

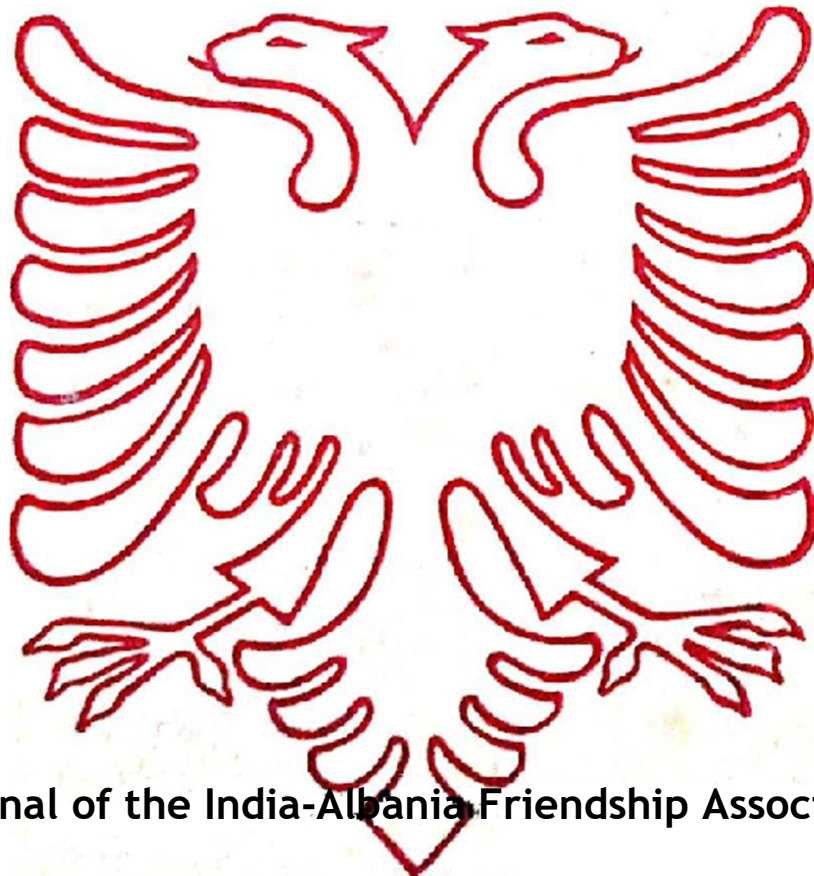
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Agriculture in Socialist Albania

Albanian agriculture is organized completely on a socialist basis. All the peasant economics, in the lowlands and in the mountain regions, have been organized into agricultural cooperatives.

In the past, Albania had the most backward agriculture in Europe. After the establishment of our people's state power, the overthrow of feudal bourgeois relations in the countryside as well became an urgent task. This was absolutely essential if we were to develop agriculture and create the premises for building socialism in the countryside.

The first step in this direction was the implementation of the slogan "the land belongs to him who tills it", which the Party had launched as early as during the National Liberation War.

The first step to implement the Party programme for the socialist transformation of the countryside was the application of the land reform laws. Considering the agrarian reform laws as the first revolution in the social-economic relations in the countryside, Comrade Enver Hoxha has emphasized: "*The typical characteristic of this revolution was the democratic transformation of the relations of land, the ultimate elimination of the survivals of feudalism, the liquidation of the class of land estate holders.*"

The landless and land-poor peasants were impatiently waiting for the proclamation of the land reform laws and their application. The land reform laws were issued on August 29, 1945, only nine months after liberation and the establishment of the people's state power.

The basic principle of the land reform laws was to give the land to those who tilled it. The land, trees and draft animals, which had belonged previously to the big estate owners, feudal gentry, merchants and other exploiters, were confiscated. They were distributed by the state to the landless or land-poor peasant families at the rate of 5 hectares per household. At the same time, the buying, selling, or alienation of land was prohibited. The old debts incurred by peasants were cancelled. The Agrarian Reform, which was completed within 14 months, brought about a profound transformation in the social relations and the mentality of the peasantry, who saw in it the realization of their age-old dream of land and getting rid of their bondage to the landlord. The antagonistic contradictions, which had existed for centuries between the labouring peasantry and the large estate owners were solved, and the way was opened to a speedy development of the forces of production.

The land reform laws were of a revolutionary character also because of the method by which they were carried out. The committees of the poor peasants rendered a valuable contribution by helping in a practical way to register the lands of the large estate holders, of the enemies of the people and of all those whose lands were confiscated by law. They fought to lay bare the hostile activities of the landlords, of the wealthy peasant farmers and of other reactionary forces who rose right at the beginning against the application of the land reform laws.

The application of the land reform laws created new conditions for our countryside. With the new base which it set up for the transformation of the semi-slave into a free peasant, the agrarian reform laws were a necessary premise for all the economic, cultural and social transformations which would be made during the subsequent stages in the countryside.

During the Agrarian Reform the foundations were laid, also, for the creation of the state socialist sector in agriculture. The first state farms were set up on part of the confiscated land, while the forests and waters were turned into the collective property of the people as a whole.

The Party of Labour of Albania was well aware that with small fragmental economics, agriculture could not get out of the deplorable backwardness, which it had inherited from the past, and the harmonious and speedy development of all the branches of our people's economy could not be ensured. Both in the city and in the countryside, the people's state power had to have its own advanced socialist base. The collectivization of agriculture was essential and the only way to ensure the victory of socialism in the countryside. Thus side by side with the wide-ranging work for land improvement and protection, the mechanization of agriculture, the development of agricultural crops, animal husbandry, and so on, a major struggle was waged for the collectivization of agriculture, which, in line with the Party's consistent and cautious directives, was gradually spread throughout the country including in the end, even the Highlands.

The collectivization of agriculture was carried out in a number of periods. The first period lasted about ten years from 1946 to 1955. The slogan applied during the first period was "In the matter of collectivization we should not be hasty, but neither should we mark time."

The cooperatives which were set up in this period played a very great role in creating conviction of the superiority of the collective property over the individual economics. The ten years that followed (1955-1966) were characterized by the forming of cooperatives on a mass scale not only by the poor but also by the middle peasants, in nearly all the villages of the country with the exception of those high in the mountains.

At this time and on the basis of the socialist transformations, which had taken place in agriculture, on the basis of the general development of the country, the political-economic-social conditions had been set up to wind up the process of collectivization of the countryside also in the mountain regions. Summing up the experience gained and taking into account that the social-economic conditions had already been created, the 5th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania issued the directives in November 1966 to complete the collectivization of agriculture. The Congress stressed "It is not the topographic factor which determines the socialist relations in production, but the economic-social premises and the consciousness of the people. These premises have long existed in our country. Under these circumstances, the establishment of socialist relations in production, through collectivisation, also in mountain regions which have not yet been collectivized, depends only on the people, on their consciousness,"

The orientation of the Party was adopted with enthusiasm and in full consciousness by the labouring peasantry of the mountain regions. Within a very short time, in less than three months, collectivization was successfully established also in mountain regions.

The collectivization of agriculture in Albania was carried out « an uninterrupted revolutionary process, which built up steadily without any disorder. It was accompanied everywhere and always with an upsurge of the self-activity of the peasants who took an active part in the socialist transformation of the countryside and of the country as a whole. Their political consciousness and ideological level increased day by day. At the same time, agricultural production marked a turn such as the past had never known, liquidating the devastating consequences of the foreign invasions and pulling agriculture out of the backward state in which the former anti-popular regimes had left it.

From their experience of life and thanks to the great efforts of the Party to explain things to them, the peasants were convinced of the superiority of the cooperative order, the only order which could lift them out of want and rescue them from any exploitation. The world outlook of

the peasantry underwent a radical change. The psychology of individual work of the small-scale private property and narrow personal interest began, more and more, to give way to the feeling and consciousness of the common property, collective work and large-scale socialist production.

The successful conclusion of the collectivization of agriculture was rightly called the second revolution in the social-economic relations in the countryside.

The programme of the socialist transformation of the countryside was carried out in stern class struggle against the kulaks and other enemies of the people's state power. In this struggle the labouring peasantry had the powerful backing of its ally, the working class.

The process of uniting the cooperatives, which had been set up first on the basis of the village, into larger cooperatives, was carried out step by step and in a prudent way. This process was necessary for it created new opportunities to strengthen them organizationally and economically, to make better use of the state investments and other aid, to concentrate production and take advantage of the superiority of the large-scale collective property, to put agriculture on a better scientific basis.

Today, the agricultural cooperatives have an average of over 1,000 hectares of land each. As a rule, in the lowlands the agricultural cooperatives have from 2 to 3 thousand and more hectares of land, while in the mountains they have from 600 to 800 hectares. Combining the small cooperatives into enlarged agricultural economies, also created possibilities for a more harmonious development of the villages of the same cooperative, thus further narrowing their differences in production and the social cultural field.

Experience has shown us that the construction of socialism in the countryside does not end with the accomplishment of collectivization and the union of cooperatives. The property of the cooperative is the property of the group and as such it is a transient and historical character. In time, it must be turned into the property of the people as a whole. This process is relatively long and passes through a number of stages like that of approaching the two forms of ownership and then turning the property of the group into the property of all the people, forming in this way a form of property, that of all the society.

Under the conditions of our country, it is very important and actual to map out the right course for the initial stage of this process.

The setting up of the cooperatives of the higher type in the lowlands serves this purpose. This is an original way mapped out by the Party of Labour of Albania in bringing closer the two forms of ownership: that of the group with that of the whole society. This is an intermediary form of turning the property of the group into that of the whole society. Thus, the collective property gradually loses its transient character.

Now the cooperatives of the higher type occupy nearly 18 percent of the arable land of the Republic. The main distinctive feature of the cooperatives of the higher type is the participation of the state in the development of production with non-repayable social means for investments, a thing which is not done in ordinary cooperatives. This participation of the state with investments is done only for the development of the productive forces.

Another feature of these cooperatives is the transition from payment on the basis of work days performed to guaranteed wages, according to quotas realized. The amount of remuneration for each cooperative is determined according to its economic potential and is guaranteed up to 90 percent. In these cooperatives too, the remuneration for work continues to be connected with the results attained in production.

Different from the ordinary agricultural cooperatives, those of the higher type, after setting aside their seed and the fodder for the livestock etc., repay their debts and sell all the rest of the

products including bread grain, to the state. The state organs, on their part, guarantee to supply the members with bread at a fixed price.

The collectivization of agriculture and the work done to intensify and modernize it, have brought about a new revolutionary situation in our countryside. In work and in life our cooperative peasants are being educated and tempered with the features of communist morality, with the socialist stand towards work and the collective property.

The increase of mechanization, the land improvement and irrigation projects, the large-scale use of chemicals, the ever-better application of advanced agricultural technique, the extension of the network of communications, etc, the increase in the number of specialized cadres and the general rise in the educational level of the peasant, have created the appropriate material conditions to carry out intensive modern agriculture in breadth and depth, to raise the cultural and living standards of the masses of the cooperative members to a higher level, to bring production and life in the countryside ever closer to that of industry and the city.

Our country has long created stability in agricultural production with an average yearly increase of 5 percent.

Now the extensive network of scientific institutions extends all over the country. With their assistance within a record time, a series of studies decisive for the modernization and intensification of agriculture have been carried out, such as the results of the study of soils and the drawing of the pedological-agrochemical map of every cooperative, the study of the climate of the country and the kinds of plants most suitable to it; the local production of selected seeds for all agricultural crops, including wheat yielding over 40 quintals per hectare, hybrid maize yielding from 80 to 100 quintals per hectare, tobacco resistant to blight, and so on.

As early as 1973, there were fifty times as many cadres of higher training and forty times more cadres of medium training engaged in agricultural work than before liberation. Today in Albania there are two Higher Agricultural Institutes and about 260 agricultural secondary schools. Ten Central Scientific Institutions and 26 agricultural stations in the various districts of the country are engaged in scientific work in agriculture.

The larger agricultural economies also created many advantages for the development of animal husbandry. Now an up-to-date and complex animal husbandry sector, based on correct technological and scientific criteria, has been set up and continues to develop. The main achievements in this field are the harmonious and proportional development of all kinds of livestock, the improvement of breeds and the organization of specialized units. Some of the state farms have large herds of milk cows and ensure regular supplies of dairy products for the city. Other enterprises specialize in raising livestock for meat. Many state farms and agricultural cooperatives have specialized units raising pigs, sheep and goats as well as poultry.

The new Albanian socialist countryside today is in a process of rapid development and transformation affecting the field of production and the social and cultural field. This revolutionary process of development of the forces of production agriculture and of the improvement of socialist relations in the countryside will lead, in the future, to the transformation of the agricultural cooperatives from the property of a group of persons into the property of all the people, to the liquidation of the differences between the cooperatives and the state farms in order to bring about the complete construction of socialism in the countryside, to gradually narrow, and then do away altogether, with the essential differences between town and countryside, between the peasantry and the working class. This has been and continues to be, one of the fundamental objectives of the general line of our Party for the construction of socialism in our country. To this end, the Party of Labour of Albania has carried out and continues to carry

out a broad programme of measures of a profound ideological, political, economic, social and cultural character. The continuous aid of the state to the countryside in the form of agricultural machinery, chemical fertilizers, credits, cadres of higher training, the setting up of the complete network of educational and public health institutions, the building of an extensive network of buildings for social and cultural purposes and the extension of the system of pensions to the countryside, the extension of scientific work, the electrification of all the villages and building of the network of motor highways and telephone lines in the countryside and a number of other similar measures, are important steps taken to attain this objective of the Party of Labour of Albania in connection with the countryside.

The decisions of the Central Committee of the Party of Labour and the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Albania of April 1, 1975 constitute an especially important step in this direction. On the basis of the new stage of the development of socialist production in the country and the new relations between town and countryside, between the working class and of the state adopted a new programme of measures which will carry the Albanian countryside further on the road to socialism. Among the decisions of April 1st, were the following measures:

“In order to further narrow the differences between town and countryside and, within the countryside, between the plains and the hilly and mountainous zones, in order to raise the economic, social and cultural level of the peasantry more rapidly as well as to further improve the conditions of work and life in the countryside, *the state is to take over* in the countryside: the expenditure for outpatient and consultation centres, maternity homes, kindergartens and nurseries for children; the salaries of the personnel of houses of culture in the centres of cooperatives; the investments for building schools, kindergartens and nurseries in the villages as well as houses of culture and public health institutions in the centres of agricultural cooperatives; the expenditure for the maintenance of the electric power line network within the villages and telephone network to the centre of enlarged cooperatives.

“The Central Committee and the Council of Ministers are in favour of raising the percentage of pensions for the cooperative members, bringing it to the same level as that of city workers; of raising the minimum pensions of cooperative members, of having the State Social Insurance meet the cost of maternity leave payments for cooperativist women; or bringing the percentage of maternity leave payments (in relation to normal earnings) to the same level as in the city.

“To increase state investments in the hilly and mountainous zones for building irrigation projects, for opening secondary canals and extending the existing network of irrigation projects; to cover partially or wholly the value of workdays in opening and systematizing new land and for creating new orchard blocks and vineyards, for financing by the state up to 50 percent of the value of workdays spent in radical pruning of olive saplings. In order to increase the number of draught animals, the state is to help the cooperative of the hilly and mountainous regions with financial means to buy them.

“To lower the price of nitrogenous fertilizers from 9 to 15 percent for the hilly and mountainous agricultural cooperatives.

“The Tractor and Machine Stations to meet the expenditure made by the agricultural cooperatives for the transport and storage of fuel and protection of agricultural machinery. Investments to build sheds for the Tractor and Machine Stations on the agricultural cooperatives to be financed by the state.

“The agricultural cooperatives of the hilly and mountainous regions to be exempted from paying bank interest on all the credits they have received and will receive in the future and the percentage of this interest for all the other cooperatives to be reduced.”

Speaking about the policy of the Party of Labour of Albania towards the countryside, Comrade Enver Hoxha has said: *“While attaching primary importance to the industrialisation and mechanization of labour, at the same time, we in no way underrate the countryside and are not proceeding to depopulate it, but are developing agriculture in harmony with it. While speaking of high yields in the plains, we do not overlook the rapid development of agriculture in the hilly and mountainous regions. Maintenance of the right proportions in this direction is very important to the cause of building socialism in our country, while allowing the creation of disproportion is fraught with disorder and grave economic, political, class and ideological consequences.”*

The implementation of such a line has meant that in Albania there has been no abandonment of the countryside, no ravaging of it, but, on the contrary, it has steadily developed both in the lowlands and in the mountainous regions. While carrying out the call of the Party “to take to the mountains and hills and make them as fertile as the plains”, the peasantry, backed by the state and the volunteers from the city youth, have created large plantations of fruit trees and other agricultural crops on the hills, on the mountainsides and along the coast, which used to be barren or covered with scrub. The creation of new villages with modern town planning, of farms on the newly brought in land have given the map of our homeland a new appearance and have placed agriculture on the road to rapid development and prosperity.

The collectivization of agriculture in Albania has its distinctive features. It was carried out under special social and economic conditions. In the first place it was carried out under the conditions of the existence of the small private ownership of the land. The experience of our country goes to show that where the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established, the collectivization of agriculture can be carried out successfully even where the nationalization of land has not been made but the land reform laws of a thoroughly revolutionary character have been implemented. This experience constitutes a creative development of Marxist-Leninist science, it shows that the initial nationalization of the land is no longer an objective necessity for all countries in order to carry out the collectivization of agriculture.

Another distinctive feature of the socialist transformation of the countryside is that in our country we did not wait for the productive forces to develop first and then to carry out the collectivization of agriculture, but we began to build socialist relations in production without neglecting also the development of the forces of production. Had we waited to develop the forces of production and then to begin collectivization, we would have lost time in favour of capitalism and to the detriment of socialism, we would have caused great damage to the alliance of the working class with the labouring peasantry.

Our experience of socialist construction in the countryside goes to prove that collectivization should not be hampered artificially until a rapid development of the forces of production is ensured just as it should not be forced artificially before the necessary political, ideological and economic premises have been created.

Another distinctive feature of the collectivization of agriculture in our country is also its cautious application when the ideo-political and social-economic conditions are ripe. The collectivization of agriculture in our country was carried out at a time when the modern revisionists had come to power in the Soviet Union and in other socialist countries where this general law of socialist construction was sabotaged.

The collectivization of agriculture in our country was realized by pursuing the same policy in the development of the class struggle: the political alienation, the economic isolation and liquidation of the wealthy farmers as a class.

As a rule, in setting up agricultural cooperatives in our country, we did not wait to include all

the peasants in cooperatives all at once, but we set up cooperatives with a relatively small number of peasants. This made it possible not to force collectivization in an artificial way.

“The development of agriculture and the experience of building socialism in the countryside”, as Comrade Enver Hoxha has said “prove the universal value of the teachings of Marxism according to which, the only course to follow in building socialism in the countryside, in countries with chopped up agricultural economies, is the collectivization of agriculture. Any other course besides collectivization leads only to the development or restoration of capitalism in the countryside.”

From: *“Albania: General Information”, Tirana, 1976)*

The Construction of New Albania is the Deed of the Albanian People Themselves

The recent inauguration of three important construction and industrial projects which include the largest hydroelectric power project in Albania at Fier. the “Light of the Party”; the completion of the first stage in the construction of the steel complex at Elbasan which has been given the name “Steel of the Party,” and the opening of the new “Enver Hoxha” automobile and tractor complex and production of the first Albanian-made tractor on the eve of the 70th anniversary of the birth of the glorious leader of the Party of Labour of Albania and the Albanian people. Enver Hoxha, reflect the invincible spirit, courage and strength of the people of this impregnable bastion of socialism in the world today.

These are the brilliant successes of a small country on the shores of the Adriatic which has stood like a granite rock fearing neither the threats, blackmail, pressure of the ferocious enemies of mankind and their hostile actions like those of the two superpowers and collaborator in crime, the present leadership of China.

The hydro-electric power project “The Light of the Party” which has been designed and built by the creative efforts of tens of thousands of Albanian specialists, engineers and technicians under the leadership of the Party, constitutes a truly great victory and will remain the immortal tribute to the revolutionary party of the proletariat in Albania, the Party of Labour of Albania. The development and construction of this project is entirely the fruit of the labour, knowledge and talent of the Albanian people. Relying on their own forces the Albanian workers and specialists refuted utterly the absurd notion that this hydro-electric power project could not be built. When Chinese leaders saw that their efforts to sabotage the construction of this project by cutting all economic aid were to no avail, they tried everything possible to prevent the successful completion of the project. But the inauguration and the putting into operation of the first two turbines and related technical equipment were a brilliant testimony to the heroic deeds of the Albanian people who with unshakable confidence in their own forces, surmounting all difficulties have won yet another new victory in the building of new socialist Albania.

On October 13, 1978 another historic victory in the construction of socialism in Albania was won with opening of the iron factory. rolling departments, oxygen factory, the metallurgical engineering department and two additional departments, which marked the successful conclusion of the first phase of the “Steel of the Party” metallurgical combine in Elbasan.

The completion of the first phase of the metallurgical combine is of special significance for it represents the consistent application of the Marxist-Leninist policy of the PLA for the construction of socialism in the country, and the resolute struggle of the Party and people against both external and internal enemies and their invincible will and courage to overcome countless obstacles and difficulties imposed by the enemy.

As Enver Hoxha pointed out in his “Report to the 7th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania”:

The local production of pig-iron and various steels creates favourable conditions and opens up new prospects for the development of the engineering industry. With the powerful and advanced machinery base, all the possibilities now exist for it to go over, on a broader and more organized scale, to the production of all the special machinery for mining, farming and other branches of the economy, to build complete factories and production lines on the basis of self-reliance.” (Norman Bethune Institute, 1976, p. 43). This has indeed become a reality with the opening of the new tractor and automobile complex “Enver Hoxha” in Tirana which has just

produced the first Albanian-made tractor.

These victories come at a time when the Chinese government has severed all economic and military aid to Albania, following in the same footsteps as their predecessors, Messrs. Khrushchov & Co. who also posed as “friends” but as history would reveal cherished hostile and aggressive ambitions towards Albania and its people. We are certain that the same fate awaits the feudal lords of China who will know no peace. Just as the anti-Albanian schemes of Khrushchov and his successors were unable to convince the people of Albania that their economy was not powerful enough to build the magnificent industrial projects in new Albania, so too will the Albanian people overcome the difficulties imposed by the Chinese leadership who act in the manner of big chauvinists and an aggressive state to sabotage the completion of this magnificent project. Not unlike various monopolies and multinational companies who exact enormous profits from the sweat and toil of the people, the Chinese overlords intended to take pig iron and cobalt from Albania, leaving this material in a semi-processed state, acquiring unprocessed steel at very low prices and then dumping it into the country in the form of finished products such as sheets and pipes at inflated prices. But all the efforts of the savage enemies of mankind will never be able to crush the steel-like unity and determination of the Albanian people to always advance on the road of socialism.

The brilliant example of socialist Albania is indeed a source of inspiration for all the progressive and freedom-loving people of the world. In the victories of the Albanian people we share with them our joys, for our dreams are a reality in socialist Albania. The forging of new Albania belongs to the self-sacrificing efforts and invincible will of the Albanian people to defend and preserve the dictatorship of the proletariat, led by its revolutionary Party. The victories won by the Albanian people demonstrate that a small country even though surrounded by ferocious imperialist and revisionist enemies, when led by a Party loyal to the end to Marxism-Leninism such as the PLA can build a new socialist society by relying on its own forces.

From: “Socialist Albania” Bulletin of the Canadian-Albanian Friendship Association, November-December 1978,

Revisionist "Theories" of Restored Capitalism

by *Hekuran Mara**

The deep and all-round counterrevolutionary and aggressive process which has taken place in all countries ruled by the revisionists has already led to the elimination of the dictatorship the proletariat and the complete restoration of capitalism in these countries. Now the questions on the agenda for traitor revisionist ruling cliques and their ideologists and apologists is to elaborate and publicize "theories", as demagogical and disguised as possible, in order to strengthen the restored capitalism, to present it as "mature socialism", etc.

All this is intended to disorientate the working class and the other masses of the working people ideologically and politically, to prevent the emergence of doubts in their ranks about what has happened and is happening in these countries, to benumb their vigilance, and revolutionary thinking and action, to avert their blows and, finally, to suppress the proletarian revolution when it breaks out. This is a tactic to gain time, to prolong the existence of the restored capitalism.

Revisionism, like all other kinds of opportunism, is a great evil for the Marxist-Leninist ideology, socialism and the world proletarian revolution. The restoration of capitalism in the countries which were building socialism was prepared and accompanied by the spread of the opportunist ideological trend of modern revisionism. At the head of the modern revisionist front stands Krushchevite revisionism. "Soviet revisionism", stressed comrade Enver Hoxha at the 7th Congress of the PLA, "represents the most completely elaborated theory and practice of the revisionist counter-revolution which has revised the Marxist-Leninist theory in all fields and on all questions" (Enver Hoxha, Report to the 7th Congress of the PLA, Tirana 1976, p. 224, Engl. ed.).

The frontal attack of Soviet revisionism on the fundamental questions of Marxism-Leninism could not leave the theory and practice of scientific socialism untouched. First, doubts were raised about the truth and scientific value of the fundamental theses of socialism formulated by the classics of Marxism-Leninism, then the revisionists went over openly to abandonment of them and struggle to overturn them, while today they have been replaced with all kinds of "new" revisionist theories, always veiled in the smokescreen of eclecticism and demagogy about "creative" Marxism, in order to conceal the true face of the capitalism they have restored. The Soviet revisionists dress themselves in the cloak of Marxism-Leninism precisely to cover up their betrayal of Marxism-Leninism, socialism and the proletarian revolution just as the bourgeoisie and the criminal in bourgeois society do when, in order to cover up their crimes, they don the robe of the "guardian" of public order or the "law-abiding" person.

In the system of "theories" and views of the Soviet revisionists which serve to cover the restored capitalism with a false lustre of socialism, *the question of the historical limits of the period of transition from capitalism to communism occupies an important place*. On the correct solution of this question depends the stand towards a series of fundamental theses of the theory and practice of scientific socialism, the implementation of which is decisive for the preservation and strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the continuous advance of the revolution and the construction of socialism and communism, the impossibility of the turn back and the restoration of capitalism.

The Soviet revisionists maintain the view that the period of transition does not extend right up to the construction of the classless society, but is a separate period of the transition from capitalism to socialism which ends with the construction of the economic base of socialism. "The

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period of transition from capitalism to socialism”, writes the academician Pyotr Fedoseyev, “begins with the triumph of the socialist revolution and ends with the elimination of capitalist private property” (Voprosy Ekonomiki, No. 5, 1975, p. 27). In connection with the same question, the text of political economy of Moscow University says: “In every country the period of transition begins from the moment of the establishment of socialist relations in production” (Kurs Politicheskoy Ekonomii, Izdatelstvo Ekonomika, Moscvva, 1974, pp. 8-9).

It is evident that this view is not a chance aberration or simply an “isolated ideological distortion”, but a consciously chosen prevailing official view. The reduction by the Soviet revisionists of the period of transition from capitalism to communism to a period that ends with the construction of the economic base of socialism is done for the purpose of justifying the revisionist counter-revolution “theoretically” and denying the class struggle, of justifying the elimination of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its replacement with the dictatorship of the new bourgeoisie, and disguising the restoration of capitalism.

And, in fact, they assert that after the completion of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism “the main problem” of “who will win?” is solved, “socialism achieves its complete triumph over capitalism,” in the socialist economy the struggle between the two roads of development no longer exists, “in the developed socialist society classes disappear and only occupational or social-psychological distinctions between the intelligentsia, the workers and collective farmers remain,” etc. etc (Kurs Politicheskoy Ekonomii, pp 10, 50, 79). Likewise, according to them, after the establishment of socialist relations of production the class struggle ceases and, therefore, the ideo-political or socio-economic soil for the possibility of the degeneration of socialism and the restoration of capitalism cannot be created. After this period, according to the Soviet revisionists, “the tendencies of private ownership cease to operate”, “the forms of small scale private production cannot serve as a breeding ground for the emergence of the new capitalist elements in the economy”, the contradictions between socialist production and small-scale production no longer have an antagonistic character”, “within the country, any cause for political struggle is eliminated, and the possibilities of antagonistic class conflicts and political counter-revolution disappears” (Kurs Politicheskoy Ekonomii. tom II, Moskva. 1974 pp. 33, 60). As a consequence of all these false, anti-scientific and anti-Marxist argumentations they arrive at the conclusion that “socialism is not a temporary co-existence of immature communism and vestiges of capitalism, but a new, independent, mode of production” (Voprosi Ekonomii, No 6, 1975, p. 27). And finally, the eclectic circle of the revisionist betrayal is completed with the thesis that in the conditions of the so-called developed socialist society, the existence of the dictatorship of the proletariat is no longer necessary, therefore it is transformed into a state of the entire people.

We need only confront the views of the Soviet revisionists on the period of transition from capitalism to communism with the theses of the classics of Marxism-Leninism, the teachings of our Party and comrade Enver Hoxha to disclose their anti-scientific and anti-Marxist character and their bourgeois capitalist content.

The classics of Marxism-Leninism always treated the period of transition as a very long historical period which extends throughout the whole period of the construction of socialism up to communism, as a whole epoch of the transition from capitalism to communism. Likewise, in broad outline, they also denied the fundamental socio-economic characteristics of this period. Between capitalist and communist society, wrote K. Marx, “lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other” (K. Marx, Criticism of the Gotha Programme, p. 30). On another occasion he writes that the period of transition from capitalism to communism “is

that indispensable step to go on to the elimination of class distinctions in general, to the elimination of all relations of production on which these distinctions are based, to the elimination of all social relations which correspond to the relations of production, to the overthrow of all ideas that stem from these social relations” (K. Marx—F. Engels, Selected Works, Vol. I, p. 226, Alb. ed.).

When he speaks about the society of the period of transition capitalism to communism, Marx is speaking not about a communist society which is developing on its own communist base but about a society which has just emerged from capitalist society, a society which for this reason still preserves in all directions traces of the old society from the womb of which it has just been born.

Lenin, too, maintained the same stand whenever he dealt with the question of the period of transition from capitalism to communism or individual problems connected with this period. The transition from capitalist society which, in its development, is moving towards communism, to communist society, cannot be made without a political transition period” (V. I. Lenin Collected Works, vol. 25. p. 540, Alb. ed.). When he deals with this period, Lenin especially stresses that it combines in itself features and qualities of two socio-economic orders, that it is a period of struggle between capitalism which is dying and communism which is in the process of its birth. Finally, Lenin, like Marx, links the period of transition with the disappearance of classes, and class distinctions in society, and all the relations of production on which these distinctions are based.

Proceeding from the notion of the socio-economic formation as a separate social organism which has its objective laws of birth and development, in which a given mode of production corresponds to a social class structure and given superstructure, the classics of Marxism-Leninism have laid it down that communism is a single socio-economic formation with two phases: with a lower phase — socialism, and a higher phase — full communism.

Hence the anti-Marxist character of the revisionist view, which considers and proclaims socialism as a mode of production in itself and communism as another mode of production, emerges very clearly. Within one economic-social formation there have never been and cannot be two different modes of production. The arbitrary declaration of socialism as a mode of production in itself was necessary to the Soviet revisionists as a “theoretical argument” in order to negate the existence of classes and class struggle in socialism.

The revolutionary experience of the construction of socialism in our country is more and more confirming the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist view that the transition period *is* the whole historical period of the transition from capitalism to communism. It starts with the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and continues up to the achievement of full communism, until classes are eliminated, until all class distinctions disappear, and classless society is achieved.

In accord with this concept, socialism represents a stage in the transition to communism in which the new socialist relations of production have been established, the exploitation of man by man has been wiped out, antagonistic classes have been eliminated, but non-antagonistic classes exist, class distinctions and contradictions exist, the class struggle exists as the principal motive force, and the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road of development continues according to Lenin’s formula “Which will win?” in the base and the superstructure. As long as all these problems have not been resolved, socialism cannot be considered as completely built, and consequently, its triumph cannot be considered as final. For these reasons the socialist revolution must continue uninterruptedly during the whole period of the transition from

capitalism to communism. In regards to the final triumph of socialism, this question has to do with the development of the world proletarian revolution, with the ratio of forces between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie on a world scale. When this ratio has been definitively solved in favour of the proletariat, that is to say, when the proletarian revolution has triumphed and socialism is built in all the countries of the world, then its complete victory is turned into a final victory. Under these conditions, there is no longer any danger threatening socialism either within the country or from outside.

The true Marxist-Leninist concept of socialism as the first stage of communism brings to light the sheer falsity of the revisionist view which treats it as a social order of social homogeneity in which class interests and class struggle allegedly no longer exist, in which the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road is no longer waged because the question of "who will win?" has allegedly been finally solved.

During the whole period while socialism is being built and friendly classes exist within it, along with elements of the overthrown classes and the capitalist encirclement, there still remains the possibility of the birth of the new bourgeois elements, the possibility of degeneration of socialism, hence also the possibility of the restoration of capitalism. This possibility is not an inevitability. It can be totally averted when the socialist revolution continues uninterrupted, when the Party of the working class, which leads the entire process of the construction of socialism, bases itself firmly on, and remains loyal to, the triumphant and ever young ideology of Marxism-Leninism. The great historical merit of our Party with comrade Enver Hoxha at the head is that it not only brought our country into the brilliant epoch of the transition from capitalism to communism, but is also leading it with determination and wisdom in the consistent construction of true socialism. It is self-evident that in the scheme of the Soviet revisionists about socialism or the "developed socialist society", the question of the possibility of degeneration of socialism and the restoration of capitalism is left completely unmentioned, because to speak of it would be like speaking of the noose in the home of the hanged.

Until the final victory of communism is achieved, the historical period of the construction of socialism is characterized by the preservation of the political organization of society in the form of the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this period, the dictatorship of the proletariat and its economic, organizational, educational and repressive functions go through a dialectical process of growing stronger and more perfect, which goes on right up until the internal and external conditions for the withering away of the state are created universally.

The view of the Soviet revisionists on the transformation of the dictatorship of the proletariat into the socialised state of the entire people after the construction of the economic base of socialism, when classes still exist, is an anti-Marxist, counter-revolutionary view, to disguise the social-fascist dictatorship established by the revisionist bourgeoisie. In reality, the so-called "state of the entire people", which has been established today in the Soviet Union, is a state without the working class at the head, without the leadership of its party and without the Marxist-Leninist ideology. This type of state represents the political domination of the new bourgeoisie, its dictatorship, which oppresses, enslaves and exploits the working class and the other masses of the working people, which protects the restored capitalist order by force of arms and other means of coercion.

The open abandonment by the Soviet revisionists of the scientific Marxist-Leninist concept of socialism comes out clearly, also, when they proclaim the development of the productive forces as the only decisive factor of its construction. "In the conditions of developed socialism", write the ideologists of Soviet revisionism, "the problem of the economic efficiency of social

production emerges as primary. Raising this efficiency constitutes the decisive condition for the construction of socialism” (Voprosi Ekonomiki No 5, 1975, p. 771. This too, is a very dangerous anti-Marxist view which opens the way to revisionist counter-revolution. It is aimed at creating and spreading the erroneous idea that such factors as the leadership of the working class and the Marxist-Leninist party, keeping the dictatorship of the proletariat in the hands of the working class to ensure that it is not usurped by new bourgeois elements, the strengthening and perfecting of the socialist relations of production, the waging of the class struggle on all fronts and in all fields at the same time, are allegedly not factors, just as decisive as the development of the productive forces for the fate of the socialist revolution and the construction of socialism.

The negative experience of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union shows unequivocally that the fatal damage did not come from any low level of the development of the productive forces but from the degeneration of the economic base and superstructure, from the replacement of the proletarian political line of the party with a revisionist line. And this same evil may threaten the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism in any country that builds socialism if the emphasis is placed one-sidedly on the development of the productive forces alone, and revisionism is allowed to spread in the superstructure, especially in ideology, and in the base.

The Marxist-Leninist theory and revolutionary practice teach us that true socialism can be built consistently and can advance successfully towards communism when the revolution and the class struggle are developed ceaselessly in all fields of social life, when they include not only the development of productive forces, but also the strengthening and perfecting, in the correct revolutionary Marxist-Leninist course, of socialist relations of production, when they also include the defence and strengthening of the dictatorship of the proletariat and, above all, when they include the preservation of the revolutionary proletarian line, the defence of the purity of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Otherwise, if the revisionist counter-revolution is allowed to spread, no level of development of the productive forces, however high, can save socialism from the danger of degeneration and the restoration of capitalism. Any illusion created about the role of the productive forces alone in the construction of socialism is fatalistic determinism, a vulgar metaphysical concept of materialism, which history has punished severely.

Another field of the revision of the theory and practice of scientific socialism on the part of the Soviet revisionists is *their elimination of the dividing line, their confusing of the economic laws of socialism with their methods, forms and practices of management of the economy*. As a result, their analysis of socialism is not based on the relations of production but on their so-called theories and practices of planning, of the total social product and the factors of its growth, of the necessary product and the surplus product of the criteria for measuring the efficiency of production, etc. The “theories” and views of the Soviet revisionists, which replace the economic laws of socialism with their forms and practices of the management of the economy, represent an entire ideological and political mechanism specially selected to provide theoretical justification for the restoration of capitalist practices in the organization and management of the economy in the Soviet Union.

In the text-book of the political economy of socialism published by the University of Moscow, the analysis of the so-called developed socialist society begins with the planning of production, which is considered as the fundamental relation of socialism, its foundation. Here it is quite obvious that the Soviet revisionists have gone over completely to bourgeois idealist positions, in open opposition to the well-known thesis of historical materialism which says that the most profound secret, the invisible foundation of the whole social structure should be sought in the relations of production which arise from the type of ownership over the means of

production.

The anti-Marxist position of the Soviet revisionists becomes even more clear when they affirm that “the necessity of planning springs from the high level of development of the material and technical base” (Kurs Politicheskoi Ekonomii, p. 110) and that “the technical-scientific revolution, and the utilization of mathematical economic models should be made the foundation of planning” (Voprosi Ekonomiki, No 5, 1976, p. 30). That these statements are a negation of the law of the planned and proportional development of the economy, is clear from the “arguments” that the revisionists themselves employ on this question.

The Soviet revisionists claim that the law of the proportional development of the economy is a universal law that operates in all socio-economic formations, therefore there can be no special law for socialism. In this connection they usually refer to the known thesis of Marx to the effect that the need for the social division of labour in definite proportions cannot be eliminated from social production in any instance, that only the forms of its expression can alter. But with this thesis Marx means that every nation is obliged to expend parts of its labour on the production of material blessings and divide the labour in certain proportions. This need Marx considered as a similar to the “laws of nature” which cannot be eliminated.

But can it be claimed on this basis, as the Soviet revisionists do, that Marx was of the opinion that the law of the proportional development of the national economy has operated and continues to operate in all socio-economic formations? Certainly not! In fact, Marx does speak of the need for the division of social labour in certain proportions for any nation, regardless of its economic-social order, but not of the possibility of this. As is known, the economic law does not comprise only the need, but also the objective possibility through which the need is realized. It is also known that as long as social ownership over the means of production and the dictatorship of the proletariat have not been established, the objective possibility for social labour to be divided in a planned manner and in regulated proportions among the various branches of material production is not created either.

That the law of the proportional development of the economy is a law peculiar to socialism and, therefore, had no possibility of existing, and in fact did not exist prior to socialism, emerges without any doubt also in the case of capitalist production. For this reason, Marx never claimed that the law of the proportional development has operated in the capitalist economy. Let us recall that as early as his work “The Poverty of Philosophy”, Marx described the efforts of Proudhon and the other ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie to achieve proportional production, to ensure a correct ratio between supply and demand in the conditions when private ownership of the means of production prevailed, as a reactionary utopia. Consistently pursuing the same line of thought, in the first Volume of the “Capital” Marx proved that, in capitalism, the distribution of labour and the means of production among the various branches of social production is regulated only by the interplay of the momentary and arbitrary forces that operate in the market. Of course, here, too, there is a permanent trend towards the establishment of a balance among the different branches of social production, but this tendency manifests itself only as a reaction against the permanent and continuous upsetting of this balance.

It is known also that Lenin, too, in his time, categorically refuted Struve's attempt to interpret Marx's theory on the realization of social product as a theory of the proportional distribution of labour and means of production in capitalism. In this instance Lenin stresses that, in his theory of the realization of the social product in capitalism, Marx, by means of scientific abstraction, deals with the conditions that must exist for extended reproduction, including the proportional distribution of the product among the different branches of the production, although this in no

way means that Marx's theory on the realization of social product presupposes and affirms that the products are, or can be, always distributed in a proportional manner in capitalist society. The proportional distribution of the product is the ideal of capitalist production, but no means the reality of it. Therefore, the proportions in capitalist production are not established and realized except as an accidental occurrence in the permanent state of disproportion. And when these disproportions reach their ultimate critical point, then the economic crisis breaks out which, through its destructive force, re-establishes some sort of new equilibrium, to open the way for a new cycle of disproportions.

The law of the planned and proportional development of the national economy is born, exists and operates only in the conditions when socialist social ownership over the means of production and the dictatorship of the proletariat prevail. It is exclusively an economic law specific to socialism. Its operation necessarily requires the management of the national economy by the socialist state, that is to say, from a single centre, on the basis of democratic centralism, requires the drawing up and implementation of a unified overall state plan, based on all the other economic laws of socialism, in order to attain the objective of socialist production—the fulfilment of the material and cultural needs of the members of society.

The endeavours of the Soviet revisionists to present the law of the planned, proportional development as a universal law that operates in other socio-economic formations, too, is an opportunist view which coincides with the view of the bourgeois apologists of capitalism, who claim that the capitalist economy, too, can be developed and planned in a proportional manner. They need this in order to conceal their going over to methods and practices of “planning” of the capitalist type with demagogy. If we add to this the creation of branch and inter-branch combines of the monopoly type, with complete economic independence, as well as going over of enterprises to full economic freedom (to a completely self-supporting basis), we can see the decentralization of the Soviet revisionist economy, which has been turned into a market economy in which the law of profit and the other laws of capitalist production prevail.

The question of the use of commodity and money relations represents a whole system in the “theories” and views of the Soviet revisionists. One of the directions of the revisionist onslaught that was launched following the 20th Congress of the revisionist Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the Marxist-Leninist theoretical legacy in the field of economic science began with the question of commodity production and law of value, until, step by step, it reached the point of the elaboration of the so-called theory of “market socialism” which serves today as the basis to proclaim profit as “the fundamental criterion of the efficiency of production” in the Soviet economy

In attacking the Marxist-Leninist view in regard to commodity production in socialism, the Soviet revisionists claim that history knows only two types of social production: the natural economy and the market economy. Therefore, they assert, either socialism and an economy without the system of commodity and money relations, or socialism and a market economy with commodity, value, money, economic spontaneity, competition, prices, profits, credits, interest, taxes on the fundamental means, rent, etc, which extend over the whole people's economy. According to the revisionists, any commodity production in socialism is identical with capitalist commodity production. According to them, to assert the existence of commodity production of a special type in socialism means, allegedly, to decide “arbitrarily”, contrary to the objective reality.

This view of the Soviet revisionists is refuted, first of all, by the history of the birth and development of commodity production itself and of all the other economic categories related to

it. Commodity, money, market are economic categories which do not belong to only one socio-economic formation; they extend beyond the bounds of capitalism and capitalist private ownership in general, they have their beginnings before the emergence of capitalism and capitalist private property. Following the thread of the history of the birth and development of commodity relations shows that in different economic-social formations, they have expressed and still express different relations of production, in accordance with the prevailing form, «ownership over the means of production. On the other hand, according to the type of ownership over the means of production, the sphere of operation of commodity and money relations has changed, too. Some of their features have disappeared and others have emerged in their place. For example, in the pre-capitalist formations, commodity relations did not extend over labour power. Later, labour power was turned into a commodity and, finally, socialism totally precludes the existence of labour power as a commodity, along with some other things as such the means of production.

As emerges from the study of the history of commodity production and the economic categories related it, there is no ground whatsoever to take commodity production separately from the social formation in which it exists, and, what is more, there is no reason to assert that every kind of commodity production is identical with capitalist commodity production, as the modern revisionists do.

Both in theory and in the practice of our socialist construction it has been proven that commodity production, the relations of commodity production and money do not present themselves in the socialist economy with the same nature and the same features as in the conditions of dominance of capitalist private ownership over the means of production, but undergo a radical alteration. In order to make this difference clear, Stalin proved that in socialism there is commodity production of a special type. Precisely this thesis of Stalin's the Soviet revisionists do not accept, in order to give the "right of citizenship" to their bourgeois thesis to the effect that the socialist economy is allegedly a commodity production economy, a market economy. However it is known that the whole essence of the analysis Stalin makes in connection with commodity production in socialism in his work "Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR" is summed up in the disclosure and explanation of the features that disappear or change radically and of those that are preserved in the conditions of the socialist economy.

What are the features of commodity production that are eliminated in the socialist economy? Of course, they are all those features which are connected with the capitalist relations of exploitation and express those relations, such as anarchy of production, spontaneity of the market, competition, the exploitation of man by man, the transformation of commodities and money into capital, surplus value and profit, the price of the product, inflation, crises of overproduction, etc.

Which are those features of commodity production which remain in socialism and continue to develop on a new basis and in new socio-economic conditions? Naturally, only those features that are used to express the economic form of social relations among people in some of the phases of the process of social reproduction, such as value, cost, price, etc.

It is self-evident that commodity and money relations in socialism do not include the base of socialist production. Here the means of production and labour power are not commodities. Therefore, the uniting of the means of production with labour power, as a fundamental economic relation, is not carried out through the act of buying, but directly through the organization of the centralized and planned management of the economy, in the interest of the working people themselves, who are owners of the means of production and direct producers of material

blessings at the same time. In this sense, Stalin stressed that in socialism, the sphere of extension of commodity production, of commodity and money relations, is limited, that it does not include in its content either production in general or the means of production. This thesis marks the dividing line between the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint and the revisionist viewpoint on commodity production in socialism. According to this thesis, commodity production in socialism, is production of a special type which history has never known before.

Marx and Engels did not envisage commodity production in socialism, so they did not take up this question to solve it. On this basis, prior to the October Revolution opinions were expressed to the effect that socialism is incompatible with commodity production, and it was accepted as an axiom in socialism. In the period of war communism in the Soviet Union, efforts were made to do away with commodity and money relations. The experience of that period provided convincing proof of the impossibility of the construction of socialism without using commodity production and the economic categories deriving from it. Basing himself on the experience of war communism, Lenin rejected the dogma of the incompatibility between socialism and commodity production. Lenin linked the elimination of commodity production and of gold as money with the triumph of communism on a world scale.

Proceeding from Lenin's teachings and the historical experience of the construction of socialism up to the end of the forties, Stalin summed up and formulated theoretically a series of questions related to the reasons for the preservation and necessity for the existence of commodity production in socialism, its new features as commodity production of a special type, and the use of commodity and money relations in the socialist economy. The experience of the socialist economy in our country, where Marxism-Leninism is implemented faithfully and in a creative spirit by our Party of Labour, show that Stalin's view on commodity production, which are based on Marxist-Leninist theory, were and still are correct.

The present-day process of world development as a whole is moving towards the overthrow of capitalism, towards the proletarian revolution and the triumph of communism. "The world is at a stage when the cause of the revolution and national liberation of the peoples is not just an aspiration and a future prospect, but a problem taken up for solution" (Envor Hoxha, Report at the 7th Congress of the PLA, p. 159, Engl, ed.)

In the context of this general and unceasing trend towards the revolutionary transformation of the world, the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and the other countries ruled by the revisionists represents a zigzag, a violation of the universal laws of development of human society, which cannot abolish the operation of these laws. Therefore, Marxism-Leninism sees it and describes it as a temporary, passing phenomenon, which will be wiped from the face of the earth with violence, by means of the proletarian revolution.

The revisionist "theories" of restored capitalism have to do not only with the economy, but with all fields of social life, with an offensive against the entire Marxist-Leninist theory and the practice of scientific socialism. Therefore, the task our Party has laid down before us of deepening our knowledge of the roots of Khrushchevite revisionism and its variants, and increasing our criticism and struggle against it and any kind of opportunism, new and old, is a many-sided task. It must include knowledge and criticism of, and struggle against, the fundamental theses which have to do with the ideological preparation for the restoration of capitalism, with the degeneration of the relations of production and the superstructure, with the new exploiting class that is emerging and the class struggle, with the political organization of society and the socio-economic relations which are established by the modern revisionists.

Now that the communists and all the working people of our country have in the hands thr

broad, thorough, general analyses that the Party and comrade Enver Hoxha have made of the causes and ways of the complete restoration of capitalism in the Soviet union and the other revisionist countries, they are armed to fight even better and with greater success against the whole bourgeois-revisionist ideology and the pressures it exerts on our society and our socialist construction. It is only by means of thorough knowledge and criticism of, and struggle against, the bourgeois-revisionist ideology on all fronts that the purity of Marxism-Leninism can be defended on all the issues of the theory and practice of scientific socialism, that the construction of true socialism can be carried forward in all fields, and that the forms and practices of capitalism, no matter how specific and disguised, can be exposed and the road closed to them.

The Paternity Case

A Short Story by Aleks Duarasi

The biting cold made it pleasant to turn in to the warm courthouse building that January morning- As I opened the door of my office, an unprepossessing young man standing in the corridor came up to me and asked if I was the judge. When I replied in the affirmative, he went on:

“May I see you about a case...?”

I interrupted him: “You may not. If you have information about a case, you must give it in court with all the parties present.”

He flushed “I’m sorry. Comrade”, he said, and backed away from me. He had a peculiarly ungainly walk, lifting his feet slightly to one side like a caricature of Chaplin....

When I looked at the list of cases for the day, I saw that the only one that morning was a paternity case. As a judge I probably see more than most people of human tragedy and weakness, but of all the cases that come before me, those involving paternity cause me most anguish: the bringing up before strangers of private intimacies and emotions, the evidence of broken trust and deceit, of selfishness and callousness where love should be – above all the thought of a child brought into the world unwanted by one parent and sometimes by both.

As I took my place in the court, I looked for a moment at the parties involved. The girl, whose name was Elida, was young and moderately attractive, with the air of a country girl bewildered by events she did not fully understand. The man, Kristaq by name, was extremely handsome and smartly dressed, with an air of confident assurance: he was represented by a lawyer.

When the necessary papers relating to the birth of the child had been produced, I turned to the girl:

“You say that this man” (I nodded towards Kristaq) “is the father of your child?”

“Yes”, she replied quickly, in a hoarse whisper

The lawyer cleared his throat and rose to his feet. “Comrade Chairman!” he said, “I wish to state that my client absolutely and positively denies any intimacy with this young woman”.

I questioned the defendant who replied in tones of aggrieved innocence. He had met the girl only once, he said, at a cinema, where they had exchanged conversation in the foyer. After that she had telephoned him several times at his place of work but he had never set eyes on her again until he received, “out of the blue” as he put it, a letter from her saying that she was pregnant. His lawyer then called two men friends of his as witnesses, both of whom declared (although, it seemed to my legal eye, a shade uneasily) that the defendant hardly knew the girl and could not possibly have been intimate with her without their knowledge.

I looked at the girl. She was very pale, and her hands gave little fluttering movements—like the wings of a bird that has been shut up in a cage and is trying in vain to break through unyielding wires.

“It’s not true” she said; “we met lots of times. He *is* the father. There has been no-one else.”

“Have you any witnesses, or evidence of any kind, to support what you say?” I asked.

She shook her head. “He always wanted to meet me in the park at night, after dark,” she said; “there was no-one”.

At this moment a figure rose to his feet at the back of the almost empty courtroom, and I recognised the young man who had accosted me in the corridor.

“Comrade Judge!”, he exploded

“If you have some information to give on this case, please come to the front of the court”, I told him. And he walked forward with that strange twist of the feet which I had noticed outside.

“I...”, he began nervously, and gulped; “I am the father of the child!”

This announcement produced a stunned silence. Everyone involved seemed completely taken aback—none more so than Elida.

“What are you saying, Beno?”, she called out in a startled voice.

The lawyer was the first to recover, and rose quickly to his feet.

“Comrade Chairman!” he said, “you have heard that there is absolutely no evidence whatever to connect my client with paternity in this case—quite the contrary. Now a witness has come forward and admitted paternity. I ask that the case against my client be dismissed.”

I turned again to the girl.

“It's not true”, she said weakly, “...not true!”

My feeling was that the girl had told the truth and that everyone else involved was, for reasons of his own, lying. But one cannot make a legal judgment on the basis of subjective feelings. There was clearly no valid evidence against the defendant and, after consulting with my colleagues on the bench, I dismissed the case. Kristaq left the court somewhat jauntily, but I noticed that he avoided looking at Elida; who was staring at him with an expression of contempt—that was perhaps directed as much at herself as at Kristaq.

As I left the courthouse, I noticed that Elida and Beno were standing in the corridor. The girl was crying and Beno was patting her hand awkwardly. “But I've always loved you Elida”, he was saying; “I want to marry you...”

My Rifle

A poem by Faslli Canaj

I hold you to my breast,
I touch you,
I stroke your proud and awful barrel,
I grip you,
I talk with you in nights of rain and wind,
I watch with you in crystal mornings, over broad horizons.

I dream with you,
I sing with you,
I march with you,
I watch with you,
That the enemy may not come, secretly, like a wolf at the gate,
That our eyes may be bright with Albanian light.

In order to get in touch with the State Preparatory Committees of the India-Albania Friendship Association contact the following:

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