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Trotskyism and the Revolutionary Movement

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As was pointed out at the 6th Congress of the Party of Labour of Albania, the development of the revolutionary movement of the working class in our times absolutely demands a consistent struggle against both the Right opportunism of the modern revisionists (and this is the main thing) and the “leftist” trends and preachings, especially against the dangerous activity of Trotskyism, which, at the present time and going back to the 60s, has been reactivated. In the report delivered at the 6th Congress of the Party, Comrade Enver Hoxha said: “The varying anti-Marxist trends of Trotskyism and anarchism have been enlivened as never before. Penetrating into the various mass movements, especially of the youth and intellectuals, they are trying to fish in troubled waters, with the aim of diverting the masses from the right road and throwing them into dangerous adventures which lead to grave defeats, and disillusionment”.

RESUCITATION OF TROTSKYISM AND ITS CAUSES

Following the 20th and especially the 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U., at which the renegade Khrushchov launched his savage campaign against Stalinism, Trotskyism, which had received heavy blows and lost all influence among the masses, raised its head, recommenced its undermining activity on a wide scale and extended its poisonous roots to many regions and countries of the world. In Europe, Africa and in other zones, numerous Trotskyite groups and organisations began to sprout like toadstools on rotting timber.

Since the 1960s, the Trotskyists have grouped themselves around four main centres: “the International Secretariat”, the so-called “Marxist-Revolutionary Trend of the 4th International” the “Latin American Secretariat”, and the “International Committee” of London, which by and large unites the British, American and Canadian Trotskyist groups.

The Trotskyist groups are particularly numerous in Western Europe. For example, in France such groups as “the Internationalist Communist Party (P.C.I.), which is the French offshoot of the 4th International, “the Internationalist Communist Organisation (O.C.I.), a rival faction which does not participate in the 4th International, “the Alliance of Youth for Socialism” (A.J.S.), “the Marxist-Revolutionary Alliance” (A.M.R.), “the Communist League (L-C.), “the Workers’ Struggle Group” (L.O.) etc., have all appeared and carried on their poisonous activity. Similarly in Spain there are “the International Communist Party” also known as “Unidad”, “the Worker’s Party of Marxist Unity”, (POUM), the “Communist Action” organisation, “the Revolutionary Workers’ Party (P.O.R.), In Britain there is the Trotskyist organisation called “the Socialist Action League”. Various Trotskyist groupings have raised their heads in many other countries from West Germany, Sweden, Belgium, etc. in Europe, to Ceylon and Japan in Asia.

What are the causes of the revival of Trotskyism at the present time? The main reasons are:

On the one hand the betrayal by modern revisionism, especially that of the Krushchovite revisionists, which caused great confusion in the revolutionary movement. This is precisely what has made it possible for the Trotskyists to flaunt pseudo-leftist slogans to confuse the revolutionary movement.

On the other hand, the revival of Trotskyism is connected with the large-scale drawing into

the revolutionary movement today of the petty-bourgeois middle strata, including especially the petty-bourgeois strata of the cities such as small shop-keepers, lower and middle grade clerks and officials, intellectuals and students, who bring with them into the movement all the waverings typical of the petty bourgeoisie. It is precisely these vacillations, this petty-bourgeois instability, the tendency to go from one extreme to the other, from anarchism and unrestrained adventurism to extreme Right opportunism and defeatism, which constitutes that favourable ground on which Trotskyism can flourish and on which it gambles for its counter-revolutionary aims.

Finally, in the present period, when the tide of revolutionary movement is in full flow, the bourgeoisie is bending every effort to encourage and support the spread of Trotskyism, which, by playing on the feelings of protest of the broad masses of working people, especially of the youth and students with their sincere but spontaneous revolutionary tendencies, against the capitalist order, is trying to disorientate them with ultra-revolutionary phraseology, to turn them from the true road of the revolution, to direct them into adventures that are quite harmless to the rule of the bourgeoisie and thus to engender disillusionment. This is why today the publishing houses financed by the bourgeoisie are distributing large quantities of the works of Trotsky and other Trotskyist literature.

FUNDAMENTAL FEATURES

What are the characteristics of present-day Trotskyism?

In general, the Trotskyism of our day takes its stand on the same anti-Marxist views, objectives and methods, that were worked out by Trotsky himself in his time. But because of the existing conditions and circumstances in which it is operating today, they cannot fail to have certain new special features.

From the philosophic-methodological viewpoint, present day Trotskyism, like the Trotskyism of the past, is characterised by subjectivism, which is expressed, among other things, in failure to take into account the objective circumstances which condition the development of the revolutionary movement on a national or an international scale, the character and motive forces of the revolution in its different stages. Eclecticism and pragmatism, lack of firm principle, reliance on completely contradictory concepts, rushing from one extreme to the other, unity with the most varied trends for the sake of momentary advantages, are all characteristic of Trotskyist concepts.

From the political-ideological viewpoint, present day Trotskyism is characterised by hostility towards revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. This is a common feature of both old and new Trotskyism. Formerly it was expressed in Trotsky's hostile stand towards Lenin and Leninism. Later it found expression in the hostile stand of Trotsky and the Trotskyists towards the ideas, leadership and work of Stalin.

At the present time the hostility of Trotskyism towards Marxism-Leninism is expressed in the fact that the Trotskyists try to divert the attention of the revolutionary movement away from the struggle against modern revisionism and direct it to a position of anti-Stalinism. The Trotskyists present the revolutionary Marxist-Leninist line of Stalin in an entirely distorted light, describing it as Right opportunism. And while they have little or nothing, apart from a few general statements, to say about the struggle against revisionism, they direct all their fire against Stalin and Stalinism, accusing him of betraying Leninism and the cause of the revolution and socialism, of confusing the world revolutionary movement, of causing the decline of the revolutionary drive in the West, of carrying out the occupation and exploitation of the countries

of People's Democracy after World War 2, etc. etc. (P. Frank — "La Ouatrieme International" ed. Maspero, 1969).

They also assail Mao Tsetung and his ideas, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese revolution. (Ibid, and also D. Avenas, A Brossat, — "De l'antitrotskyisme", ed. Maspero. 1972).

UNITY WITH REVISIONISTS

Meanwhile the Trotskyists are in complete agreement with the modern revisionists in their fundamental attitudes. Together with the revisionists they attack Stalin and the Communist Party of China, give their support to the various trends of revisionism. In 1948, the leadership of the 4th International and the Trotskyist organisations that participated in it expressed their support for the Yugoslav revisionists and carried out widespread activities in their favour (P. Frank — La Ouatrieme Internationale). In 1956 they took the side of the Hungarian counter-revolution.

In 1968, the Trotskyists lined up with the Dubchek revisionists in Czechoslovakia, proclaiming their policy as a revolutionary one. Likewise, the Trotskyists associated themselves with the demagogy of Soviet revisionists over the alleged "united front of all socialist countries against American imperialism". They deny the process of the restoration of capitalism in the countries ruled by the revisionists.

What Lenin said about Trotsky long ago is completely valid for present-day Trotskyism: "He twists, speculates, poses as being of the Left, and does everything he can to assist the Right..." The main objective of the Trotskyites is to bring about the unity of all trends, whether Right or Left, against revolutionary Marxism-Leninism, which they describe as Stalinism.

SPLITTERS OF WORKING CLASS MOVEMENT

The splitting of the revolutionary movement of the working class is one of the outstanding objectives and the most characteristic feature of present-day Trotskyism. Objectively, Trotskyism today can be described as a special agency in the service of the bourgeoisie for the splitting of the working class movement, splitting which the Trotskyites try to elevate to a principle by expressing themselves openly against the unity in the ranks of the movement.

This is what Pierre Frank, one of today's leading ideologists of Trotskyism wrote: "In fact, what is really the most abnormal thing in the worker's movement is its monolithic nature, this 'unity' which stifles all independent political thought in the ranks of organisations which call themselves Marxist... Anyone who looks at the history of the workers' movement will see that it has been full of struggles between currents and trends, in political and theoretical opposition to one another. This was in order, because progress of revolutionary thought and deed is inconceivable without a ceaseless confrontation of theories, attitudes and orientations, with the reality. And how much more should it be like this in a world in which great upheavals are occurring continually, in which the "new" is being born from day to day" (P. Frank — La Ouatrieme Internationale, p. 60).

Thus, according to him we cannot even speak of unity of the workers' movement, as its normal state is one of continuous splits. (!)

TROTSKYIST VACILLATIONS

Unprincipled vacillation from Left to Right, uniting sometimes with the opportunists furthest to the Right, sometimes with the most extremist and adventurist leftist elements, is also characteristic of the concepts and attitudes of the Trotskyists. Thus on the one hand, they pursue the so-called policy of infiltration, that is, the amalgamation of Trotskyist groups with other

parties, even with the Rightist social-democrat parties, while on the other hand, they launch frantic attacks on the policy of the anti-fascist people's front, which they describe as "an opportunist policy of class collaboration".

On the other hand, the Trotskyists praise to the heavens the use of violence, regardless of whether or not it is correct tactics, support and incite Leftist and anarchist movements which are without any revolutionary perspective or programme, which only cause confusion and disillusionment in the revolutionary movement through such things as tiny revolts by tiny armed groups, or guerrilla fighting which has no support in a broad, organised, mass political movement (putschism and political adventurism). On the other hand, they recommend that the workers' movement adopt strategy and tactics in the struggle for socialism which is an identical copy of the reformist line of the "right-wing" revisionists (P. Frank — "La Quatrieme Internationale" and K. Mavrakis — "Du Trotskysme", 1971).

These vacillations, the eclectic mixing up of concepts furthest to the Right with those from the extreme Left, are not only the expression of the profoundly petty-bourgeois nature of the Trotskyist movement, but are also a method to confuse and disorientate the revolutionary movement.

All these things show that the fundamental policy of the Trotskyism of today is, as it was in the past, revolution in words, but the undermining and sabotage of the revolutionary movement in practice.

TROTSKYIST METHODS TODAY

How do the Trotskyists sabotage the revolutionary movement of the working class today?

The Trotskyists make great play with slogans of revolution, and in particular, they proclaim the so-called theory of the 'permanent revolution', which they try to put across as the creative development of Marxism-Leninism. But what is the essence of their ultra-revolutionary preachings and whom do they really serve?

The theory of the "permanent revolution" is the denial of stages of the revolution under the pretext of its uninterrupted development. This was the viewpoint of Trotsky and is the viewpoint of his followers today. According to this theory, in every country, whether one of the developed capitalist countries or a colonial or semi-colonial country, wherever the revolution is being carried out, it cannot be anything except a purely proletarian revolution, without any sort of intermediate phases.

"At the present time there are no intermediate roads between the rule of capital and the dictatorship of the proletariat", write the Trotskyists. But to put the matter forward in this way means to ignore the objective factors which condition the revolution in the different phases of its development, to restrict the social basis of the revolution in these countries, to sow divisions between social forces which should be united in the revolutionary movement, and in the end to sabotage it.

The Trotskyist theory of the "permanent revolution" is also a theory of the negation of the national motive force in the development of the revolutionary movement, a theory of the over-estimation of the external factor and the denial of the internal factor as the decisive factor in revolution, and in the final analysis, a theory of the "export" of the revolution. "The idea that the revolutionary movement can be built on a national scale or in 'regional' isolation", says one of the programmatic documents of the 4th International, entitled, 'The Actual Dialectic of the World Revolution', "has never been so bankrupt as in the epoch of inter-continental ballistic missiles and journeys through the cosmos" (P. Frank — La Quatrieme Internationale).

Such a presentation of the problem leads to giving up the revolution in the different

countries, to sitting back to wait for the conditions to be created for the carrying out of “chain revolution on a world scale”, a thing which is impossible because of the unequal economic and political development under capitalism. But the Trotskyists choose to disregard this and thus they fall into subjectivism.

DENIAL OF ROLE OF THE PEASANTRY

Through their preachings and their own attitudes the Trotskyists confuse and divide the motive forces of the present day revolutionary process. In the colonial and semi-colonial countries where the working class still comprises a relatively restricted class while the majority of the population, thus numerically the greatest force of the revolution, are the peasants, the Trotskyists, by denying the revolution by stages, in fact deny the revolutionary possibilities of the peasantry, alienate it and the other intermediary strata from the working class with ultra-Leftist slogans.

In the developed capitalist countries, however, where the working class constitutes the decisive force of any truly revolutionary movement, the present-day Trotskyists are ever more persistently spreading the view that in these countries the striking force of the revolution and the true leaders of the revolutionary movement are allegedly the young intellectuals, the students and school pupils. Clear evidence of this is the fact that while the Trotskyist trend is spread mainly among student youth, its influence among the workers is extremely limited. Thus on this problem the position of the Trotskyists is very close to that of the bourgeois ideologists such as Marcuse or the extreme Right of the revisionists such as Fisher and others.

But it is well known that however much the student movement may be developed, it can play an effective and positive role in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism only if it is united with the revolutionary movement of the working class and places itself under the leadership of the proletariat and the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party.

While they make a great fuss about their ultra-revolutionary general slogans, when it comes to getting down to work to deal with the concrete problems of the development of the revolutionary movement of the working class, the Trotskyists come out with sermons that in essence are identical with those of the modern revisionists about “structural reform”, about worker participation in the management of capitalist enterprises, etc. Thus the Trotskyist Mandel says that the struggle for workers’ control in the capitalist countries, “creates a situation of the duality of state power”, that “the demand for worker control... aims at the emergence of workers’ state power, at first at the plant and later over the whole country”.

According to the preachings of the Trotskyists, workers’ control can be achieved under the conditions of the rule of the bourgeoisie armed to the teeth, without overthrowing its state power, without destroying the bourgeois state machinery, without establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat(!) This is a flagrant opportunist denial of the revolution.

THE VANGUARD PROLETARIAN PARTY

The hostility of the Trotskyists both past and present, towards the revolutionary movement of the working class comes out most clearly in connection with their attitude towards the problem of the party of the proletariat. The Trotskyist views on this matter can be summed up as follows:

1. According to the Trotskyists, the existence and leadership of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party is not absolutely necessary in the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the triumph of socialism. As the Trotskyist P. Frank says in his book, “La Quatrieme Internationale”, Trotsky himself in his writings envisaged, although as an unlikely possibility in unusual circumstances, that “the revolution would triumph even under leadership which was not

a Marxist revolutionary leadership”, while following the Second World War, allegedly several such occurrences have taken place (P. Frank — La Quatrieme Internationale).

It is clear on this question that there is no real difference between what the Trotskyists and the Yugoslav, Italian and some other revisionists preach. It is known that the aim of such teachings is to leave the working class without a true revolutionary leadership, and their only purpose is to sabotage the revolution and to leave the working class in enslavement to capitalism.

2. The Trotskyists rise up against the undivided leadership of the Marxist-Leninist proletarian party following the seizure of power by the working class, and, together with various bourgeois and extreme Rightist revisionist ideologists, advocate the multi-party system under socialism. Here is what the Trotskyist P. Frank had to say about this: “In the society of transition to socialism the working class will still remain differentiated for a long period to the degree that various strata will have differing views on the relationship between their daily needs and their longer term interests. Thus there will be room for various parties in the transition society, some more reformist in character, some more revolutionary”. (Ibid).

That means we are speaking about several allegedly workers’ Parties, which excludes all possibility of the leadership of a single vanguard party of the working class based on the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism.

But in these conditions the existence of a true dictatorship of the proletariat is not possible either, and the Trotskyists have taken this into account. The very fact that they have carried on and continue with a rabid campaign against the ‘Stalinist’ soviet system, which was the embodiment of the fundamental features of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is the clearest evidence of their unlimited hostility to the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

3. By preaching “world” revolution and under-estimating the role of the internal, national factor in the development of the revolutionary movement, the Trotskyists consequently also under-estimate the role of the proletarian party on the national scale and speak about the necessity of a “world party”. “Since there is no such thing as socialism in a single country and no national road”, they say, “the instrument of the world revolution cannot be other than a world party”, (P. Frank — La Quatrieme Internationale).

In essence, this means to eliminate the true role of the proletarian party, because the world revolutionary process under today’s conditions is meaningless except as the development and triumph of the revolution in various countries, thus on a national scale, necessarily under the leadership and complete responsibility of the proletarian party in each country.

4. Although in words the Trotskyists proclaim themselves the consistent successors of Lenin himself, in fact they are opponents of the Leninist principles of the internal life of the proletarian party. Under the pretext of “democracy” and “freedom of opinion”, they especially oppose the principle of democratic-centralism, of the unity of thought and action, to the iron proletarian discipline in the party, without which the party remains amorphous and disorganised, a mere club for endless discussions, incapable of any kind of effective revolutionary action, while the internal democracy is transformed into a means to disintegrate and liquidate the party.

In his day, Trotsky described the Party of the Leninist type as a “barracks regime”, and the Leninist norms as bureaucratic and dictatorial. In his view, the party should consist of an unprincipled union of all factions or trends that proclaim themselves socialist or communist (Jean-Jaques Marie, “Le Trotskysme”).

The present-day Trotskyists also advocate factionalism and express support for “freedom of discussion” and the right to form trends, without which “a true political life is denied to the rank

and file”. (P. Frank — La Quatrieme Internationale). On this question too, the position of the Trotskyists is identical with that of the extreme Right wing of the revisionists of the type of Garodi and Fisher, or the Leftist groups of the type of the “Manifesto”, which openly, and not in a shame-faced way like the Trotskyists, came out against the Leninist teachings on the party.

DANGEROUS COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY TREND

The facts prove that Trotskyism today is a sworn enemy of the revolutionary movement of the working class and peoples and a dangerous weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie and imperialism to sow confusion in this movement, to divide and undermine it. Therefore the struggle for the exposure and destruction of the Trotskyist trend is an essential condition at the present time for the successful development of the revolutionary movement of the working class and an immediate task for all Marxist-Leninists.

This will be a protracted and complex ideological and political struggle to expose the falsity and the truly counter-revolutionary character of the preachings and attitudes of the Trotskyists in connection with the various problems of the revolutionary movement today. But this sort of struggle alone is not enough.

The defeat of the Trotskyist trend is inseparable from the struggle of the Marxist-Leninist parties against modern revisionism, first of all against the Soviet modern revisionism, to put an end to the confusion it causes in the revolutionary movement today, which creates the conditions for the revival of Trotskyism.

But the decisive condition for a successful struggle against Trotskyism is the further development of the Marxist-Leninist movement itself, the working out in each country of a real programme of revolutionary struggle and the extension of the Marxist-Leninist parties deeper into the ranks of the masses.

(Abridged — Ed).