery and training. The number of soldiers involved is secret.

“The most dangerous thing we can do is to let Ukraine lose.” So says Geir Hågen Karlsen, lieutenant colonel and head teacher at the Armed Forces Staff College, to NTB [Norwegian News Agency]. This is a clear political statement that officers normally refrain from. If Ukraine is not to lose, it must naturally defeat Russia. Neither the authorities nor the officers are saying whether this entails the reconquest of Crimea, as Volodymyr Zelenski demands. This can never be done without NATO going “all in” for a full-scale third world war.

Pro-imperialist “antifascism” of Jonas Bals

Does Putin’s Russia pose the imminent fascist threat of our time that the whole world must rally against? Whoever answers yes to the question is as easily fooled as anyone who thinks that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is about ridding the country of Nazi influence.

By Jan R. Steinholt

Today’s rotting capitalism promotes fascism in various ways. Fascism is imperialism’s own by-product. But that does not mean that fascism holds state power in the aggressive imperialist grand schemes. Not yet.

Fascism is the dictatorship of monopoly capital and state power in its openly terrorist form. The invasion of Ukraine is clear proof that Russia is like other imperialist powers. But the war does not prove that Russia is fascist. Imperialism is by its very nature aggressive, without it being tantamount to fascism. Otherwise, the United

States would have been a fascist power to the nth degree, measured by the number of brutal invasions and wars of occupation it has carried out.

Russia is not a special case

Jonas Bals, former adviser to Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store and representative of the Labor Party in the Storting [Norwegian Parliament], is one of those who draws parallels between today's war in Ukraine and the Second World War and Nazi Germany. He believes Russia has a fascist government, not unlike the historical fascism that was defeated in 1945. And that such fascism must be met by force of arms. Bals has repeatedly argued this in the daily newspaper *Klassekampen* (*Class Struggle*).

He thinks it is “unforgivable” that the left does not understand how Russian fascism supports, finances and inspires the fascism that is now on the rise across much of the world. This is a somewhat peculiar claim, given that the Putin regime builds its legitimacy in foreign policy by referring to the heroic Soviet struggle against Nazism and fascism. Then it would be risky if Moscow were to be caught funding fascist movements.

One of the examples Bals mentions is Syria. This is a particularly poor example, as Russia has assisted the government in Damascus in defeating jihadist fascism in the form of al-Qaeda and ISIS in Syria. Meanwhile Norway has actively, including militarily, supported the terrorists in the Nusra Front. At the same time, Bals has a point in that the role of fascism in the elections in the USA, and now most recently in France, is met with a shrug of the shoulders from large parts of the left. Nevertheless, he puts “Russian fascism” in a class of its own, in comparison with Nazi Germany.

Russia is a major imperialist power with strong authoritarian traits, some of them pointing in a fascist direction – such as under pressure from striking workers, imprisonment of protesters and criminalization of revolutionary movements and other political opponents. The Russian regime's “anti-fascism” is not consistent with the fact that it has allowed Nazi organizations and terrorist gangs free rein. Only in 2021 did the Duma pass a legal ban on Nazi symbols. After 2000, Putin-friendly youth gangs operated alongside Nazi skin-heads who carried out violence and hundreds of killings of non-Russians and leftists. Since then, several Nazi sympathizers in and around

the state apparatus have been sentenced to prison for murder. But far from all.

Things like this Russia has in common to a greater or lesser extent with a number of so-called Western democracies. Nazis have killed dozens of immigrants, Jews and socialists in countries such as Germany, Sweden and Norway. The German Bundeswehr army is infested with Nazis on several levels, and the government in Berlin has been forced to carry out several purges after a series of scandals. Spanish and French authorities have cracked down at least as hard on political protests as in Russia. It should suffice to mention the mass arrests of Catalan elected officials, or the French police's conduct towards the Yellow Vests. The regimes in Hungary and Poland violate human rights to the extent that the EU also feels compelled to react.

How should we understand the war in Ukraine? On the left, the analyses differ:



Jonas Bals (right) compares today's Russia to Nazi Germany. Facsimile from Klassekampen April 30, 2022.

Democracy is a veneer

Fascist parties are represented in the national assemblies of many European countries. The closest thing to a fascist party in the Russian Duma is probably the Liberal Democratic Party, formerly led by Shirinovsky. It has 20 seats (out of 450). By comparison, Franco's successors in Spain, the Vox party, have 52 out of 350 seats. In several Baltic and Eastern European countries, communist parties and symbols are criminalized. None of these countries can be called fascist, although they exhibit ever more anti-democratic inclinations and the state apparatus is developing fascist features through mass surveillance, new power of attorney laws and increasing censorship. We

also see a similar development in Norway, albeit in a far milder form, since the class struggle in this country is far less acute. The reason for this European development is that bourgeois democracy is in crisis, the trust of the workers and the majority of the people in the system and those in power is evaporating more and more every day. One example is the recent elections to the National Assembly in France. Only 47.5 percent saw any point in casting a vote.

Bourgeois democracy in Russia is a veneer, as it is in other capitalist countries. The iron fist is always directly beneath the façade of class democracy, but it is not equally visible in all countries. Nevertheless, there is a significant difference between an “authoritarian” bourgeois democracy and a fascist state power in which violence and terror have free rein.

In Russia, non-socialist parties other than United Russia (Putin’s party), including the remnants of the revisionist “communist” party, are allowed to stand for election and are represented in the Duma. Vladimir Putin is not an autocratic figure. The officially recognized trade union movement is allowed to operate fairly freely, while other workers’ opposition is suppressed. Russia has corporate features, but it is not a corporate state, just as little as Norway, although the “Norwegian model” and the tripartite cooperation have clear corporate features. “Freedom of the press” in Russia is increasingly characterized by self-censorship, further reinforced by the fact that the country is at war. Self-censorship and cover-ups are increasingly also affecting the media in Europe, not least in foreign policy issues.

Fascism is undoubtedly on the rise, even within the bourgeois institutions of a large number of countries, such as Italy. But it is not yet the case that fascism has seized state power in any European country, including Russia. That doesn’t mean it can’t happen before we know it, in Russia, Germany, Spain, Italy, France or Poland.

Prayer for world war in the name of “democracy”

The imperialist powers in the east and west are competing for markets and spheres of influence, a rivalry that points to new wars. Trade wars are already a reality. China is economically on the offensive, while the US is on the defensive. But in terms of military force, the US is far superior to its Russian and Chinese rivals. Seen from Beijing and Moscow, a full-scale military confrontation is tantamount to defeat or nuclear disaster. Seen from Washington, a pre-emptive war before its rivals grow too powerful is more alluring.

Perhaps even more so now, after the war against Ukraine has laid bare the great weaknesses of the Russian military machine.

Jonas Bals is a Social Democrat and one of the ideological leaders of the party's trade union left wing. He has written several books on the history of the labor movement. The view he presents of Russia as a new Nazi Germany is already being embraced by the AUF [Workers' Youth League] and parts of the Labor Party. The consequence of such a view is obvious: the whole world must get behind the United States and the Western democracies to contain this greatest threat of all, if necessary in the form of full-scale world war. With this, Bals runs the errands of the aggressive Western powers. It is futile when he attempts to camouflage his imperialist war cry as a fictitious alliance of democracies against allegedly fascist Russia. To the extent that there is a historical parallel to World War II, it would have to be that Bals has fallen into the company of those who believe civilized Europe must acquire *lebensraum* to the east.

Bals and the left-wing social democrats in the AUF make a small reservation when it comes to embracing the United States. If Donald Trump comes to power again, they will bet their cards on a strong and rearmed Europe. If the US presidential election in 2024 results in a new round of Trumpism, the Labor Party and the AUF will almost certainly come on board as open supporters of Norwegian EU membership and the EU army.

What Bals is right about is that fascism is on the rise in Europe and the United States, as it was in the 1930s. The way fascism appears, and the methods it uses to win power, are not necessarily identical to what we saw in the interwar period of the last century. The boundary between right-wing populism and fascism may be more diffuse today. What is common is that "liberal" bourgeois parties – often with the support of the leaders of social democracy – are helping fascism advance: on the one hand, by allowing fascists and racists to organize and spread their propaganda under the guise of "freedom of expression", and through the historical whitewashing of the Nazis and front fighters for their "efforts" against communism; and on the other hand, through reactionary measures of repression against the workers and progressive people and through the broad powers of the state's apparatus of violence and surveillance.

Fascism does not arise overnight and without warning

Comintern leader Georgi Dimitrov explained it in 1935: “Comrades, the accession to power of fascism must not be conceived of in so simplified and smooth a form, as though some committee or other of finance capital decided on a certain date to set up a fascist dictatorship. In reality, fascism usually comes to power in the course of a mutual, and at times severe, struggle against the old bourgeois parties, or a definite section of these parties, in the course of a struggle even within the fascist camp itself -- a struggle which at times leads to armed clashes, as we have witnessed in the case of Germany, Austria and other countries. All this, however, does not make less important the fact that, before the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages *is not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory.*” (Excerpts from *The United Front; The Struggle Against Fascism, and War.*)

Words of Arnulf Øverland

Jonas Bals is probably not convinced by the communist Dimitrov. Perhaps he listens more to Arnulf Øverland, who explained that the rise of fascism is only possible in a sick capitalist society where fascism finds fertile ground. Øverland believed that only socialism can change the social conditions and eliminate fascism. His words from 1939 largely describe today’s European reality:

“I also have a few words for the bourgeois anti-fascists: I do not believe in any final victory over fascism without the victory of socialism. We socialists do not believe that bourgeois democracy is capable of solving the problems of society and overcoming fascism.

“For the past fifteen years fascism has spread across Europe like wildfire. But in order for the fire to spread with such speed, the grass must be dry. It does not spread in fresh grass,.

“There must be something sick about a society where fascism can spread as it does today. If the bourgeois liberals want to fight it, then they must also agree to a clean-up of society. If one strives for both peaceful conditions of society and individual freedom, then one must meet the fundamental demands of human rights. If you don’t, dictatorship will come.”

Fascism on the rise. Arnulf Øverland (1889-1968) at a mass meeting for anti-fascist unification, Gothenburg 1939. Reprinted from Virksomme Ord (Active Words).

SV considers support for Norway to send even more “defensive weapons” to Ukraine

The NATO trap has collapsed on the Socialist Left Party, as we warned could happen in the previous edition of Revolution. The Socialist Left Party (SV) has already supported shipments of “defensive weapons” to Ukraine.

Now the party is fighting internally over where the border lies. Which are “defensive” weapons? Norwegian field artillery M109 and Hellfire missiles are for most people not particularly defensive, but now the Socialist Left Party is discussing whether sending planes, drones – and soldiers – to the country is legitimate in the “defense war” in which NATO is now increasingly involved.

February 2022

The Story of the Imperialist Grip on Pakistan

It has been 75 years since Pakistan gained independence from the British Empire. This country, with the fifth largest population in the world, is rich in natural resources and has a fresh workforce of young people. It finds itself in need of IMF, World Bank and other imperialist financial institutions and is forced to take loans from them on their terms.

The imperialist financial institutions captured the economy and politics of Pakistan since the establishment of Pakistan. The main reason for this was the oil supplied to the Far East via Pakistan which has a border with China, Russia, Afghanistan, Iran and India. It is also closer to the waterway; oil going to the Far East passes through Pakistan at a distance of about 250 km.

At the time of the establishment of Pakistan in 1947, Pakistan did not have any significant industrial infrastructure, but it had vast agricultural land, rivers, seas, mountains, minerals, deserts and a significant workforce.

Pakistan's governance was from the very beginning in the hands of people who had no interest in building democratic institutions on solid foundations. However, the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, was an enlightened thinker educated in Britain. In party programmes and other writings, he used to openly express that Pakistan will be made a modern, developed industrial country in which the rights of all nationalities will be protected without discrimination. But he died immediately after the establishment of Pakistan. After his death, Pakistan was taken over by people who were against the establishment of democratic traditions and democratic institutions. They were opposed to protecting fundamental rights and strengthening the social and political foundations of democracy. They belonged to classes whose interests were at odds with the public interest. The democratic process and democratic institutions were unacceptable to them. They wanted to stop the democratic process at all costs. For this purpose, they needed foreign aid and support to consolidate their power.

Immediately after the establishment of Pakistan, these ruling classes strengthened all the institutions that blocked the way to democracy with the help of American aid. The country's bureaucrats

were given higher education and training in European universities and American schools so that they could understand the country's system and Pakistan was to be run in the interests of the American and Western countries.

Even during the time when Pakistan was united with India, there was no major industry in the region except for a few industrial units and the region was occupied by feudal lords who supported the British Empire. In 1857 the British government took over from the East India Company. Those Indians who had opposed the first Indian war of independence in that year were granted landed estates (jagirs) by the British. These families are playing the role of supporters of British and American imperialism till today and due to their wealth, power and influence, these same families are occupying the politics of Pakistan till today.

India announced 'land reforms' after 1947, but Pakistan is one of the few countries in the world where the outdated feudal and tribal chieftaincy still exists. The influence of the Communist Party of India, organized in the 1920s, was also present in the region and the Communist Party played a significant role in the Indian independence movement, especially the Naval Mutiny and in the labour unions of the Indian Railways and other institutions. The strikes and struggles of the British Empire caused many problems. When the British rulers transferred power to India in 1947 it was divided into two parts, India and Pakistan. There was definitely a communist movement in the region at that time. But it was not powerful enough to take advantage of the situation and create a revolution in this region.

As a result of the partition of India, the communist movement of this region suffered a lot. The reason for this was that after the partition of India, millions of Muslims migrated from India to Pakistan, and similarly, a large number of Hindus and Sikhs living in this region migrated to India. Before 1947, Sikh comrades were prominent in the area that became West Pakistan while Muslim communists were few in number. Later in 1948, the Communist Party of India sent Comrade Sajjad Zaheer to organize the Communist Party of Pakistan. Pakistan consisted of two parts, West and East Pakistan, with a distance of more than 1000 kilometres between them. Compared to West Pakistan, the Communist Party was working in a slightly better way in East Pakistan (which later became Bangladesh).

This was the time when the international political trends and issues were slowly falling into severe differences and the world was

divided into two camps, headed by the Soviet Union and the United States. There was a people's democratic revolution in China. Due to the fact that China and the Soviet Union were close to Pakistan, the American government did not want the communist movement to stand on a strong foundation there; the Pakistani rulers also wanted the same. This is the reason why from the first day, the rulers continued to impose unnecessary harshness on the Communist Party and in 1954, the Communist Party of Pakistan was declared illegal and banned and all its top leaders and cadres were arrested and imprisoned. Communists newspapers, magazines and press were confiscated.

Right after the establishment of Pakistan, the rulers of Pakistan sought help from the United States so that they could strengthen their forces. At that time it was very weak militarily and economically while India's military and economic condition was slightly better than Pakistan's and the British assets that would remain with India after Britain left India were to be divided between the two countries but India had not distributed these assets. This war forced the rulers of Pakistan to think seriously about strengthening their defence. Pakistani rulers also chose America to fulfil their defence needs.

Seeing this need of Pakistan, the United States decided on January 25, 1951 to advance the process of achieving its objectives in this region; in this regard, a document approved by American President Truman explains the situation.

"The time has come for us to pursue our goals in South Asia with greater will. We are now in a position to assess the policies of the governments in the region and determine the possibilities and limits of our influence.

"In addition, getting out of the hands of China, the threats facing Indo-China and the balance of Southeast Asia have made it more important to achieve our goals in this region. Show a willingness to accept perceived threats. It is important to develop an attitude in South Asia that supports the acquisition of the facilities that the United States and its allies may need in times of peace and in times of war."

The document also stated that Pakistan had air bases in places like Lahore, Karachi and Rawalpindi closer to the Soviet areas than anywhere else available in Asia or the Near East.

This was the time when the American politicians, recognizing the importance of Pakistan, adopted a policy of instilling the fear of communism in all countries in order to stem the flood of communism

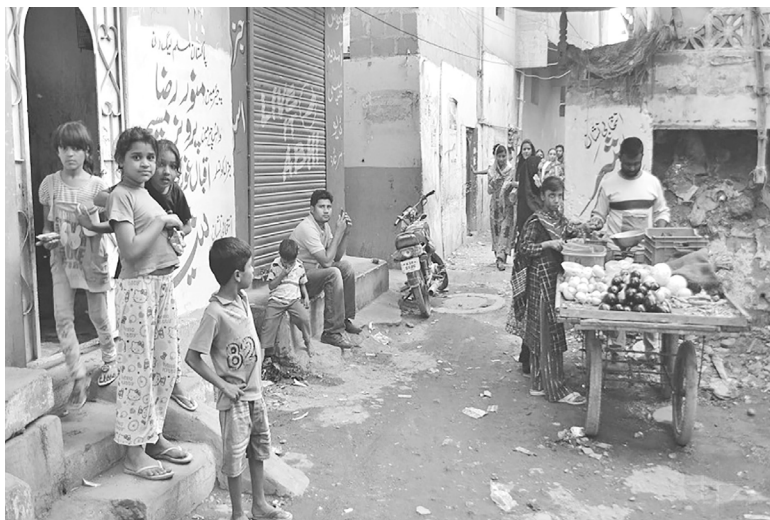
and its growing popularity around the world. Left-wing anxiety, threats to Turkey and Greece, and anxiety in Berlin led America to encircle the socialist world.

Due to all these situations, the effectiveness of Pakistan in the eyes of the United States increased so much that American analysts began to describe the military strength of Pakistan as a measure of the military strength of the United States in the subcontinent. Shortly thereafter, Pakistan joined the South-East Asia Military Agreement.

This is where the unfortunate journey of the people of Pakistan begins. After getting the American patronage, the rulers did not allow the newly independent country to strengthen their power, nor did they pay any attention to the country's industrial development. It provided an opportunity for feudal and tribal leadership systems to become stronger. Americans supposedly are the leaders of democracy and human rights in their country; their policy in the case of Pakistan is completely different. And they started the process of awarding privileges to the rulers here.

Until 1960, the rulers of Pakistan ignored the national interest and served the American objectives. Meanwhile, in 1958, the IMF gave Pakistan its first loan of \$25,000,000 US.

The government of Pakistan had handed over the “Badha Bhir” airport near the city of Peshawar to the Americans, which was strongly objected to by the Soviet Union, but both the Pakistani and the American authorities denied this allegation. On May 1, 1960, the



Soviet Union shot down a U-2 spy plane flying over Pakistani territory, which damaged Pakistan's position in the world and marked the lowest point in Pakistan's relations with the Soviet Union.

The political history of Pakistan is full of such incidents that the Pakistani rulers promoted aid and borrowing from other European countries as well as the United States, IMF and World Bank to strengthen their power, but the country's industry did not develop as much as it could and did not enable Pakistan's agriculture to earn more foreign exchange than to meet the country's needs, which would serve to improve the plight of the people.

Pakistan, which has the best canal system in the world and which has four distinct seasons and a large number of labourers and artisans, has been mired in oppressive governance since its inception. And despite having all the resources, it became so accustomed to foreign aid and borrowing from institutions like the IMF and the World Bank on their strict terms that today even after 75 years, if not for the \$6 billion agreement with the IMF, it would have defaulted.

Due to the American war against communism in this region, the damage to the democratic structure of Pakistan was done, but its foundations were also weakened and in 1971, the eastern part of Pakistan was separated from Pakistan and it was called "Bangladesh.

Even after all this destruction, the rulers of Pakistan once again played the role of America's number 1 ally in the "Afghan War" against the "Soviet Union". Due to this role, the rulers of Pakistan must have received billions of dollars. But terrorism, narcotics, Kalashnikov culture, anarchy and lawlessness came to the part of the Pakistani people. In addition, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's capitals of industry and agriculture have suffered irreparable damage. The Afghan war has now reached its end. The US and its allied forces have left Afghanistan, the government of the "Taliban" has been established in Afghanistan once again, but Pakistan is still suffering from insecurity. The dead bodies of our loved ones have to be taken. Pakistan's economy is in ruins, no country is ready to invest here.

From 1958 to 2022, Pakistan has borrowed one hundred and two billion dollars from various financial institutions, including the IMF, but Pakistan's financial crisis is increasing instead of decreasing. The policies are going on. The progressive movement is not mentioned here, even bourgeois democracy has not been able to establish its foothold. The feudal democracy is still established in the country. A large number of Pakistan's working class of 63 million are suffering

from unemployment. The flood of 2022 in Pakistan has destroyed half of Pakistan. This flood has also had a negative impact on the country's agricultural and industrial workers. The government of Pakistan is not in a position to cope with these flood disasters; they are appealing to the whole world to help the flood victims.

Many countries, including Europe and America, are suffering from a financial crisis due to the Russia-Ukraine war, the ravages of the Corona virus and the international recession. Inflation has broken all previous records. In these circumstances, the flood victims of Pakistan number 30 million. There are serious threats to their lives. The whole system of life is in chaos.

The progressive movement of Pakistan is busy trying to play its class and political role to the extent possible despite all the adverse conditions.

Long live the union of workers

Long live the proletarian revolution

Workers of the world unite

Down with American imperialism

Down with the New Coup Plan of the Fascist Right!**We Reject the Political Use of the Attorney
General's Office of the Country!**

We of the Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) speak out to reject the new destabilization plan that is being orchestrated by the most reactionary-fascist section of the right-wing parties in Peru, represented by Fujimorismo, Popular Renewal, Avanza País, remnants of APRA [American Popular Revolutionary Alliance] and former members of the Armed Forces who have been accused of serious crimes of violation of human rights in our country.

The nation's Attorney General, Liz Patricia Benavides Vargas, is faithful to the Fuji-Montesinista [a combination of Fujimori, former president of Peru, and Montesinos, head of his Intelligence service – *translator's note*] style of the years of the dictatorship in the 1990s. She is surrounded by the most rotten criminal drug-trafficking sector; in her election she put out false information about her academic degrees to achieve her position. She is making political use of her powers as a representative of the Public Ministry in order to create a scenario of political crisis that is leading to a new confrontation between the powers of the State (legislative and executive), so that the criminals who have taken over all the state institutions continue to steal and to centralize the entire state procurement plan. She is also doing this so that these sectors can demand a larger share of the budget for their areas and they can continue to enrich themselves at the expense of the money of all Peruvians.

October 11, 2022, a Constitutional Accusation against President Pedro Castillo and former ministers Juan Silva (Transport and Communications) and Geiner Alvarado (Housing, Construction and Sanitation) has been filed in the Congress of the Republic for the alleged crimes of criminal organization, simple and aggravated influence peddling, and for aggravated collusion, which in the case of the accusation against the President violates the provisions of Article 117 of the same Fujimontesinista Political Constitution of 1993. This states that during his term, the President can only be constitutionally accused of the crimes of treason; of preventing presidential,

parliamentary, regional or municipal elections; of dissolving Congress except in the cases provided for, and of preventing the functioning of the National Jury of Elections and other agencies of the electoral system. No other crime is to be considered in that article, so the statements of the Attorney General and the groups in the national media such as America televisión, Frecuencia Latina, Canal N, ATV [a TV channel in Peru – *translator's note*], Panamericana, Willax, el Comercio group, La República; among other mercenaries, are continuing to promote the scenario so that the forces of reaction have a better position to carry out a soft coup.

We see in this coup attempt a great threat to the popular movement since there are vile anti-communists in Parliament, which is also chaired by retired Army General José Daniel Williams Zapata. He has been accused of human rights violations in the Accomarca Massacre (in Ayacucho in 1985), is a rabid anti-communist and has the whole School of Americas fascist repression in his veins. These people are part of the spearhead of this stratagem that is trying to ignore the electoral results, in which the majority of Peruvians chose the possibility of changing things in the country. Unfortunately the factional struggle of the party that entered the government, the absence of honest leaders, cadres, and the lack of a national development plan consequently limited the possibilities of advancing to make substantial changes in the context of the crisis that our country is experiencing.

Once again history shows us that the limitations and degeneration of social democracy in power, which opens the door to the most reactionary positions of the parasitic bourgeoisie of our country. They have taken over the national parliament to gain better positions in the contention over the resources of the State and who abandon the people who elected them. In a scenario in which there is a serious danger to the supply of food for all Peruvians, there has been a harsh blow to the agricultural sector due to the absence of fertilizers. There has been a considerable increase in the price of fuels and therefore we have been affected by an inflation of almost 10% and an increase in the prices of the basic family basket by almost 200%. The lack of work and an increase in crime continue to prevail in the country, without any attention from the parliamentarians of the reaction, who since the first day after the victory of Pedro Castillo have tried in every way to remove him from office.

The current scenario of increased confrontation between the sections of the bourgeoisie and social democracy demands that the working class, the peasantry and the popular sectors mobilize, organize and take up a political position to put on the agenda what really interests the working people to solve their immediate and medium-term problems. These coincide with the struggle for national and food sovereignty and the necessary industrialization of the country to achieve a harmonious development throughout Peru.

As the Party of the working class we denounce the maneuvers of reaction that basically are trying to impose the costs of the crisis on the workers and share the spoils of what is still in the hands of the State. We call on all workers to take to the streets to defend the popular will and revive the struggle for the convocation of a Sovereign and Popular Constituent Assembly that will lay the foundations of a new Republic with the active participation of the people.

Down with the destabilization plan of the fascist right!

**For the convocation of a Sovereign and
Popular Constituent Assembly!**

**For a new Constitution that lays the foundations
for a new republic!**

America was not discovered, it was invaded and plundered!

October 12, 2022

*For the Political Bureau of the Central Committee
Nilo Candela – General Secretary of the PCP (m-l)*

The Hundredth Anniversary of the Foundation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1922-2022)

1. Introduction

In December 1922 the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was founded. To understand the complex process of the formation and organization of the USSR, it is necessary to start from two fundamental facts: the multinational reality of Tsarist Russia and the principle of the right of self-determination defended by the Bolshevik Party.

On the eve of the October Revolution of 1917, Tsarist Russia was an immense country of 21.5 million square kilometers, approximately 150 million inhabitants, and more than a hundred nationalities. In the Russian state lived numerous non-Russian peoples who possessed their own cultures, customs, languages and historical developments, but who at different times had been incorporated into the tsarist empire. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had been conquered by Peter the Great in the early 18th century. Most of Ukraine and Belarus were annexed after the partition of Poland at the end of that century. The conquest of Crimea also dated back to the 18th century, while the Armenians and Georgians were conquered in the early 19th century and the peoples of Central Asia were incorporated into Russia in the second half of the 19th century (1). Undoubtedly, *“Tsarist Russia was a prison of nations. The numerous non-Russian nationalities were entirely devoid of rights and were subjected to constant insult and humiliation of every kind. The tsarist government taught the Russian population to look down upon the native peoples of the national regions as an inferior race, officially referred to them as inorodtsi (aliens), and fostered contempt and hatred of them.”* (2).

The tsarist government fomented confrontations between the different nationalities while trying to impose Russian patriotism on the whole population. The national question was undoubtedly one that the future revolution should solve.

The Bolshevik Party was fully aware of this problem and had analysed it in depth in numerous articles, pamphlets, reports, etc. The program of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, approved at the Second Party Congress (1903), recognized the right of self-determination for nations forming part of the Russian State.

In 1913 Stalin had written a pamphlet entitled *Marxism and the National Question*, in which he dealt brilliantly with this subject. Referring to the national question in Russia he stated:

“When seeking a solution of the question we must take into account not only the situation at home but also the situation abroad. Russia is situated between Europe and Asia, between Austria and China. The growth of democracy in Asia is inevitable. The growth of imperialism in Europe is not fortuitous. In Europe, capital is beginning to feel cramped, and it is reaching out towards foreign countries in search of new markets, cheap labor and new fields of investment. But this leads to external complications and to war. No one can assert that the Balkan War is the end and not the beginning of the complications. It is quite possible, therefore, that a combination of internal and external conditions may arise in which one or another nationality in Russia may find it necessary to raise and settle the question of its independence. And, of course, it is not for Marxists to create obstacles in such cases.

*“But it follows that Russian Marxists cannot dispense with **the right of nations to self-determination**.*

*“Thus, **the right of self-determination is an essential element in the solution of the national question.**” (3)*

Lenin’s position was also clear and precise on this issue. In 1914 he wrote:

“In this situation, the proletariat of Russia is faced with a two-fold or, rather, a two-sided task: to combat nationalism of every kind, above all, Great-Russian nationalism; to recognise, not only fully equal rights for all nations in general, but also equality of rights as regards polity, i.e., the right of nations to self-determination, to secession. And at the same time, it is their task, in the interests of a successful struggle against all and every kind of nationalism among all nations, to preserve the unity of the proletarian struggle and the proletarian organizations, amalgamating these organizations into a close-knit international association, despite bourgeois strivings for national exclusiveness.

“Complete equality of rights for all nations; the right of nations to self-determination; the unity of the workers of all nations – such is the national program that Marxism, the experience of the whole world, and the experience of Russia, teach the workers.” (4)

When the Bolsheviks took power in October 1917, they therefore had a solid theoretical framework for solving the national question in Russia. The events after the victory of the revolution complicated the political landscape and the building of a juridical-political structure that would make proletarian internationalism compatible with the right to national self-determination, which was only achieved at the end of 1922.

2. From the October Revolution to the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1917-1922).

On October 25, 1917, the socialist revolution triumphed in Russia. The Bolshevik Party was then faced with the gigantic task of building a new political, social and economic order in a technically backward country, with a majority of illiterate poor peasants and a minority industrial proletariat. It also had to deal with the hostility of the capitalist powers and the Russian ruling classes that did not resign themselves to losing their power and privileges.

In the new Bolshevik government, called the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom), Stalin held the Commissariat for Nationalities, promoting a policy that resulted in the approval by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which began its sessions on January 13 (23), 1918, of a “Resolution on the Federal Institutions of the Russian Republic”. Its first paragraph stated that *“the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic is created on the basis of a voluntary union of the peoples of Russia in the form of a federation of Soviet republics of these peoples” (5)*. A few months later, on July 10, 1918, the Fifth Congress of Soviets approved the Constitution of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR), which entered into force on July 19. the federal basis of the Republic was established in points 10 and 11:

“10. The Russian Republic is a free socialist society of all the working people of Russia. The entire power, within the boundaries of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, belongs to all the working people of Russia,, united in the urban and rural soviets.

“11. The soviets of those regions which differentiate themselves by a special form of existence and national character may unite in

autonomous regional unions, ruled by the local congress of the soviets and their executive organs. These autonomous regional unions participate in the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic upon a Federal basis.” (6).

The RSFSR theoretically comprised the essentially Russian territories of the former tsarist empire, but the signing of peace with the central empires (Treaty of Brest-Litovsk) in March of 1918, the civil war and the invasion by numerous foreign armies, including those of France, the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan, drastically restricted the territory of the new republic (7).

Between 1918 and 1921, the civil war not only led to the economic ruin of the country, but to an intense geographical fragmentation. Some territories proclaimed independence; others repeatedly changed hands, sometimes ruled by counter-revolutionary armies (the Whites) and sometimes controlled by the Red Army, while foreign armies ruled large areas of Russia. Ukraine was undoubtedly one of the most politically and militarily complex areas. After the October Revolution, a large group of belligerents fought for control: bourgeois nationalists, anarchists, the Red Army, the armies of Germany and Austria-Hungary, the White armies and also the intervention of France, Romania and Poland. Finally, in November 1921 the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic was proclaimed, but the western territories were annexed by Poland. (8)

When the civil war ended, the situation was as follows regarding the exercise of the right of self-determination in what had been the tsarist empire:

7. Poland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were independent, and Romania had annexed Bessarabia.
8. The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic included about twenty autonomous units composed of non-Russian peoples.
9. Eight Soviet republics had been formed, with independence from Moscow to varying degrees: Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, the Far East, Khorezm and Bukhara.

From this moment on, the aim of the Bolshevik government was to achieve the union of these republics in order to build a socialist society, respecting the national rights of the non-Russian populations and also maintaining the principle of the right to self-determination. There began, on the one hand, a complex process of agreements and treaties between the RSFSR and the other socialist republics and, on the other hand, a process of territorial simplification. On December

23, 1922, the Transcaucasian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic was created, bringing together Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Far Eastern Republic joined the RSFSR and the republics of Khorezm and Bukhara, which did not yet have a socialist character, in principle remained only as military allies, excluded for the time being from a future political union.

The eight republics had been reduced to three: Byelorussia, Ukraine and Transcaucasia, which agreed to create a Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The process of reaching this agreement was not without difficulties and tensions. Undoubtedly, the worst disagreement took place with the Georgian communists. As we have already seen, by the end of the civil war the socialist republics of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan had been formed. Regarding the project of creating a Transcaucasian Socialist Federation, promoted by Moscow as a means of smoothing out the strong nationalisms of the Caucasus region and promoting proletarian internationalism among Armenians, Georgians and Azeris, the Georgian communist government was opposed to the federation and wanted Georgia to join the future Soviet Union as a full member. At the basis of the political discrepancies were attitudes that showed the remains of social-chauvinist attitudes in Georgian communism. With Lenin seriously ill, Stalin and Ordzhonikidze were the Bolshevik leaders who took it upon themselves to resolve the problem. Although there are discrepancies about what occurred, the Georgian leaders were pressured, even going as far as physical violence by Ordzhonikidze, to agree to join the Federation.

The news that reached him, although fragmentary, caused Lenin great alarm, and he dictated to his secretaries an article on the national question on December 30 and 31, 1922. Lenin expressed his deep disapproval of the Bolshevik leaders and had harsh words for both, whom he accused of “Great-Russian nationalism”:

“What is important for the proletariat? For the proletariat it is not only important, it is absolutely essential that he should be assured that the non-Russians place the greatest possible trust in the proletarian class struggle. What is needed to ensure this? Not merely formal equality. In one way or another, by one’s attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the ‘dominant’ nation subjected them in the past.

"I think it is unnecessary to explain this to Bolsheviks, to Communists, in greater detail. And I think that in the present instance, as far as the Georgian nation is concerned, we have a typical case in which a genuinely proletarian attitude makes profound caution, thoughtfulness and a readiness to compromise a matter of necessity for us. The Georgian who is neglectful of this aspect of the question, or who carelessly flings about accusations of 'nationalist-socialism' (whereas he himself is a real and true 'nationalist-socialist', and even a vulgar Great-Russian bully), violates, in substance, the interests of proletarian class solidarity, for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; 'offended' nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest – to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or great) nation." (9)

The incident highlighted that there was still a long way to go before nationalist sentiments were replaced by a new Soviet patriotism,



but the steps being taken were in the right direction. On December 26, 1922, in accordance with a motion by Stalin, the Tenth All-Russian Congress of Soviets adopted an agreement on the Union. On December 30, the delegates of the RSFSR, Byelorussia, Ukraine and Transcaucasia took part in the First Congress of Soviets of the USSR and Stalin read out a Declaration on the reasons to proceed to the union of the republics and a draft Treaty for establishing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Declaration stated:

“Devastated fields, factories at a stand-still, destroyed productive powers and exhausted economic resources, which remain as the legacy of the war, render insufficient the separate efforts of separate republics in economic reconstruction. The restoration of the national economy has proved incompatible with the separate existence of the republics.

“On the other hand, the instability of the international situation and the danger of new attacks make inevitable the creation of a united front of Soviet republics in face of capitalist encirclement.

“Finally the very structure of Soviet power, which is international by its class nature, drives the working masses of the Soviet republics along the path of union into a single socialist family.

“All these circumstances imperatively demand the unification of the Soviet republics into a single union state capable of guaranteeing external security, internal economic progress and freedom of national development for the peoples.” (10)

The Congress then approved the Treaty, elected a new supreme legislative body, the Central Executive Committee (VTsIK) of the Union, to whose presidency Kalinin was elected, and Lenin was elected Chair of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR. (11) The Soviet Union was born.

3. The Constitution of the USSR (1924)

On January 10, 1923, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee appointed a Commission of thirteen members to draft the Constitution, although it soon increased to twenty-five. Fourteen were from the RSFSR; five from the Socialist Republic of Ukraine, and three each from Byelorussia and Transcaucasia.

After months of intense work, on July 6, 1923, the Constitution was approved and on January 31, 1924, nine days after Lenin's death, it received official approval of the Second All-Union Congress of Soviets.

The Constitution was divided into eleven articles. Article I laid down the powers of the highest organs of the Union and Article II lay down the sovereign rights of the Federated Republics, including the right to freely secede from the Union. (12)

The supreme organ of the Union consisted of the Congress of Soviets, composed of the representatives of the soviets of the cities, at the rate of one deputy for every 25,000 electors, and of representatives of the Soviet provincial congresses, at the rate of one deputy for every 125,000 inhabitants (Article III).

In the interval between Congresses the supreme organ was the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, composed of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities. The Congress of Soviets of the USSR elected the 371 members of the Soviet of the Union from among the representatives of the federated republics in proportion to the population of each, and the Soviet of Nationalities consisted of the representatives of the federated republics and the autonomous Soviet socialist republics. with five representatives each. In the interval between sessions of the Central Executive Committee, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee was the supreme organ of power, composed of 21 members (Article IV).

The Central Executive Committee elected the government, known as the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, composed of the President and the various Commissariats (Article V), which were divided into federal commissariats for the whole of the USSR (Foreign Affairs, War and Navy, Foreign Trade, Transport, Post and Telegraph) and coordinating commissions (Higher Council of National Economy, Supply, Labor, Finance and Workers' and Peasants' Inspection). The commissioners of coordination were from the USSR and the federal Republics (Article VIII).

The Constitution established a Supreme Court of the USSR (Article VII). As for the federated republics, they had their own administrative and governing bodies (Article X).

In the following years, the number of republics increased. In October 1924 two new republics were formed: Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In 1929 Tajikistan was formed and in 1936 the Transcaucasian Federation disappeared, and was replaced by the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani Republics. In the same year Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were formed. On the eve of the German attack on the USSR, the republics of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Moldova were integrated into the USSR.

The creation of the USSR was a formidable step on the road to the building of socialism, overcoming national rivalries and placing proletarian internationalism as a fundamental aspect of the new state. In addition, it created a Soviet patriotism that would be a fundamental factor in the victory against Nazism during the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945). The Soviet experience showed in practice how the national question could be solved within the framework of socialism; that is, under a mode of production that abolishes private property and exploitative relations. Because hatreds between peoples, fueled by aggressive nationalism, are phenomena fomented by the bourgeoisie to divide the workers and pit one against the other in criminal wars whose sole objective is to increase the profits of capital.

Notes

1. C. Taibo: *La Unión Soviética (The Soviet Union) (1917-1991)*. i, Sinthesis, 1993, pp. 17-18.
2. History of the Communist Party of the USSR (Bolshevik) (Edited by a commission of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B). Authorized by the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B). in 1938.) International Publishers, 1939. Page 4.
3. J. Stalin: *Marxism and the National Question*. From J.V. Stalin, *Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954, Vol. 2, pp. 373-374.
4. V.I. Lenin: *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*, in V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, Vol. 20, pp. 453-454.
5. E.H. Carr: *A History of Soviet Russia: The Bolshevik Revolution, 1917-1923*. London, MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1950. Vol. I, p. 123.
6. From <https://www.marxists.org/history/ussr/government/constitution/1918/article2.htm>.
7. Under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March 3, 1918), Russia had to accept the independence of Georgia, Ukraine and Finland, and give the territories of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia to Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It also had to cede several areas to Turkey. In addition to losing a considerable part of its territory, and being left without a good part of its rich mineral deposits, the Bolsheviks had to agree to pay compensation by their surrender of 6,000 million marks. See P. Renouvin: *La crisis europea y la Primera Guerra Mundial (The European Crisis and the First World War) (1904-1918)*. Madrid, Akal, 1990, pp. 449-450.

8. On the civil war in Ukraine, see G. Golikov and others: *Historia de la Gran Revolución Socialista de Octubre (History of the Great October Socialist Revolution)*. Madrid, Castellote Editor, 1976, pp. 251-266.
9. Lenin: "The Question of Nationalities or 'Autonomisation,'" in *Collected Works*. 4th English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, Vol. 36, p. 608.
10. E.H. Carr: *Op. cit.* p. 398.
11. B. Ponomaryov (head): *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1969, p. 364 (available at: <https://ia803007.us.archive.org/35/items/HistoryCPSU/History%20CPSU.pdf>).
12. The powers of the higher bodies of the Union are as follows:
(a) The representation of the Union in international relations, the handling of all diplomatic affairs, the conclusion of all political or other agreements with foreign states; b) the modification of the external borders of the Union, as well as the regulation of questions of modification of the borders between the federated republics; c) signing of treaties admitting new republics to the Union; d) the declaration of war; (e) the right to contract all foreign or internal loans on behalf of the USSR and the authorization of all foreign or domestic loans to be contracted by the federated republics; (f) the ratification of international treaties; (g) the general direction of foreign trade and the establishment of the internal trade system; (h) the establishment of the principles and general plan for the entire economic life of the Union, the definition of the specific industrial sectors and concrete industrial undertakings of interest to the Union as a whole; the signing of concession contracts on behalf of the Union or of the federated republics; (i) the general direction for transport and post and telegraph Affairs; (j) the organization and general direction of the Armed Forces of the USSR; (k) the adoption of the budget for the whole of the USSR, including the budgets of the federated republics; the fixing of common taxes and revenues, as well as transfers and supplements to provide for the budgets of the federated republics; (l) the establishment of a single monetary and credit system; (m) the establishment of common principles of agrarian organization and use of land, subsoil, forests and waters throughout the territory of the USSR; n) common legislation concerning emigration from one republic to another and the establishment of a colonization fund within the Union; (o) the establishment of the principles of judicial organization and procedure as well as of the civil and criminal legislation of the Union; (p) the

establishment of the fundamental labor laws; (q) the establishment of general principles in the field of public education; (r) the establishment of general measures for the protection of public health; (s) the establishment of a system of weights and measures; (t) the organization of statistics for the whole Union; (u) fundamental legislation in the field of federal citizenship concerning the rights of foreigners; (v) the right of amnesty extended to the entire territory of the Union; (w) the annulment of decisions of the congresses of soviets and the central executive committees of the federated republics which violate this Constitution; (x) the settlement of disputes which may arise between the federated republics.

Tunisia's Version of Populism¹

Far-right populism has emerged in recent years, and particularly at this time, as a political and practical issue. We are no longer faced with a marginal current, as we were two or three decades ago, that tries to influence the course of events in this or that way, but we are facing a current that now occupies an important part of the world political scene. Indeed, it came to power in the largest capitalist power in the world, namely the United States of America with the rise of Donald Trump to the White House (2016-2020). It also came to power in Brazil in the person of President Jair Bolsonaro since 2018. In recent years, populists have managed to govern in seven European countries (Hungary, Poland, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Austria, etc.), either alone or as part of an alliance. Moore than one analyst places the resigning British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, in the category of populists. This current is competing for power in more than one country, such as France, where the far-right representative, Marine Le Pen, reached the second round of the last presidential elections and her party occupies a prominent place in Parliament. This is what has led many writers to assert that the world is now living in the “period of populism”; some among them consider the 21st century to be the century of populism. Tunisia, like some other dependent countries, has not remained immune to this trend. Today, populism occupies the pinnacle of power through its representative, Kais Saied, who has monopolized all power since the coup of July 25, 2021 and seeks to establish a “New Republic” at his will, without anyone’s participation.

Dozens of books have been devoted to an analysis of this phenomenon, which now occupy entire shelves in the world’s major bookstores. Countless articles have also been written about this in specialized and non-specialized newspapers and magazines. This phenomenon has preoccupied the media of all kinds. Everyone is trying to analyze it, understand it and anticipate its future. But it can be

¹ Text of the introduction to a book currently being published under the title “Populism in Tunisia”: The Terrifying Trio: Dictatorship, Impoverishment and Dependence.

said that analysts of the phenomenon do not limit it to one form, but speak of “populisms” in the plural because of the sometimes-different style, or the discourse of other periods, or even its orientations. This difference is due to the national, economic, social, political, cultural and even religious contexts in which populism arises. But no matter how different these populists are in their details, and here we mean far-right populism in our current situation, they have characteristics that unite them and make them recognizable. These common characteristics concern the conditions of their emergence and the general intellectual and political character that determines their place in the political scene and their behavior.

Populism is today the legitimate son of the general crisis of the world imperialist capitalist system, a crisis that affects all its material and moral manifestations. This crisis has revealed the savage nature of this system on the economic and social level. The wealth of only 26 of the richest people in the world is equivalent to that of the poorest half of humanity, about 3 billion, 600 million people. This creates an abyss between this small minority and the vast majority, whether within the same society or between nations. Two opposing worlds, two opposing humanities, one at the top of the pyramid and the other at the bottom, which has further widened the gap and fueled class hatred between them. The crisis has affected the model of political domination of these financial oligarchs over society, i.e. the model of representative democracy with its various traditional institutions: parliaments, parties, governments, presidencies, ministries, the judiciary, the media, cultural institutions and non-governmental organizations. They have reached an extreme degree of separation, decay and isolation from the “common people”, who are left to their own devices, confused as to their material and moral problems, to which is added the environmental problem that threatens life on our planet. One of the consequences has been the emergence of two phenomena: The first is the widening of the circle of non-participation in public affairs, especially in elections, because of a feeling of their non-effectiveness and their inability to change the conditions of the poor and the marginalized majority. The second is the hatred with which large sections of this majority have come to confront the “elites”, that is, the rotten institutions of the capitalist system.

Far-right populism has flourished in the absence of revolutionary solutions to overcome the contradictions of the capitalist system, and to create a new human civilization as an alternative to bourgeois

civilization that is in ruins economically, socially, politically, culturally and in values. This is the first point common to the different populations, which can vary according to the contexts in which each of them evolves. The second point is the fact that the populist presents himself as the representative of the “people” in the face of the traditional “elites” who dominate power, which he considers the symbol of failure and corruption, or even devoid of any legitimacy. The populist believes that he is the bearer of a message to “guide the people against this oligarchy which controls the power that was originally supposed to belong to the people and must be restored to them”. All that is needed is an “inspired leader” who “embodies the will of the people” and who does not even need to consult the people since he knows what they want; this would limit the role of the people to supporting the “leader” by following him. The seizure of power by this leader instead of the traditional oligarchy is what populism calls the restoration of the usurped power for the benefit of the people. But this populism only attacks the form of power, that is to say representative democracy, which it considers ‘cowardly’, ‘non-categorical’ and ‘corrupt’. It ignores its capitalist economic base, because in reality it came to defend it by means of another form of power, authoritarian and fundamentally anti-pluralist. This is what brings current right-wing populism closer to traditional fascism. It works to destroy representative frameworks in order to replace them with individual power as a new form of domination of monopoly capital; it considers this as “real democracy” or “direct democracy” where the “leader” deals directly with his “people”. The people, represented by the populists, is a homogeneous bloc that does not suffer from any social or political diversity, so that even the popular sectors that do not support the populists in their eyes do not belong to the “real” people”.

In this respect, populism, like its fascist counterpart in the post-crisis period of the 1920s, represents, in the eyes of its followers, a “solution” to the current crisis of the monopoly capitalist system, not a means of overcoming it. Like traditional fascism, in order to seize power, populism comes into conflict with the forces of the liberal right. This makes it appear as an “anti-system” and as the bearer of a “new system” or a “new state”, “close to the people”. But the state, in fact, remains the same as regards the class interests it represents: indeed, populism pushes neoliberalism to its extreme limits, contrary to the “pro-poor discourse” it promotes. It uses them as kindling wood first in its electoral battles for power, and second, when

necessary, in its foreign battles, when populism is at the head of an imperialist capitalist state, against its capitalist competitors, subjecting the poor to atrocious exploitation for maximum profit or using them as “cannon fodder” in its wars.

Donald Trump is living proof of this. When you listen to him, one of the richest, most arrogant and greatest defenders of savage neoliberalism in the United States, deliver his inaugural address, you have the impression that you are facing “the adored of the poor and the destitute”. Here is how he attacks Washington’s oligarchy: “For too long, a small group in our nation’s Capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost. Washington flourished – but the people did not share in its wealth. Politicians prospered – but the jobs left, and the factories closed. The establishment protected itself, but not the citizens of our country. Their victories have not been your victories; their triumphs have not been your triumphs; and while they celebrated in our nation’s Capital, there was little to celebrate for struggling families all across our land.” (January 20, 2017).

The third point around which the different populisms converge is the use of a demagogic discourse adapted to the conditions in which each of them arises. This demagogic discourse is based, in general, on racism, hatred, the awakening of savage instincts, intimidation and the fear of “the other”: whites are in danger because they are a minority compared to people of color in America (Trump...); the



Christian European peoples are threatened by the “encroachment of immigrants”, especially “Muslims”; and “the purity of the race” must be protected to prevent the “suicide of Europe” etc. These populists also converge in hostility to women’s rights (the right to abortion as an example), to science, to knowledge and to everything that is a source of criticism and reflection because these means can expose them and reveal their truth. Humanity has seen concrete examples of this during the Covid-19 epidemic regarding the positions expressed by Trump and Bolsonaro. Populism is above all aggressive in its foreign policy, provoking tensions and conflicts. There is no doubt that the catastrophes of populism at all levels will increase if the working class and the rest of the working and impoverished classes, the revolutionary and progressive intellectuals, the women in struggle and the peoples as a whole do not confront them. But it is important to be aware of the need to transform the struggle against populism into a struggle against its origin, namely capitalism itself, which has produced these savage forms to ensure its domination over the workers and peoples.

At present, populism as a global phenomenon is not limited to the big capitalist countries, but is also spreading to the dependent countries. We mentioned earlier that our country has been plagued by this phenomenon. Although Kais Saied was the one who came to power after the election, he was not the only representative of the populist movement in the 2019 elections, nor in the state institutions. The party “Heart of Tunisia” can be considered a supporter of populism in Tunisia, which can be described as “social populism”. The movement that later founded this party was based on an individual project of the head of the Nessma television channel, Nabil Karoui, who focused all his activity on the “charity work” of collecting donations and then redistributing them to the poor and marginalized in view of their integration into the electoral process of 2019 in the name of the association bearing the name of his deceased son. All his charitable activities were broadcast on his channel, which presented him to public opinion as “the father of the poor”, while his economic orientations had nothing to do with social democracy. If it had not been for his harassment by Youssef al-Shahed, then head of government, and his imprisonment, Nabil Karoui would have obtained a majority in Parliament, and perhaps he would even have succeeded to the Palace of Carthage. As for the other supporter of populism, it is the “Coalition of Dignity” movement, which has built its discourse on a

mixture of conservative, even extremist, religious tendencies and a “nationalist” tendency, manifested in particular by the constant attack on France and the chanting of the slogan “Where is our oil going?”. This trend supported Kais Saïed as President and was able to win more than 20 seats in the House of Representatives. But the Coalition of Dignity abandoned its electoral slogans to become the armed wing of the Ennahda movement in its various fights against Kais Saïed on the one hand and the Destourien Libre Party on the other.

But Kais Saïed can be seen as the representative of the populist model, very close to the populism prevalent in the world today, which speaks in the name of the people and is hostile to elites and liberal democracy in particular. Kais Saïed took advantage of his position in the presidency to overturn the wing of the system constituted by the Ennahda movement and its allies, remove them from power and gradually proceed with the implementation of his project, which he announced in a press interview on June 12: Killing representative democracy in the name of “true democracy”, which does not differ in any way from the democracy of fascist theorists: what Kais Saïed wants is what the people want and what the people want is what Kais Saïed expresses because he is the only one who understands what the people want. For this reason, and in the face of the growing danger of Kais Saïed, who is progressing in the implementation of his project of tyranny/dictatorship, we have decided to publish this book. It consists of a series of articles, some of which have not been published (the first part of the book), while others the have been in newspapers and websites, all of which attempt to analyze and understand the phenomenon and show its dangers and how to deal with them.

However, we are sure that our people will be able to face this difficult situation, to rebuild their own forces and save themselves and their country. In times of crisis, people regress in their behaviors and mores, in their relationships and their consciousness, which sometimes leads some people to wonder if it was really this people who made the revolution. Is it really about this people with 3,000 years of history? But they are mistaken if they think that the matter is settled and that our people will not get back on their feet, whether they are acting in good or bad faith, whether they themselves are won over by a sense of despair or seek to discourage others from turning away from their rights and even their freedom. Indeed, crises can produce a new consciousness and push people forward to achieve their goals, if, of course, they know how to learn from their successes as

well as their failures. This will not happen without conscious vanguards assuming their responsibility.

There is no doubt that the generation of the 1970s remembers well what the Chinese Premier of the time, Chou en Lai, responded to the Japanese Prime Minister, who came to the Chinese capital to present Japan's official apology to the Chinese people for the crimes committed by the Japanese invaders at their expense. Chou en Lai's response was surprising and unexpected, when he said to the Japanese official: We too thank you because what you have done to the Chinese people has been the major cause of their awakening and determination to organize the resistance and win their freedom by force of arms and to rebuild their civilization.

We think that our people, who have made enormous sacrifices in recent decades and who have made a revolution that inaugurated the revolutions of the new millennium in order to achieve salvation, cannot allow themselves to be overwhelmed by the crisis for long. There is no doubt that the suffering of the decade following the revolution has been great, and that the cost, as evidenced by facts and figures, is exorbitant in all areas. However, freedom, dignity and social justice remain the beacon to which a ship lost and battered by rough waves can be attracted.

“Even though this is an era of gloom,
I glimpse the morning behind the darkness”
(Aboul-Qacem Echebbi)²

Tunis, September 24, 2022

² Tunisian poet of the 1930s, who died at the age of 25 (1909-1934), author of a unique collection “The Will to Live” and a very famous verse “If the people one day decide to live, it is necessary that Destiny bends to their will.”

Migrant Workers in Turkey, Class Struggle and Socialist Perspective

With the war in Syria and the ensuing migration, Turkey has become one of the countries that host the largest migrant population in the world. This development opened a new field of exploitation for the bourgeoisie in Turkey. Thus, the AKP government, by using the Syrian migration effectively, joined the ongoing exploitation of migrant workers in the international arena as a powerful and collaborative actor. While the previous experiences of exploitation of imperialist states and monopolies have been a source of inspiration for the Turkish bourgeoisie, the ruling classes and political power have come a long way in developing new exploitation techniques.

Before delving into the detailed picture in Turkey, it will be useful to look at the situation in the world in general terms. According to the World Migration Report, in 2020, there are at least 281 million migrants on the globe. The migrant population corresponds to 3.5 per cent of the entire world population.¹ This includes millions of people from Turkey who have travelled across continents to work or seek asylum.

The vast majority of the world's total migrant population is made up of migrant workers. According to ILO data, the number of migrant workers increased from 164 million in 2017 to 169 million in 2019. During this period, the proportion of young workers in the world's migrant population increased by 2 per cent.² One can conclude that these figures will be higher by 2023.

In the 20th century, the peak of the exploitation of migrant labour occurred in the immediate aftermath of the second imperialist war of division. After Europe was liberated from fascism in 1945, migrant labour was needed to rebuild destroyed cities, infrastructure, factories

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¹ IOM (2019) World Migration Report 2020, https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2020.pdf

² ILO (2021) ILO Küresel Yabancı Göçmen İşçi Tahminleri, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---ilo-ankara/documents/genericdocument/wcms_811865.pdf

and plants. The capitalist states of Europe began to transfer migrant labour by trains and ships. The Italian, German and EU monopolies dropped anchor in poor countries such as Turkey, Greece, etc. and materialized one of the biggest migrant labour transfers of the era. Germany, by introducing the *Gastarbeiter* (guest worker) programme, had the heaviest, dirtiest and most risky jobs done by migrant workers. The exploitation of migrant labour is of decisive importance in the resurgence of capitalism in Europe. New legal regulations and exploitation techniques have been introduced in the exploitation of migrant workers.

Another model that inspired world capitalism emerged in the Gulf Arab countries. The huge labour camps prototyped in the Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, served as a laboratory for the spread of the exploitation of migrant labour to other continents. Migrant workers are employed predominantly in the construction and oil industries and they are housed in wards built mainly in deserts, having to endure a long-lasting camp life. The social life of the workers outside the workplace is very limited. Regardless of their country of origin, migrant workers are forced to live according to Sharia law. Labourers brought to the Gulf countries in caravans from the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Turkey and many other countries were turned into precarious workers through a practice called “*kafala system*”. Kafala is a sponsorship system. In order for a migrant worker to work in the Gulf Arab countries, he or she needs the guarantees of “*employers*” or companies. This labour system, which is also in accordance with Sharia law, makes the migrant worker a slave of the bosses. In case of a dispute, the “*employer*” terminates their sponsorship and the migrant worker is deported, having lost all their pending payments before the Sharia courts. Besides the colonisation of Africa and Latin America and the enslavement of indigenous peoples, the Kafala system of exploitation in the Gulf has created a huge accumulation of capital. For the international monopolies, this system became the model for new exploitation techniques. International companies, which recruited workers from other countries, gradually applied more original forms of this exploitation technique in Europe, the USA and other continents.

In both UN and ILO data, the term “*migrant population*” refers to a broader definition that includes refugees. The world’s migrant population is expected to reach 300 million by the end of 2022, and 89 million of them are displaced persons, i.e. refugees. Forced to

leave their countries due to political oppression, exile, civil wars, conflicts and wars caused by imperialism and capitalist reaction, refugees are forced to work in the most precarious jobs in order to survive. This is caused by the fact that the social protection rights for refugees gained in the 20th century, particularly the 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees, are being rapidly dismantled. Another factor contributing to the liquidation of the gains of migrant workers was the destruction of the international gains of socialism and the working class struggle. As the organised power of the working class weakened, migrant workers became more vulnerable. In the past, refugees could live under social protection and without having to work for a certain period of time (adaptation, education, integration process), but by the 21st century the situation had changed significantly. In this century, the rule has become almost as if *“you will work even if it is precarious, the refugee who does not work will not survive, they will die”*. Thus, refugees have been caught in the web of opportunist networks, labour brokers, subcontractors, unregulated workshops, unregistered exploitation that feeds the subcontracted production chain and the black labour market. The veneer of the *“millennium age”* has opened the door to such a ruthless system of exploitation.

While today's world is struggling with the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and economic problems, the imperialists, who are responsible for all these evils, are creating new mechanisms of exploitation under the name of *“humanitarian and regular migration management”*. In the name of *“global economic growth”*, the giant monopolies of the world have carried their plans to inflate their coffers to the imperialist economic summits. Thus, strategies for *“inclusion of migrant labour in the labour market”* started to be marketed to the countries of the world as a *“new global development model”*. The working class all over the world is being attacked from all sides by imperialist unions such as G7 and G20, as well as through strategies such as the EU's *“New Pact on Migration and Asylum”*. One aspect of these attacks is the use of migrant labour as a cheap and precarious competitive force.

With summits such as the L20 (Labour 20), organised under the G20, trade unions are used as tools for this project. *“Social dialogue”* unionism is used as a bridge to legitimise the exploitation of migrant labour and to subordinate the working class to capital. This whole process serves the further scaling back of the rights of refugees and

the exploitation of migrant workers in cheaper and more precarious ways.³

The “*New Pact on Migration and Asylum*” prepared by the Council of Europe and put into force on 1 January 2021, as a unique move of the global strategy of capital, traps migrants and refugees. With the new pact, the European monopoly union, which halted the refugee crossings to Europe, put into effect the project of “*temporary contract migrant workers*” in order to eliminate the employment gap.⁴ Countries like Turkey and Libya were assigned the task of sub-contracting this project. Britain is trying to implement a similar plan in Rwanda, first as a “*migrant depot*” and then as a “*migrant labour depot*”.

Turkey in Migrant Labour Transfer

The number of displaced and internally displaced persons in Syria has approached half of the country’s population. It is estimated that there are more than 4 million Syrians in Turkey alone. Almost half of that population has become precarious labourers. Child refugees, who should be in school, have rapidly become workers. The imperialist wars of plunder, exploitation and redistribution have brought along a profitable area of exploitation such as the sharing of migrant labour in addition to oil, natural gas, land and hegemony.

Capitalists demanding cheap and precarious migrant labour through the international migrant smuggling network, where millions of dollars are exchanged, work in cooperation with each other through their intertwined and intricate relations. For instance, the young members of the migrant groups travelling from Kabul, Afghanistan to Istanbul know the workplaces or workshops where they will work even before they set off. Human traffickers, who also use the internet and social media, put migrant workers on the market through channels such as Instagram, Facebook, Telegram, WhatsApp, etc. The migrant labour market is woven like a spider web not only in Turkey but all over the world. Through digital instruments

³ ITUC (t.y.) L20, <https://www.ituc-csi.org/l20?lang=en>

⁴ Akdeniz, E. (2020) “AB’nin mültecilerle savaşı: 10 soruda ‘yeni göç ve iltica planı’” [EU’s war against migrants: ‘The new plan for migration and asylum seeking’ in 10 questions], Evrensel, <https://www.evrensel.net/yazi/87237/abnin-multecilerle-savasi-10-soruda-yeni-goc-ve-iltica-planı>

bosses can access a lot of information ranging from the age and weight of the migrant labourer to their work experience and passport-size photo. A significant portion of them get caught in the net of labour brokers after entering the country. So much so that private employment agencies are rapidly becoming “*migrant labour transfer agencies*”. Behind the scenes, these bureaux also bring unregistered migrant workers to the “*labour market*”.

According to data from the Directorate General of Migration Management, the total number of migrant workers in Turkey who were granted work permits was 115,837 in 2018, and it reached 145,232 in 2019. The distribution of the migrant worker population by country of origin in 2018 was as follows: Syria: 34,573, Kyrgyzstan: 13,452, Georgia: 7,321, Ukraine: 6,394, Turkmenistan: 5,547, Uzbekistan: 3,969, Nepal: 3,186, Azerbaijan: 2,997, Russia: 2,994, China: 2,992, Iran: 2,689, Indonesia: 2,356, Philippines: 2,076, Kazakhstan: 1,799, and India: 1,663.⁵

The data show that the Turkish bourgeoisie resorts to the multinational exploitation of migrant labour. The number of unregistered migrant workers is not documented but it is estimated that nearly 2 million migrant/refugee workers are employed without any social security. In the informal sector, the number of countries of origin begins to multiply and countries such as Armenia, Iraq, Pakistan and countries from Africa emerge.

In fact, the “*migrant labour industry*” in Turkey has already taken a certain shape in terms of sectors: Syrian workers in textiles and shoemaking, Afghans in shepherding, Georgian workers in tea picking, Azerbaijani workers in construction, workers from African countries in transport and denim washing, Pakistani workers in waste paper and plastic collection, Uzbek, Filipino and Turkmenistan women workers in elderly and child care. Of course, this category does not contain sharp distinctions and it is possible to find workers of more than one nationality in each line of work. But the overall picture that emerges on the basis of sectors shows how capitalists transfer a reserve labour army from abroad through human traffickers (just like oil transported through pipelines). In its 20-year-rule the

⁵ Mülteciler Derneği [Refugee Association] (2020) “Türkiye’de Çalışma İzni Verilen Suriyeli Sayısı” [The number of Syrians with work permit in Turkey], <https://multeciler.org.tr/turkiyede-ca-lisma-izni-verilen-suriyeli-sayisi/> [In Turkish]

AKP government has put this wheel of exploitation created by the “*new migration management*” at the disposal of capital in the most effective way.

Which Syrians?

At this point, it is necessary to dwell on a concept that is often used among Turkish workers to confuse them: “*Syrians*”! This exclusionary concept is used as a veil blurring class contradictions. However, neither Syrians nor Turks are a “*classless*” mass. Syrians or Syrian refugees include people from different classes and strata. From the beginning, the war in Syria went hand in hand with the war economy, and in this process the war profiteers have emerged and got rich. People who were dispossessed during the war and rapidly became workers fell into the net of the “*war-rich*”. Syrians who were workers in their own country before the war were driven to lower-status jobs in exile, working longer hours and cheaper.

According to data from the Directorate General of Migration Management on 26 February 2019, the number of companies in Turkey with at least one Syrian partner is 15,159. The mechanism of exploitation moved to Turkey together with its factories, machinery and tools of labour. The “*Syrian capital owners belonging to the opposition*” who settled in Turkey and took control in the diaspora started by exploiting their own citizens. Syrian workers employed informally and at low wages in textile factories, workshops, store and restaurant chains became the new basis of enrichment. While Syrian capitalists became part of the Turkish bourgeoisie, Syrian workers became part of the Turkish working class. This is the class reality that is hidden by generalizations like the “*Syrians*”.



11 years passed like this, will the next 11 years be the same?

Turkey began to implement the “Temporary Protection” status for Syrian asylum seekers in 2013-14. Millions of refugees, who were not registered even until then, are literally exploited without any rules. Capitalists of the informal sector, especially in agriculture, textile and construction, have made serious money from Syrian workers. Seeing this trend, the big bosses’ organisation TISK “objected” to the process with its own reasons. For this purpose, it published a report titled *“Opinions, Expectations and Suggestions of the Turkish Business World on Syrians in Turkey”* in 2014. In summary, this report demanded the transfer of migrant workers to medium and large-sized factories and proposed legal regulations and projects to the government. This is how the legal restriction was introduced on the employment of a maximum of 10 foreign workers per 100 employees in every factory. But the number of registered migrant workers with social security remained at 34 thousand for Syrians. This is because the current “Labour Law for Foreigners” takes the right to apply for a work permit away from the refugee workers and gives it to the bosses; thus, placing the other end of the chain around the neck of migrant workers into the hands of the capitalists. Moreover, capitalists who consider the worker’s right to social security as an unnecessary expense that increases costs do not want to employ registered workers. In 2020, TISK published the “Migrants’ Adaptation to the Labour Market Report” which demands additional regulations from the government for the employment of migrant workers in large factories. Thus, following the unregistered workshops, the heaviest, dirtiest, most dangerous and cheapest jobs will be identified in modern Organised Industrial Zones.

In summary, the monopoly capitalists in Turkey are not satisfied with the steps taken so far in the 11th year of migration and insist on attracting cheap and precarious Syrian labour to big factories in the near future. In addition, TISK, the union of big capitalists, aims to put pressure on the gains of domestic workers (working hours, wages, holidays, etc.) through migrant labour. This paradise of cheap labour, which is flourishing in Turkey, right next to Europe, is growing like a new Bangladesh, a new India.

What about the trade unions?

While capitalist organisations such as TİSK, TÜSİAD, MÜSİAD are constantly planning on the exploitation of migrant workers, trade unions are very inert. The trade union bureaucracy is almost paving the way to capitalism's attempts to divide the working class and forcing indigenous and migrant workers to compete.

HAK-İŞ, a confederation of trade unions, carries out trade unionism in the backyard of the government. By clinging to the discourse of *“religious brotherhood”*, it actually ignores the rights of refugees and migrant workers. The demand for equal rights of indigenous and migrant workers is not even an issue in its understanding of trade unionism. The largest labour confederation TÜRK-İŞ, on the other hand, has almost saluted this path of exploitation of migrant workers that capital has been travelling for the past 11 years. DİSK confederation differs from the other two confederations, with the symposiums and workshops organised in the recent period, in that they define the problem in terms of a common struggle for rights. However, there are serious problems in terms of the participation of workers, workplace representatives and trade unionists in these workshops and the implementation of the decisions taken in the factories and at the grassroots level. On the other hand, these three labour confederations continue to seek *“social dialogue”* with the bosses by agreeing to participate in the L20s, a sub-summit of the G20 summits.

Chauvinism aims to cripple the working class

It must be remembered that when fascist Mussolini and Hitler marched to power they used xenophobia. Today's imperialism, using previous historical experiences, paves the way for fascist ideologies, racist fascist movements and parties through xenophobia. Fascist leaders are once again being glamorised. Since fascism has a dark shadow in the history of humanity, the steps taken are still tentative. In Turkey, too, prototype parties are emerging and being created. For example, the Zafer (Victory) Party, in competition with the neofascist parties of Europe, embraces anti-immigrant sentiments. Sometimes the one-man government and other times the bourgeois opposition benefit from the discourse of this party.

The main enemy of fascist chauvinist ideology is the workers. Fascism exists to break the working-class struggle or take it under its control through reaction. The working class must never give in to

chauvinism and must fight fiercely against it by bringing forward the unity of struggle of indigenous and migrant workers. With the provocations of the capitalists and their political representatives aiming to divide the working class, refugee workers are being targeted. Thus, workers who are angry about the economic crisis, poverty and unemployment can point to refugees and say “*They came and took our jobs*”. This conclusion, which may seem right at first glance, is in fact false. However, since it is wrong and superficial, it leads the workers with spontaneous consciousness to bourgeois consciousness. It is actually the capitalists who take away jobs and bread and push the local workers to the depths of poverty by employing cheap and precarious migrant labour. Those who benefit from labour competition are the ones who actually hold the tap of exploitation in their hands. And of course, it is the bourgeois governments that coordinate all this as an order of competition that intensifies exploitation. For workers to grasp this reality, they need to become conscious of their class.

The antidote to chauvinism is workers’ internationalism. “Left” “socialist” movements that are not based on workers’ socialism cannot make a consistent fight against chauvinism; they cannot get rid of bourgeois currents. This is why they always produce defective policies on immigrants and migrant workers.

One of the popular debates in Turkey today is the debate on “sending refugees back to Syria”. So, what should be the attitude of the working class on this issue? First of all, indigenous workers who have been working alongside their class brothers and sisters, the refugee workers, for the past 11 years should defend their rights without hesitation. For example, what happened to the usurped social security premiums of refugee workers who have been working without any insurance in the last decade? What about the right to a pension? What will happen to the severance payments, etc. that have been forfeited? What about the unpaid compensation to the families of refugee workers who lost their lives in unsafe workplaces? What happens to the workers who became disabled in work related accidents? How can the discussion of repatriation be held without acknowledging the retroactive rights for the past decade, which have been ruthlessly grinded under the wheels of intensive exploitation? Part of the exploitation that is being hidden behind the chauvinist wave is hidden in these questions.

A question frequently encountered in our party's work in the factories and workplaces is the following: *"Are you on the side of the Syrians or us?"* Yet, taking sides with one of them would actually be falling into the trap of the bourgeoisie because this is a class-based problem, and in the confrontation of labour against capital, native and migrant workers have common interests against the bourgeoisie. For this reason, opposing the brutal exploitation of migrant workers actually means defending the interests of native workers.

A decent living wage for all workers, decent working hours, a safe, secure and unionised working life... These are the priority demands that will eliminate the distinction between migrant and native workers. The breaking of chauvinism depends on the struggle of the working class for its own demands without discrimination on the basis of race, religion or language.

Examples of Joint Struggle and Organisation

In the 11th year of Syrian migration, we have also seen examples of joint struggle and unionisation that broke down the walls of prejudice.

– In the footwear and leather production sector, there were actual strikes in 16 cities. Intermittent work stoppages went on for a total of two months, with two years apart. Native workers and Syrian workers were organised in the same committees. Press statements were made in Turkish and Arabic. The revolutionary party of the working class distributed leaflets, published brochures and posters in both languages in order to make the strikes widespread and successful. Ömer Şeref, a Syrian shoe-worker who took part in the strike, told Evrensel newspaper: *"Along with other workers, my Syrian friends are happy to get a wage rise but they are happier because we are united and not excluded. No one considered the differences in the protest. Everyone was a shoe worker, everyone was brothers and sisters, and we won."*⁶

– The strike of agricultural workers in Çukurova, in southern Turkey, ended with a victory before nightfall. The wages of Turkish, Kurdish and Syrian workers were increased. In Torbalı, Izmir, local agricultural workers, who had been provoked against refugee workers and even involved in attacks, put aside discrimination and came

⁶ Akkaş C and M. Baylav (2017), Evrensel, <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/331882/saya-iscileri-on-yargilari-asarak-kazandi>

together in a joint strike. In the district, the 8-hour work day was implemented and daily payments were reset.⁷

– Syrian textile workers from Antep participated in the 120 work stoppages in January 2022. In addition, some Syrian workers organised in the union were dismissed and joined the resistance.⁸

– Meryem, a Syrian worker who had been working in a meat factory in Beylikdüzü, Istanbul for 5 years, was dismissed due to trade union organisation. Meryem, who acted jointly with Turkish workers, said that after the unionisation effort, the view of other workers of her at the workplace changed. Stating that before the struggle, workers discriminated against her to the point of “*making her cry*”, Meryem said, “*I fought not only for myself but for all workers. I would do it again*”.⁹

– Turkish and Syrian workers at Izmir Işıkkent Shoemakers Site staged a joint protest. Chanting slogans “*Shoemakers out*” and “*Workers are brothers, bosses are pricks*”, the workers came together in the square and made a press statement.¹⁰ Yet, in the same workplace two years ago, local workers had organised another protest, shouting “*We don’t want Syrian workers*”.

– Labour Party Izmir Provincial Organisation made a statement at the graves of three Syrian workers who were burnt to death in Izmir. Demonstrations were held with the participation of DİSK Food Workers Union and labour and democracy forces against the workplace murders in İstanbul Büyükçekmece and Güngören, demanding that the perpetrators to be punished. The murder of textile worker Ali el Hemdan at the hands of the police was prevented from being covered up with the efforts of the Adana Bar Association and the forces of labour and democracy, and the police officer responsible was imprisoned.

⁷ Ud, M. (2018), Evrensel, <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/356941/turkiyeli-ve-suriyeli-tarim-iscilerinin-birligi-sonuc-verdi>

⁸ Kaya, A. (2021), Sözcü, <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2021/gundem/turk-ve-suriyeli-isciler-yan-yana-grevde-6616225/>

⁹ Tok, H. and E. Ergine (2022), Evrensel, <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/461394/suriyeli-isci-turkiyeli-iscilerle-birlikte-hakmini-aradi-isten-atil-di-yine-yaparim>

¹⁰ Gazete Duvar (2017), <https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/ekonomi/2017/09/21/izmirde-turkiyeli-ve-suriyeli-isciler-ortak-eylem-yapti>

And a final example from France: Emmanuel Macron, the French President, targeted migrant workers, using the pension law as an excuse. The CGT union mobilised precarious migrant workers, the so-called “*paperless workers*”, in a de facto general strike. The bosses had to back down.¹¹

It is clear that the working class, native and migrant, is learning from its own struggle. Workers are accumulating a common memory and experience against the attacks of capital. Recently, we have also seen Syrian workers organise through WhatsApp groups and negotiate wages in factories. Clearly, if these initiatives are not combined with a modern and common union organisation, they also carry the risk of turning into a network of labour brokers. On the other hand, the struggles for common rights, which are still mostly taking place in the lower and informal sectors, need to be discussed among modern industrial workers, and all these struggles need to be transformed into the idea of a common organisation. This is because the capitalists want to employ migrant workers as a reserve army of precarious labour in large factories as well. There is no doubt that the future of the working class depends on organisation in modern industry, in the main enterprises, in heavy industry and in the basic service sectors. And working-class parties have to build an organising strategy in their countries that includes the organisation of migrant workers in all these areas.

The task of socialists is to enlighten the workers by exposing the new migration strategy of capital. There is no room for vacillating here. The problem is a class problem inherent in capitalism and is also political. If it is a question of the struggle against the capitalist order of exploitation, migrant proletarians must also be included in the class struggle and the socialist struggle. Neither migrant nor native workers have a choice against the parties of capital. But in Turkey there is a revolutionary party of the working class.

This is not the party of workers of this or that nationality, but only the party of the working class of all nationalities living in the country, and only such a party can lead the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie and reaction.

¹¹ Uztopal, D. (2019), Evrensel, <https://www.evrensel.net/haber/388639/150-gocmen-isci-fransa-isci-sinifina-katilma-mucadelesini-nasil-kazandi>

Dismantle the Anti-LGBTQIA+ Stigma Around Monkeypox!

On August 4, 2022, the U.S. declared the outbreak of the Monkeypox virus a national health emergency. Leading up to this declaration, there has been a rise in chauvinist disinformation concerning the nature of the virus and its origins, how it spreads, and the communities it affects. This disinformation has become a way for reactionaries to attack the LGBTQIA+ community and create another stigma that will negatively impact the lives of all of our community members. Currently, queerphobic chauvinists are using cases of children catching monkeypox as evidence of “grooming”, even though the disease is not an STD. Historically, the right-wing has used the transmission rates of diseases and viruses through the queer community to stigmatize, marginalize, and alienate the queer sections of the working class from the rest of itself. The LGBTQIA+ Commission of the American Party of Labor finds it necessary to promote scientific and factual information concerning the Monkeypox virus and by doing so break down the negative stigma that is being constructed against the LGBTQIA+ community in this time of crisis.

Monkeypox was first identified as a virus affecting humans in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1970 when a nine month old boy contracted the virus. The World Health Organization classifies Monkeypox as a zoonosis, a virus that has its origins in animals and has spread into humans. The original animal hosts of the Monkeypox virus are thought to be rodents and non-human primates. The virus itself can be transmitted from person to person by close contact with “lesions, body fluids, respiratory droplets, and contaminated materials such as bedding” according to the World Health Organization. The UK Health Security Agency reports that of the patients surveyed, 98% (out of 152 interviewed cases) reported having sex during the incubation period of 2-4 weeks. While the virus can be found in sexual fluids, it is uncertain if it is transmitted directly via the exchange of fluids or through close contact. The City of Chicago Public Health department reports that the disease can be spread through close contact, including body fluids, but also through hugging,

kissing, shared bedding and clothing. It can also crucially be spread through respiratory droplets such as through coughing or sneezing. Of the 152 patients surveyed by the UKHSA, 151 reported being MLM (Men Loving Men); the obvious question is— why this group in particular if it is not a “gay disease”? Sexual networks among MLM individuals are not different in nature from other groups, however they are much more densely connected, notes Lilith Whittles, an infectious disease modeler with the Imperial College London. Although currently concentrated in MLM networks, this virus can spread to other close networks, be it sexual, or nonsexual such as in gyms, athletic events, and prisons as has happened before both with HIV in the 1980s and *Staphylococcus aureus* in the 2000s.

Due to the widespread public health risk that this virus has caused, mass vaccination would be ideal, regardless of sexual orientation, gender, race, or age. Therefore, the American Party of Labor calls on the U.S. Government to prioritize expanding vaccine access to the entire population. Many public health departments nationwide have an ongoing waitlist for the vaccine that other at-risk people can be added to, such as pregnant people, children, immuno-compromised people, and the elderly. An increased demand for the vaccine indicates that the people support the prioritization of public health and will not accept further neglect of our health and safety from those in power. CDC guidance, as well as eligibility requirements for the vaccine, state that it is only those who are most at-risk who should get vaccinated due to limited supply of doses in the U.S. For instance, the San Francisco Public Health Department lists the eligibility criteria for the vaccine as:

- Are gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men and trans people who have sex with men and have had multiple (more than one) sexual partners in the past 14 days
- Are sex workers of any sexual orientation or gender
- Have been identified as a close contact of someone who has monkeypox (suspected or confirmed)
- Have received a notification from a venue or event of a potential exposure to someone who has monkeypox (suspected or confirmed)
- Laboratory workers who routinely perform monkeypox virus testing

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- Clinicians who have had a high-risk occupational exposure (e.g., examined monkeypox lesions or collected monkeypox specimens without using recommended personal protective equipment)

If you meet any of these criteria, it is essential to get vaccinated as soon as possible to prevent further disease transmission. If you do not meet the criteria listed above, or the criteria listed on your local public health department's website, calling your local public health department can still be beneficial. This is because everyone is at risk for getting monkeypox, as transmission can be through coughing, sneezing, and close contact. Therefore, everyone should be looking out for signs and symptoms of monkeypox. If you have symptoms of monkeypox, your public health department is also a resource for getting tested. Find the contact information for your local public health department [here](#), and do not hesitate to call.

September, 2022



The Imperialist Blocs and Reality

The struggle between imperialist powers for a new redivision of the world is seen today so clearly that no one can deny its existence; although the greatest confrontation is taking place, for now, in Eastern Europe, we can see its advance to other territories.

In a historic conflict zone, located between Ukraine and the Crimean peninsula, war has started again; there the clashes between NATO and the Russian Federation take as a *casus belli* the conflict between Ukraine and the self-declared People's Republics. These, which have now been incorporated into the Russian Federation, are leading the way in the levels of violence, an expression of the uneven development of the contradictions.

In that war, and in the attempts at confrontation that occur in other areas of the planet, the contradiction between China and the United States regarding the situation in Taiwan stands out.

We can see two hot spots that show this: the existence of a struggle for a new redivision of the world, the direct participation of the great imperialist powers, in addition to the fact that these are grouped into two increasingly defined blocs. Each of these is based on the exploitation of the proletariat and the search for maximum profit by consolidating large groupings that are attracting other powers to their sphere, as well as dependent countries that for some reason are within their orbit of influence.

This struggle is also escalating at the military level of confrontation between large armies, because we cannot doubt that on one side are the generals of NATO and on the other the Russians and Chinese. They are measuring their capabilities and mobilizing their forces on the great world chessboard of the resources, the life and death of the working class.

The analysis of the fundamental contradictions allows us to see that there is an inter-imperialist struggle advancing daily in the theatres of war, where some workers are dying to achieve the objectives set by the big monopolies. At the same time, there is part of the population that is fighting against imperialist aggression that threatens the dependent countries and oppressed nationalities with their disappearance.

Undoubtedly, there are also expressions of the class struggle, the direct struggle between workers and bourgeoisie in the form of strikes and protests to show how the three fundamental contradictions evolve.

What we can expect

The economic crisis that was exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic opened the doors to a recession in most of the world economies. This can be transformed into a great world economic depression which the dominant imperialist powers are trying to forestall by appropriating sources of raw materials, vital areas for war and strategic zones. This leads to even more violent steps in the attempt to control the energy and food sources necessary to carry out a war of greater magnitude, perhaps a war of world dimensions such as has not been known until now, not only for its extension but also for its intensity and resources.

The US-EU bloc is not in vain. Since the early 2000s, it began its political movements for the control of the rich regions of Ukraine, historically controlled by Russia. It has subsequently expanded its military apparatus concentrated in NATO in order to guarantee that region and also to “control” Russia, limiting its capacity for movement that it demonstrated by supporting Syria with military technology and troops.

The US-EU imperialist bloc is using the military tactic of “controlling” its enemy and limiting the movements of its large army by using a smaller one that, through a provocation, forces it to enter combat, to wear itself out in its own territory by reducing its mobility. In addition to leading it to a progressive weakening, while the bulk of the army that will truly confront it is preparing and studying its behavior on the ground in order to figure out its tactics and strategy.

That same tactic of provocation and controlling is being applied by the US-EU imperialist bloc to China, but it seems that the Chinese leaders have realized this and have managed to dodge this ruse by avoiding entering into a war on their borders. They are continuing to advance with their offensive of the Silk Road that is at the same time an economic, political and military plan of expansion, without ruling out the use of force. Obviously they will use force when they see conditions more favorable to their expansionist interests.

It is clear that the Chinese value more their strategic vision of global expansion of an offensive type than to engage in a defensive

war, which in addition to trying to confine them to their territory would tire them greatly, forcing them to modify their long-term plans.

The role of Latin America

Within this struggle for the reorganization of the imperialist forces, today grouped in the two main imperialist blocs, there are also changes in the other contradictions and regions of the world, including Latin America.

It is clear that the China-Russia imperialist bloc has been making great strides in Latin America for several decades, increasing its presence, which has not been seen as a good thing by the US-EU imperialist bloc.

When assessing the levels of development of the fundamental contradictions, specifically in the territory of Latin America, we can clearly see that the struggle is developing in the economic, political and ideological field. This is an approach that puts in first place the discourse of confronting the hegemony of the United States through “multipolarity”, which is nothing more than a euphemism for changing imperialist masters. This can be attractive to a section of the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and even popular sectors motivated by the desire to overcome the status of “backyard” and to advance. The problem with this is that for the emerging imperialist powers there is no interest in national liberation or in the independent development of the peoples but rather a change of master. This is because the economic model of both blocs is based on the exploitation of wage labor and the expropriation of raw materials, which implies the existence of the capitalist mode of production. This needs an exploited and



oppressed majority to carry out the aims of big capital regardless of the color of its flag.

We consider that several possibilities are developing in the region and that in general there is an advance of progressive ideas, under reformist, social-democratic and petty-bourgeois leadership. This could not lead to national liberation, much less socialism, but it opens possibilities to deepening popular organization and mobilization.

It is clear that there is no unity of opinion, and less of ideology or class in a broad progressive anti-Yankee grouping and that we can find contradictory proposals. However, it is important to assess how in Colombia and Chile there has been a replacement of the most extreme right in the government, in the same way that it could happen in Brazil.

If we add Argentina, Bolivia, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and evaluate what existed in those countries a decade ago, we can see a distancing from the US. In the same way, there is a greater influence of Cuba and the China-Russia bloc along with beginning forms of the struggle for independence. We must organize to this in order advance to national liberation and socialism, which can only happen if we Marxist-Leninists are able to fulfill our historical role and concretize the role of vanguard organized with actions based on a dialectical materialist analysis of reality and its perspectives.

As Lenin stated: imperialism is the highest stage of capitalism, it is a period of wars and revolutions; current reality makes us see that these positions are still correct today and that the struggle for the re-division of the world that is already divided up will lead to wars, which have been present as local conflicts, taking them to a more violent and global dimension.

Where are the revolutions?

We could say that revolutionary processes are at a level of preparation, so that it is up to us Marxist-Leninists to organize along with the broad exploited masses.

In Latin America there are very interesting processes of raising the anti-imperialist and anti-fascist consciousness of the peoples. We must take advantage of such phenomena in order to consolidate our parties and take up our historical role; for this we true Marxist-Leninist communists must study and apply its theory and practice.

The analysis of concrete reality in the light of the conclusions of our classics, the evaluation of the revolutionary experiences,

including such important milestones as the Paris Commune, the Great October Socialist Revolution together with the contributions of the Communist International and other experiences, can help us clarify the course and overcome the weaknesses that weigh on the revolutionary movement.

We call on all parties and their militants to study the concrete reality and adjust their tactics, always maintaining a line corresponding to the precepts of Marxism-Leninism in accordance with the interests of the working class, the peasants, revolutionary commune members and the exploited in general.

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

*Political Bureau of the PCMLV.
October 2022.*