

# False Freedom under Capitalism



**Unidad y Lucha**

ORGANO DE LA CONFEDERACION INTERNACIONAL DE PROFESORES Y ORGANIZACIONES MARXISTAS-LINISTAS

**Unity & Struggle**

ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF MARXIST-LINIST PROFESSORS AND ORGANIZATIONS

**Unité et Lutte**

ORGAN DE LA CONFEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES PROFESSEURS ET ORGANISATIONS MARXISTES-LINISTES

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*Workers of the World, Unite!*

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# **Unity & Struggle**

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# ICMLPO

## *International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations*

### **On the International Situation and Our Tasks**

#### **1. The pulse of the dying capitalist system is weak and irregular**

The 20th plenary session of the ICMLPO, held in Turkey in 2014, made an analysis of the international situation, noting that “the capitalist imperialist world is trapped in its irresolvable contradictions” and concluded that a new economic crisis was looming.

The events that have developed confirm the dynamics, trends and forecasts contained in the document adopted at that plenary.

Eight years after the start of the longest and most serious post-war crisis of over-production, the process of recovery of production is still slow and partial, with continual relapses.

Despite the efforts of the bourgeoisie so that the growth rests on the backs of the working class and peoples, the world capitalist economy has developed at a modest pace compared to the period before the outbreak of the crisis, with limited rates of growth and different rates among the major imperialist and capitalist powers.

The growth of global GDP in 2014 was practically the same as in 2013, and in most countries it has declined. In 2015 the growth will be similar.

If we compare the period 2011-2014 with the period 2003-2008, we see that 4/5 of the world economy has had a lower average rate of growth.

World industrial production stagnated in 2014. In the first half of 2015 a similar trend could be seen both among the “advanced” imperialist powers, as well as among the “emerging” powers, particularly in Asia and Latin America. World trade is also shrinking significantly.

The world economic prospects are dark. The situation has been dominated by weak economic growth since the outbreak of

the crisis of 2007. Symptoms, elements and factors are accumulating, and tendencies are developing, which could lead to a new scenario of international crisis. A crisis that some countries, such as Argentina, Brazil, Russia, Ecuador, Venezuela, etc. are already suffering.

## **2. Concrete aspects of the current economic situation**

In the past year the main elements, and some new ones, in the economic sphere are as follows:

a. The sharp decline in the growth rate of the BRICS, particularly in Brazil, China, Russia and other “emerging” capitalist countries.

The average rate of growth of the 18 principal “emerging” capitalist countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and Venezuela) have fallen dramatically.

The following factors have influenced this: the sharp drop in price of oil because of over-production in this sector, as well as the price of gas, metals, fertilizers and agricultural commodities; the weak world demand and reduced consumption of the masses, due to the impoverishment of the workers; the appreciation [increase in value – *translator’s note*] of the dollar and rising interest rates for loans. This has led to serious losses in producer countries in Latin America, Russia, the Middle East and Africa.

In the last two years, serious financial problems have affected some of these countries: Brazil, Russia, Turkey, China, etc. Financial investments in these countries have clearly diminished and their currencies have been devalued, especially against the dollar.

Financial shocks in China and the slowdown of the economy of the Asian giant (in September manufacturing output fell to the lowest level in the last six and a half years) is a new expression of the difficulties of capitalism that will have profound consequences in the sphere of credit and production worldwide, and can lead to a new recession.

b. Uncertainty and unequal development of the economies of the principal imperialist countries: the growth of the U.S. and Britain on the one hand, and the slowing down in the eurozone



and Japan on the other. In this context the “advanced” economies grew by only 1.8% in 2014: a small growth, despite unprecedented monetary policies to stimulate production and the cheap price of oil.

c. The growing divergence in monetary policies pursued by the central banks of the principal imperialist countries in order to halt the fall in production and markets (for example, the end of the Quantitative Easing (QE) program in the U.S., the beginning of QE in the EU and the broad injection of liquidity into Chinese markets) has resulted in differing interest rates for the currencies, and in the consolidation of the dollar.

d. The constant weakness in international trade due to the slowing down of economic activity and the weak demand from the richest countries. In the period 2012-2014, trade registered an average growth of less than 4%, much lower compared to the period before the crisis, when the average increase was about 7%. In early 2015 the volume of world trade has continued to decline.

### **3. The economic course in the major imperialist and capitalist countries**

**United States of America.** In the country that was the epicenter of the crisis, there is an fluctuating rate of growth in GDP that was about 2.4% at the end of 2014, aided by low energy prices, low interest rates, etc. However, the pace of recovery is unsteady and the prospects are not favorable and may get worse.

U.S. industrial production has barely exceeded pre-crisis levels, but its development has not continued further.

There is a large excess of productive capacity. This is a symptom of continuing serious problems that inevitably will manifest themselves in a new destruction of capital.

During the past year, domestic investments in the energy sector have stagnated and there has been a fall in investment. The appreciation of the dollar has depressed exports. The Yankees still have the largest deficit in the world, estimated at \$430 thousand million dollars in 2014.

The situation confirms that U.S. imperialism no longer has the necessary strength to affect the whole capitalist economy, but it is able, with its financial and energy policies, with the predominance of the dollar and with its military power, to place its diffi-

culties and imbalances on other countries, especially the dependent ones.

**China:** The Asian capitalist giant has seen a progressive decline in economic growth, which was 7.4% in 2014, the lowest since 1990. In 2015 growth fell to about 7%.

China has long suffered from a high excess productive capacity in all sectors. Overproduction, over-construction and over-accumulation of capital are three interconnected aspects of its economy.

In recent years, as a result of this situation – aggravated by the fall in European and American markets – China’s industrial production has declined visibly.

At the same time a gigantic housing bubble has formed and later a stock bubble. Deflation of the Chinese bubbles has been one of the causes of the decline in economic growth since 2012.

The Chinese government has tried to curb the economic slowdown and the flight of capital with Keynesian measures, massive introduction of liquidity into its financial institutions and the devaluation of the yuan. But it succeeded only partially.

China’s low growth has negative effects over all of Asia and over the world economy, especially in the “emerging” countries because of the financial conglomerates and the large volume of exports.

**Japan:** In 2014 Japan’s GDP fell sharply, despite the devaluation of the yen, which favors exports, and the low price of oil. The momentum generated by the fiscal stimulus measures of 2013 has been exhausted, so the Bank of Japan has taken up the QE program. Recently, the deceleration of the Chinese economy has affected Japan. It has also restricted consumption.

**European Union:** The slowness of the economic recovery process is particularly evident in the countries of the imperialist EU, despite the fall in oil prices, the extraordinary measures taken by the European Central Bank, ECB, and the favorable exchange rate of the euro. If we consider the EU of 15 states, in 2014 the growth was only 1.2%.

Even Germany did not go beyond 1.6% in 2014, with a tendency to deceleration in 2015. With its exports it is maintaining a strong trade surplus (it surpassed China in 2014).

France ended the year with a modest 0.4% growth. After

three years of recession, Italy recorded a tiny rate of growth in 2015. Among the European powers, only the United Kingdom achieved a growth of 2.6% in 2014. Spain is in a similar situation to that of Italy.

In the EU, the investments in fixed capital have been considerably restricted. This is due to several factors: the tendency to over-production, the long-term effects of the cyclical crisis of 2008-9, the political uncertainties and growing tension in Eastern Europe.

The level of unemployment in the eurozone has been very high in 2014, about 11.5%, with the highest in Greece (26%) and Spain (24.5%). Characteristics of unemployment in Europe are: the high percentage of unemployed youths and the long duration of unemployment for the workers.

In 2014 inflation was negative, causing problems for countries with a large debt. Between June 2014 and May 2015, the euro depreciated 18% against the dollar.

In this scenario, in March of 2015 the ECB decided to carry out a program to purchase government bonds and corporate bonds (60 thousand million euro per month from March 2015 to September 2016), beyond the measures already taken to aid the banks.

The ECB's extraordinary measures have so far not had consistent results. There remains the possibility of a prolonged stagnation with low inflation in the eurozone.

Let us add that the process of "convergence" of the EU is encountering greater difficulties because of the combined action of the law of uneven development and the political supremacy of German imperialism. The Greek case is a tangible demonstration of the breakdown of the EU and the ambition of the German authorities to impose their hegemony. Despite the efforts of the European bourgeoisie, particularly the German bourgeoisie, to speed up the formation of the "United States of Europe," which will strongly limit popular and national sovereignty, reality confirms that this "is impossible or reactionary under capitalism."

**In Brazil**, the slowdown of the economy is continuing, accompanied by massive layoffs of workers, high inflation, corporate debt and the growing poverty of the masses. Foreign investment fell sharply. The Brazilian economy has suffered from the

fall in exports to China and the fall in prices of raw materials. This, together with the increase in the public deficit, is preventing the use of Keynesian policy.

Overall, in the Latin American and the Caribbean area during 2014, growth has declined for the fourth consecutive year, reaching 1.3% overall. The fall in prices of raw materials has resulted in increased deficits and economic difficulties for the exporting countries. Venezuela has been particularly hard hit by the collapse in the price of oil, which has worsened a situation already complicated and exacerbated by the maneuvers of the bourgeois sectors that are speculating and disrupting the economy. Similar issues are taking place in Ecuador and Colombia, countries dependent primarily on oil exploitation and exportation.

**India.** Growth in India was 7.2% in 2014 and stayed the same in 2015, bringing along the South Asia region. Currently India has the fastest growth in the world. The predominant sector is that of services. But it will not be easy to maintain that pace, due to internal structural obstacles (for example, the controversial reform of land ownership, crucial for the capitalists) and the fall in foreign investment that the government is trying to regain with an agrarian reform law and by promoting openly reactionary and anti-people policies.

**Russia.** In Russia the fall in the price of oil, the economic sanctions and the collapse in investments, led to a depression in 2014 that is continuing in 2015. This has been accompanied by the devaluation of the ruble and rising inflation. In general, the situation throughout the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has deteriorated significantly, with an annual contraction.

#### **4. New financial storms that are shaking capitalism**

Although the consequences of the earthquake unleashed in 2007 have not ended, in the heart of the imperialist-capitalist system factors and elements that may lead to a new financial crisis are developing. Here are some aspects of this process.

a. In the period 2004-2013 a real estate bubble formed in China, which tripled the cost of housing. The speculative boom in this sector was the result of the reduction in the rate of profit in industry, which was struck by over-production. The real estate sector has been encouraged by the policy of urbanization and the

printing of large numbers of yuans determined by the government, the debt of local governments, as well as the investments by monopolies in this highly profitable sector, which for years has been the growth engine of the Chinese economy.

The housing bubble began to deflate in 2011, due to the adoption of restrictive monetary policies, taxes and prohibitions on home sales. In 2012 Chinese growth began to slow down. The central bank of China intervened in the credit market and introduced liquidity into the system. This contributed to a bubble in the stock market, in which the banks, Chinese and foreign monopolies and small investors heavily invested capital as an alternative to the productive and real estate sectors. The new speculative bubble inflated dramatically in a short period of time.

In June of 2015, the Chinese stock market began to collapse. The government tried to stem the fall with extraordinary measures. But Beijing, which has liberalized much of the economy and finance (there is broad parallel credit system), cannot control all the factors of anarchy in the capitalist market and cannot prevent the outbreak of new crises which, the longer it takes, the more destructive and contagious they will be.

b. There are other elements that lead to the formation of bubbles of fictitious capital in the American and European financial markets. Their origin is in the ultra-expansionary monetary policies followed by the U.S. and the EU to bail out banks. There is speculation with liquid capital at low interest rates, the financial “drug” in the “parallel financial markets,” where the “vultures of the stock market” seek greater profits.

c. Another risk factor is the erosion of the margins of financial security in the countries that produce and export raw materials. The announced increase in interest rates in the U.S. can cause a withdrawal of capital from the “emerging” markets, increasing the vulnerability and instability of these economies, which are slowing down.

d. Finally there are the problems in Europe, particularly in the southern countries. The banking sector in the EU is still in disarray and full of toxic securities that the ECB is “washing” with the QE program. There are serious problems in the insurance companies and so-called “clearing houses” created to concentrate the toxic derivatives. Besides this there is the

possible “default” of heavily indebted states such as Greece, Bulgaria, Croatia, Portugal and Italy, the consequences of which are unpredictable.

We see that the “solutions” of the previous crisis have added fuel to the fire. There are different factors that can spark a new financial fire, which will have devastating effects on the production process.

### **5. The impoverishment of the proletariat and the increase in social inequality**

The modest growth in the major capitalist economies has not led to any relief for the working class and other laboring classes. The sacrifices continue.

This economic revival has been accompanied by high levels of unemployment (in the OECD countries there are 40 million unemployed), especially among the youth; worsening working conditions, lower real wages and widening wage discrimination against women workers; the increase in the tax burden on the working masses; and therefore, the progressive impoverishment of the working class, small peasants and the popular masses.

Jobs are growing very slowly (especially in the informal sector without protection, in part-time jobs, etc.), and in most of the imperialist countries it is unlikely that they will be sufficient to recover the losses recorded since 2008. The overproduction of capital is accompanied by the overpopulation of unemployed workers.

The crisis has aided the further concentration and centralization of capital in the hands of the international monopolies.

While poverty is increasing in many countries, including in the most “advanced” (in the U.S. it is about 17.6%), striking vast sectors of workers, social wealth is increasingly monopolized by a small group of financial magnates.

The data show that in the period 2008-2014 the share of global wealth owned by the richest 1% has grown from 44 to 48%. Therefore, the share of income held by 99% of the world’s population has dropped from 56 to 52%.

In recent years the wealth possessed by the 80 richest individuals in the world has increased rapidly: today these 80 representatives of the financial oligarchy hold wealth equal to that of

the poorest half of the world's population (3.6 billion people).

These trends are worsening the situation of the laboring masses and the peoples in the moribund capitalist system, which is increasingly characterized by concentration of social wealth in a few hands, the unbearable oppression of the monopolies over the rest of the population and widespread poverty.

The restricted consumption of the masses, due to the impoverishment of the workers, is an important factor in the crisis of capitalism. At the same time it is a powerful factor for the development of the class struggle of the proletariat, which will eliminate the cause of all social inequalities by abolishing capitalism.

## **6. The decline and decomposition of the capitalist system**

In the previous post-war crises, capitalism managed to recover with its own forces in a few years.

After the great crisis of 2008 there was a revival, not achieved by the internal forces of capitalism, but by the drug of state aid. This ended in 2010, followed in 2011 by a period of stagnation and then of recession.

In the main imperialist countries, in 2009 the productive apparatus exceeded the lowest point of the cycle, but the uneven economic recovery has not been transformed into a boom phase, a phase of prosperity. This phase tends to disappear due to the fact that the expansion of capitalist production can soon run into conflict with the limits of the market.

The weakness of the revival observed in 2014 and the low observed in the first months of 2015 point to a problem of persistent over-production that has not been solved.

The growing surplus of productive capacity, the partial utilization of industrial facilities that is recorded in the imperialist and capitalist countries, is a fact that shows that capital tends to chronic over-production. The barriers to production are continually breached by financial speculation in order to increase capital, but this inevitably leads to new and violent crises.

The slowing down of the “emerging countries,” which had been the shock-absorbers of the crisis in previous years, has serious implications for the entire capitalist economy and in the event of a new crisis they cannot play the same role.

China, which has been a key factor in avoiding the global re-

cession in recent years, has been transformed into its opposite, and has become a factor for a new global crisis of capitalism.

This analysis leads us to conclude that capitalism has partially overcome the previous crisis – whose impact had not yet been exhausted – by setting the stage for a new and more destructive crisis of relative over-production, the inevitable result of the contradiction between the social character of production and the capitalist appropriation of the products of social production.

The next crisis will have deeper consequences than the previous one since it will not take place after a period of prosperity, but after a period of stagnation and modest recovery. Moreover, the state budgets in many imperialist and capitalist countries will not be able to support new and higher levels of debt in order to save the banks and monopolies.

That is, there are no conditions for a relative capitalist stabilization. On the contrary, the process of decomposition of monopoly capitalism is continuing, which is manifested in the aggravation of the general crisis of the capitalist system, which is entering a new and destructive phase.

The correlation and interdependence between the general crisis and the cyclical and sectoral crises of capitalism taking place in different countries of the world are obvious and are reflected in the length of the periods of crisis and stagnation, in their depth, in the weakness of the recovery and in the general instability.

The elimination of the suffocating capitalist rule is the only solution, which is possible, necessary and urgent for the problems of humanity.

### **7. The sharpening of the contradictions of capitalism and the dangers of war**

The uneven development of capitalism in different countries, the growing economic and political difficulties, the attempts to place the consequences of the crisis on their rivals, have led to a worsening of relations among the imperialist powers.

There is not only a more intense economic and financial competition on all continents, commercial and political contention over markets, raw materials, fresh water, fertile land, etc., but a marked instability of international relations, an exacerbation of military tensions, preparations for a new redivision of the



world, perhaps by armed force.

The hegemonic politics and the strategy of U.S. imperialism is finding a more determined response from Russian and Chinese imperialism, which are not willing to bear the international domination of the United States and are trying to break its “world order.”

There are many pockets of war that can develop, due to the growing imperialist aggressiveness, into a general war. The local and regional armed conflicts in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Yemen, Ukraine, Central and West Africa, Afghanistan, etc., the growing tension in the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean, in the Balkans, Pakistan, Venezuela, Colombia, etc., the drive of the imperialist powers to rearm, the militarization of the economies and the reactionary and fascist transformation of the bourgeois states, are expressions of the internal and external contradictions of capitalism, of the struggle for supremacy, which are increasing the danger of a wide-scale war.

Syria, the gateway to the Middle East (and oil), is today a battleground for inter-imperialist contention. The military forces of the rival imperialist powers and their allies are directly present on its territory; they are acting with conflicting strategic aims and interests. The situation is dangerous and can easily degenerate into a direct clash.

In Latin America there are also obvious manifestations of inter-imperialist contradictions. China and Russia have achieved an important commercial presence and economic activity, particularly in the sectors of mining and oil. Faced with this, the U.S. and NATO are trying to retake the commercial and military initiative in the region, with the establishment of new military bases, as well as with treaties such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, TTIP, deepening the dependence of the dependent countries.

In this scenario, U.S. imperialism – powerful because of its military, financial and technological power and its energy transformations – has developed a strategy to defend its interests and preserve its “world order,” shaken by the economic and military growth and influence of other imperialist powers that want to escape U.S. dominance.

To that end the U.S. superpower is trying, on the one hand, to

strengthen and lead a broad system of alliances with subordinate and vassal states and “sub-states”; on the other hand, it is trying to prevent any other power from acquiring a power equal to its own, preventing the formation of alliances based on rival imperialist powers that can unseat its hegemony in the capitalist world.

The strategic plan of the U.S. is based on an extensive program of military, economic, energy, political and diplomatic measures, and it is accompanied by a hypocritical ideological campaign.

This long-term plan does not focus on only one region; it has the whole world as its field of action, and it defines a set of priorities according to the global interests of U.S. imperialism:

a) the re-balancing of military force in the Asia-Pacific Ocean region, the center of gravity of the world economy, in order to contain the growth of China as a superpowers and the other emerging powers who are contending for supremacy and privileges in this crucial area;

b) the maintenance of dominance in Europe by NATO, in order to encircle Russia and contain the rise of German imperialism, hampering its relations with Russia and China;

c) a strong military presence in the Persian Gulf and the re-drawing of the borders of the Middle East;

d) the maintenance of military and technological supremacy, modernizing and strengthening its nuclear and conventional weapons, reorganizing its armed forces in order to fight more long-term regional wars, as well as local wars on different continents;

e) counter-guerrilla and urban counter-insurgency activities, by its organizations and in accord with local allies;

f) stopping direct attacks on the U.S., acting unilaterally and by any means on a world scale;

g) maintaining internal stability, threatened by social unrest, and preventing its extension (in July there was a major military maneuver in the U.S. for control of its territory, in anticipation of wider revolts in Ferguson and Baltimore) .

**The Asia-Pacific Ocean area** is the heart of U.S. hegemonic strategy. In the next five years the U.S. will have 60% of its naval fleet in the Pacific Ocean. The U.S. aspires to more aggressively redefine its alliance with Japan, south Korea, Australia, Philip-

pires and Thailand in this area, rearming those countries. It is also determined to strengthen its relations with India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. Through ASEAN and the East Asia Summit it wants to build a strategic anti-Chinese and anti-Russian alliance on that continent.

In Central Asia, NATO is incorporating Georgia, and advancing in “deepening its cooperation” with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, in order to counter the Eurasian Economic Union, which comprises Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan.

The U.S. and NATO are continuing the war in Afghanistan, a country of geostrategic importance. At the same time, the U.S. is threatening other states, such as the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea, that could in any way compromise its interests or represent local threats.

**In Europe** one can see the passing over of U.S. imperialism to an extremely aggressive and openly expansionist policy. The full integration of the Balkan and eastern European countries into NATO, the extension of its area of operations and the tripling of its rapid reaction troops in Eastern Europe are key aspects of its maneuver to encircle Russia.

While accelerating the “modernization” of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, the Yankees are reorganizing their forces in support of new vassals (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, etc.).

Ukraine is included *de facto* in NATO’s network as the key country to hem in Russia and destroy its relations with Germany. In Central Europe and the Baltics, NATO has sent fighter-bombers to “patrol” the skies to the borders of Russian airspace. In the Black Sea, U.S., Canadian, German, Italian, Turkish, Bulgarian and Romanian warships have come together, besides Russian ones. There is the possibility of a military escalation in the region of the Donbass, where the working class and the population are threatened by inter-imperialist rivalries.

At this moment (October of 2015), “Trident Juncture 2015,” the largest NATO military exercise since the end of the “Cold War,” is being held in Italy, Spain and Portugal. Its objective: to test the “Response Force,” especially the “Spearhead Force.” It will include the participation of the EU and the African Union.

We emphasize the role assigned to Spain, with the anti-

missile shield and the creation of a rapid intervention force with 30,000 soldiers, which can be operational within 48 hours.

While NATO is increasing its pressure on Russia, we are witnessing the continual pressure of the U.S. on its allies to “share the burden of military expenditures,” as well as to force the EU to sign the TTIP agreement (and in Asia the Transpacific agreement), as opposed to the Sino-Russian “New Silk Road” and the Russian pipelines to supply energy to Europe.

It can be seen that the countries of the EU that are dependent on oil and gas from Russia (for example, Italy), or with strong industrial and commercial links (for example, Germany), are having difficulty following the policy of war and sanctions imposed by the U.S. and are calling for a “political solution.”

**The Middle East** is a region characterized by strong political instability; it no longer has the same importance for the U.S. as it did earlier. Instead of a direct military presence, Yankee imperialist intervention is being carried out by organizing reactionary coups and civil wars, by training, financing and arming Islamic fundamentalism and other counter-revolutionary, obscurantist and reactionary forces that are violently opposed to the camp of the revolutionary, progressive, anti-imperialist and democratic forces.

The strategy of “constructive chaos” in Syria, Iraq and Libya, carried out with the collaboration of the irregular army of the Islamic State, IS – a byproduct of imperialist interventions in the region – serves to strike the revolutionary and democratic processes, to prevent rival powers from taking advantage of the political vacuum, from gaining positions and weakening U.S. hegemony.

Clearly, behind the pretext of the “fight against terrorism” is the war for the control of mineral and petroleum resources, for strategic areas, as well as the rivalries among the imperialist powers and their local allies.

In this unsettled region, the U.S. can count on its alliance with Israeli Zionism, Jordan, Egypt, the four Gulf monarchies and Saudi Arabia. Other obvious aspects are: the tactics of equilibrium between Sunni and Shiite forces to control both; the nuclear deal with Iran, which allows Washington to direct its resources and means to the greater conflicts and provides Iranian

oil and gas to the EU, reducing its energy dependence on Russia.

The Vienna agreement on the nuclear issue, signed by the Islamic regime of Iran and the “5 + 1” group, has been drawn up in accordance with the interests of U.S. imperialism, which has imposed its rules to the detriment of the national sovereignty of the Iranian people.

**In Latin America**, U.S. imperialism is trying to maintain its hegemony, threatened by China and other imperialist countries, and to develop its war policy by relying on its lackey governments, such as Peru, Mexico, Chile and Colombia. In 2013 NATO made an illegal agreement on security with Colombia, which is already engaged in military programs, including the training of special forces. This agreement represents a threat of military intervention in the region and serves to encircle Venezuela, which is already subjected to an economic blockade and a media campaign which precede aggression.

The formation of a triangle of influence among Central America, Colombia and the Caribbean is essential to the US, in order to counter the growing financial and commercial penetration of China in its old “back yard.” This is how we must understand the recent opening to Cuba, with the eventual elimination of the criminal economic and political blockade.

**In Africa**, having destroyed Libya and organized the military coup in Egypt, the U.S., besides intensifying its military presence (for example, in Niger), creating infrastructure for war and preparing military interventions (for example, in Nigeria), is promoting military and economic assistance to the African Union. Initiatives such as Power Africa, Trade Africa and the African Growth and Opportunity Act, AGOA, serve to increase its ability to rob natural resources, to increase its political influence and to curb China’s growing presence on the continent.

Clearly the other imperialist powers do not limit themselves to observing, they defend their own interests and spheres of influence against their rivals.

**Imperialist China** continues to increase its export of capital around the world (especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America and in the “offshore” financial centers), it continues to strengthen itself militarily and to develop its role of superpower in Asia and other regions of the world.

In Africa, China's power is present and active in the context of the rivalry among the imperialist powers, especially in the economic field and in the contention for raw materials, oil, uranium, etc. Africa is an area of struggle among the imperialist powers. It is also an important economic area for the penetration of Chinese capital and commodities, in competition with the British, French, U.S. monopolies, etc. China also has a strategic interest in this continent.

In the political-military sphere, China is asserting its ability to act unilaterally, especially in the maritime area. It is continuing its efforts to counter the advanced military technology of the U.S.

In the South China Sea – through which half of the commercial ships en route to Europe, the Middle East and East Asia pass and where there are rich deposits of oil and gas – the increased Chinese military presence is clear. The Chinese attitude is very aggressive not only towards the U.S., but also towards Japan, Vietnam (the contention over the Paracel and Spratly Islands and over the oil platforms), Philippines (contention over the Spratly Islands and Huangyan Island), Malaysia and Taiwan.

In order to assert its sovereignty over 80% of the southern maritime area, China is building artificial islands on coral reefs thousands of kilometers from its coast. It aims to control the strategic Strait of Malacca, entering into direct conflict with the U.S. and Japan. Also in the East China Sea there is serious friction with Japan over the Senkaku Diaoyu Islands.

To assert its interests in the area – in opposition to U.S. naval supremacy – China has approved a program to develop a powerful and modern fleet of over 300 warships with anti-missile systems.

The tension and military presence in East Asia and in the whole South China Sea is rapidly increasing, as is the nationalism of the countries in the region; this is indicative of the trend to imperialist confrontation.

**Russian imperialism** is playing a more active role at the diplomatic and military level. It has changed its military doctrine and shown itself more willing to directly intervene to defend its interests and its borders. In addition to modernizing its strategic arsenal, it is promoting its special rapid reaction forces in operations in the area of the former Soviet Union in order to create

“facts on the ground.”

Although it is weakened economically, it is trying to regain its role as a great imperialist power and is strengthening its ties with China through multiple economic and military bodies.

At the Moscow conference on international security last April, Russia, China and Iran held talks at the military level to improve their cooperation and to counter NATO’s expansion.

The Russian intervention in Syria, with the shelling of the jihadist enclaves, has caught the U.S. and Israel by surprise, and made clear that Russian imperialism does not want to lose its spheres of influence, its allies, and its military base in the Mediterranean.

**German imperialism** has shown once again its role as a great power in the search for its “living space,” not only in economic terms (for example, the *diktat* to Greece), but also in the political and military sphere. It has planned a consistent increase in military spending, acquiring tanks, weapons and equipment. It aims to strengthen its war industry to make itself independent of the U.S.

**French imperialism** is tirelessly defending its spheres of influence in Africa, activating all its controls: increasing its spending and military bases and sending military missions to and maintaining permanent bases in the countries of “French Africa” (Burkina Faso, Benin, Mali, Central Africa, Chad, Niger, Ivory Coast, etc.). It is carrying out economic pressure, political and diplomatic interference and monitoring the revolutionary forces in this region; it is an openly neocolonial policy.

**Imperialist Japan** has “interpreted” its Constitution to allow more scope for its military fleet and has passed a law that will allow its armed forces to take part in operations abroad. At the same time, it is increasing military spending by 2% (in 2015 it reached a record after the Second World War), equipping itself with new generations of aircraft, including U.S. F-35s, “drones” and very advanced ships: the imperialism of the “Rising Sun” is thus becoming the “monitor” over China.

The exacerbation of inter-imperialist rivalries and the competition among monopolies is leading to a consolidation and reorganization of economic and military blocs. Today, except for NATO, there are no stable blocs. The situation is fluid, the alli-

ances can change quickly. There are many contradictions and dividing lines among the imperialist and capitalist powers, among the reactionary camps, which combine and then separate.

The general trend is the worsening of the political situation, the rearmament and militarization, the intensification of nationalism and chauvinism. Not only military, but also economic and political imperialist interventions, the interference and brutal pressure on the oppressed peoples and the economically weak countries are increasing, which maintains the inevitability of wars among imperialist and capitalist countries, and therefore the need to overthrow the bourgeoisie.

### **8. The incessant wave of migrations**

As a result of the economic looting and political destabilization of countries, of wars of aggression and plunder by the reactionary regimes, of hunger and unbearable conditions of life, of the lack of any favorable perspective for the younger generations, the wave of migrations from the dependent countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean is continuing and growing.

Large masses of men, women and youth, who are fleeing misery, war and political oppression, are trying to reach the richest and most developed capitalist countries, often losing their lives in crossing the sea or in other routes. In the first half of 2015, two thousand migrants drowned in the Mediterranean while trying to reach European shores.

The imperialist countries – which have the historical and main responsibility for this situation – are building ever higher walls to prevent the entry of the migrants, including many political refugees.

The migrants, when they manage to reach their goal, are often subjected to the harshest exploitation, discrimination, deprivation of rights and social security and bestial conditions of life. They are persecuted by the police and attacked by racist, fascist and populist groups which stir up hostility under the pretext of the “invasion” of migrants.

Clearly the phenomenon of migration has economic implications. The imperialist powers, particularly the U.S. and Germany, are causing and driving the migration process of the labor force for two purposes: to increase the pressure on the native-born



working class in order to eliminate the social gains that have been won, and to renew their labor force, because their economically active population is getting older and therefore there is a need to integrate young workers at a cheap price.

At the same time, some governments and reactionary and xenophobic sectors of the bourgeoisie are using the migrants as an escape valve to relieve social tensions, they set off increasingly aggressive policies and are alarming people about the social danger that massive migration involves; they are criminalizing all those who are in solidarity with the migrants. We must also note that migrants bring important experience of struggle from their countries of origin.

Together with the wave of migration from the dependent and underdeveloped countries, there is also the increased phenomenon of emigration of young people struck by the impact of the economic crisis in the advanced countries. Immigration and emigration are as inseparable from capitalism as unemployment, poverty and wars.

### **9. The worsening of the political situation in the imperialist and capitalist countries and the offensive against the working class**

The latest capitalist crisis and the continuing economic difficulties have produced a worsening of the political situation in the imperialist and capitalist countries, and the destruction of sovereignty and national independence of the dependent countries.

While discontent and distrust of the corrupt ruling classes and bourgeois parliamentarism is growing, in many countries we are witnessing a process of reactionary transformation of the state power, which is tending toward the form of the open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The worsening economic and political situation is pushing the bourgeoisie – in the crisis of consent and leadership – to increase the use of authoritarian and despotic methods of government, to eliminate the rights and freedoms of the workers such as the right to strike, organization, expression, demonstration, etc., to repress the workers' and people's struggles, in order to weaken the organization and the resistance of the masses and to declare their struggles illegal.

At the same time, the ruling classes strive to restrict the prerogatives of parliaments, to modify the bourgeois-democratic constitutions in a reactionary manner, to eliminate the political and trade union fields of action used by the workers' and communist movement.

In the countries where the bourgeoisie can no longer govern with its old methods and parties, it uses populist movements and new social-democratic parties as well as the religious, pro-fascist and fascist parties to divert the discontent of the masses, to divide them and preserve their class rule. In these conditions the "democratic" freedoms and the rights of the workers are suffering violent attacks in many countries.

The politics of war and military intervention are leading to increased measures of "security" and repression in a climate of intense demagogic and xenophobic propaganda, which poisons public opinion.

The anti-communist offensive is continuing, as is seen in brutal attacks and vilification that is especially harsh in the Baltic countries and Ukraine, with the ban on political activity, on communist symbols and the obscene equation of communism with fascism.

The capitalist attack on the working class is taking place on many fronts on the basis of dictates of the financial oligarchy in order to obtain maximum profit.

This consists in the elimination of most of the political, social and trade union rights and gains won by the working class during decades of struggles, in the so-called "structural reforms" in the marketplace for labor power, which allows greater flexibility and insecurity, tighter control over production and total "deregulation" to eliminate the barriers erected against capitalist exploitation.

The attack on wages is continuing, which are differentiated to favor the labor aristocracy and harm the masses of workers. Pensions and social security for the workers are being reduced and the retirement age is being increased. In many countries, the capitalists and their governments are trying to extend the working day, to increase work at night and on holidays. We are witnessing the expansion of the informal sector, without rights for workers. Women, youth and migrant workers are the favorite targets of

discrimination and super-exploitation, with the attempt to break the united resistance of the working class.

In countries forced to devalue their currency, the workers are required to pay for the economic disaster.

In many countries collective bargaining agreements (national and group) are being degraded, especially those won by the trade unions that are resisting the offensive. The capitalists and their governments are increasing their efforts to divide the workers, young from old, regular from irregular, native-born from foreign-born, etc. Threats, blackmail and lies have become the favorite methods of the bourgeoisie.

The high level of indebtedness of states – due to the financial bailout of the banks and enterprises – and the political consequences of “austerity,” are leading to further cuts in social spending, in health care, education, pensions and public transport, besides the increase in direct and indirect taxes on the laboring masses.

The neoliberal treaties such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, TTIP, the General Services Administration, CETA and the Trade in Services Agreement, TISA, will affect the rules that guarantee a minimum of protection in the workplace and social security, as well as the quality and safety of food, and the defense of public services. Due to this the most powerful monopolies can easily penetrate the markets in order to seek maximum profit. One consequence of this will be the elimination of thousands of jobs. Clearly these treaties are weapons against all the peoples.

As a result of the criminal offense of capitalism and its governments the class struggle is sharpening.

## **10. The profound crisis of social democracy and revisionism**

The urgency for the bourgeoisie to find a way out of its serious economic difficulties, by placing them on the back of the working class and popular strata, while maintaining social peace; the need to prepare for imperialist wars, without alarming the peoples; the implementation of reactionary measures, under the guise of “reform” and “democracy,” have created the bases for open collaboration between the financial oligarchy and the social-democratic and revisionist parties, the real social props of the

bourgeois dictatorship and supports of imperialism.

In countries where these counter-revolutionary parties **are** in government, they usually participate actively in the measures adopted by the bourgeoisie against the working class and popular masses. The leaders of these parties are fully integrated into the system of the financial oligarchy, and they take a direct role in the consolidation of bourgeois rule and in the repression of the workers' movement. In order to stay in power, the social-democratic parties make alliances with right-wing parties.

Where they **are not** in government, the social-democratic and revisionist leaders resort to more sophisticated methods, in order to channel and divert the protests of the working class and sectors of the petty bourgeoisie who affected by the crisis and the policies of big capital and its institutions. It is important to note that in the imperialist countries, particularly the ones that are most aggressive against the working class and peoples, the social democrats and revisionists are increasing their activity, spreading illusions and mystifications about the imperialist institutions, about the peaceful transformation of society; they are weakening the vigilance of the masses against political reaction, hiding from the masses the class character of fascism and striving to "protect" the working class from the influence of communism.

In particular, we emphasize the role of the left wing of social-democracy which is retarding the process of disintegration of reformism and spreading the dangerous illusion that the imperialist institutions can be reformed, to become democratic and "social." This is a path that leads only to new and crushing defeats.

In Latin America the decline of the so-called "progressive governments," which mainly represent the interests of the rising middle class, has begun. The defeat of Evo Morales in the secondary elections, the growing popular protest against the authoritarian and arrogant politics of Correa, show the disenchantment with a political program that has not changed the capitalist nature of these countries, that has not eliminated the dependence on imperialism and has not been able to provide answers to the many demands and expectations of the workers and peoples.

These governments have gradually shifted to the right and have taken up neoliberal and repressive positions under the pressure of imperialism and its supranational institutions, of the capi-

talists and the top levels of the Catholic Church. The fall in the price of raw materials has exacerbated their crisis and expanded the base of social protest.

In the Old Continent the false slogan of “another Europe is possible” is becoming exposed under the dictates of the Troika, showing the laboring masses and peoples that imperialism cannot be reformed, it has to be overthrown.

The desire of the social democratic forces to reorganize around Keynesian-type programs is a maneuver of extremely opportunist sectors who are trying to take over the leadership of the processes of struggle in order to divert and fool the masses, to weaken their revolutionary actions, to adopt measures useful to the bourgeoisie in situations of acute crisis in order to gain time and recover lost ground.

These policies create expectations among the workers and the petty bourgeoisie, but they can also be deflated quickly when they show their inconsistency and lack of real perspectives, due to the degradation of the economic and political conditions, for example, the elimination of the welfare state), which in the past acted in favor of the social democrats and of a break with the imperialist-capitalist system.

There is also a process of fragmentation and reorganization of sectors of old and new revisionists, especially in Europe, which are spreading their counter-revolutionary positions and deviations of all kinds. However, there are groups, particularly of young people, who do not follow these positions and are coming close to the Marxist-Leninists.

The deep crisis of social democracy and revisionism allows the Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations to extend their revolutionary influence over the masses of the workers, including the workers influenced by the social-democrats viewpoint. In order to expand these contacts and win over these workers it is indispensable to call for unity of action against the capitalist offensive, political reaction, fascism and the danger of war; at the same time it is necessary to form united front organizations for a broad mobilization of the masses against the common enemy, capital, despite the hostility of the social-democratic leaders.

## **11. The response of struggle of the proletariat and the popular masses**

The imperialists, the capitalists and their institutions are intensifying their assault on the working and living conditions of the working class and peoples, but the resistance against the reactionary and anti-working class policies, the cuts in social spending, etc., are tending to develop and to become more organized.

With demonstrations, strikes in the factories, street fighting, the vote or its boycott, the working class, the unemployed and the peoples are confronting the policies of the imperialist bourgeoisie and its reactionary allies, they are rejecting neoliberalism, austerity and the social destruction, they are delegitimizing the corrupt bourgeois institutions.

There is a tendency of the mass struggles to rise, with important workers' struggles and struggles for democracy; also in many cases there are demands for independence, sovereignty and the right of self-determination of the peoples. The workers and peoples are regaining confidence in their great strength through struggle.

The working class is struggling in different conditions and situations in Turkey, Poland, South Africa, Nigeria, Bolivia, Bangladesh, south Korea, Burma, Cambodia and China. In India there was a historic general strike given the conditions in that country. There are struggles for wage demands, to put a stop to exploitation and for better working conditions, and against massive layoffs. In some cases the workers have occupied factories and held debates there on the capitalist order. The workers are also fighting against the shameful positions of the collaborationist leaders of the unions, demanding their expulsion from the factories and organizing themselves into independent committees, as has taken place in Turkey.

In Latin America and the Caribbean the struggles of the workers and peoples are on the rise, as in Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, Colombia, Panama, etc. In Mexico popular anger and resistance are growing for those missing and murdered by the State, against the "structural reforms" of the government. In Honduras the people are demanding the punishment of the corrupt. In Brazil, Chile and Argentina the social protest and strikes are continuing.

In many African countries – especially in west Africa – the people and youth are standing up for their basic needs, for freedom and democratic and trade union rights, against the reactionary civil wars and corrupt dictators, agents of the imperialist powers which are pursuing a policy of economic and political recolonization of the continent.

In Burkina Faso the revolutionary process is advancing. After the reactionary military coup in September, mass mobilization has been developing throughout the country despite the maneuvers of the local bourgeoisie and the imperialist powers, the U.S. and France, who are trying to paralyze the dynamism of the masses.

We emphasize the development of the social struggle in Iraq and Lebanon, with new social and political demands that are going beyond religious divisions and are acquiring a class character.

In the Middle East the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people is continuing with a new intifada against the criminal occupation of their territory. The Kurdish people are fighting for self-determination. The popular response to terrorism and fascist provocations in Turkey as well as in Tunisia is noteworthy, in order to defend the rights gained and to achieve the revolutionary goals.

In Europe we have seen important workers' struggles in Poland, Belgium, Italy and other countries against layoffs. The workers in transport and communications have mobilized in England, France, Germany, Spain and elsewhere. In Italy the teachers have carried out a massive strike against the privatization of the public schools.

The rejection of the austerity policies has seen new significant expressions in Greece, where the workers have rejected the blackmail of the imperialist Troika (EU-ECB-IMF). They have punished the neoliberal parties and then opposed the subordination of the social-democratic government towards these institutions that imposed a new cruel "memorandum," the mandate.

In the U.S. the struggles of the workers in the oil industry, the movement of low-wage workers and the large protest of the black community against police terror and racism in the judiciary have developed. In Canada, the students took to the streets en masse against the government.

The rise of the class struggle comes in waves. The earlier

ones allow for the development of the following ones at new levels of militancy, unity and strength.

The character of the current class struggles is still defensive. In large and small struggles, the workers, youth, women and oppressed peoples are expressing their protest and reinforcing the role of their organizations, but in most cases they have failed to prevent the implementation of the neoliberal and anti-popular measures of the governments. However, the struggle itself is creating an implacable hatred among the masses against the capitalists and state power, paving the way for a qualitative leap.

These struggles are showing a renewal of the workers' and trade union movement and its demands. The strikes are increasingly attracting new groups of workers and other exploited laboring people who play a key role in economic life. The level of mobilization and the number of the discontented is growing, especially among the young people.

We are seeing a shift toward the left of the combative sectors of the workers' movement. The struggle for immediate economic and political demands is quickly taking on a political character. In the struggle itself, the aim is being put forward to reorganize the workers' and trade union movement on a militant class basis.

The working class and peoples are regaining their ideological and political positions, increasing their level of organization and strength, although gradually and unevenly. The conditions are maturing for a new revolutionary advance, thanks to the increased militancy and participation of the masses in political and social life.

One can predict an intensification of the class conflicts as the center of the worldwide contradictions, in which the economy is slowing down and the cost of living is increasing.

The basic problem is: what forces are leading the protests, struggles and revolts? What class must exercise hegemony, taking every opportunity to deal a blow at imperialism and to increase its political influence over the other sectors of the population? Today the main limitations of the struggles are the lack of a consistent proletarian leadership and revolutionary perspectives. This increases the importance of the "subjective factor," that is, of the level of consciousness, militancy and organization of the working class and its vanguard detachment.



## 12. On our tasks and responsibilities

We are in a historical period characterized by the contradiction between the maturity of the objective factors to take a step towards the new society based on common ownership of the means of production on the one hand, and the backwardness of the subjective factor determined by the temporary defeat but with profound consequences of the first experiences of socialism on the other.

The communist movement today is still weak and fragmented, but it is reviving. It rests on our shoulders the stage in which, as a result of the imperialist and anti-communist offensive, the consciousness of the working class and the popular masses has been hard hit and shows a loss of revolutionary perspective.

The offensive of capitalism and the social impact of the recent crisis have been so great that only now do the exploited and oppressed masses see more clearly the true face of this obsolete system; therefore they show more and more the need for radical political and social changes. Communist ideas have spread since the crisis of 2007.

There are powerful favorable factors for the development of the revolutionary struggle: the continued growth of the proletariat worldwide (today there are approximately 1.6 thousand million wage workers, of whom about half are industrial workers); the rapid growth of the largest young generation in history; the development and spread of the means of communication that put workers and their struggles in contact with each other; the increase in social inequalities and the concentration of immense masses of the exploited and oppressed in the cities, where already more than 50% of the world's population lives and that will be the crucial places where the class conflict will develop in the coming decades.

It is needless to add that large sectors of the petty bourgeoisie, victims of the criminal policies of the financial oligarchy, are going through a serious crisis and no longer form a secure base of support for the bourgeoisie. The political disintegration of the middle classes provides a greater possibility of success for the struggle of the proletariat, which must lead the great mass of the exploited and oppressed, isolating the unstable and vacillating strata.

The terrain is once again fertile for the Marxist-Leninists.

From the disaster of all the bourgeois and reformist political options, there emerges again the only sure alternative: the proletarian revolution and socialism.

In the present situation rapid changes can be anticipated, the pace of revolutionary events can speed up, conditions can be created in which it will be possible to advance at a rapid pace, in leaps.

The situation demands the ability to understand the concrete situation, to foresee and adapt to it; it requires ideological firmness and stability in order to adopt adaptable and flexible tactics, subordinated to the revolutionary strategy.

In this scenario the task of the Marxist-Leninist forces is to increase their political influence, to develop and maintain the closest ties with the proletarian masses, understanding their needs and aspirations, to engage the most decisive sectors in struggle in order to attract them to our camp and advance in the process of accumulation of revolutionary forces.

The convulsions of the capitalist-imperialist system, the reactionary offensive of the bourgeoisie, the dangers of war, make the development of the class struggle, of its organization and level of combativeness of the masses of vital and urgent importance. We must take advantage of the objective situation, define appropriate lines of political action and make an effort to take the leadership of the struggles, in order to multiply our contact with the masses, without ever losing sight of the struggle for political power.

Therefore, it is up to the (Marxist-Leninist) communists to support and mobilize the working class and other laboring people every day in defense of their economic and political interests and aspirations; to unite the exploited and oppressed, bringing the light of scientific socialism to the workers' and people's movement; to propose and implement the united front of the working class in various forms in order to bring the broad masses of workers and unemployment into struggle; to work in the existing mass organizations and to create new ones, to organize common actions against the capitalists, the rich and their governments, creating the conditions for a broad counter-offensive of the exploited and oppressed.

In this way, we will be able to penetrate more deeply among the masses, in order to develop closer links and politically win

over the decisive sectors of the proletariat. Thus we will be able to mobilize the allies of the proletariat: the broad laboring masses who are suffering from the yoke of capital, the small peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the unemployed youths and students, the women of the popular strata, the oppressed peoples and nationalities.

It is up to the (Marxist-Leninist) communists to fight against the bourgeois dictatorship in all its forms, to take into our hands the banner of the freedoms and rights of the working class and the popular masses threatened by the bourgeoisie, to uphold popular sovereignty and the independence of the countries subjugated by imperialism; to develop the struggles against the reactionary and fascist forces, against xenophobia and fascism, against the anti-popular repression and the anti-democratic policy of the bourgeoisie, promoting broad popular fronts that unite the popular strata around the working class. These fronts must be linked at the regional and international level into a single revolutionary, anti-fascist, anti-imperialist front of struggle of the working class and oppressed peoples against the common enemy, imperialism.

It is up to the (Marxist-Leninist) communists to take the initiative in the fight against imperialist war, on the basis of anti-imperialist and revolutionary platforms that bring together all the popular, democratic and patriotic forces; to place ourselves at the forefront of the struggle against imperialist interventions, against the fomenters of war and the arms race, for the dismantling of the imperialist military bases and the withdrawal from all pro-war alliances, in order to hinder the war machine with mass actions, for the transformation of reactionary civil wars into revolutionary civil wars, thus supporting the struggles for national and social liberation that are shaking the capitalist imperialist world.

It is up to the (Marxist-Leninist) communists to intensify the most decisive ideological and political battle against the nationalist, populist, chauvinist and fascist currents and against those reformist and social-democratic currents that are putting the masses to sleep and dividing them in order to perpetuate wage slavery.

It is our task to point to the revolutionary way out of the general crisis of the barbarous and inhuman capitalist system.

In order to fulfill these tasks and responsibilities, to advance in a consistent manner in the organization of the revolutionary

processes in different countries, it is necessary to count on larger and stronger Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations, with a greater number of really active proletarian cadres.

Without communist parties rooted in the working class and the popular masses, which actively take part in social and political life, it is impossible to overcome the weaknesses of the movements of struggle and to transform them into revolutionary mass movements; it is impossible to lead the struggle of the proletariat in an independent manner, to advance and ensure the triumph of the revolution, the building of socialism and communism.

Therefore, it is our indispensable task to group the vanguard of the proletariat, the genuine communist forces under the banner of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism, to strengthen and revive the existing parties, to build genuine communist parties and organizations where none exist, to work to consolidate the international unity of the revolutionary proletariat in our ICMLPO.

Quito, October of 2015  
21st Plenary of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations

# **ICMLPO**

## ***International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations***

### **Rules of Organization of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations**

We are the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, the ideological, political and organizational integration of the revolutionary parties of the proletariat of various countries and continents. We represent the interests of the working class in our countries and internationally. We intend to demolish the foundations of the capitalist-imperialist system, seize power, build socialism, abolish every kind of social inequality, destroy social classes, emancipate humanity and establish communism.

We are the continuers of the international organization of the workers and communists initiated by the working class of Europe and the tireless work of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels that took shape in the International Workingmen's Association, which continued in the first stage of the Second International, which was developed in the Communist International founded by Lenin and Stalin, the Comintern, and later the revolutionary period of the Cominform.

We rose up against modern revisionism that attacked the leadership of the Communist Party and State power and the Leadership of the USSR; we fought consistently against the opportunist theses that renounced the class character of the proletarian party and State, which entered into agreements with imperialism and capitalism to oppose the revolution and socialism.

We recognize ourselves as protagonists of the ideological and political struggle against the theory of the Three Worlds and Maoism that sought to divert the working class, the peoples and the communists from the true course of the revolution and socialism.

Along with Comrade Enver Hoxha, we were fighters for the revolution, in defense of Marxism-Leninism; we always struggled for the international unity of the communists.

We were born as the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, ICMLPO, at the height of the anti-communist offensive unleashed by imperialism and reaction after the collapse of the USSR, of socialism in Albania, immersed in the ebb of the trade union and revolutionary struggle of the working class, of the serious defeats suffered by the national liberation movement.

We emerged as a historical necessity for the continuation of the struggle for revolution and socialism in each of our countries, to contribute to the victory of the international revolution of the proletariat.

After several efforts, of frank and timely discussions, of agreements and commitments, of various initiatives, among which we highlight the multilateral meetings of the 1980s, the international journal *Theory and Practice*, the International Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Youth Camps and the meetings of parties between 1991 and 1993, we were founded in August of 1994.

We are the ideological, political and organizational coming together of the Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations in an international initiative that proclaimed the principles of class struggle and proletarian internationalism, the need for revolutionary violence to overthrow the rule of imperialism and capitalism, the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the building of socialism, the struggle for communism.

We recognize as a very valuable historical legacy, of relevance today in all the countries, of the thought of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin; we adhere militantly to the revolutionary principles of Marxism-Leninism and with their guidance and inspiration we fight in our countries to organize and make the revolution.

The fulfillment of the responsibility of leading the cause of the working class and peoples for social and national liberation, for the revolution and socialism, for emancipation, takes into account the need to fight in defense of Marxism-Leninism, its revolutionary principles, its development; it raises the responsibility of unmasking, denouncing and fighting to the end against revi-

sionism in all its variants and every manifestation of opportunism within the workers and revolutionary movement, and within the communist parties.

The Communist Declaration adopted in Quito in 1994 fully identifies us and we propose it as a Declaration that, at the same time as it unifies us, it drives us to develop it under new conditions.

We, the Parties that constitute the ICMLPO, would like to invite the parties and organizations from all countries that defend and fight for communism to join with us for the formation of a powerful Marxist-Leninist International Communist Movement, which is planning to reconstruct the Communist International at the same time as we commit ourselves to make our contribution in all fields for the formation and development of new Marxist-Leninist parties.

## **RULES OF ORGANIZATION**

1. The members of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, ICMLPO, are the parties and organizations that are formed in their countries and call themselves communists, that adhere to Marxism-Leninism, denounce and combat revisionism and opportunism in all its variants, that strive to organize and lead the struggle of the working class and peoples for the revolution and socialism, that take up the Communist Declaration and the Rules of Organization of the ICMLPO.

2. The Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations of any country can be members if they decide to be involved in the ICMLPO, for which they must endorse the Communist Declaration, the Rules of Organization, and have the endorsement of two member parties or organizations of the ICMLPO.

3. The process of admission to the ICMLPO establishes an initial period of two years in which they participate as observer, take part in the discussions and decisions of the ICMLPO, with the exception of the right to vote, and participate in its activities.

4. The organic integration is taken up at the Plenary of the Conference with the approval of two thirds of the participants.

5. The ICMLPO states that it recognizes the existence of a single Marxist-Leninist party in each country; it proposes that the

organizations that consider themselves Marxist-Leninists one country should work for their ideological, political, programmatic and organizational unification, which we will decisively support.

6. All the Parties and Organizations that are members of the ICMLPO assume the following duties:

I. To defend Marxism-Leninism. To struggle against its detractors of all kinds.

II. To be actively involved in the economic and political struggle of the working class and the people and to lead them taking into account the perspective of the seizure of power.

III. To practice proletarian internationalism.

IV. To defend and apply the decisions of the ICMLPO.

V. To contribute to the process of establishment and development of the members of the ICMLPO as vanguard parties of the working class in their country.

VI. To contribute and aid in the formation and development of new Marxist-Leninist parties and organizations in countries where they do not exist.

VII. To participate actively in the different internationalist initiatives defined by the ICMLPO, such as: the plenary sessions of the Conference, the regional meetings of the parties, the international anti-fascist and anti-imperialist youth camps, the trade union meetings, and those that are approved in the future.

VIII. To aid in the publication of the journal *Unity and Struggle*, to distribute it among its membership, the working class and youth.

7. The Parties and Organizations that are members of the ICMLPO have the following rights:

I. To participate with full rights, with voice and vote, in the Plenaries of the Conference, in the Regional Meetings of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations.

II. To participate in the editing of *Unity and Struggle*.

III. To constructively criticize the policy and activity of the other members of the ICMLPO.

8. The ICMLPO can expel from its ranks parties and organizations that deviate from Marxist-Leninist positions, take revisionist and opportunist positions, that betray the cause of the revolution and communism.



Expulsion from the ICMLPO should proceed cautiously and with reflection; one must guarantee the defense of the party or organization and proceed when there is no possibility of correction or rectification. The decision to expel a member of the ICMLPO is taken at the Plenary Session of the Conference, it requires the decision of two-thirds of the participating parties.

The Parties and Organizations that do not participate regularly in the Plenaries and activities of the ICMLPO, with a lapse of three years, without a justified reason, are considered excluded from the ICMLPO by their own will.

9. The Plenary Session of the Conference is the decision-making body of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations, ICMLPO, it is convoked and meets every year and, if necessary, at a special session, convened by the Coordinating Committee (COCO) or at the request of the majority of the members.

The Conference discusses and approves general political resolutions, as well as concrete issues related to special problems and situations. The approval of decisions is made by the majority. The decisions of the Conference are binding on the members of the ICMLPO.

The Plenary of the Conference accepts the admission of new members and decides on the expulsion of its members.

The Conference can establish Work Commissions to deal with specific problems.

Each year the Plenary of the Conference elects the Coordinating Committee of the ICMLPO and analyzes and approves its activities.

Only the Plenary can modify the Rules; it must do so by discussing them in two consecutive sessions.

10. The Regional Meetings should develop their discussions and activities within the framework of the general decisions of the ICMLPO; they should contribute to the development of the member parties and organizations, to the formation of other parties in countries where they do not exist.

11. The Coordinating Committee, COCO, is elected every year by the Plenary session of the Conference, which decides the number of its members.

All the members of the Conference may present their candidacy to the COCO.

The Coordinating Committee works between the Plenaries of the Conference, taking political initiatives of coordination, political and solidarity statements within the framework of the guidelines of the Conference.

The Coordinating Committee should work with the party and organization that will be the Host of the Plenary of the Conference.

The COCO renders accounts of its activities to the Plenary of the Conference.

12. The relations among the Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations are established on the basis of equality; they are fraternal and comradely, they express internationalism and solidarity.

The relations among the parties and organizations are governed by mutual respect for the decisions of each, but they do not exclude criticism and political debate with the perspective of advancing the process of the international revolution of the proletariat.

13. The journal *Unity and Struggle* is the official publication of the ICMLPO, its purpose is to defend Marxism-Leninism at the international level, to analyze the situation of the workers and revolutionary movement, to communicate the experiences of our parties and organizations.

*Unity and Struggle* is published every six months. Each party should send in its article in a timely manner and disseminate the contents of the journal among the revolutionaries and the working class of its country.

14. To carry out its internationalist activities each member party and organization of the ICMLPO undertakes to contribute annual dues, whose amount is voluntarily decided by each one of the members.

15. The Coordinating Committee renders accounts of the financial management annually.

21st Plenary Session of the ICMLPO  
Ecuador, October of 2015

## **Brazil**

### ***Revolutionary Communist Party – Brazil***

*Edival Nunes Caja*<sup>1</sup>

### **Fifty years ago Manuel Lisboa founded the PCR in Brazil**

It is with a deep sense of love that the revolutionary communists of Brazil celebrate the 72 years since the birth of our immortal commandante, Comrade Manuel Lisboa on this day, February 21.

His short but extremely fruitful life was dedicated to sowing unlimited faith in the need for the organization of a true Revolutionary Communist Party and the practice of militant solidarity in the generous hearts of the workers, the exploited and oppressed in order to transform the unequal and unjust world that we live in into a “promised land,” a land of justice and endless happiness, the communist world that is now arriving by historical necessity.

Therefore, during the month of May and throughout 2016 we are proudly celebrating with parties and work the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Revolutionary Communist Party, PCR. This party of a new type was founded in May 1966 in Recife by Manuel Lisboa, Amaro Luiz Carvalho, Valmir Costa, Selma Bandeira and Ricardo Zarattini Filho, among others.

That historic meeting was held under rigorous norms of clandestine work was the equivalent of its first Congress, due to its political depth and significance. It approved the name of the Party, Marxism-Leninism and democratic centralism as the only doctrine and method valid for guiding the development of the ideological and political struggle within the party, its political line, elected its Leadership, its Central Organ (*La Lucha – The Struggle*), norms of security and finance policy. Its basic line was to seek among the basic masses the support for the PCR and the revolution. The call to this event came only after exhausting a long ideological struggle against the central committee of the

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<sup>1</sup> Edival Nunes Caja is a member of the Central Committee of the PCR.

Communist Party of Brazil PCdoB and confirmation of its path toward revisionism and away from the principles of Leninist organization towards political opportunism.

Historically the foundation of the PCR came to irreversibly separate the revolutionary communists from the revisionists and opportunists of the right and left in Brazil, whether they be followers of the Khrushchevites, shameless traitors to the Bolshevik revolution of the Soviet proletariat, or the followers of the Communist Party of China, hidden traitors to the revolution of the brave Chinese working people.

### **Who was Manuel Lisboa?**

Manuel was born on February 21, 1944, in the city of Macei, Alagoas. The son of Iracilda Lisboa de Moura and Augusto de Moura Castro, a family belonging to the middle class of Alagoas, which lacked nothing from the material point of view. Already as a student in what is today the Alagoas State School, already as a teenager he became a dedicated member of the Student Association of his school and the Union of Secondary Students of Alagoas, UESA. He felt a burning desire to study philosophy, economics, sociology and Marxism-Leninism in order to understand the causes of the outrageous social inequality. The growing injustices, the wars, the suffering of millions of people without food, without a home to live in, unable to cure their illnesses, without schools for their children, left him truly angry.

In Brazil in the 1950s and early 60s, while his friends and neighbors sought a relief for this anguish in Sunday sermons of the priest of Farol Parish, the neighborhood where he was born and lived, Manuel went to the headquarters of the Communist Party, in the center of Maceio, to buy books and study them, as one who likes a tasty meal, in order to immediately reach out to friends, teachers and trade unionists to review the contents absorbed amidst heated discussions.

There were works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Dimitrov, Maxim Gorky, Caio Prado Jr., Jorge Amado, Graciliano Ramos, Nelson Werneck Sodre, etc. Manuel promptly joined the ranks of the Communist Youth and the PCB, carrying out an intense and disciplined work of forming new nuclei, new cells to study the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

He created new centers of agitation and circles of contributors to support the new activities of propaganda and organization of the Party. When he began studying medicine at the UFAL [Federal University of Alagoas], Manuel was already a trained revolutionary Marxist activist. Already as a leader full of revolutionary enthusiasm, he took up the task of building the party organization throughout the university. Thus he sought to support the demands of the employees and to attract teachers with a social conscience to the Party. There he devoted much of his energies to work to unite and mobilize the students, promoting the struggle for their most pressing demands, always explaining in his agitation that students can only achieve their final victory when they take over their organization and march in the same



direction and perspective as the class-conscious proletariat, representing the laboring classes, who produce everything, including the support of the universities, without being able to enroll their children there and without being able to live in the beautiful apartment buildings built there.

### **He Made History**

To bring these revolutionary ideas to the workers he dedicated himself to writing for the Party press to impart a revolutionary character to the work of the masses and to cultural work, through film-discussions, poetry, music, theater, activities developed at the Popular Center of Culture (CPC) of the National Union of students, UNE, as a way to raise the level of consciousness of the students and working class of Alagoas. He always ended up attracting the best people of the most combative sectors of the masses to him and the Party. He took part in staging some theatrical works such as *A mas valor, va acabar, su Edgar, de Vianinha*. He put on the play of Joao Ninguem for the dockworkers of the Port of Alagoas, including playing the part of the actor and after the staging he coordinated the discussion among the audience of stevedores about the living conditions of the working class in Brazil and in the countries where the socialist revolution had already triumphed.

These attitudes showed that Manuel was already conscious of the fact that to make the revolution it was necessary to merge socialism with the spontaneous workers and popular movement. For this, the leading role of the members and the Party is fundamental. Furthermore, he pointed out the need to awaken the working class for the fight against the military dictatorship and for the leadership of the democratic and revolutionary movement as a condition for the success of the victory of the workers over the bourgeoisie. He never departed from this Leninist conception by a millimeter.

On the day of the fascist military coup, April 1, 1964, his home was invaded by an armed gang with machine guns who were looking for him. Manuel escaped that time thanks to the spirit of pride of his mother, Mrs. Iracilda, who sent the police away from her house, saying that he was at the movies, while she urgently provided Manuel with a revolver with ammunition,

money and transportation while he made a safe retreat through the back door.

Thus began the heroic saga of a devoted young revolutionary, fulfilling the norms of security of clandestine political work until the end of his life. Despite the fact that the political police were on his heels all the time, he always remained a passionate revolutionary, with a good sense of humor, without fear, of the Leninist type, studying and struggling to transform the Brazilian reality.

In confronting the difficulties of clandestine work, he had a special predilection for the following texts: *Notes from the Gallows*, by Julius Fucik, *What Every Revolutionary Should Know about Repression*, by Victor Serge, and *If You Are Taken Prisoner, Comrade*, edited by the Third International, by Alvaro Cunhal.



Banner reads: For a revolutionary government of the workers!  
Revolutionary Communist Party – PCR

He loved to study in order to gain scientific knowledge, whether from Brazilian authors, the classics of Marxism-Leninism, international literature as well as *Capital*, all as part of

a disciplined and methodical plan of study, including French, English and German. He knew well the work of Dante Alighieri (*The Divine Comedy*) and of Honore de Balzac (*The Human Comedy*). The study of literature and art filled the free time left by the unpredictability of clandestine life in order to make the best of his time. Besides he left time to do physical exercises and practice soccer, when possible; he had his favorite team, Santa Cruz, but he never allowed himself to take part in sectarian discussions. On the contrary, everything served for discussion and to increase his knowledge and strengthen relations of camaraderie among his comrades.

Thanks to his passion for studies, for the questions of the Brazilian revolution, his energetic and active participation in the organizational debates and conferences of the Party, he and other comrades soon discovered that to continue as members in the PCB would not lead to the socialist revolution in Brazil, based on its reformism, legalism and submission to the betrayal of the Khrushchevites who had seized the leadership of the CPSU at the 20th Congress in 1956 and were moving towards the restoration of capitalism in the USSR. So he saw what happened afterwards.

With his veteran comrades Valmir Costa, Selma Bandeira, Amaro Luiz de Carvalho and historical leaders such as Diogenes de Arruda Camara and Mauricio Grabois, among others, he went to work with all his might for the organization of the Party under the name of the Communist Party of Brazil, PC do B, in 1962, in order to hold high the banner of revolutionary Marxism and the perspective of socialist revolution in Brazil.

### **The Judgment of History**

It was hard to see, after the fascist military coup in 1964, that the Central Committee of the PC do B would continue with virtually the same serious revisionist deviations, now of a leftist nature only now following automatically the Communist Party of China, in addition to the subjection to the so-called national bourgeoisie, as one can see in the document released to the public at the beginning of the first half of 1966, entitled *Union of all Brazilians to free the country from the crisis, dictatorship and the neocolonialist threat*, “which even the most moderate sectors of the bourgeoisie could sign,” as Manuel criticized at the time. In



the same period there was also the open letter to Fidel, in which the leadership of the PC do B tried to discredit the Cuban Revolution and its leader Fidel Castro, “in order to show its slavish fidelity to the CP of China.”

The objective was to support without any discussion the opportunist differences of a geopolitical nature of the two powers in a disguised march towards capitalist imperialism to which Russia and China and their respective parties the CPSU and the Chinese CP were heading.

“It was in April of 1966 that some revolutionary communists, anticipating this outcome, rebelled against the leadership of the PC do B,” “that firm and resolute attitude of the revolutionary communists, our uncompromising decision to forge a truly revolutionary and proletarian Party in the heat of the class struggle, to awaken and mobilize the masses in the region of the country most exploited by the monopoly groups: the Northeast, the unshakable conviction that only the people’s war will lead to the seizure of political power. This resulted in a revolutionary practice that was ‘unforgivable’ to the traitors and renegade leaders of the PC do B, who for that reason had a boundless hatred for us. They created and spread all sorts of lies, libel and slander against the revolutionary communists” (*La Lucha* editorial, No. 5, April 1968).

We refer to this document that already belongs to history, only to show the correctness and inevitability of that revolutionary rupture by the revolutionary communists with the careerists of the PC do B. Who can now doubt the unquestioned political and ideological degeneration of that party as a communist party?

Manuel was the most outstanding builder of the PCR, the wisest and highest leader until the last moment of his life when he had reached the highest level of human consciousness, the communist consciousness that decisively overcomes the individualist sentiment, the egoistical interest that everyone inherits from the culture of the system of private property, with the strength of his deep communist conviction, his vigilant ideological struggle in defense of the interests of the collective, of his party, which represents the hope of the proletarian revolution, the possibility of the emancipation of the exploited and marginalized of Brazil and the world.

The end of Manuel's heroic life at age 29, on February 4, 1973, by the fascist torturers of the DOI – Codi [Department of Information Operations – Center for Internal Defense Operations], did not prevent the blossoming of his most important work, the Revolutionary Communist Party, which continues to build the bright future of the workers of the city and countryside and especially of the youth.

In all states we are celebrating this heroic path, by increasing the membership of the Party founded by Manuel Lisboa for the victory of the working class.

***Long live the 50th anniversary of the  
Revolutionary Communist Party!  
The PCR lives and fight!***

March 2016

## **Burkina Faso**

### ***Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta***

### **Regarding the Terrorist Attacks in the West Africa Sub-Region and its Problems**

Recently a series of extremely violent terrorist attacks have taken place in various countries in the West African sub-region. Some examples include: the terrorist attack in November 2015 on the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali, with heavy losses of 27 dead.

On January 15 and 16, 2016, our country, Upper Volta, now called Burkina Faso, suffered terrorist attacks on an unprecedented scale. Heavily armed individuals attacked the restaurant bar Cappuccino, burned vehicles in front of the Hotel Splendid and shot at those present, from 7:30 PM on January 15 until the morning of the next day, January 16; there were 30 dead and over 50 injured as the result of this murderous operation.

Warning signs to the public had appeared a few days before. In fact, a mission of a special delegation from Tin Akof, a village in the north of the country, returning from the village of Tin Abao, was ambushed by gunmen. According to the statement by the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, this attack resulted in two dead (a policeman and a civilian) and two policemen wounded. Moreover, in the city of Djibo, which is also located in the north, reported the kidnapping on the night of January 15 to 16, 2016, of two Australian aid workers from a health center, who were residents since 1972. To these events must be added an attack on an outpost of gendarmes in Samorogouan on October 9, 2015, as well as the kidnapping of an expatriate Romanian employee of a manganese mine of Tambao in the province of Oudelan.

On March 14, 2016, six armed men stormed the beach of the North Star Hotel in Grand-Bassam, a coastal town 40 kilometers from Abidjan (Ivory Coast), where they shot many of the people present. There were 22 dead, including 3 members of the Special Forces.

The macabre list got longer with the attack of March 21, 2016, against the North Star Hotel, of the Azalai group, a real

estate agency in the district of Bamako. This is the headquarters of the training mission of the battalions of the Mali army, created by the European Union after the military intervention of French imperialism in Mali, in Operation Serval in February 2013.

The Revolutionary Communist Party of Volta (PCRv) condemns these terrorist attacks and expresses its condolences to the bereaved families in the West African sub-region. In the case of our country, the PCRv salutes the courage of our people, of the soldiers, gendarmes and defense and security forces for having put an end to this vile business. We denounce terrorism and particularly jihadism, which is aimed at sowing terror and destabilizing our country and putting in question the victorious popular resistance uprising of October 30 and 31, 2014 against the counter-revolutionary fascist military coup of September 16, 2016. Our party, in its publications and statements, has always denounced terrorism and jihadism, which is contrary to the revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation and the establishment of socialism.

Against the oppression and exploitation of the system of imperialist domination, the working class and peoples are developing various forms of struggle, including the popular uprising, revolutionary violence and armed struggle. These are just wars that should not be confused with blind terrorism. We communists strongly condemn the state terrorism of the reactionary and bourgeois regimes in the service of capitalism and the imperialist powers. We also denounce the provocative groups that are often



linked to the forces of repression of the bourgeoisie, which use them to destabilize the popular struggles.

On the contrary we, the Marxist-Leninist parties, support insurrectionary movements, the struggle for national and social liberation of the working class and peoples and we are developing tactics and strategies in order to organize and leader better with courage and clarity.

However, one must understand the causes and problems of the terrorist attacks that are increasing throughout the world and particularly in the West African sub-region. Because ultimately they are used by the imperialist powers in their plan for war and oppression of the peoples.

### **The Jihadist Groups Are an Integral Part of the Policies of Imperialist Domination in West Africa**

The West African sub-region, struck by the economic, political and military crisis, is at the heart of the inter-imperialist rivalries for the redivision of territories and for world hegemony.

French imperialism feels threatened in its former backyard by the other imperialist powers (United States, Britain and Germany) and by the new candidates such as India, Brazil, Turkey and China, which are increasing their military intervention under the pretext of fighting against terrorism. In addition, it is not opposed to some armed groups such as the National Liberation Movement of Azawad (MNLA) involved in the attacks in northern Mali in 2012.

The sub-region of West Africa and the whole Sahel-Sahara strip has become a militarized zone with the presence of military bases and troops of U.S. and French imperialism and the countries of the European Union. The neocolonial states, suffering from the gangrene of corruption and the mafia clans, are showing themselves incapable of defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of their countries and are trusting in the armies of the imperialist powers. In other regions, the misery, the endemic worsening and particularly youth unemployment, are the result of the plunder of the resources and the policies of neocolonial exploitation. These are favorable conditions for recruiting some youths by the jihadist groups. This is the case with movements such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and AQIM (Al-Qaeda in the Is-

lamic Maghreb) and MUJAO (Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa, Ansar Eddine) in northern Mali. All these groups have cells operating in different countries of West Africa and may commit terrorist attacks, including in the major cities, as has been widely shown by recent events.

Under the pretext of dealing with these terrorist actions, the imperialist powers are reinforcing their military interventions and the installation of bases, troops and the infrastructure of surveillance and control of the territories; above all this is directed against the democratic and revolutionary struggles of the people. Operation Barkhane (Liza) under the command of the French armed forces is extending its actions throughout the Sahel-Saharan strip (Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Burkina Faso) with a force of 3,000 troops on the territory. The Special Forces are also based in Ouagadougou, capital of Burkina Faso, considered as a strategic platform for interventions in neighboring countries as “areas of interest” such as Libya, Nigeria and Cameroon.

The recent attacks in Burkina Faso are linked to the adventurist policy of the last regime of dictator Blaise Compaoré, who made our country a rear base for different groups of jihadists in the sub-region. The current political authorities with Rock Marc Christian Kaboré as President of the Republic and Salif Diallo as President of the National Assembly were key players in the implementation of this mafia policy.

In the light of all these events, the African peoples and espe-



cially our people must understand that it would be an error to confuse Islam with jihadism. These terrorist groups are involved in various forms of international trafficking (drugs, smuggling of goods, cigarettes, arms and human beings taken as hostages, etc.). As recent history has shown, jihadist terrorism is a product and at the same time an instrument of the imperialist powers. Through their policies of oppression and looting of the dominated countries, including predatory wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Mali, they prepared the way these movements that they exploit in order to divert the struggles of the peoples. One should recall on this question the exemplary case of Osama Ben Laden, trained by the CIA for the U.S. crusade against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

In the case of terrorist attacks on African countries, French troops are eager to take the lead in this situation in order to play an essential role and to legitimize their presence. They speak of generously providing assistance and technical cooperation to the African States. So after the terrorist attacks in Grand-Bassam, Francois Hollande said that “France is providing logistical support to the Ivory Coast to find the attackers. It will continue and intensify its cooperation with its partners in the fight against terrorism.” Later, the French Defense Minister announced from Abidjan, the positioning of French gendarmes of GIGN [Intervention Group of the National Gendarmerie] in Ouagadougou to carry out actions against terrorists in the sub-region, without any prior consultation with Burkina Faso. Only in this way does the policy of denial of the national sovereignty of the African countries and of domination with the military plan, through the stationing of French and U.S. troops, become understandable.

The PCRV strongly reaffirms that one cannot trust imperialism to defeat terrorism because it is imperialism that is secretly using terrorism to achieve its goals of extortion and abuse of the struggles of the peoples.

Only the constant struggle of the proletariat and the peoples for social and national liberation can ensure peace, freedom and social well-being. The PCRV denounces the jihadist attacks and threats in the sub-region, especially against our country. The PCRV calls on the working class and people to organize themselves to defeat the terrorists and instigators of reactionary civil war in order to deepen the achievements of the popular uprising

of October 30 and 31, 2014, and to achieve the national democratic revolution. Only the struggle for national and social liberation can defeat Jihadism and the different terrorist tendencies in our country, in the sub-region of West Africa and internationally.

**No to the Presence of Foreign Troops in the  
West African Sub-Region and Our Country!  
Bread and Freedom for the People!**



## Colombia

### ***Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist)***

### **Peace and the Road to Power**

The news about peace in Colombia is monopolizing cyberspace. At the end of January the relevant news was the decision of the UN Security Council to verify the “cease-fires” that seal the demobilization of the FARC. In February there was the visit of the Colombian government led by President Santos, senior officials and former officials of the country to the government of the imperialist Obama to celebrate 14 years of militarism, barbarism and anti-democracy sponsored by “Plan Colombia”<sup>1</sup>. It is an intervention plan that will function to continue the *tasks of containment of the popular struggle* after signing the agreement of demobilization of one of the historic bulwarks of the insurgent movement that includes the guerrillas of the EPL and ELN, movements that have not been defeated militarily by the alliance between the Pentagon and its counterparts in the Ministry of De-

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<sup>1</sup> “*We will soon have a new version of Plan Colombia’*,” says Pinzon. *The former Defense Minister anticipates details about the U.S. role in post-conflict Colombia.*” *El Tiempo* newspaper. By Sergio Gomez Maseri, January 10, 2016:

“Are we talking about a new Plan Colombia?”

“I think we will eventually have a new version of Plan Colombia. We are already working on that. Maybe the focus and even the name will change because we need a plan with a vision for the times that are coming in Colombia and that will certainly contribute to the development of issues that are within the framework of the peace agreement. Issues coming into the post-conflict period such as investment in marginal areas of the country, the fight against organized crime, and new issues such as education, innovation, and even the attention of members of the Armed Forces who were injured and required specialized care. I think that this is the kind of (aid) package that will be coming to the country in the coming years. I am convinced that we will eventually be able to talk about what some already call the Plan for Colombia looking towards 2030. We have to look more to the future than to the past.”

fense and the armed forces of the country. In particular, the EPL thinks that there are no political conditions for a dialogue with Santos given his unshakable positions that go against Colombia and its people.

The reality is that there is a strong struggle between the antagonistic classes facing each other to improve their forces in terms of the preservation of power, in the case of the oligarchy, and for the seizure of power, the situation of the proletariat and the popular majority. The economic crisis is creating political situations that are rapidly changing the balance of forces and are heating up the atmosphere throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, as the Haitian people have just demonstrated.

The insurgency, as an essential factor in this confrontation, became an importance element that worries the oppressors who maintain their desire to win in this class struggle that demands the use of revolutionary violence by the popular masses in order to end in a revolutionary victory.

### **A Dialogue in Order to Disarm**

Therefore, when Santos called for a dialogue with the FARC and not with the other guerrilla groups, it became a double-edged sword against the people. It is very different from using it as a tool of struggle to strengthen the political character and status of belligerency of the insurgency, to pressure the regime for solutions in favor of the people and not only benefit certain groups, such as the guerrillas have been developing it – with different experiences – since 1984 when the agreements between the government and the guerrillas were signed, with the “cease fire and national dialogue” of the EPL and the PC of C (m-l)<sup>2</sup> having a great impact.

That reality put forward that the discussion on the right to rebel and the tactical-strategic value of combining the various forms of struggle, which allowed the Colombian people to advance in terms of the destruction of the Bourgeois State, is not unimportant.

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<sup>2</sup> The People’s Liberation Army – EPL – and the Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist)

However, the about-face made by the FARC, more especially by the PCCC<sup>3</sup>, the party that leads it, abandoning the essence that was defended at the time it was a member of the Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinator, this political-military organization now has another language and practice. This is shown when it spoke of the results of the Havana table to the European Parliament: “In this regard, undoubtedly what has created the greatest expectation has been the Agreement on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), which deals with the creation of a Jurisdiction that should meet the responsibilities arising from the long and bloody armed conflict. This is contributing to consolidating the peace and making it irreversible, *understood as the correct synthesis of all the fundamental rights of individuals*, because without a consolidated peace the full and integral enjoyment of human rights is not possible. The Special Jurisdiction *places the Right to truth at the top of the whole system.*”<sup>4</sup>

According to those statements, is the supreme right to rebel-

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<sup>3</sup> **Clandestine Colombian Communist Party**, which, although it rejected Gorbachev’s theses of “perestroika,” did not do so with the Khrushchevite theses that it supported, including the “peaceful transition” to socialism, which is a renunciation of the use of revolutionary violence as the only road to people’s power and socialism, in order to adopt parliamentarism and electoralism as the only roads. These theses were adopted at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in the early 1950s, together with the theses that led to the fall of socialism in the USSR. In this regard, the *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels says: “Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all settle matters with its own bourgeoisie. In depicting the most general phases of the development of the proletariat, we traced the more or less veiled civil war, raging within existing society, up to the point where that war breaks out into open revolution, and where *the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie lays the foundation for the sway of the proletariat.*” (p. 45)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.pazfarc-ep.org/noticias-comunicados-documentos-farc-ep/delegacion-de-paz-farc-ep/3308-intervencion-de-ivan-marquez-en-el-parlamento-europeo>

lion enshrined in the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN in the middle of the last century, something secondary or that no longer exists? Can there be a “lasting peace” or a “democratic peace” under the ruthless exploitation and dictatorship of the oligarchy and imperialism over the people?

From this new perspective, these questions are being answered positively, but this was not clearly expressed in the early speeches – at the start of the conversations – made by the head of the peace delegation, Ivan Marquez and by Timoshenko, the commander on the road to demobilization initiated by his predecessor, Alfonso Cano<sup>5</sup>.



Peace talks, Havana, Cuba

It should be noted that the statements and speeches of the FARC pander to the deceitful bourgeois discourse on democracy and the “Rule of Law.” They lead to a reformist legal struggle in order to fulfill the agreements, which call on the people to trust in Santos and his government team at the service of the exploiting

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<sup>5</sup> He died in a murder outside of combat, ordered by President Juan Manuel Santos and denounced by some bourgeois personalities such as the bishop of Cali. It is known that Cano was returning from a meeting with Santos’ brother, who made the first contacts to reach the agreements that gave rise to the talks in Havana.

classes. They put the FARC outside of its political agenda of the struggle for the seizure of power, which was expressed at the guerrilla conferences that approved plans such as the one called the “8 year plan.” They have even given rise to the Uribe-Santos idea of the “defeat of the insurgency,” especially with its acceptance of appearing before the courts of the Special Jurisdiction of Peace, part of the state institutions that they combatted for over 50 years.

This basic conceptual change is also seen by the absence of political initiatives towards crucial events in the country, thus creating the false and dangerous idea that *the only matters concerning peace are the talks between the government and the FARC*.

Acts against national and popular sovereignty, which keep the people away from the social justice that they are preaching, have not merited statements from the FARC. These are acts such as the sale of the state-owned electric utility ISAGEN, the rise in the cost of public services, the paltry increase in the minimum wage and the serious economic crisis. Nor did the announcement of the tax reform and the large budget gap that the public rejected, the appearance of ZIDRES<sup>6</sup> that directly clashes with the democratic aspirations of the agrarian movement barely receive passing mention, and one must note the lack of drive to defend the demand for the convening of the National Constituent Assembly, although Santos has launched a legal, constitutional and

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<sup>6</sup> “Zones of Interest for Rural and Economic Development (Zidres) allows the wastelands of the country to pass not only into the hands of dispossessed peasants, as established by Law 160 of 1994, but also and mainly to large agro-industrial investors. While after two years of negotiations our agrarian communities have not been able to gain access to our territorial rights, in less than one year the large investors have achieved priority attention with all the prerogatives of your government.” (Letter to Santos from the Political Commission of the Agrarian, Peasant, Ethnic and Popular Summit, November 30, 2015)

propaganda initiative in favor of holding a plebiscite<sup>7</sup> which denies the use of this bourgeois-democratic mechanism and at the same time serves to ensure the continuity of the neoliberal economic model and the reactionary regime. This is not a dividing line between advanced and reactionary positions because the nuances expressed by Uribe to the process with the FARC also points to the intention to maintain them.

It is no wonder that a politically enlightened person, such as a leading intellectual and liberal columnist would say "... the government has yielded virtually nothing to the FARC in the negotiations in Havana: neither in the political and social organization of the State, nor in the capitalist and neoliberal economic model, nor in rural reform, nor in the Armed Forces. Whereas in exchange the FARC has not only renounced the method of armed struggle *but also the principle of the class struggle. What it now accepts is class collaboration.* Between the peasantry and proletariat, which they claim to represent, and the ruling class of the bourgeois state, whose domination they now only seek to contest on the basis of the electoral and trade union political action: they accept formal democracy, whose reforms, if they come, will come from the peaceful development of their formal freedoms."<sup>8</sup>

With total scientific validity, in order to deepen the struggle for people's power, Marxism has stated that: "The dictatorship of the proletariat cannot arise as the result of the peaceful development of bourgeois society and of bourgeois democracy; it can arise only as the result of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine, the bourgeois army, the bourgeois bureaucratic apparatus,

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<sup>7</sup> This recalls what happened with the Plebiscite of 1957, when leaders of the bourgeois Liberal and Conservative parties submitted their agreement called the "National Front" to approval by the citizens. This subjected the country to the exclusion of all but these two parties in the management of the state and the right to elect and be elected for 20 years. Santos now wants to eternalize the antidemocratic and neoliberal program called the "Constitution of 1991."

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.semana.com/opinion/articulo/antonio-caballero-participacion-politica-electoral-de-quienes-dejan-las-armas-esdemocracy/454089-3>

the bourgeois police....

“In other words, the law of violent proletarian revolution, the law of the smashing of the bourgeois state machine as a preliminary condition for such a revolution, *is an inevitable law of the revolutionary movement* in the imperialist countries of the world.”<sup>9</sup> This is what the followers of Nikita Khrushchev and the social-democratic current that it embraces have trampled on, which continue to reap the failures experienced in Chile with the overthrow of President Salvador Allende by the fascist General Pinochet, and has the so-called “alternative governments” resulting from mass and electoral processes that were not given birth to by revolutions on shaky grounds.

### **The Government of Peace?**

When Juan Manuel Santos sought re-election in 2014, the Bogota government headed by him and his bosses in Washington promoted a fantastic and lying advertising slogan: “...*this is the time of the victims and this is the time of peace*”<sup>10</sup> They spread it in order to address the political, economic, social and armed conflict that Colombia has been experiencing for almost a century, as the Colombian novelist William Ospina said, but making themselves “invisible”<sup>11</sup> to the world for the crimes committed under

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<sup>9</sup> J. V. Stalin, “The Foundations of Leninism”, Chap. IV, in *Problems of Leninism*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1976

<sup>10</sup> Website [www.Las2Orillas.co](http://www.Las2Orillas.co), June 11, 2014

<sup>11</sup> William Ospina, a writer and columnist for the national daily newspaper *El Espectador* [*The Spectator*], wrote in his Sunday column of September 26, 2015: “For a long time this leadership has been seeking the causes of our ills, and every so often it points to various ones responsible for each historical calamity. In the 1950s it was the violent bandits, in the 1960s it was the student rebels and revolutionaries, in the 1970s the increase in the guerrillas, in the 1980s Pablo Escobar and the Extraditables, in the 1990s the paramilitaries, in the first decade of the 21st century the FARC.

“This week Juan Manuel Santos has managed to show the world, with great media coverage, that the agreement on transitional justice that it reached with the FARC is the key point of the talks in

the shelter of state terrorism that they established as part of the political regime, early in the last century, while maintaining the status quo.

Notorious historical events perpetrated by the army, police and agencies of state security confirm this statement; such events as the “Massacre of the banana workers”<sup>12</sup> in 1928, the long and

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Havana, perhaps because it is the point on which the FARC seem to admit that they are the ones responsible for the war these five decades. At least it is the only point that deserved to be presented to the world by the two commanders of both armies.

“But although the FARC admitted being the primary ones responsible for the crimes and atrocities of this war, I have to repeat what I said so often, that it is the Colombian leadership of the last century that is the main cause of the ills of the nation, that it is their interpretation the country and its manner of administering it that is responsible for everything. It is responsible for the bandits of the 1950s, whom it armed and whose fanaticism it aroused; for the rebels of the 1960s, all of whose rights it eliminated; for the M19, for the fraud in the 1970 elections; for the mafias of the 1980s, by closing off the opportunities for entrepreneurial initiative and the progressive and suicidal dismantling of the legal economy; for the guerrillas, for its abandonment of the countryside, for the exclusion and lack of responsibility by the state; for the paramilitaries, who provide the business owners with the protection that the State did not provide them; it is even responsible for the FARC, for this half century of useless war against an obsolete enemy that it could have included in the national project 50 years ago, if that project had existed.”

<sup>12</sup> The Massacre of the banana workers occurred on December 5, 1928, in the banana region of Cienaga and Santa Marta (Magdalena), where a massive strike involving more than 25,000 people of this region took place, in which they were fighting for their rights as workers in the banana plantations of the well-known banana company United Fruit, which exploited all those who worked for that company since 1918. The workers were on the outskirts of these plantations.

The strike was going very well, as the intention of the strikers was to fight for their rights. In a decree issued by the State they were called a “gang of criminals, rioters, arsonists and murderers of the Banana Zone,” and they were attacked with great bursts of fire from the National Army, who shot at everyone in the square, leaving



gloomy episode called “La Violencia” [“The Violence”] (made much worse by the murder of Liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitan<sup>13</sup>), the holocaust that took place 30 years ago with the “re-

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thousands dead, for wanting to have a better life and working conditions.

All this, the state governed by Miguel Abadía Méndez, who gave permission to fire all those who were in favor of the strike, or leaders, since it was not in the interest of the banana companies of U.S. imperialism to give them their rights or have a protest of this magnitude at the national level. Their victims have not received compensation; the truth is still being hidden and so is justice; the massacres are continuing in Colombia.

<sup>13</sup> The Bogotazo was an episode of violent protests, disturbances and repression in the center of Bogotá, the capital of Colombia, on April 9, 1948, following the assassination of Jorge Eliecer Gaitán that the justice system has not yet solved, but it is common knowledge that it was the principal leaders of the oligarchy from the Liberal and Conservative parties who were the masterminds of the crime.

It is considered to be one of the first urban acts of the era known as “La Violencia” [The Violence] and it is one of the most important events in the history of Colombia in the 20th century.

The unrest spread to other cities and regions of the country but with less intensity. In some smaller cities democratic governments were formed, and among their consequences were the emergence of Liberal guerrilla movement from the plains led by Guadalupe Salcedo, who was assassinated in Bogotá on June 6, 1957, four years after having signed a peace agreement with the government.

An important event before the death of Gaitán took place on February 7, 1948, when the Liberal leader led a demonstration of more than 100,000 people. This March of Silence occurred in protest against the political violence in various parts of the country. In his famous Prayer for Peace Gaitán told Ospina Pérez: “... *Mr. President, we ask you for one simple thing for which we do not need any more speeches. We ask you to stop the persecution by the authorities and this immense crowd also asks for this. We ask you for one small and big thing: that the political struggles be carried out through constitutional channels. We ask you not to think that our tranquility, this impressive tranquility, is cowardice. Mr. President, we are not cowards. We are descendants of the brave people who eliminated the*

taking of the Palace of Justice,” whose perpetrators remain unpunished,<sup>14</sup> the institutional genocidal massacres and actions and the covert actions of the State through the paramilitaries, which made the poor people targets of the military and of the justice system with special jurisdictions,. Hitler would be envious to see their devastating effects among the workers, peasants and other sections of the people and their political and social mass organizations<sup>15</sup>. These are a clear confirmation of the deeply-rooted

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*tyrannies on this sacred ground. But we can, Mr. President, sacrifice our lives to save peace and tranquility and freedom in Colombia....”.*

On February 15, Gaitan spoke out again in Manizales, this time with a speech called “Prayer for the Humble” as a tribute to the 20 Liberals massacred in the Department of Caldas. “...*Comrades in struggle. At the foot of your graves we swear to avenge you, with the victory of the Liberal Party we are reestablishing the ways of peace and justice in Colombia. You have physically departed, but you are very much alive among us...*”

<sup>14</sup> The Seizure of the Palace of Justice in Bogotá, Colombia, was an attack carried out on Wednesday, November 6, 1985, by a commando of guerrillas of the April 19 Movement (M-19) on the headquarters of the Palace of Justice, located on the north side of the Plaza de Bolivar in Bogota. The M-19 held about 350 hostages including judges, state councilors, judicial officers, employees and visitors to the Palace of Justice. The reaction of the Police and the Army left a toll of 98 dead, including eleven judges. Another 11 people were not found.

Due to the investigations undertaken by the Attorney General’s Office since 2005 two colonels and retired Colonel Alfonso Plazas Vega, the head of the operation to retake the Palace, were arrested. The latter was acquitted in late 2015 by the Supreme Court despite large protests by the human rights movement, democratic forces, the left and the revolutionaries. The event was classified as a holocaust and massacre by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH).

<sup>15</sup> Between 1985 and 2013, according to the Historical Memory Group, some 170,000 people died, 2,000 massacres were perpetrated by illegal groups and more than 8 million hectares of land were ille-

authoritarian and exclusionary practices and of state terrorism in the service of national and transnational monopoly capital, with a special dependency on U.S. imperialism, to form the backbone of the rise of fascism of the political regime that the Colombian people are experiencing.

**This is how one may make central the political slogan of winning a real democratic opening with real freedoms for the people and not just the enumerations of rights in the text of a constitution.**

In this way, the usurpers of power in Colombia and their principal partner, the USA, have guaranteed the plundering of the natural resources of the country and the exploitation of the labor power of the youth, women, peasants, indigenous people and black communities and the other laborers in the countryside and the city.

### **The Problem of Power and Peace**

The key problem of political struggle is that of power. That is why the bourgeoisie, the right hand of imperialism, has carried out many initiatives in Colombia to contain the popular struggle and remain in power. Its current tactic of dialogue is aimed at this and not at providing a negotiated political solution to the conflict. They are for the surrender and submission of the insurgency, without making any concessions.

The government and leaders of the business associations – even the church leaders – of the bourgeoisie share the tasks and have co-opted for this some politicians who serve as the “democratic left” in order not to explain why they do not aspire to overthrow the power of the owners of capital and the land.

In a document signed by 21 leaders of different business sectors on October 19, 2015, they expressed their support for the talks with the FARC, stating that:

“Over at least the last 35 years, all those who have governed Colombia have sought for peace processes with the rebels in arms, some of which were successful. Such persistence leads one to ask: why negotiate? Not because one believes that the subver-

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gally appropriated, while 4 million people, more than 8% of the rural population, had to emigrate.

sive cause is just in its motives or manner of proceeding; nor because the rebels in arms have the ability to threaten the stability of the Republic. *Essentially, the reasons are humanitarian.* The violence by armed outlaw groups, and that carried out by irregular groups which were formed to fight the guerrillas, has led to many victims, especially belonging to the poorest layers of the population in rural areas. One also negotiates to prevent damage that, through terrorist attacks, these groups continue to cause to the environment, the infrastructure, public goods and, in general, to the national economy.”

Likewise, confirming their hypocritical commitment to the peace that they offer to the “victims” by speaking of “truth, justice, reparations and non-repetition,” the employers are expressing their concern about the Truth Commission that was agreed to in Havana since they fear both its past and present of opprobrium that they say: “a debate going over the past about these institutions could lead to an unfair deterioration of their legitimacy.”<sup>16</sup>

For his part, the high commissioner for peace, Sergio Jaramillo, who is one of the main leaders at the negotiating table in Havana said during the forum “The role of the business sector in building peace,” that “It cannot be only the business community that bears the cross for peace in Colombia; it is an effort of all Colombians, everyone doing what he can.”

During the event, led by the Chamber of Commerce of Bogotá, Jaramillo also reflected: “As for me, I cannot think of *another sector that has benefited more than the business sector from the end of the war.*”<sup>17</sup>

But one must remember that when Santos spoke of peace when he took office on August 7, 2014, he did so demagogically and identified Colombia with the business owners, as one can see: “And I must be clear: Colombia will continue to advance an *agenda of social justice* and building peace; will continue to advance rural development, strengthening democracy, the fight against drug trafficking, in compensation for the victims... with

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.cgn.org.co/Default.aspx?id=18>

<sup>17</sup> 85% of employers believe that peace will encourage foreign investment. *El Tiempo*, April 22, 2015

or without the FARC!” Santos emphasized<sup>18</sup> to flatter and support the opportunists and careerists and those who were mistakenly duped by his speech about peace and made a call to vote for him in the 2014 elections.

However, it did not take long for the pacifying– but never pacifist – demagogy to become apparent, not only by his economic measures and anti-social policies, but also by his speech, by his efforts to avoid being taken advantage of by his right-wing counterpart Alvaro Uribe who at times sought to gain space among the business associations and parties represented in the National Unity coalition, which supports Santos with its parliamentary majority group. **On May 13, 2015, without impudence, Santos again spread the militarist thesis that guides his dialogue with the insurgency:** “We told our soldiers and our police, that as in any similar situation throughout history, here or in any country in the world, for a soldier, for a policeman, peace is victory, and we are seeking that victory so that we can put an end to this war once and for all”...

The Chief of State, upon saying that every war ends with negotiations, called on members of the Security Forces “not to worry, because the Armed Forces of Colombia, our Army, our Navy, our Air Force, our Police, will also play a most important role in the post-conflict period, among other things, in order to ensure the sustainability of peace and to ensure the security of the Colombians”<sup>19</sup>.

If there were still any doubts, Santos’ former Defense Minister, now Ambassador to Washington, reaffirmed this at the be-

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<sup>18</sup> Government Information System -SIG-  
[http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Prensa/2014/Agosto/Paginas/20140807\\_03-Palabras-del-Presidente-Santos-en-su-posesion-para-el-periodo-presidencial-2014-2018.aspx](http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Prensa/2014/Agosto/Paginas/20140807_03-Palabras-del-Presidente-Santos-en-su-posesion-para-el-periodo-presidencial-2014-2018.aspx)

<sup>19</sup> The victory, Government Information System (SIG)  
[http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Prensa/2014/Mayo/Paginas/20140513\\_01-Para-un-soldado-o-un-policia-la-paz-es-la-victoria-afirmo-el-Presidente-Santos.aspx](http://wsp.presidencia.gov.co/Prensa/2014/Mayo/Paginas/20140513_01-Para-un-soldado-o-un-policia-la-paz-es-la-victoria-afirmo-el-Presidente-Santos.aspx)

ginning of 2016, saying to the newspaper *El Tiempo*<sup>20</sup>:

“The agreements with the FARC have caused debate not only in Colombia but in the US, which will be affected in one way or another. For example, on the question of extradition since the agreement stipulates that they will not be sent to the US to answer to justice in that country. How much discomfort is there for that decision?

“This is explained in terms of the medium-term vision of what has been happening in Colombia. When all this effort to strengthen security capabilities, to combat the various threats is begun, it will bring a lasting peace to Colombia. *Therefore the process with the FARC should not be understood as an isolated event but as a result of having put down that group.* And thanks to that today we can expect that the talks will be realized. That having been said, in the framework of the peace process there are sovereign decisions, which are led by the President of the Republic and are tied to the negotiations. Of course, as with all policy decisions, there are detractors and others who support them. What we are doing is explaining these actions.

“But if one believes that this explanation has been enough?

“There are questions, but that is why I think it was necessary to give these explanations. And to repeat *the four red lines of President Santos* that have been the framework: 1. Do not negotiate the political system or economic model. 2. Do not negotiate the Armed Forces. 3. Do not accept a bilateral ceasefire until the agreements have been reached. 4. Do not accept impunity for war crimes or crimes against humanity.”

In this way, in the dialogues and negotiations that Santos and the regime is offering to the insurgency, the power of his class is not at issue, but he seeks to strengthen it.

### **If They Accommodate to the Slogan of Peace, Why Speak of Power and the Road to Power?**

With the statement “Give peace a chance in Colombia,” on

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<sup>20</sup> *‘We will soon have a new version of Plan Colombia’*: Pinchon, former Defense Minister, anticipates details about the role of the US in post conflict Colombia. *El Tiempo* newspaper, by Sergio Gomez Maseri, January 10, 2016

January 30, 2016, the FARC leader spoke to *Semana* magazine on what the war in Colombia has been about and how they are preparing for democratic life:

**Semana: At this point in history don't you believe that the issue of armed struggle is obsolete?**

**Timoshenko:** The armed struggle as an instrument of popular struggle is valid when circumstances force it and impose it. The armed struggle is not valid when one imposes it artificially. But our struggle, the struggle of the FARC was born in the context of the social struggle in Colombia. I say, those who do not believe in the armed struggle, well then, *help us create the conditions where it is not needed*. What we are not willing to give up are our ideas, our political ideals, the conception we have of the world and of life.<sup>21</sup>

One should recall what Lenin taught: “A natural complement to the economic and political tendencies of revisionism was its attitude to the ultimate aim of the socialist movement. *‘The movement is everything, the ultimate aim is nothing’* – this catchphrase of Bernstein’s expresses the substance of revisionism better than many long disquisitions. To determine its conduct from case to case, to adapt itself to the events of the day and to the chopping and changing of petty politics, to forget the primary interests of the proletariat and the basic features of the whole capitalist system, of all capitalist evolution, to sacrifice these primary interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment – such is the policy of revisionism.”<sup>22</sup>

**That accommodation to temporary circumstances, sacrificing the strategic objective, leads to the FARC to negotiate the forms of struggle.**

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/timochenko-vamos-a-hacer-politica-sin-armas/458573#cxrecs\\_s](http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/timochenko-vamos-a-hacer-politica-sin-armas/458573#cxrecs_s)

<sup>22</sup> V. I. Lenin. **Marxism and Revisionism**. Written in the second half of March, not later than April 3 (16) 1908. First edition published in St. Petersburg, Russia, between September 25 (October 8) and October 2 (15), 1908, in *Karl Marx* (1818-1883) with the signature: “V.I. Ilyin.” *Collected Works*, 4th English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1963

Now the song of fashion, that the demobilized seek to impose on the popular organizations, has *become* “*promoters of peace*” and has abandoned the mass struggle against the oppressors and exploiters, against imperialism and the oligarchy.

For the demobilized of today and yesterday, it is sterile to discuss the revolutionary road to power or how to seize power!

Communist Party of Colombia (Marxist-Leninist)  
Central Executive Committee

March 1, 2016



Will there be peace?



## Denmark

### **Workers’ Communist Party of Denmark – APK**

## **‘United Europe’: The Growing Popular Resistance and Reformist Bail-Outs**

*The European Union (EU) is moving from one crisis to the next, leading to a ‘failed project’. Popular support has been steeply decreasing. The desire in many countries to leave it has been growing, and in many countries popular movements to leave the EU and the euro are gaining strength. This has caused reformist forces such as the Party of the European Left and others to develop plans and initiatives to ‘save the Union’.*

The project of the ‘United Europe’ is an offspring of monopoly capital, and has foremost been strongly promoted by the big powers of the continent – such as reunited Germany and France. The ambition has been to create a new imperialist superpower, based on ‘an ever closer union’ of the member countries, with its own currency, legal and political framework, political, economic and military bodies – with a single market, ‘external borders’ and free passage within the old borders between the member countries (‘Schengen’<sup>1</sup>). The plan is to conclude the establishment of the ‘United States of Europe’ by 2025.

Since the outbreak of the world capitalist crisis in 2007- 08 it has been obvious that the German chancellor is the most powerful figure of the ‘United Europe’. The introduction of the euro and the provisions of the single market as well as legislation in many areas has increased the uneven development of the various countries, making Germany stronger and richer, and impoverishing the weaker ones. From 70-80% of the legislation passed in the national parliaments are adaptations of laws and directives of the EU, which has ‘neoliberal’ economic policies as a fundamental part of its treaties.

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<sup>1</sup> Agreement between European countries to eliminate the internal border controls and transfer them to external ones [*translator’s note*].

All this combined with the bailouts of the banks at the peak of the economic crises and later led to a rapid widening of the gap between rich and poor, and richer and poorer countries. The profits of the monopolies soared even in a period of prolonged stagnation. Millions of workers are unemployed, social benefits have been mercilessly cut back. Hunger and child poverty are becoming everyday phenomena. The extension of the ‘free trade’ zones, of CETA [Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement], TISA [Trade In Services Agreement] and TTIP [Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership] agreements between the EU and the US and other countries are concluded, and will further accelerate the social polarization.

The European Union has no strong foundations and is not yet the ‘United States of Europe’ with an undisputed president and European government. When it is struck by crisis of any kind – economic, social or political – this tends to paralyse the system and expose its weakness. In the global context of increasing global imperialist rivalry among the big world powers, of endless wars, turning millions of people into refugees, and increasing terrorism, also striking the capitals of the EU, the workers and peoples of the EU countries are losing whatever trust they might have had in the project.

The peoples of the EU are also losing trust in the bourgeois, liberal, social-democratic and reformist parties that have embraced each other as partners in the construction of the ‘ever closer Union’ – as tools of the class of capitalists. The social-democratic and socialist fairy tale of the European Union as a ‘good’ superpower and of the possibility of transforming it into a ‘social union’ beneficial to the workers have lost credibility. This has led to a strengthening of the workers’ resistance and broader popular resistance to the EU Project, but also to a strengthening of right wing nationalist movements, which are sceptics and against the Union.

From its very beginning, class conscious workers, trade unions and political organizations have been fighting against the class policies of the EU. The peoples have expressed their resistance to the development of ‘the ever closer Union’ and the project of the United States of Europe also in various referendums, rejecting a number of treaties. Whenever the peoples are asked in

referendums, the governments and the EU bodies fear a new No. There will be major implications if the people of the UK reject the deal between Prime Minister David Cameron and the EU fearing a so-called Brexit – that Britain will leave the EU.

The referendums are the results of the growing popular resistance, if the national constitutions provide for such an opportunity. Norway and Switzerland have voted to stay out of the EU. Iceland has withdrawn its application for membership.

### **A new resounding No of the Danish people**

On December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015 a referendum was held in Denmark, which resulted in a new strong No to further integration into the European Union. 53.1% of the voters said No, 46.9% said Yes. 72% of the voters participated.

It was a victory for the people against the ruling class and the building of the United States of Europe. It means that Denmark will not automatically form a part of the supranational Europol<sup>2</sup> and legislation on criminal and civil affairs will remain in the hands of the Danish parliament.

This was the third time that the Danes voted a clear No to the building of and further integrations into the European Union. They said No to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, No to the Euro in 2000 and now No to a change of the status of Denmark in 2015.

– The people voted against the establishment and the coalition of political parties, the employers and the bosses of the trade unions, who hand in hand told them to vote yes, commented Dorte Grenaa, Chair of the Workers’ Communist Party APK. She added:

– It was a No of the working class, of the broad strata of the Danish population. It was a No of the youth. The young generation says No to the EU, No to more European Union, No to the plans of establishing the ‘United States of Europe’.

It was a major defeat for the government of Lars Løkke Rasmussen, who heads a coalition of bourgeois parties, including the infamous right-wing Danish Peoples’ Party. The political program of the prime minister and his party was formulated this

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<sup>2</sup> European Police Office – *translator’s note.*

way in 2012: “We will bring back hunger”. This out-and-out reactionary government replaces a coalition led by the social-democratic Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt. In the referendum the government, the social democrats and most of their coalition campaigned for a Yes.

The No vote was not a vote of the political right, as it was presented by the pro-EU parties and some international media, proclaiming it as a triumph for the populist right. It was a no of the people. The social and politically broadly based People’s Movement against the European Union, which is represented in the European Parliament, this time was also a decisive factor in the success of the No campaign.

### **Can the EU be turned into an instrument of progress?**

The trust in the possibility of transforming the EU from an anti-worker, neoliberal imperialist bloc into a progressive ‘social Europe’ suffered a severe blow in 2015 when the efforts of the Greek Syriza government to escape its enslaving chains of debt collapsed, and it agreed to impose the brutal cuts of the EU, making the Greek people pay over and over again. The Syriza government refused to follow a road leading out of the Euro and out of the EU.

We, the Marxist-Leninist parties of the ICMLPO in Europe, clearly reject the social-democratic, reformist and left reformist utopian ideas of the transformation of the neoliberal tool of the ruling classes into an instrument of progress for the workers of Europe or into a progressive actor on the global scene. The European Union is the heir of and dominated by the old colonial and war-mongering powers.

The statement adopted by the Marxist-Leninist parties of Europe at their regional conference in June 2015 entitled “Let us mobilize against policies of austerity and war! Long live international solidarity!” concludes:

*“Everywhere the consciousness is also growing that it is not possible to change the EU from within into a supposedly progressive institution at the service of peoples.*

*“Therefore, we unconditionally defend the right of the peoples to break with the EU, the euro and all its political and economic mechanisms.”*

## DiEM25 (Democracy Movement in Europe 2026)

The effort of the Syriza government to get a ‘fair deal’ concerning the debt failed miserably, causing headaches among reformist left and trade union forces, which had been the most eager exponents of the ‘Social EU’ in one form or another.

But this loss of illusions did not make the strategists of the reformist left give up on the European Union project. Instead they are looking for ways to renovate it. Not only one, but two such bail-out projects have been launched. Both of them originated in Syriza and the Party of the European Left, which had Alexis Tsipras as its candidate for ‘President’ of the EU. This party has a strong representation in the EU Parliament and comprises a good part of the reformist left, such as the German Linke (Left), the French Parti Gauche (Party of the Left), the Spanish Podemos (We Can) and the Greek Syriza.

The former Syriza minister Yanis Varoufakis has launched a ‘Pan European’ movement called DiEM25. It declares that it will challenge the ‘EU of the elite’ and transform it into ‘a EU of the democratic peoples’.

The EU no longer serves the people – Democracy demands a new beginning, declares Varoufakis, who claims to have found ‘a



third way between the anti-democratic technocracy of EU and the impotent cocoons of the nation-states.’

Varoufakis dreams of a ‘truly single market, a genuinely level playing field, which requires a single legal framework, identical industrial, labour and environmental protection standards, and courts that will enforce them with the same determination throughout the single jurisdiction. But this also requires a common parliament that writes the laws to be implemented across the single market, as well as an executive that enforces the courts’ decisions.’

Varoufakis asks if there is a third way to achieve this, and answers:

‘Yes, there is. It is the one that the official “Europe”, and some local elites, resist with every sinew of their authoritarian mindset: a surge of democracy, orchestrated by Europeans seeking to regain control over their lives from unaccountable technocrats, complicit politicians and opaque institutions’.

But there is nothing new in this. It is the age old reformist dream of a democratic and popular take-over of the class institutions of capitalist society and transforming them into their opposites, without affecting the economic base. DiEM25 is the left reformist ‘alternative’ to the United States of Europe of 2025.

It has been supported from the beginning by petty-bourgeois liberal and reformist organisations all over Europe. This includes the new Danish Party ‘Alternativet’ (the Alternative), which entered the Danish parliament in the general election of 2015,

Varoufakis imagines democratic control of the institutions of the EU with full transparency and live-streaming from meetings among other things. Within two years a constitutional assembly of the whole EU should be summoned and a ‘sovereign parliament’ established.

Varoufakis’ project sounds newer and more radical than it is. In fact, it is a kind of repetition of the rhetoric similar to the Democrat Obama and the promises that surrounded the present EU-institutions when they were created that have never been fulfilled.

Exactly for this reason Varoufakis and his consorts are in a hurry. The crisis is deep, there is a need for change right now, for ‘a new beginning’, because popular support for EU project is rapidly disappearing.

### **Tried and failed**

Rina Ronja Kari, the representative of the Danish Peoples’ Movement against the EU in the EU Parliament, writes:

‘Knowing which interests the EU was created to serve, the illusions of Varoufakis and the Alternative of changing the EU from within are at best senseless’. She continues:

‘It is said that any change must begin with a recognition of the problem. And if we are going to change Europe into something better, we first have to realize that the European Union in itself is a part of the problem.

The EU is not an apolitical institution, which can be shaped and painted in any form you like. From its very beginning the EU was created to strengthen the coal and steel industry. Its basic principles – the so-called four freedoms – are about the free movement of money, goods, services and of labour power – which is not the same as the free movement of human beings.

Even if the utopians, the reformists of the EU and Greek former finance ministers should succeed in reducing the democratic deficit of the Union, and even if against all expectations power **could** be transferred from the EU Commission to the elected representatives in the EU Parliament – even in that case the decisions concerning the future course would be limited to proceeding faster or slower towards the goal established in the treaty of ‘a successively closer Union’.

This could not be said more to the point. Varoufakis’ utopian ‘third way’ is not a stumbling block on the road of the EU elite towards the United States of Europe.

The present-day capitalist nation-states are certainly historically outdated. But so is a capitalist supra-state, even though it will not be ‘complete’ until 2015.

The interests of the working class and the great majority are best defended, when the supra-national institutions such as EU cannot dictate reactionary policies of social dumping and cutbacks, or enforce such projects of the multinationals as TISA and TTIP.

### **Plan B**

Varoufakis’ old party comrades of the European Left are also busy designing a new reformist strategy after the collapse of the

failed reformist move led by Syriza.

This new project is known as Plan B for Europe and is strongly promoted by one of the members of the Party of the European Left, the French Parti Gauche and its leader Jean-Luc Melenchon.

According to this platform, launched by a conference in Paris in January of 2016, Plan A would be to work on national levels in the EU and collectively push to renegotiate all of the treaties of the EU.

At the same time a Plan B would be to counter the most reactionary and anti-democratic forces of the EU – which means the forces of the right, and not the monopolies or the governments of capital.

It calls for ‘strengthening our positions towards their brutal execution of a policy that sacrifices the majority to the interests of a small minority’, and to ‘uphold again the principle that ‘Europe is about Europeans’. Further that ‘Currencies are tools to promote distribution of wealth, not instruments of torture or weapons to kill democracy.’

Melenchon adds:

‘If the euro cannot be made more democratic, if they insist in using it to strangle the people, we shall rise, look them straight in the eye and tell them: Do your worst! We are not scared by your threats. We will find a way to guarantee that the Europeans have a currency that works for them, not at their expense.’

The rhetoric is found at high levels. But Plan A and B are about as concrete and realistic as DiEM25.

They are products of the same reformist strategy, all predestined to fail. In the end they only serve to slow down the development of the resistance towards the EU project of the monopolies by renewing the illusions of the possibility of changing it in a progressive way, instead of working to throw it into the dustbin of history.

The social democrats transferred their national strategies of class collaboration to the European Union with the promise of a ‘social Europe’, where workers’ rights are respected and their positions strengthened. This project has collapsed even more visibly and much faster than their national projects such as the Nordic welfare states, which have now been destroyed in the neo-



liberal European Union.

Class conscious workers, genuine socialists, communists and revolutionaries cannot be supporters of the European Union of the monopolies, of its supra state institutions and its failed currency. Not in any shape or form.

The capitalist United States of Europe is and will remain a reactionary project.

March 2016



Stop the EU!  
Preserve Legal Provisions

# Dominican Republic

## *Communist Party of Labor*

### **The Main Question for the May 15 Elections in the Dominican Republic Is: A Conservative, One-Party Regime or a Republic. A Republic in Words and a Conservative Regime in Deeds**

#### **Political Declaration of the 36th National Conference of Cadres of the Communist Party of Labor (Dominican Republic)**

*The tendency for change is growing heading into May 15; we must convert it into a mass movement opposing the government in the public streets and squares. We support the presidential candidacy of Luis Abinader, and at the local level we will only support those who fit the political views of renewal and ethics in the exercise of public affairs.*

The 36th National Conference of Cadres of the Communist Party of Labor (PCT), which held its session **in tribute to comrade Juan Marte, a member of our Central Committee, who died last year, and in remembrance of the glorious Palmeros of January 12 1972,**<sup>1</sup> discussed the ongoing electoral situation and the delegates approved the following POLICY STATEMENT enthusiastically and unanimously:

1. There is a growing tendency that seeks to get rid of the government of the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) in the elections next May 15; it is fueled by the increasingly evident desire of a large majority of the Dominican people who are showing signs of being tired of 12 consecutive years of government by this party.

This government has indebted the country at a rate of \$236 million per month, making up 45% of GDP. In this way, crime,

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<sup>1</sup> Los Palmeros, revolutionary militants who fell in combat against the military and police forces of the Balaguer government on January 12, 1972.

insecurity, sexual violence, assassinations by allies of the military, police and political leaders, and drug trafficking as well as other activities have grown enormously; creating anxiety for families.

At the same time, corruption and impunity have far exceeded the usual levels in our country as in most countries, causing great harm to public institutions, development, people's well-being and social morality.

2. In this process the presidential candidacy of Luis Abinader and the policy of Convergence stand out as the one of the opposition who garners the greatest support and makes possible the objective of a change in government.

3. Other candidates are taking part in the name of change, some of whom could feed off the same opposition voters, and therefore contribute to the reelection [of the PLD].

But it must be stressed that the candidacy of Luis Abinader is the one that clearly and convincingly has the greatest possibility of fulfilling the demand that **“the people in the government must leave,”** which is heard everywhere.

4. What is happening is a lot like what happened in 1978 when, against the repression, misuse of state resources, patronage and all the stratagems of state power, the will of the people expressed itself when the majority voted to put an end to the 12-year government of that time.

5. Now it is only necessary that the candidacy of Luis Abinader and his allied forces **should make a more effective opposition and take to the public streets and squares;** at the same time as this will reduce the splitting of the opposition vote that, to a certain degree, is imperceptibly encouraged by the PLD government, which is aware that a division aids its re-election.

6. The candidacy of Luis Abinader and his allied forces have to overcome **the power of the state, the waste of public money in the campaign, the power of the media aligned with the PLD government, since, besides the commitment of the main media companies to the continuity of the PLD, 300 journalists were found to be on the government payroll to be their spokespersons and make something bad look good.**

**The opposition must defeat the policy of buying votes and causing splits, which are the pillars on which is based the at-**

**tempt of the PLD to remain in power at least until the bicentennial of the Republic in 2044.**

The opposition must overcome the demagoguery that presents the PLD government as leftist, due to its links with the Forum of Sao Paulo which, by the way, has been highlighted with the corruption scandal uncovered in Brazil which involves the construction company Odebrecht, through which the PLD campaigns were financed in exchange for public works concessions; Joao Santana, one of the advisers of the PLD and a Brazilian national, was financed in the same way; he led the dirty campaign and electoral fraud against the opposition.

The opposition must defeat a party that controls all the institutions of the State, including the electoral commission and the High Courts, which have become bodies subjected to the central government.

7. The PCT supports the candidacy of Luis Abinader, the Broad Front, the Rebel Movement and policy of Convergence that are based on a program that corresponds to the situation in the country and the most pressing and immediate demands of the people and of broad social sectors of the country. They also have made an Ethical Commitment to the exercise of government.

8. The PCT is not deceived, Luis Abinader is a bourgeois liberal, a democrat; he is not a revolutionary or anything like that; he comes from a family that gives a public account of the origin of its properties, that has not been charged with immoral acts. That family was active against the Trujillo dictatorship and during the subsequent governments it has been consistent in defending civil liberties and democratic rights. His father, Don Rafael Abinader, is credited with playing a prominent role as Minister in the Constitutionalist government headed by Colonel Caamaño during the war of April 1965.

9. Of all the presidential candidates competing in the election, **Luis Abinader is the only one who has not been an official at any level in any of the previous governments.** The other candidates supported or played a leading role in the historic maneuver of Balaguer in 1996, by which the PLD came to power and became what it is today. **They were high-ranking officials**

in the PLD government that resulted from this maneuver, and we should not forget that this is the historical premise of the conversion of the PLD into what it is today.

**9.1. Some of these candidates were also important officials in the Balaguer governments.**

10. The other candidates may differ with the candidate of the PLD Government on the question of corruption and its immigration policy regarding Haitians. **But they had and have a historical similarity, that is, the rejection of Peña Gomezism**, which expresses the largest section of the popular masses, the workers and the dispossessed, who are vital to any progressive change in the country.

11. This historical similarity of all the sectors who support other candidates **was shown when, in the 1974 elections, they opposed the Santiago Agreement, which was the Coalition led by Dr. Peña Gómez with the decisive participation of the MPD, the party from which the PCT emerged, which could have defeated the dictatorship of Balaguer; the opposition was divided and thus made it possible for Balaguer to remain in the government. That similarity reappeared in 1978 when they tried to disavow the triumph of Peña Gomezism over Balaguer, and was repeated in 1996 when they allied with Balaguer to bar the way to Peña Gomezism.**

12. The division of the opposition vote that is being encouraged today and could facilitate the re-election of the PLD **has a political and historical tradition. These sectors united**



**Balaguer and Vincho Castillo, the main opponent of Haitians and chief spokesperson for Opus Dei and political conservatism; but they have always agreed with rejecting Peña Gomezism.** These are the facts, which can be seen in the press archives, although in words they want to disavow them.

## II. The Main Question

11. There are many old, new and ongoing political and social problems in the country; these are caused by the bad policies of the governments in office.

12. **But the main problem at the present political moment and on whose solution other solutions depend is the danger of the PLD government becoming a conservative REGIME, of a single party, sustained by policies of public charity, through which it seeks to gain popular support;** in which the main economic and business power, as well as the natural resources of the country and the great public works remain in the hands of the national and foreign oligarchy, and the majority of the people are left with small family businesses to alleviate poverty without ever putting an end to it.

13. Protected by a constitution made to order and for its purposes, abusing all the branches of government, the PLD government has put before the people, country and nation a choice of a **one-party REGIME** based on patronage or a democratic republic.

14. This choice is the one that is raised at this time. **It is the main political question. It is what is at issue in the upcoming elections of May 15.**

15. **The one-party government weighs decisively on the State.** It is increasingly becoming a conservative REGIME that subjects the other branches of the state to its power; it controls the media and co-opts the democratic organizations with the resources of the same power. **The constitution exists in words, the REGIME exists in deeds.**

16. The PCT as always takes a clear stand, and does not hesitate to state its support of the policy of Convergence and the candidacy of Luis Abinader; **because this is the only way to block the path to the prospects of a conservative and one-party REGIME on 15 May.**

### III. To What Do We Aspire?

17. We are a communist, revolutionary party, **which is clear that this position is a tactical one and not a strategic one.** What we seek is a means to advance towards higher objectives; it is not an end in itself.

18. A victory for Luis Abinader and policy of Convergence over the PLD government **would create a new political atmosphere, a feeling of change, of a victory of the people,** and would help restore confidence in them that things can be changed for the better.

19. It would question that, in these new circumstances, we push the revolutionaries and progressives can look for more.

20. A victory for Luis Abinader and the policy of Convergence **would enable the country to move towards a new democratic transition, for which the PCT holds high the banner of a Constituent Assembly by Popular Vote,** which it has promoted for more than 20 years.

21. A victory for Luis Abinader and the policy of Convergence **would ensure a general increase in wages, encourage domestic production, create quality and well-paid jobs, put an end to corruption and impunity, put an end to the violence, crime and insecurity that the families are suffering from, protect the environment and the natural resources, promote policies in favor of youth, gender equality, inclusion and tolerance towards the LGBT community.**

**IV. We are clear and firm in our objectives, without supporting those who do not correspond to the political and ethical views that we have always held**

23. We must insist even more on the objective of the policy of a broad alliance, which is to block the way to the constitutional, one-party dictatorship, which is becoming an increasingly conservative REGIME that the PLD government expresses, and with its defeat on May 15, will create a new political atmosphere in the country.

24. Local candidates are good and important to ensure the demands and pressure from within Congress and the Municipalities for the government to fulfill its program. In fact, it is almost certain that several comrades will end up being elected. **But this**

**is secondary to the essential political purpose that leads us to broad alliances.**

25. In seeking to strengthen the tendency of change, **the Modern Revolutionary Party (PRM) has concluded bilateral alliances with forces that by their nature, or by their decision, will not enter into the policy of Convergence.** These are particular forms of alliances of the PRM that have the common goal of defeating the PLD government.

26. It is possible that through these bilateral agreements of the PRM some local candidates will appear in some provinces or municipalities that do not correspond to the political and ethical views that we have always held, and in such cases, **WE DO NOT SUPPORT THEM.**

27. This is nothing new for the PCT, which has to its credit extensive experience in the implementation of specific agreements in local elections, through which it has been able to distinguish between candidates with whom it may or may not agree according to certain views.

**The tendency for change is growing!  
No to the one-party conservative REGIME!  
A more democratic republic!  
A broader unity of the opposition!  
Division favors reelection!  
36th National Conference of Cadres**

January 2016





## **Ecuador**

### ***Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador – PCMLE***

*Pablo Miranda*

## **The Ideological and Political Confrontation with Reformism**

We proletarian revolutionaries represent in ideas and deeds the short and medium-term interests of the working class, we are protagonists of the daily fights for the revolution and socialism; we take on this responsibility as the struggle for the seizure of popular power and later, from that power, for the building of the society of the workers, for socialism.

The seizure of power will only materialize when the power of the capitalist class and imperialism is brought down, when the bourgeois state apparatus is destroyed, when its institutions, armed forces and police at its service are shattered, and a new state with new institutions, new laws, new armed forces and police are built up.

We understand that in order to overthrow the capitalist-imperialist power we must use all forms of struggle:

The economic struggle: the trade union struggle, the actions to demand wage rights, stability, overcoming the backwardness of the country, for material progress, education, health care and social security.

The political struggle: the confrontation with the political domination of the bourgeoisie in various forms, the demand for public liberties, trade union rights, the maintenance of democracy, the right to organize and strike, freedom of expression, defense of national sovereignty and natural resources, opposition to imperialist domination, participation in elections of representative democracy, the use of bourgeois institutions, parish councils, municipalities, prefectures, the bourgeois parliament itself as tribunes to continue the struggle, to denounce the system, to show the popular masses that we do have the ability to lead the destiny of society.

The ideological struggle: the denunciation of the reactionary, anti-democratic and anti-popular character of the capitalist system; to unmask the social ills of the present, the dishonesty, corruption, prostitution and crime; to show the aggressive, war-like nature of imperialism; to denounce the criminalization of the social struggle and state terrorism. The promotion of the ideals of the revolution and socialism, social equality, proletarian democracy, the independence of the country and national sovereignty, the participation of the workers, with voice and vote in making the decisions in the organs of people's power, the massive incorporation of the peoples in building the new society.

Through the years and events, the practice of the PCMLE has dealt with the union organization of workers, their political education and the leadership of demonstrations and strikes; the organization of peasant associations and communes, the struggle for land and water in opposition to feudal and capitalist oppression, the demonstrations and seizure of haciendas; the organization of teachers, the development of valiant actions in defense of education and teachers' rights, the demands, work stoppages and strikes; the organization of university students, the linking of their specific demands with the great problems of the society and the country, the struggle for university autonomy and free admission, for national sovereignty, freedom and democracy; the organization and courageous actions of the secondary-school student youth, the strikes for specific demands, the street fighting for freedom and solidarity; the actions of poor neighborhood residents in the cities, of the small-business owners for their rights and needs. The struggle for civil liberties and rights, for social change of the democratic and progressive sectors of the middle classes and strata.

The militant adherence to Marxism-Leninism, the incorporation into the social and political life of the working masses, of society have allowed us to clarify in theory and practice that all these forms of the class struggle must be subordinated to the struggle for power, for the overthrow of the rule of imperialism and its local servants; that the seizure of power cannot be won through reforms, through the road of elections, that this great objective demands the defeat of the legal and military apparatus of the ruling classes, the use of revolutionary violence, the voluntary

and conscious participation of a great mass movement, the unity of all those interested in the process of social transformation.

In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels aptly noted: “The Communists fight for the attainment of the immediate aims, for the enforcement of the momentary interests of the working class; but in the movement of the present, they also represent and take care of the future of that movement.” We communists of Ecuador have endeavored to uphold these teachings.

When we refer to the daily struggle for the demands and rights of the working masses and peoples we are not speaking of a reformist policy much less making it the political line. We fulfill our revolutionary responsibilities to bear in mind the immediate desires and interests of the working masses, to deal with them from Marxist-Leninist positions, converting them into slogans to present to the masses and to persuade them to convert them into their banners, into a platform for the promotion of the fight for their concrete realization, to transform them through the action of the masses themselves, into small and sometimes great victories, and sometimes even into temporary defeat. That struggle of the working masses allows the party to link itself to them, to become, in practice, an organizer, propagandist and agitator, a political educator, a leader. Through these activities a part of the policy of the party is recognized by the masses; if we use these conditions well, the name of the party, its newspaper, and also the comrades directly involved will be recognized.

When we say that the masses will recognize a part of the policy of the party as their own, we are clear on the limits of the economic struggle for concrete demands, and that is why we propose that these actions be used as leverage to make ourselves visible, as a place for the dissemination and agitation of the revolutionary political proposals of medium-term and strategic character.

Of course, in certain circumstances, we proletarian revolutionaries propose to fight for social and economic reforms for the benefit of the working classes, in the interest of national sovereignty.

For example, we advocate for a new Labor Code, we seek to reform the bourgeois laws, to win new gains, new conditions for

the development of the struggle of the working class. Also, when we demand free admission to the university, we fight for the access of young workers, so that the children of the workers and peasants can have access to higher education, we seek the democratization of the bourgeois university. The fights for these positions and their eventual realization demand that the masses must be the protagonists in achieving their interests and rights; that they be educated politically, that they trust in the organization, in the struggle, that they recognize the Communist Party and its policies in that arena.

The struggle for reforms does not make communists into reformists; it contributes to their revolutionary training, to the links with the masses, to finding and recruiting new communists in the midst of those combats.

When we communists take part in the elections under bourgeois democracy we do not legitimize them in the minds of the toiling masses, we use that arena, that political struggle for our policies to reach the working class and the whole people, to compete with the proposals of the different political forms of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, to win the adherence of the advanced sectors to revolutionary goals, for us to grow and develop. We use one of the most important forms of struggle, the political struggle for the local and national government. This way of developing the revolutionary politics was settled several decades ago by the proletarian revolutionaries in various areas of the world, it was one of the experiences of the accumulation of forces developed by the Bolshevik Party, it is one of the teachings of Leninism.

However we must be clear about the purposes and ways that we communists participate in the elections under bourgeois democracy. If we use them as a form of struggle, if we use the gains we achieved with them in bourgeois institutions in order to advance, to grow as a revolutionary alternative, to continue the fight under new conditions, for power, independent of the immediate results, then we are consistent with the teachings of Marxism-Leninism. If we pretend that through them we will seize power, if we sow such illusions among the workers, if we conform to bourgeois democracy, we will lose the revolutionary course; we will be headed into the swamp of opportunism.

## **The Struggle for Reforms**

To confront the capitalist class from the revolutionary position of the proletariat, from the interests of the working masses and the peoples, every day and in all circumstances, is one of the characteristics of the policy of the communists.

When we communists actively participate in the organization and struggle for political reforms, for new union and political rights, for laws and constitutions that guarantee the rights of the workers, against the dictatorships and authoritarianism, we fulfill the responsibility of standard bearers of the people's interests.

What is at issue is that these fights of the masses should go beyond the immediate interests and objectives, the specific economic demands, they should serve as an arena for strengthening the popular organization, for the political education of the masses, to promote the need and character of the revolution, to uphold socialism, to make the party visible and strengthen it with new members.

Essentially these policies point to the obligation of the communists to fight for specific issues of immediate concern to the masses, for reforms.

This means that the struggle for reforms is one of the manifestations of the policy of the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

## **Reformism**

Reformism is a school of thought, a policy put forward by certain sectors of the ruling classes that seek a gradual change in things without affecting the system. Reformism has existed since the emergence of private property, it is essentially a response to the demand of the peoples to change their situation, to leave behind slavery, serfdom and the exploitation of wage labor; it is a diversionary proposal that seeks to divert the masses from the goal of transformation, of social change.

There are various forms of reformism.

### **Reformism as an Expression of the Ruling Classes**

When there is a rise in the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peoples, when popular anger burns and threatens their privileges, the ruling classes respond by making the repres-

sive policies harsher, establishing military dictatorships, imposing authoritarian regimes; persecution, imprisonment, torture and assassination become everyday issues; they seek to eliminate the revolutionary organizations and the communist party; they try to break up the mass movement, to prohibit trade unions, to eliminate the rights of the workers and public liberties.

At the same time, they turn to demagogic measures, to reformist politics, they seek the agreement of the “sensible” popular and union leaders, they threaten or co-opt them, they divide the mass organizations and trade unions.

At certain times reformist policies prevail. They cede a part to preserve the whole; they remove the grounds of the consistent fighters, the revolutionaries; they entice a segment of the popular mobilizations by offering to satisfy some of their demands; to divert the course of the struggle of the masses from the lofty goals of the revolution, people’s power and socialism.

In Latin America, the land reforms promoted by the Alliance for Progress in response to the increasing development of the peasant struggle for the land are fresh in the memory of the peasants and workers; the proposed industrialization of the countries with the import substitution policy put forward by the ECLAC {Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean} in response to the development of the struggles for national liberation; the dismantling of military dictatorships as the policy of the Carter Administration<sup>1</sup> in order to put limits to the struggle for democracy and freedom; among other.

Land to the tiller, material progress for the countries, democracy and freedom were and are great aspirations of the workers and peoples. Large demonstrations for these objectives were held in all the countries of Latin America that were largely averted by the diversionary and reformist policies of imperialism and the ruling classes.

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<sup>1</sup> We refer to the policies put forward by the U.S. at the end of the 1970s to organize the transition from the military dictatorships that were established in the majority of Latin American countries to systems of representative democracy and which continue in force with few exceptions.

### **Social-Democracy**

Internationally, social democracy is one of the principal forms of reformism. It appeared in the workers' movement, in the course of the trade union struggle of the workers in defense of their rights, for the winning of their demands. When the working class took its first steps in the struggle for its rights, when the communists won the adherence of the workers who opposed oppression and exploitation by the capitalists, social democracy emerged with pacifist proposals, proposing dialogue, the satisfaction of the needs and aspirations of the workers through agreements.

The social-democratic formations today do not necessarily come from the workers movement; they are expressions of sectors of the intelligentsia coming from the petty bourgeoisie who provide answers to the problems of the workers within the framework of the system. This is the case with the Democratic Left in Ecuador, with the Social-Democratic Party in Brazil.

With the talk of democratic socialism, of the well-being of the workers, social democracy was established within the workers movement as an alternative to communism, to the revolutionary struggle for the seizure of power. After World War II in several European countries it won the government through elections and implemented the so-called "welfare state".



From left to right: Rousseff, Brazil; Maduro, Venezuela; a Silva (Lula), Brazil; Correa, Ecuador; Morales, Bolivia

In these policies and practices, social democracy counted on the convergence in words and deeds of the social doctrine of the Church, of the political formations of social Christianity.

Imperialism, the monopoly bourgeoisie, much of the capitalist class in those countries used part of the public money for economic and social reforms in favor of the workers and peoples. It counted on substantial resources from the looting of the colonies and from the exploitation of the workers in those countries, from the surplus value created by the working class and the expansion of the capitalist economy. Clearly this was not a policy of charity, much less giving away part of their huge profits in favor of the creators of wealth, a recognition of the rights of the workers. It was at the time a diversionary strategy carried out by the centers of power of the capitalists.

It was meant to diminish, to lessen the prestige of the Soviet Union after World War II. It was an attempt to undermine the growing influence of the communist parties within the working class; to try to divert the consciousness of the workers from the ideal of the revolution and socialism. They worked to dismantle the trade union movement, to divide and divert it, to make it into an embellishment of bourgeois democracy.

Many of these goals were fulfilled. The ideological and political work of social democracy had an impact among the working masses; the great reserves of the workers' movement built up in the struggle against fascism suffered a decline; a caste of workers' leaders who usurped the leadership of the trade union movement was established, it was taken over by the idea of mutual interests and class collaboration; the workers' membership in the communist parties diminished.

Social democracy cleverly played a dirty role: at first it demanded the right to organize and strike, it pushed legislation that favored the interests of the workers, it proclaimed freedom and democracy; later from parliament, from the bourgeois governments it promoted the cutbacks to trade union freedoms, labor flexibility, etc.

With the advent of neoliberalism, in the context of the collapse of "real socialism," the "welfare state" collapsed; the social-democratic parties were shamelessly unmasked as manifestations of capital, of the sensible bourgeois.



### **Modern Revisionism**

Modern revisionism, which seized power in the Soviet Union and took over the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, inflicted great damage on the communist movement, on the revolutionary process on an international scale, on the workers' and people's movement.

Reviving the old theses of the Bernsteins and Kautskys, the Khrushchevite revisionists yielded to the pressure and blackmail of imperialism and reaction; with the arguments of new times, of changes in the relation of forces between capitalism and socialism, in a gradual but sustained process, they led to the destruction of the Soviet Union and the transformation of the Bolshevik party into a reformist organization.

Modern revisionism affected the great majority of communist parties that succumbed to its blows, they rejected Marxism-Leninism and became allies and servants of the bourgeoisie, preachers of class conciliation, products of the contradictions within the bourgeoisie, proponents of the capitalist system.

The Khrushchevites theorized and later brought into practice the ideas that it was possible to achieve the objectives of the working class by promoting the struggle for the expansion of democracy; that socialism would come about with the strength of the fights of the workers who would force the capitalist state to make concessions. With the strength of the struggle of the proletariat, of the demands of public opinion, with the acquiescence of democratic bourgeois sectors significant structural reforms would be implemented that would gradually change the capitalist system, transforming it into the socialist world.

They argue that it is necessary to distinguish the sensible business owners from the reactionary capitalists, the national capitalists from the monopolist groups, and to support and be supported by the former in order to corner and isolate the latter; revolutionary violence was not necessary.

Modern revisionism became, in all countries, an embellishment of bourgeois democracy, it disarmed the working class, it led it by way of reformism to fight for its interests and rights, always respecting bourgeois institutions.

In various political processes, on all continents and in many countries, the revisionists placed themselves at the tail of “democratic and progressive” governments and from those positions they proclaimed the revolution and socialism as an ongoing process, they called for support for those regimes, for understanding the need to reduce social demands to prevent the downfall of those governments.

In the workers movement, among the peasant masses and the youth they caused grave ideological and political damage, they dismantled, diverted and demobilized the trade union movement; they helped to enthrone the bureaucracy in the leadership of the unions. They failed to support the rank-and-file workers whom the communists had organized and led and, in fact, they placed them at the mercy of the yellow trade unionists, of the labor aristocracy.

The betrayal of the revisionists could become effective and gain ground among the rank-and-file workers because they spoke of communism in order to oppose communism, they proclaimed themselves revolutionaries in order to sabotage the struggle for power, for socialism.

Together with the Khrushchevite revisionists, who came from the communist parties with a tradition of struggle, they incorporated all sorts of “left” opportunists, Trotskyists, the revolutionary trends and organizations of the petty bourgeoisie who theorized and acted in a voluntarist manner.

### **“21st Century Socialism”**

In some countries in Latin America, the beginning of the new millennium saw the ascent to the government of social and political forces led by representatives of the radicalized petty bourgeoisie.

These developments were the result of large and massive mobilization of the workers in the city and countryside, of the youth and peoples, of strikes and popular uprisings, of barricades of battle-hardened youth opposed to the neoliberal policies of imperialism and its local servants. In Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina and earlier in Brazil the surge of popular struggle overthrew corrupt, despotic and inept governments; across the continent the masses were in the streets demanding change. There was an important ideological leap, from strikes and from the streets mil-

lions of people channeled their discontent into the electoral process and elected democratic and progressive governments that raised the banners of change.<sup>2</sup>

Some of these governments called themselves left-wing or revolutionary, they proclaimed “21st century socialism” as opposed to the socialism that triumphed in old Russia, in China, in several European countries and in Cuba<sup>3</sup>; they called themselves the “Bolivarian revolution,” the “citizens’ revolution,” the “cultural revolution” in opposition to the socialist revolution that took place in the 20th century and was expressed in great social and material achievements for the benefit of the workers and peoples.

These governments and their administrations were obviously in their beginnings progressive, democratic, anti-U.S. governments; they awoke expectations among the peoples, the hope for social achievements for the benefit of the masses. By their origin, because they arose as a result of the popular struggles, for their speech and their initial achievements we proletarian revolutionaries and communists supported them and fought for them to advance with the strength of the masses.

Some sooner and some later, those governments prostrated themselves before the pressure of imperialism and the business owners; in fact, they changed course, but they kept the leftist verbiage. They ceased to be progressive regimes and they became just another bourgeois, reformist government.

These processes were favored by the high prices of raw materials, oil and agricultural products, which provided large eco-

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<sup>2</sup> It is not true that the charismatic pretenses and attitudes of the Lulas, Correas and Moraleses are deceptions of these processes. These events were the result of the development of the class struggle, of the harsh and great battles of the workers and peoples; they represent the strengthening and at the same time the historic limitations of the people’s movement.

<sup>3</sup> The political personalities, Chavez, Correa and Morales, proclaimed themselves protagonists of “21st century socialism” in opposition to socialism, which they called anti-democratic and dictatorial; in fact/in this they joined the anti-communist discourse of imperialism and reaction.

conomic resources, all of which allowed them to develop social and welfare policies for the most impoverished sectors of the population and to advance in the modernization of the country.

While they spoke against neoliberalism and its disastrous policies, they pushed forward the extraction of natural resources and the deindustrialization and again basing the economy on primary goods.

The “progressive governments” are the continuation of the experiences of “democratic socialism.” They used public money to raise the wages of the workers, to push forward housing programs, to build schools and hospitals, highways and airports; to develop welfare policies directed to the impoverished sectors of the city and countryside, bonuses, gifts, scholarships. That is, from the government, gradual changes were developed leaving intact the interests of the big business owners and bankers, who benefited on a large scale from the economic prosperity and government policies.

Faced with dependency, the discourse of defending national sovereignty was eliminated in respect to U.S. and European imperialist interests. In recent years the dependency of the “progressive governments” was directed toward trade with China and credits and investments from that country.

### **Revolutionary Policies Towards the “Progressive Governments”**

Above we expressly pointed out that in order to advance in the process of accumulation of revolutionary forces, we communists, in the everyday class struggle, work to turn the discon-



tent of the masses, their interests and rights as part of revolutionary politics, to banners of struggle that allow us to link up with the people in order to contribute to their organization, unity and political education.

We proletarian revolutionaries fight for reforms together with the people, for their realization for the benefit of the masses; but we do not remain there, we struggle to advance.

We work so that those fights of the masses allow us to influence their political education, pointing out the strategic objectives of the revolution and socialism.

Faced with the reformist governments and processes that are developing we always take up clear positions:

When the self-styled progressive governments emerged in various countries in Latin America, as we stated, they did so in a specific context: the rise of the movement of the working masses and youth, the failure of the neoliberal policies and governments. They were the result of an important advance in the ideological and political positions of the working class and peoples. They emerged in opposition to neoliberalism and propagated patriotic and democratic positions, even revolutionary ones. They awakened expectations of change among the peoples.

Under these conditions it was legitimate and obligatory for the left, for the revolutionaries and communists, to support them. They were indeed progressive governments, without quotation marks. It was also necessary to clarify to the masses their nature, the fact that they are forms of change within the framework of the system and then to work to push for their advance from within the mass movement, for their radicalization in the confrontation with neoliberalism and the oligarchies. After the triumph of the October Revolution, Lenin was explicit in this regard, in his work “Left’-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder.” He stated that knowing the reformist and bourgeois nature of these processes, we communists must be clear that they influenced the organization and consciousness of the masses, that we should work so that the masses discover for themselves, through social practice, the real character of their policies and that they should arm themselves with the ideas of continuing the fight for social change, for the revolution.

These political positions were taken up by almost all the left-wing political organizations and parties in all countries. In Ecuador, we Marxist-Leninists were participants in those policies.

The progressive governments, in a process, ceased to be such; they became guardians of order in each country and of international dependence on imperialism and logically the policy of the left and the communists changed. From initial support, it shifted to demands for the fulfillment of electoral proposals, of their promises and talk; to critical positions; and finally to popular opposition, always taking care to demarcate our positions from those of the bourgeois opposition, from the economic and political sectors seeking to replace them through elections.

After the economic boom that benefited all the countries in Latin America, the reactionary pro-U.S. regimes such as in Mexico and Colombia as well as the “progressive governments,” came the lean years; the economic crisis significantly affected Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador and Argentina, and threatened other countries in Latin America. They all seek to place the burden of the crisis on the workers, to raise taxes, to impose the old practices of labor flexibility. The corruption that always infected them burst from every pore, it showed the masses that just as the other representatives of the bourgeoisie, the “new” rulers were participants in the corruption, in the use of public funds for personal and group gain.

In this scenario the failure of the “progressive governments” becomes more evident.

This failure is not just the result of the economic crisis. It is mainly the result of reformist policies and policies of [capitalist – *translator's explanation*] development, of welfare policies that only alleviated the situation and soon ended up benefiting the bankers and business owners, the international monopolies, the U.S., European and Chinese companies, that they struck blows at the trade union organization of the workers, restricted their labor rights, hampered their right to strike, became the old policies of nepotism in order to favor their supporters and preserve their backing of the process.

**The “progressive governments” failed, essentially, in their attempt to show themselves as a road for social change, for the solution of the grave and acute problems of the work-**

**ers and peoples. For much of the workers' and people's movement, the illusions vanished, reality allowed them to see the nature of these processes, show them to be a new manifestation of the bosses. Facts are stubborn things, they showed that the course followed by these processes is not the road to emancipation, is not the way to social and national liberation that the working masses and youth need and demand.**

The communists, leftists and democrats, much of the working masses are clear that those experiences do not correspond to the liberating process, they are not a form of socialism and the revolution. The decline and replacement of the “progressive governments” is not the failure of socialism, of the revolutionary left, of the communists; it is the collapse of the reformist proposals.

However, it is necessary to take into account that part of the workers, peasants, youth and democratic middle strata have illusions about these processes, they thought that they were the way, the liberating alternative; they were captivated by the illusion of “21st century socialism,” by the proposed “end of hunger,” the “cultural, citizens or Bolivarian revolution.” For one sector the failure of the “progressive governments” is the failure of the left, of socialism. The intense propaganda of reaction that attacks them as socialists contributes to this perception.

Above all it is necessary to understand that despite the facts, significant social sectors are still captivated by these ideas, by that supposed road to liberation, they are an important social base that, despite its disintegration and decline, continue to believe in the discourse of the representatives of those governments, of the Lulas, Moraleses and Correas.

These facts demand that the Marxist-Leninists, the leftist formations and parties conduct an arduous ideological and political work that that will lead to clearing up these fabrications in the ideas and practice of the working masses and youth; this is an inescapable responsibility.

### **One Point Is Clear, the “Progressive Governments” No Longer Work**

Maduro clearly won the elections in Venezuela in April 2013; in December 2015 the right solidified into a single front and with the active support of imperialism overwhelmingly won

the absolute majority of the National Assembly. All this was in the middle of the deepening economic crisis, the rise of insecurity and the uncovering of corruption. Correa was re-elected in 2013 and with 52% of the vote he won 70% of the seats in the National Assembly. After one year, he lost overwhelmingly in local elections; the popular demonstrations of 2015 forced him to back down from his plans to be the candidate in 2017; he is going home. In Argentina Cristina Fernandez was not able to have her candidate win the elections of 2015, the right won by displaying the banners of change. Evo Morales won re-election for the third time with more than 60% of the vote, but in a short time he was defeated in regional elections and has just been defeated in the referendum with which he sought a new re-election. In 2014 Dilma Rousseff won the presidential election by a narrow margin of votes; now she is besieged by allegations of corruption and by the economic crisis and she has an approval rating of less than 10%; she is facing big street demonstrations demanding her resignation.

### **Revolutionary Policies Faced with the Failure of the “Progressive Governments”**

In all countries of Latin America the working masses and youth are in the streets demanding their rights, punishment for corruption, in several places they are demanding the resignation of the government. From Mexico to Argentina the working class, youth and peasants are confronting the anti-popular policies of the governments and bosses; they are opposing the criminalization of the social struggle, they are demanding the satisfaction of their needs, demanding new rights and gains.

In Guatemala, the workers, peoples, youth, the democratic and progressive sectors, the leftist forces in large mobilizations in the streets and highways drove out the corrupt and inept government, and though they have not seized power, they gained in experience, they were able to expand democracy and restore freedoms.

Among the patriots and democrats, among the leftists an important discussion is taking place about how to deal with the new situation, the decline of the “progressive governments” and their eventual disappearance from the political scene.



It is argued that since they are bourgeois, pro-imperialist, anti-democratic, authoritarian, repressive and corrupt governments whose resignation is demanded by the working masses, it is necessary to form a broad front that will defeat them in the elections, that this front should integrate all the opposition, the trade union movement, the indigenous peoples and nationalities, the youth, all the forces of the left, and would even include sectors and representatives of the bourgeois opposition that is active in all the countries.

Another question that is put forward is that the defeat of those governments would mean a return to the neoliberal past, that it would eliminate the democratic social measures that those governments had pushed forward, that a historic setback would occur; therefore to fight from the positions of the workers and the left against the policies of those governments is playing the game of the right, to imperialism, that it would feed the “conservative restoration.” This position recognizes the failure of these reformist processes but it declares that the return to neoliberalism is much more serious; in reality it advocates the lesser evil, for political pragmatism.

On the other hand it is said that the workers, the democratic sectors, the leftists and revolutionaries should place themselves at the head of the popular dissatisfaction, should join the political struggle against those representatives of capital and imperialism who from inside the government are proclaiming “21st century socialism” and the revolution and are developing a policy of repression and criminalization of the social struggle.

We Marxist-Leninists of Ecuador are responding to these questions with deeds, we are raising the banners of the revolution, of people’s power and socialism; and in everyday life we are placing ourselves at the head of popular discontent chanting the cry of the masses “Out Correa Out!”

At the same time as we note the existence of common problems, of similar situations in Latin America; we clearly establish that the situation takes a concrete form in each of the countries. One cannot generalize the analysis much less establish recipes. We revolutionaries are conscious of the fact that one of the teachings of Marxism Leninism is, from the positions of the working class and peoples, “the concrete analysis of concrete conditions.”

### **The Class Struggle Does Not Develop According to the Will of the Political Bosses**

In all countries where there exist “progressive governments” there is developing at different levels the struggle of the people, of the workers and youth in defense of their interests and rights. These mobilizations go beyond immediate demands and extend to hold the government responsible for their anti-popular policies, for the deepening of the crisis and corruption and they are demanding their resignation. They are building an independent path that takes into account the immediate and strategic interests of the working class, the struggle to overthrow the government of the bosses.

As we noted above, the conditions under which the workers’ and people’s movement is developing are different; they are facing particular situations and demand concrete responses which we proletarian revolutionaries, the patriots and democrats, the leftists and social fighters must take up.

**In Argentina**, the reformist government of Cristina Fernandez was forced to prop up what was called “rational capitalism,” to favor the extraction of natural resources and to return to export agriculture, to create an economy based on soy and to criminalize the social struggle. There are over 6,000 social activists prosecuted and criminalized for sabotage and terrorism. Involved in corruption and the crisis, she took back some of the measures of benefit to the masses. Throughout her administration she was confronted by important mobilizations of workers and peasants, of the youth, of the majority of the leftist political organizations



and parties. She went to the elections with the repudiation of the majority of Argentinians and lost.

Kirchnerism was defeated in the elections by representatives of the neoliberal right that proclaimed change and gained the support of the middle classes and strata, but also of important contingents of the working class of the city and countryside. The great majority of the leftist political organizations and parties built independent electoral alternatives and/or called for a blank vote in the elections; they did not subscribe to the thesis of the lesser evil.

The results were the establishment of a new government of the big bourgeoisie, of the imperialist monopolies. The workers, youth and the consistent leftists are at the head of a new process of the struggle of the masses for their interests and rights, for democracy and freedom, for the independence of the country. For them the struggle continues, in the recent past they confronted a reformist government, now they are opposing another bourgeois government that does not call itself reformist, that promotes policies of readjustments in the purest neoliberal style, such as the fare hikes but despite that, it does not dare to dismantle all the workers' rights.

**In Venezuela**, the social and political situation is undergoing changes in content and form. Chavism exhausted its "socialist" discourse; it was unable to address the problems of the working masses and those of the country. It squandered enormous resources from the oil revenues and could not solve the problem of the autonomous development of agricultural and industrial production. It not only continued the old practice of the Venezuelan oligarchy of purchasing abroad instead of producing, but accentuated it. The important achievements in health care, education, housing and higher wages were not enough to meet the basic needs for food, health care and livelihood. The increase in the bureaucracy masked unemployment but did not resolve it. The cost of living is growing immensely as a result of the shortages and speculation, of inflation, increase in fares, etc. Chavism's condemnation of the former governments for using public funds for their own benefit was stopped with overflowing examples of corruption at the highest levels of the Bolivarian regime. The

levels of crime grew and made the country a place where there is growing insecurity and fear.

Maduro's government is defending itself from attacks from the right and reaction, characterizing them as an "economic war," as a conspiracy of imperialism and reaction which certainly exists, but that does not explain much less justify the government's incompetence. It is confronting the demands of the workers who are demanding an answer to their needs for food and necessities of life, such as medicines and cleaning supplies, to the insecurity, and it cannot meet those demands.

These circumstances are aggravated by the worsening economic crisis, by the contraction of the economy (-7%), inflation higher than 180%, the devaluation of the Bolivar.

For several years the Venezuelan bourgeoisie and reaction have been taking advantage of these circumstances to demand from the streets the departure of the government; they always did this but now they have had important successes, they are capitalizing on the discontent of the masses, of the middle strata and classes and of the workers and they are gaining ground.

In the last legislative elections, on December 6, 2015, the Bolivarians suffered a serious defeat; the opposition won two thirds of the National Assembly and from there they have a platform to demand the departure of Maduro, using institutional means and street fighting.

The proletarian revolutionaries of Venezuela, the leftists and other revolutionaries who have not lost their way with the reformist path of Chavism have a historic responsibility of fighting in all terrains to win the masses to the revolution and socialism. It is a hard, uphill task, but a necessary one. One cannot leave the field open to the right and to imperialism, and one should also not absolve the regime of its responsibilities. At this time the independent path does not mean defending the regime of Maduro<sup>4</sup>, it has to take into account the immediate interests of the workers

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<sup>4</sup> Before the December 6 elections we said that it was correct in this process to support Maduro from critical positions. In those circumstances it was a revolutionary, correct and timely policy. Now a few months later, when events have developed rapidly, we evaluate this differently.

and youth, it has to put forward, in the concrete conditions, a proposal of the advanced elements, of the revolutionary left, that goes beyond the proclamation of the revolution and socialism and proposes a concrete solution to the crisis: the formation of a revolutionary pole, economic and political demands, popular action calling for these demands, the formation of a popular government born of community organizations, for example.

**In Brazil** the social-democratic, reformist character of the Labor Party, the PT, of Lula and Rousseff was and is more evident. They emerged as an alternative to the dictators, to the reactionary and pro-imperialist right, to neo-liberalism, although to win the elections they forged alliances with parties clearly identified with the right.

Initially they responded to the expectations created. Thanks to the economic boom, they could implement measures for the benefit of the workers, peasants and urban poor. Always, however, they preserved the interests of the big bankers and business owners and benefited from their support. The economic development of the country, of Great Brazil, catapulted the big bourgeoisie, the imperialist monopolies that looted the natural resources and exploited the labor power of the Brazilians, to the position of seventh largest economy in the world.

The government and the ruling classes faced the economic crisis of 2008 and now that of 2014 with adjustment measures paid for by the workers and people, with higher taxes and reduced social budget. Unemployment grew again, as did poverty.

In 2014 there were large demonstrations of youth in opposition to the raising of fares, against the exorbitant expenses for holding the World Soccer Cup and the Olympics. Millions of young people demonstrated in the streets and directed their demands at the government.

Today, the economic crisis is worsening, it is facing the worst performance in decades, unemployment and the cost of living are growing daily, acts of corruption involving the highest levels of government, including Lula and Dilma themselves, have become public. These show in an intense form the contradictions among the bourgeoisie; the resignation of the President is demanded, alliances with the parties that shared the government are being fractured.

It is clear that the economic crisis has become a deep political crisis.

Big mobilizations are taking place, millions of people are demanding the resignation of the government; much of the middle strata, but also significant sectors of the workers and youth are seen in demonstrations. At the same time, social sectors that support the PT, which oppose the “coup,” are turning to the streets, in smaller numbers.

The proletarian revolutionaries in Brazil correctly see that the policies of the PT, the structural adjustment measures proposed to resolve the crisis are similar to the proposals of the bourgeois opposition. They are two sides of the same policies of big capital.

It is clear that the deepening of the economic crisis is sharpening the political crisis, it is exposing the groups in power, it is shaking all of society.

In this scenario the revolutionary communists must strive, together with other formations of revolutionaries and the left, to define a clear course, an alternative independent of both sectors of the rulers, a path that unites the workers in the struggle for their rights and against the effects of the crisis, that points to a political solution to the benefit of the popular and national interests. In short, this is to build, together with other social and political forces, a current that expresses the popular opposition.

**In Ecuador** as we have been saying, Correa’s reformist project is exhausted, it is producing a steady erosion of the government and is facing general elections, in which the defeat of the regime is expected.

This situation is the result of the failure of reformism to face and resolve the problems of the people and the country, of the capitalist nature of the government, of its unmasking as a form of the ruling classes.

The immense majority of the workers’ and people’s movement, the indigenous peoples and nationalities and the youth are steadily expressing their dissatisfaction with the situation and their repudiation of the government.

The bourgeois opposition is revived but is still disunited. It is trying to take advantage of the dissatisfaction of the masses by raising essentially the same banners as the popular opposition but accusing the government of being socialist and leftist, shouting

that the failure of Correa is the failure of revolutionary proposals. Last year for a few days it was able to take to the streets and demand the same slogan as the workers and the left, “ Out Correa Out!” The popular and leftist forces knew how to regain the initiative in the streets and champion the opposition to Correism.

In the electoral sphere, Correism has been weakened; it will most likely be defeated in the next elections. The bourgeois opposition, its various factions, have failed to unite, not even to organize themselves, they gamble on getting to the second round of the elections and to capitalize on the anti-Correa vote.

The social movements, the trade union and popular organizations, the indigenous movement and the parties and organizations of the left are working for the formation of a democratic and leftist electoral political project based on the core of the Collective of People’s Organizations that would integrate the democratic and progressive sectors, the patriots, the left and the revolutionaries.

The prospects are for the defeat of Correism and the eventuality of the triumph of democratic and leftist positions; the triumph of one of the manifestations of the bourgeois opposition seeking to succeed Correa is not inevitable.

### **Some Conclusions for Discussion**

As we can see, the circumstances of the social and political struggle, of the electoral contests have similarities in substance and form, but they also have differences that must be taken into account. The policy of the revolutionaries should be drawn up according to the specific conditions of the situation, but should also aim at the strategic objectives; at this point, at the task of accumulating forces.

The political conditions, the balance of forces, the social mobility are developing in all the countries of Latin America, mainly in those that are led by the “progressive governments”.

1. Many of the sectors of workers and youth who take part in the streets in opposition to the “progressive governments” are found behind the banners of the bourgeois opposition, of the traditional political parties, of the old and new representatives of the bourgeoisie who are seeking to succeed them in government, denouncing them as communists, as manifestations of the left. This is a real, concrete situation, which has to be taken into account.

The reactionary ideas influence the subjectivity of significant sectors of the peoples, create ideological confusion and facilitate the support for right-wing proposals. All this is because the “progressive governments” have been developing a demagogic talk, hidden behind “21st century socialism,” behind the banners of the “revolution.”

2. The extensive propaganda campaign, using state resources, regarding the march of the right-wing conspiracy, of the interference of U.S. imperialism, of the CIA, the “soft coup,” the “conservative restoration,” the return to the past, the elimination of the social gains and achievements of the poor, the return of neoliberalism, feeds confusion in the forces of the workers’ and people’s movement.

3. The discontent of the working masses toward the reformist regimes is a response to the authoritarianism and violation of human rights, to the criminalization of the social struggle, to the corruption, unemployment and privileges; in the great majority of cases it is not in any way adherence to anti-communist policies.

4. The limitations of the trade union movement, of the leftist political parties and organizations to organize and develop an independent social and political pole that fights for the popular and national interests, that confronts the reformist governments, that denounces and fights them as manifestations of the bosses and capital, of corruption and repression; and at the same time demarcates positions from the political parties of the bourgeoisie that are in opposition from the interests of the class they represent, are issues to overcome urgently.

5. The “progressives” and the traditionalists, those in government and those outside of it, represent the same class interests, the perks and privileges of the bankers and business owners. They are different sides of the capitalist class, different facets of dependence, manifestations of the right. This means that the confrontation among these sectors of the ruling classes are a manifestation of contradictions among the bourgeoisie.

6. Demagogically, each sector of the capitalists, each of the bourgeois political parties proclaims democracy, freedom, national sovereignty, the defense of the interests of the workers and peoples; they call themselves champions of the social and material progress of the country; they propose change; this talk seeks to



win the adherence of the working masses in the streets and at the polls.

7. In reference to the economic crisis, each faction proposes to confront it by placing it on the backs of working people and youth, they point to the structural adjustment as necessary to revive the economy and resume the march; they differ only in the degree and speed of the adjustment. They cannot, nor will they, recognize that they seek to preserve the power or win it for the benefit of their group interests.

8. These circumstances oblige the leftists and revolutionaries, the communists to set aside the incorrect theses that to confront the reformist governments is to play the game of the right, of imperialism; they urgently raise the policy of leading the discontent, anger and struggle of the masses for their interests and rights; the leadership of these fights against the responsible politicians, the governments in office, whether they are reformist or reactionary. The policy that a reformist regime is preferable to a reactionary government is an expression of political opportunism.

9. It should be taken into account that the political and social rights achieved under the administration of the “progressive governments” are not the result of their patriotic and democratic nature; they are the response that they are obliged to give in order to channel the popular support into building a social base that supports them in various electoral processes. They are essentially a result of the struggle of the workers and peoples themselves that has developed for decades, of the demand of the masses for the fulfillment of the electoral promises that allowed them to win the vote of the majority of the people’s movement that was in the streets; they respond to the reformist ideological conceptions and policies; that is, they are not expressions of the “revolutionary” stature of the political bosses of these processes, they are not the result of the leftist character of the rulers.

10. The theses of the “progressive governments,” of the ideologues and apologists of these processes, of those who call themselves leftists that the fall of those regimes would be a historic setback, a return to the neoliberal past, the dismantling of the social and democratic gains of the workers and peoples do not have a grasp of the situation, they do not correspond to reality. In fact, many of these achievements have been and are being dis-

mantled by the progressive governments themselves: the right to organize strikes is being cut back, the social struggle is being criminalized, the pensions of the retirees are being affected, they are again proposing labor flexibility; the transportation fares, the price of fuel, water and electricity are rising, they are re-imposing fees on parents of public school children; they are raising taxes, etc.

11. Dialectics teaches us and life confirms, that social development and material progress do not move in cycles, they develop in spirals; this means that one never returns to the starting point, to the past that was left behind; and on the other hand, we workers and trade unionists, we formations of the left and the communists will continue to struggle not only to maintain but to advance these achievements, to multiply them, to advance in the process of accumulating revolutionary forces.

12. The policy of the lesser evil, that a reformist government is preferable to a reactionary proposal, which leads one to choose between the bosses who will lead the country in the coming years, is essentially a pragmatic proposal.

13. The struggle of the workers, of the youth against the reformist projects will contribute to their unmasking, to their wearing out and eventually to their fall and probably to their replacement through elections by right-wing, openly pro-imperialist political formations; that, despite their nature, they will not be able to eliminate all the democratic advances, they will have to respect them to a large degree. However, that perspective is not inevitable if we workers, peoples and the left carry out our responsibilities correctly, with initiative and daring.

14. When we affirm the correctness of building an independent project of the workers and peoples, of the left to confront the reformist governments, we affirm our adherence to Marxism-Leninism. We note the political need and initiative to develop them, taking into account the concrete conditions.

Ecuador, March of 2016

## France

### *Workers' Communist Party of France*

## “Front de Gauche” (“Left Front”): an evaluation of our experience

### Introduction

In December of 2015 our party held its 8th Congress. We chose as central to our agenda to take stock of five years of political struggle and especially of our participation in the Front de Gauche (FdG).

Indeed, at the end of our 7th Congress held in January 2011, our party had adopted a program entitled: “For a Revolutionary Popular Front, Now!” It was a political proposal for the period that was beginning, a proposal to open a path and work to create the conditions for a revolutionary break with the capitalist system.

From January 2011 to December 2015, we worked to spread this program and started to implement it, particularly in the FdG that was an important part of our activity from late 2011 to the spring of 2014.

### 1. What was the Front de Gauche in 2011 and its program “*People First*”?

The FdG was initially an alliance of three parties and organizations (French Communist Party – PCF, the Party of the Left – PG, United Left – GU<sup>1</sup>), formed to take part in the European elections of 2008. The alliance later agreed to broaden itself by including other parties and organizations on the basis of anti-neoliberal political positions which were summarized in its pro-

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<sup>1</sup> **The Party of the Left** broke from the Socialist Party – PS in 2009. One of its founders, Jean Luc Melenchon, had taken a position of voting “No” on the referendum on the European Constitution in 2005, while the PS campaigned for a “Yes” vote. **The United Left** was a Trotskyist organization that emerged from the LCR [Revolutionary Communist League], which refused to join with the NPA [New Anti-Capitalist Party]. It was formed in 2009 and joined the PCF in 2015.

gram “People First”.

More than 200,000 copies of its program were distributed during the presidential campaign (not including those downloaded from the internet).

This program was written before we joined the FdG, so we did not participate in the discussions that led to working it out.

This program aims at a break with neoliberalism, many aspects of which it denounced, but it advocates the possibility of democratizing capitalism by imposing a balance of power with the employers and by proposing a policy at the state level that is favorable to the workers and masses.

This is not a program to fight French imperialism, even if it criticizes some aspects of its foreign policy. It only refers explicitly to imperialism when it speaks of the USA.

It incorporates a wide range of demands that have been taken up by the labor movement, unions and the movements of struggle.

## **2. The political context that led us to join the FdG**

The struggle against Sarkozy’s neoliberal policy of “combat” has won over important sectors of the working class and masses. Its danger, both in terms of domestic policy with its increasing proximity to the National Front (FN) and internationally with its war policy that is more and more inspired by the “clash of civilizations,” caused its rejection by large sections of society.

The FdG began to gain the interest of activists, political sectors, unions and associations, because it denounced Sarkozy’s neoliberal policies and at the same time it displayed a willingness to break with the social liberalism personified by the candidate Hollande. It managed to unite more forces and called upon others to join.

**In other words, the FdG presented itself as an open political framework, with a series of positions that broke with neoliberalism and social liberalism.**

During its 6th Congress in December 2006, our party understood that the revolutionary perspective could only be developed in order to be heard, if the party jumped into the political battle,

in the movement against neoliberalism<sup>2</sup>. Admittedly, this movement is not revolutionary in essence. But in our country it is an obligatory path to put forward more broadly the question of a “rupture” with the system. It is through this that we could reach broader sectors of the workers and people to create greater awareness. Moreover, the movement against neoliberalism has resulted in mass mobilizations, not only among the “petty bourgeoisie” but also among the working class. The great movement in 2010 against the pension reform has brought the popular strata of all generations alongside the working class.

Because of the minority revolutionary movement, the dominance of reformism and electoralism, and a growing rejection of neoliberal politics based on these different elements, our party felt that it should take its rightful place in this political framework. It could not remain “on the sidelines” of this new experience, but it had to fight to push this as far as possible while defending its political positions, of course, without abandoning its ideological positions.

### **3. What should the FdG be recognized for and what did we contribute to this**

The FdG campaign, launched in June 2011 at the Stalingrad Square in Paris, claimed to be inspired from the great revolutionary movements of the Arab peoples, notably of the Tunisian people, who “got rid of” the reactionary regimes supported by the imperialist powers. The “seizure” of public squares and the great popular marches were two forms of the electoral campaign of the FdG. This contrasted with previous election campaigns. In form, gatherings in squares, large meetings mobilizing tens of thousands of participants, the “marches” gave it a dynamic character. In substance, it was a campaign targeting the popular strata, taking up again a number of demands made by the various resistance movements that had developed previously, either in the trade union field, or in defense of public services, of democratic freedoms, etc. These actions linked these resistances on different fronts with the overall

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<sup>2</sup> See our political report to the 6th Congress: “*Neoliberalism, from its rejection to the building of an alternative.*”

denunciation of neoliberalism and the criticism of social liberalism which capitulates to the oligarchy and eventually which ends up following the policy that corresponds the demand of increased profit, of the increased exploitation of the workers, etc. In this respect, Hollande's politics will end up confirming the criticisms made by the FdG of the PS and its candidate.

**Speaking to the working class and the popular strata: the documented and undocumented workers, women of the working masses, youth in precarious conditions**

The orientation of mainly speaking to the popular strata, the working masses, was not imposed by itself and was not always the priority.

Our party always led the struggle to make these strata the center of the FdG campaign, for its candidate to go among them, to make their demands its own. Our party worked to win over the working class to vote for the FdG, concentrating its forces among the workers and popular strata. It has also taken or supported initiatives that have shown that large sectors of the working class, the trade union and popular movement, especially women, were interested in the FdG campaign and that these sectors began to take an active part.



J.L. Melenchon arriving at the Massy plant at the invitation of the CGT on the site during the presidential campaign. Our comrade who represented us in the National Coordination of the FdG accompanied him.

The party fought for the campaign to adopt the demands for regularization of undocumented workers and for the organized sectors of these workers to participate in the mobilizations of the FdG. This was a constant struggle because, while the demand for the regularization of undocumented workers did not raise any objection on the part of the organizations of the FdG, it was necessary to make a concrete commitment and make this struggle visible in the campaign itself. It also meant persuading the undocumented workers themselves to become interested and take part in it!

Our party also worked for the campaign to include working women and women of the popular strata in the fight for social transformation in general and in the fight against neoliberal policies in particular. Not only because women suffer from these policies both as workers and as users of public services that are being attacked and undermined by neoliberal policies, but also because they are very often the first ones confronted by the measures of flexibility, insecurity, division, etc. that these policies impose.

Besides the question of regularization of undocumented women workers, the question of salary increases for feminized jobs was raised by the women’s organization Equality<sup>3</sup> and by the party and was finally adopted by the FdG.

If young people have taken more time to join the campaign, it has often been a school of practical political training for them; many have become politicized and got involved for the first time thanks to this campaign.

### **Experiences and political gains**

In this campaign, a number of political concepts emerged: the link between the policies of austerity and of repression, expressed through the widely used notion of “austeritarian politics,” a contraction of the two words, austerity and authoritarian; the nature of neoliberal policies serving the oligarchy and “finance”; the reactionary nature of the institutions of the Fifth Republic.

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<sup>3</sup> Women’s organization Equality for social emancipation and progress: [www.femmes-egalite.org](http://www.femmes-egalite.org)

The campaign began with posing the question of the need to take up a number of political decisions that undermine the sacrosanct private property of the oligarchy and the big shareholders, especially through a policy that would tax them heavily but also through the question of taking over companies that the employers had decided to close. The mobilizations against the closing of businesses, such as by the workers of Fralib (tea production of the Elephant brand, of the Unilever group), of Petroplus (an oil company), and other companies were supported by the candidate of the FdG, contributing to strengthening the relationship of forces, through the media coverage brought to them. “We will have Melenchon come” became a slogan for many union activists addressed to the bosses, who were upset and worried to see the candidate and the journalists who accompanied him in their factory.

The campaign also allowed for raising **the question of the Euro** as an instrument of the austerity policy, without limiting it to the positions (of the PCF in particular) on the need and possibility of “changing Europe “ to make the institutions work in a progressive way.

### **The fight against the National Front and Marine Le Pen**

Some of the potential voters for M. Le Pen, particularly in the popular circles less politicized but most affected by the consequences of the austerity policy, reject both “the right and the left.” They see business politics, the corruption of many elected PS representatives, especially in the municipalities and regions administrated for a long time by the chiefs of this party. They also know that it is this party that consistently defends the EU and the euro. Among these potential voters, many vacillated in voting between M. Le Pen and J.L. Melenchon. The question therefore arose to fight, with a clear language understandable by the greatest number, against the neoliberal policy at both national and European level, to clearly identify the enemy (“the enemy is not the immigrant, but the banker”) and to mobilize women and men to take part in this fight.

The campaign also had the merit of once again mobilizing the political activists, members or sympathizers of organizations making up the FdG. Thus it could reach through them thousands of militants who had distanced themselves from parties and from



political action. It is this base that resulted in gradually increasing the numbers of people who participated in marches, in big meetings, etc. Thus a step was made toward the politicization of the trade union movement: the dogma that “the trade unions should not get involved in politics” and that “the trade unions should not choose sides in the elections,” etc. began to be questioned.

The FdG pushed forwards its political themes, obliging other forces to position themselves with respect to them. One of these themes was “finance”. If it remained vague, that term nevertheless allowed for going deeper into the question of the financial oligarchy and the monopolies. For our part, we regularly discussed in *La Forge*, but also in our program, in supplements, etc. the Leninist definition of the financial oligarchy.

The awareness of the need to change the increasingly reactionary and anti-democratic institutions of the Fifth Republic was widely shared. The demand for a Sixth Republic was taken up by the FdG and we supported it. This political slogan also appears in our program “For a Revolutionary Popular Front, Now!” We defined its content as a political and institutional rupture, which would give more power to the workers and people, more resources for their social organizations, associations, unions, political organizations, in order to lead the fight against neoliberalism and against the system.



Our party's booth at the Festival of l'Humanité

We must also note, however, that the denunciation of French imperialism as a force of pillage and colonial or neocolonial domination was barely addressed in the campaign. The same thing for its war policy which, if it was criticized in the program "People First," was very rarely denounced in meetings during the campaign. Our party always defended its anti-imperialist positions, it supported the struggles of the peoples dominated by French imperialism and their revolutionary organizations. We tried to address these issues in our interventions whenever we spoke publicly. This strengthened and expanded the reputation of our party as an internationalist party, which does not hide its revolutionary convictions.

To conclude on this point, our evaluation of the presidential campaign of the FdG is largely positive. Positive for the FdG itself and the masses who took part in the campaign and supported it; it helped set in motion hundreds of thousands of people, activists, but also women and men who engaged in collective political fights on this occasion. A campaign that, if it was strongly marked by its candidate, showed that a collective of forces can work together.

But it was also positive for our party; we were able to develop our positions, we made ourselves more widely known, we strengthened links with activists of other organizations of the FdG.

The campaign saw our party very active, at all levels, taking the most important and most ambitious initiatives, allowing us to be present in many cities. We can say that this campaign strengthened the presence of our party in the panorama of political forces. Never hiding our communist, Marxist-Leninist character, we were able to fight over political positions, to get them approved, while also knowing how to make compromises.

But nothing was gained without a fight. There were roadblocks, particularly on the part of the PCF but also other forces, to our presence on stage during major meetings or by trying to prevent us from being associated with initiatives taken by the FdG towards the workers and union struggles which kept on growing throughout the presidential campaign.

In our statement announcing our entry into the FdG, we wrote: "Unity is a battle that must be fought." The experience of the campaign fully verified this.

#### 4. The defeat of the FdG

But soon after the presidential election of May 2012, this political dynamic created by the FdG died down. Starting with the legislative elections that followed, differences began to appear among the organizations of the FdG, particularly between the PCF and the PG. For the PCF it was indeed essential to have its deputies re-elected or to win new ones. In both cases, it raised the question of its position toward the PS. The old line of the PCF of alliance with the PS has quickly prevailed. For the PCF it meant building on the results of the presidential elections (“we contributed in large part to electing Hollande,” “without the voice of the FdG, Hollande could not have won in the second round” – all correct affirmations) to win offices, if not in the new majority, at least to have the support of the PS in order to have their parliamentary candidates elected.

Our party defended the position of keeping, in the electoral campaign, the demarcation line with what we still called “social liberalism,”<sup>4</sup> while putting forward the slogan of “Not a single vote for the right and far right.” This meant in particular not claiming to be part of the “presidential majority” and to put forward politically the rejection of austerity, the refusal of the workers and people to pay for the crisis, to continue to fight for the satisfaction of the workers’ and people’s demands made during the presidential campaign.

An evaluation of the presidential campaign as well as of the legislative elections was never made collectively in the FdG; only our party published, in June 2012, an article that drew the first lessons of this campaign and opened some prospects for further work.

We thought that the FdG should, above all, have strongly taken up the fight for workers’ and people’s demands and in order to do that, it should have taken political initiatives, brought together political forces, trade unionists, even the union organizations, associations and of course all those who wanted to actively

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<sup>4</sup> This term, which had meaning in 2012, was replaced in 2013 by the term “neoliberal” to the extent that it no longer had any social content in the politics of the government!

participate in this fight. We proposed both the rooting of the FdG in the workers' and people's movement and the expansion of its ranks. For us, the groups that were set up during the campaign, the "citizens' assemblies," should have served these objectives.

If for a time the FdG kept its mobilization capacity, this later did not stop eroding steadily over the years that followed.

The divisions within it often paralyzed it and prevented it from taking the initiatives expected by rank-and-file activists; this was especially the case when the question arose of the closing of the blast furnace of Florange in Lorraine, decided by the world monopoly leader in the steel industry, Arcelor Mittal. When this question arose, the PG, through the voice of J.L. Melenchon, proposed to the partners of the FdG to organize a large march on the site in solidarity with the steel workers in struggle against Arcelor Mittal. The demand of "nationalization" could have led to a broad rallying of the working class in the country around this slogan; we immediately supported that proposal. It was faced with a constant attack from the PCF as well as from other Trotskyist groups in the FdG united in "Ensemble". This refusal is explained by the PCF line which wanted to prevent any move that would position the FdG as a force of opposition to the government policy. As for Ensemble (a grouping of various forces, including several Trotskyists), they saw it as an intolerable "Leninist" position, an attempt to play a leadership role that they rejected, trying to justify themselves by saying that parties could not replace the unions!!!

If a few times and on certain questions (against the European treaty of Merkel and Sarkozy of 2012, which Hollande did not question; against the austerity budgets that the Hollande governments imposed, against the increase of the VAT [Value Added Tax], etc.) the FdG mobilized, it gradually lost its capacity to attract people. This was particularly the case after the municipal elections of March 2014 in which it refused to clearly break with the PS candidates rallied to the neoliberal policy. This greatly disappointed and turned away some of those who had supported the FdG. As of that date, we had more and more difficulty working together within the FdG. The attacks of January 2015 (against Charlie Hebdo), in which all components of the FdG except our party joined the ranks of the big "Republican" demonstration

organized by the government, marked a new step. It was then, in November 2015, that the vote took place in favor of the state of emergency<sup>5</sup> by representatives of the group of the FdG in the National Assembly. After this, it was impossible to take a common position against the intervention of the French army in Syria.

At the time of our Congress in December we already wrote: *“if we have not decided to leave the FdG, it is no longer the only part of our work to implement our policy of the Revolutionary Popular Front. We are pursuing this same policy in another situation and we are working with the forces of the FdG but also with other political forces and groupings based on orientations and in the areas of mobilizations.”*<sup>6</sup>

Beginning in January 2016, the PCF wanted to drag us into participating in the primaries<sup>7</sup> to choose the candidate of the “left” (the PS candidates were included in this left!) for the future presidential election of 2017. But at the same time, the blows of the government kept on falling on the working class and masses. The workers’ and people’s movement, meanwhile, was trying to build and converge on the fronts of struggle against the state of emergency, against the wars of French imperialism, against the “austeritarian” policy and the repression of the trade unions. Analyzing this situation, the Party decided to address the representatives of the FdG organizations to tell them:

*“The FdG in which we were involved no longer exists. The framework proposed today **does not correspond to the current needs.***

*“The conclusion we draw is that we cannot continue to par-*

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<sup>5</sup> The state of emergency was first used in 1955, during the war in Algeria. It was applied several times during that war, later in 1985 in the French colonies, particularly in New Caledonia, and in 2005 during the rebellions in the suburbs.

<sup>6</sup> Report of the activity of the PCOF, December 2015

<sup>7</sup> The primaries are a procedure (based on the U.S. model) that allows each party to choose its candidate for the presidential election.

*ticipate in the Coordination<sup>8</sup> nor to continue to call ourselves part of the FdG as it exists today.”<sup>9</sup>*

This letter was published in our central organ in March.

### **5. The party emerged strengthened from this experience**

In the conclusion of the evaluation that we discussed at our congress we tried to answer in the most objective way possible the following question: *“Did our participation in the FdG help contribute to the growth of opposition to the offensive of the oligarchy and reaction, to strengthen the positions of the working class and masses; and above all did it broaden awareness of the need for a revolutionary break with the system, especially among the advanced sectors of the working class and masses?”*

The FdG, as such, especially during the presidential campaign and on various occasions, when it played a role of political leadership and influence, really helped to make the opposition grow in the minds, but also in the struggles against the offensive of the oligarchy. It allowed to “instill” in the consciousness of many people an understanding of neoliberalism and the conversion from social democracy to neoliberalism. It also helped to understand the importance of strengthening solidarity among the workers and peoples of Europe against the policies imposed by the financial oligarchy.

But we can also judge the merits of our decision in terms of strengthening our party.

The experience gained by our party in the work of the front was very important. It first focused on learning how to combine united front work together with the forces that made up the FdG and our own work. We quickly saw the importance of continuing to make our positions known through our party materials (the journal, national monthly leaflet, posters, stickers, etc.), to continue to have our own positions on all political issues of the moment.

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<sup>8</sup> The coordination was the body in which all the organizations of the FdG were represented; it met once a week.

<sup>9</sup> Excerpt from our address to the representatives of the organizations of the FdG on February 7, 2016.

But we also quickly realized that nobody would give us space in the FdG; that we had to gain this space and push for it by our positions and our practice.

We also learned to take courageous political positions at key moments of the class struggle; positions that in fact differentiated us from positions taken by other forces in the FdG. We referred earlier in this article to the position taken at the time of the closing of the blast furnace in Florange; there was also the one taken by the local party committees in the second round of municipal elections in which we refused to call for a vote for the candidate of the PS. There was the position taken in January 2015 at the time of the terrorist attacks, that of November 2015 against the state of emergency, etc.

There was especially our 2013 campaign against the intervention of French imperialism in Mali, when our party was one of the few political forces in France not only to take a clear position, but also to conduct explanatory work to try to share it. We also learned when and how to take this type of position; at what point we had to say no, holding a clear position despite pressure, when there was an issue. But we also understood that it was not only a question of “raising the flag” but to say and do things in order to be understood, if not by the broad masses, then at least by the most conscious elements, those who seek out and expect these positions, who need class criteria in order to adopt positions.

Thus it was through our united front work in the Left Front and our positions as a communist party at key moments of the class struggle that we earned the respect of the rank-and-file members of the FdG and more broadly; we became a reference point for the politicized sector of the social movement: they listen to the PCOF, they want to know its analysis, its views on the situation and on political issues being debated.

Deciding to participate in the FdG in 2011 meant providing ourselves the means to participate in a mass political movement taking shape in order to be able to play a role. Not to have done it would certainly have been a mistake. It would have isolated us, marginalized us. In making this decision we took a position not only to act *within* the situation but also *on* the situation. We were able to play a role that caused ruptures with social democracy,

reformism, electoralism, with anti-party conceptions that deny the need for political leadership in the struggle of the working class and masses. These ruptures manifest themselves at the organizational level by bringing forces close to the party.

The great unity that emerged at the congress on this report is also proof of the correctness of our line.

### **6. Can the Marxist-Leninist movement take advantage of this experience in an imperialist country?**

The Marxist-Leninist movement has essentially experience (past and present) of fronts initiated by Marxist-Leninist parties, parties which already have a certain stature and political strength that allowed them to form the backbone of the front (as in Tunisia, Ecuador, etc.).

Can M-L parties that are smaller, that less strength, participate in fronts in which they cannot therefore play the leading role?

The experience of our party that we have tried to describe here proves that this is possible under certain conditions and that the M-L parties can be strengthened by it: by reinforcing themselves ideologically, politically and organizationally.

Our experience shows that we can work together with reformist forces without losing our political soul, provided that we know why we do it and with what purpose, that is to say, without ever losing sight of the fact that we are working to promote the perspective of the revolutionary break and will win the advanced elements of the working class.

The revolutionary struggle implies the struggle against reformism. But how can we fight this battle in order to develop the awareness of broader sectors of the working class and thus reverse the relationship of forces in favor of the need for a revolutionary rupture with the system? Demarcation cannot be a goal in itself. The fight against reformist positions is waged through the criticism of these positions, but especially through the ability of our parties to formulate concrete goals that will make the interests of the working class and masses progress. We have to be in the movement of struggle of the working class and masses. We have to learn at any moment to formulate the slogans and demands that can unite and advance the struggle in order to be



heard, and above all to allow the most conscious sectors to verify the correctness of revolutionary Marxist-Leninist positions by their own experience.

What our party has best understood and begun to learn during this experience is to lead the broadest possible movements, to develop its capacity to formulate demands that are linked to the interest of the workers and people and enable ruptures. It is for our communist parties to fight in order to win the leadership of the workers and popular movement, for the revolution and socialism.

March 2016

## **Greece**

### ***Movement for the Reorganization of the KKE (1918-1955)***

**Solidarity with Migrant Refugees  
Strengthen the Fight against War  
Stop imperialist intervention  
Stop Fascism – Racism – Nationalism  
Long Live the Friendship among the Peoples  
Imperialists out of the Aegean Sea  
Solidarity with the Struggle of the Peoples  
Greece out of the European Union  
and NATO**

Since the beginning of the war in Syria, it has been obvious that the so-called “opposition” was nothing more than the long arm of imperialism in the country. The aim was to intervene inside the country to overthrow the democratically elected bourgeois President Assad. The “Free Syrian Army” and the Syrian opposition were not created by any organized popular force, but were armed with modern weapons and trained by experienced soldiers who could confront the quite capable Syrian army.

In Greece in the same period, the vast majority of political organizations did not take a position in favor of Syria, against the embargo and the sanctions that were imposed. At best, they distanced themselves equally from the jihadists and the Syrian government, ignoring the fact that the conflict between imperialism and the people was the principal contradiction, since the imperialist countries openly intervened (as they had done previously in Iraq , Afghanistan, Libya, etc.) against yet another country as “saviors” with the aim of serving their interests in the broader region.

Eventually, Russia, the U.S., England, France, Turkey, etc., were involved in military operations in Syria. After the attacks in France, all the governments of the member states of the imperialist EU agreed to intensify their military operations in Syria (the SYRIZA-ANEL government among them). This participation

continues under the pretext of the “danger of the Islamic State,” whose influence increases or decreases depending on the degree of the bombing, without any support from the local population and without any organization of its structures or its army.

### **SYRIZA maintains the “fence of shame” in Evros**

The continuous bombing razed everything that existed in the country, forcing most of the 22,000,000 (or more) residents to flee from the scourge of war and to seek a better life elsewhere. Initially, the neighboring countries bore the brunt of the influx of refugees; but since 2015, every month thousands of immigrants are trying to reach Europe passing through our country. Being unable to cross the 12.5 km wide fence in Evros, the land border between Greece and Turkey, known as the “fence of shame” built by the fascist A. Samaras, they have no choice but to cross the sea. This is a fence that the current Prime Minister, A. Tsipras, refuses to tear down, essentially calling those who make such a proposal fools (“the idea of unilaterally removing the fence and allowing the refugees to arrive through Evros sounds like the good idea of someone who has not got a clue,” November 5, 2015), This is despite the fact that, according to a statement by Amnesty International: “Tough security measures at the land borders with Turkey and the erection there of a 12.5 kilometer long fence in 2012, has forced refugees and migrants to choose the more dangerous route through Greece’s sea borders with Turkey.” (November 2, 2015). This has led to the drowning of hundreds of refugees in the Aegean, a crime that probably constitutes genocide.

The SYRIZA-ANEL coalition called the butchers of NATO under German control the “custodians of the Aegean”, Frontex [the European Union agency that controls the external borders of the EU – *translator’s note*] will support the work of NATO activities.

While the whole of the Middle East is in flames (see Syria, Libya, Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc.), mainly due to the responsibility of NATO and its allied states, the prime minister invited the military forces (!) of NATO to “monitor the maritime borders of the country.” Thus, in the first place, he appealed to an army to deal with immigrants; in the second place, he invited the murderers of the peoples of the Middle East to be guarantors of the preservation of borders (!); and in the third place, he basically

considered the immigrants a threat to the border! This is a view that emphasizes, once again, the pro-NATO-imperialist policies of the SYRIZA-ANEL coalition and of Prime Minister A. Tsipras personally.

At the same time, the local bourgeoisie, through its media and therefore the Greek government, in the first place, criticizes Turkey (regardless of the reasons), since the latter temporarily opposes the deployment of NATO forces in Turkish territorial waters (“Turkey is undermining NATO operations in the Aegean,” *Vima*, February 22, 2016). High-ranking officials confirmed to *Kathimerini* the insistence of Turkey to limit the operation to international waters and not in national waters, as originally agreed to. If the operation is only in international waters it will not be useful in reducing the flow of refugees, the same sources said (*Imerisia*, February 24, 2016); and, secondly, the attempt to present NATO’s involvement in the Aegean as having a “positive” (!) effect in its competition with the Turkish bourgeoisie regarding the migration issue (“Mr. Kammenos recognizes that the allies are isolating Turkey,” *Imerisia*, February 24, 2016).

The Speaker of Parliament, Nikos Voutsis, could not stop participating in this contest of servility to the imperialists. Speaking at the Delphi Economic Forum on February 26, 2016, as a true apologist of imperialism, he concealed the responsibility of NATO and the EU for the destruction, uprooting and slaughter of the peoples of the Middle East. More specifically, he adopted all the arguments used by the imperialists to intervene, primarily through military means, in the internal affairs of these countries. “The political leaders of the European Union are determined to devise a strategy for the reception and integration of several million immigrant refugees from the broadest regions of the Middle East and North Africa that are generally destabilized due to wars, civil conflicts and religious fundamentalist tendencies”; (February 26, 2016 <https://left.gr/news/n-voytsis-oi-axies-tis-eyropis-anavaptistikan-mesa-apo-tin-allileggyi-kai-tin-axioprepeia-toy>).

**To differentiate between immigrants and refugees is  
reactionary and racist**

Since the attack on Libya and its dismantling by the imperialist forces of the U.S., Britain, France and Italy and the massive

wave of immigrants that followed to Italy, with thousands jostling daily onto boats to go across the sea to Europe and escape the war, a change in the tactics of the mainstream media, both Greek and foreign, began to take shape. This change was initiated, of course, by the fascist forces and opened the way to the true fascist and Nazi-fascist forces, by idealizing their slogans and practices whose only purpose is to foster hatred among the peoples and divide the proletariat in each country. The new tactic can be described in a few words with the formula: “The good refugees vs. bad immigrants,” which essentially presupposes the fascist position according to which “immigrant = irregular immigrant = illegal immigrant.”

In the context of this change of tactics, the terminology used by the Greek media and the Greek government has adapted. A typical example of this racist and reactionary distinction is the screening of immigrants by country of origin (as if Afghanistan, for example, has suffered less from imperialism or that the war there has ended). There is one attitude towards Syrians, another towards Iraqis, etc. The Syrians are allowed to leave (in small groups) from the northern border of our country, but not the Afghans.

**The practices of “control of the migratory wave” or “re-forwarding of migrants” means only one thing: More immigrants drowned in the Aegean Sea**

The EU summit held in mid-February on the issue of refugees indicated that the objective of the EU “should be the rapid reduction of the flow of refugees, protection of our external borders in order to reduce illegal immigration and the protection of the Schengen zone.” (*Vima*, February 19, 2016). The joint communiqué issued after the Council notes that “a substantial and sustained reduction in the number of illegal crossings is required” (*Vima*, February 19, 2016).

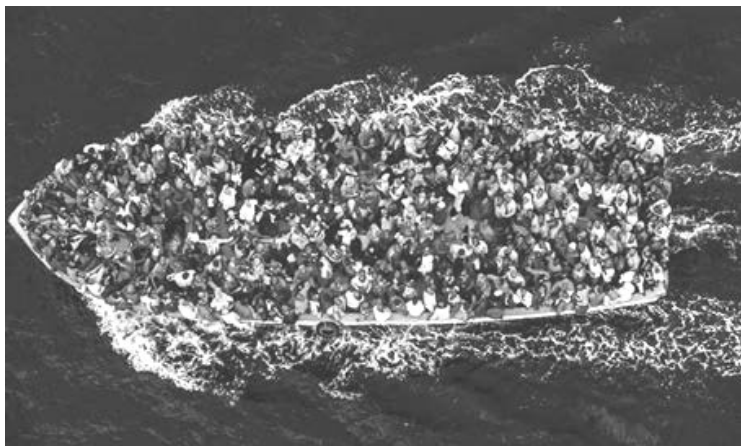
In this context, the head of the conservative New Democracy party, K. Mitsotakis and the bourgeois PASOK Ph. Gennimata had a telephone conversation in which Kyriakos Mitsotakis stated: “The illegal flows must be stopped by all means now.” (*Kathimerini*, February 24, 2016.)

Both in the communiqué of the summit and the statement by Mitsotakis and Gennimata, the immigrants are clearly treated as a threat to the EU borders. Thus they are regarded not as victims of an imperialist war, but as “invaders” and a plan of “checking the immigration wave” is being drawn up, which means more immigrants drowned in the Aegean Sea due to military operations against them.

### **The fascist transformation of Europe**

At the same time, Europe is becoming increasingly fascist. On January 26, 2016, a law was approved in Denmark allowing confiscation of valuables from migrants entering their territory in exchange for the “hospitality” that would be provided them. This law aroused a storm of reaction across Europe, since it legitimizes actions against immigrant refugees similar to the confiscation of property from Jews practiced by the Nazis before and during World War II.

In Austria, the Nazi-fascist “Free Party” is gaining popularity, beating even the party in office at the polls. However, instead of forming a front against the fascist transformation of their country, the other bourgeois parties are adopting the agenda, phraseology and program of the Nazi-fascists, closing the borders to immigrants, deploying the army in the streets and putting up fences to control the wave of migrants. In Slovakia, the Nazi-fascist party is growing and entered Parliament for the first time.



### **Camps for immigrants are becoming “hot spots”**

To cope with the wave of emigration in recent months and together with the option of the EU countries to close their borders, the government has identified areas for the construction of sites that will accommodate immigrants trapped in the country. These places, most of them in the middle of nowhere, are intended to be closed; at best they are a ghetto and at worst a concentration camp of the Amygdaleza type, where thousands of immigrants are crammed under squalid conditions under police terror.

Today a class solidarity with immigrants, the intensification of the struggle against the war, imperialist interventions, fascism, racism and nationalism is needed. As we already noted: “The revolutionary Marxists, that is, the Leninist-Stalinists, together with all anti-fascists, should fight for the creation of a broad anti-fascist front, and also for the class unity of the proletariat, of the local and foreign workers, forging solidarity and unity in the common struggle for the defense of their interests and against the fascist transformation of society, against racism, nationalism, fascism and Nazi-fascism and the struggle for the proletarian revolution” (July 2014)

March 2016



# India

## *Revolutionary Democracy*

*Vijay Singh*

### **Preface to the Indian Edition of the Textbook of Political Economy (1955)**

The publication of the series of Textbooks of Political Economy by the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, the First edition of 1954, the Second of 1955, the re-made Third editions of 1958 and 1959 and the final edition of 1962 had a profound impact in the Soviet Union, the people's democracies and in progressive circles around the world<sup>1</sup>. The volumes were published in several millions of copies in the principal languages of the globe.

The Textbooks had their impact in India. P.C. Mahalanobis, who had visited Moscow in July 1954, expressed his heartfelt gratitude at receiving a signed complimentary copy of the first edition of the Political Economy Textbook from K.V. Ostrovitianov which had been published in August of the same year. In his letter to Ostrovitianov written from Kolkata he expressed regret that he could not read the book in the original as it was in the Russian language but he hoped to learn of its contents with a help of a translator. He had observed great interest in the volume as there was not one serious book on the theme of the socialist economy in the English language. This intervention was taken with serious interest in Moscow. The papers relating to P.C. Ma-

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<sup>1</sup> 'Politicheskaja ekonomija, Uchebnik', Akademia Nauk SSSR, Institut Ekonomiki, Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, Moscow, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1954, 639 pages. The Second, expanded, edition which comprised of 672 pages was signed for the press on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1955. The Third Recast Edition of 680 pages was signed for the press on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1958. The expanded Third Recast Edition of 708 pages was approved for sending to the press on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1959. The final Fourth Recast and Expanded Edition of 703 pages was authorised for printing on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1962.



halanobis in the Archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences note that he was an ‘Advisor to Nehru’.<sup>2</sup> Mahalanobis was highly respected amongst economists and statisticians in the Soviet Union: in 1958 he was made an International Member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and after his death he was honoured by an article in the five-volume Economic Encyclopaedia of Political Economy.<sup>3</sup> The letter of P.C. Mahalanobis evidently made a mark for K.V. Ostrovitianov and D. Shepilov then wrote to the Central Committee of the CPSU. After summarising the letter which had been received from Mahalanobis they noted that thus far the Textbook of Political Economy had been translated only into the languages of the people’s democracies. Given that an English translation would be beneficial to the widespread dissemination of the textbook in the capitalist countries it was necessary to take a decision to direct the Foreign Languages Publishing House to publish the textbook of political economy in English.<sup>4</sup> Stalin earlier had said that the Textbook of Political Economy would be read by the Americans and the Chinese.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, the second edition of the Textbook of Political Economy was translated into English by Andrew Rothstein and was published by the publisher Lawrence and Wishart from London in 1957. This edition is now published in India for the first time.

The publication of the First and Second editions of the Textbooks of Political Economy in 1954 and 1955 were rooted in decisions taken by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) in 1936 and 1937. In April 1936 the Central Committee

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<sup>2</sup> ARAN Fond 1705/ Op. 1/Ed. khr. 340. The letter of P. C. Mahalanobis to K.V. Ostrovitianov is dated 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1954.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Ekonomicheskaja entsiklopedia politicheskaja ekonomija’, Vol. 2, Izdatel’stvo ‘Sovetskaja entsiklopedia’, Moscow, p. 422.

<sup>4</sup> ARAN Fond 1705/ Op. 2/Ed.khr. 173. This letter from K.V. Ostrovitianov and D.T. Shepilov to the Central Committee of the CPSU is undated.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Uchebnik dolzhen pol’zovat’sia neprerekaemym avtoritetom’. Besedy I.V. Stalina s uchenymi-ekonomistami. 1941, 1950, 1952 g., *Istoricheskij arkhiv* No. 5, 2012, p. 20.

decided to constitute a curriculum of political economy and arrange for the preparation of a manual of political economy, and, in April and July of the following year further resolutions were adopted which recommended that it be based on A.A. Bogdanov's *Short Course of Economic Science*, Moscow, 1897 which had been highly regarded by Lenin.<sup>6</sup> The writing of new manuals became a matter of urgency as the economic relations of Soviet society changed radically with collectivisation, industrialisation and the five-year plans.

A number of teams of Soviet scholars were engaged in the preparation of the several draft political textbooks of political economy from the late 1930s right through to the period 1954-1962. Leading Soviet political economists such as A.L. Leontiev, D.T. Shepilov and K.V. Ostrovitianov headed the drafting teams at various times. Crucial questions came to the fore in the presentation of successive modes of production but none were as contentious as those pertaining to the socialist mode of production and the transition to communist society. The textbooks of political economy in a pioneering fashion elaborated the principal features of the socialist economy in an extensive way. This is strikingly evident if one makes comparisons of earlier textbooks with



<sup>6</sup> ARAN Fond 352/Op. 1/Ed. khr. 165, l. 1-4; ARAN Fond 352/ Op. 1/ Ed. khr. 23, 1-5.

the Textbooks of Political Economy from 1954. The earlier volumes on political economy were devoted to a study of capitalism and which was contrasted to the socialism of the transitional period. If we look at the ‘Outline of Political Economy’, significantly subtitled ‘Political Economy and Soviet Economics’ authored by Lapidus and Ostrovitianov it parenthetically, as it were, concluded with a chapter dealing with the political economy of socialism.

From 1954, the textbooks devoted several hundred pages to this subject-matter. The Textbook of Political Economy of 1955 published here retains a particular significance today for the reason that it represents the only major study which is available in the English tongue on the features of the socialist mode of production in the Soviet Union. The section on the socialist mode of production had to harmonise the views of the classics of Marxism with the actual functioning of Soviet socialism such as it was formed after collectivisation, industrialisation and the implementation of centralised directive planning under Gosplan, the State Committee for Planning. After the socialist offensive in agriculture and the establishment of the collective farms of the middle and poor peasantry founded on the exclusion of the rich peasantry, the kulaks, whom Lenin had termed the ‘last capitalist class’ the Soviet Union declared that the basis of socialism had been established in the Soviet Union while recognising that this necessarily required further development.

The Soviet Union was declared to be in the main a socialist economy. Earlier manuals which were concerned with the Soviet economy of the transitional period were now out of date.<sup>7</sup> The Eighteenth Congress of the CPSU (b) which was held in 1939 mooted the question of the transition to communism in the Soviet Union and Gosplan in 1941 was directed to produce a fifteen year perspective plan for laying the basis for communist society. This

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<sup>7</sup> A. Leont’iev and E. Khmel’nitskaia, ‘Sovetskaia ekonomika’, Opyt posobia dlia samostoiatel’nogo izuchenia teoreticheskikh problem perekhodkhoziasstva. Plany, tesisy, literatura, Moskovskiy rabochiy, Moskva-Leningrad, 1928 and I. Lapidus and K. Ostrovityanov, ‘An Outline of Political Economy, Political Economy and Soviet Economics’, Martin Lawrence, London, 1929.

was produced but of course the impending war meant that this was not given any priority. Nevertheless after the war Stalin reaffirmed the possibility of creating the foundations of communism in one country and Gosplan again was given orders to draft a fifteen year perspective plan for laying the economic basis for communist society.

P. C Mahalanobis correctly pinpointed that the importance of the 1954 political economy textbook was its section on the socialist mode of production which constituted half of the volume. While an enormous Marxist economic literature existed in the Soviet Union on the political economy of socialism incorporating also the discussions and collisions on questions in this terrain virtually nothing of this was circulated in languages other than Russian. The textbooks on political economy which circulated in India by Ostrovitianov and Lapidus which were read by the nationalists in Indian jails, or the volume by A.L. Leontiev of the nineteen-forties had very slender chapters on the political economy of socialism. These volumes were of importance for the elucidation of the political economy of capitalism but not of the economic basis of socialism. The early generations of Indian communism were reared on these materials. The political economy textbook of 1955 is also important in other ways. It is the only textbook which represents the self-perception of the Soviet economists and indeed the Soviet state of the internal dynamics of a socialist society. Subsequent reworkings of this textbook by K.V. Ostrovitianov, the doyen of political economy under Khrushchev, were typified by the norms of what may be called the principles of a 'market socialist' economy. The two editions of the political economy textbook published in 1958 and 1959 (known as the Third edition) which were also printed by the million reflected the fundamental changes which had taken place in the Soviet economy in the period 1953 and 1959. The Third Editions of 1958 and 1959 were translated into the languages of the people's democracies but not into English. The Chinese Third Edition was reviewed by Mao in 1958 itself although he did not critique the 'market socialist' component and direction of this edition.

Having noted that the 1955 political economy textbook in many ways summarised the self-perception of the Soviet econo-

mists of the Soviet economy of the period shortly after Stalin and that textbooks after this year were orientated to the norms of market socialism' it is instructive to examine some of the ruptures which are apparent in the textbook of political economy between the understanding of the late Stalin period and the manuals published after that.

Radical changes took place in the economy of the Soviet Union between 1953 and 1955 in the spirit of neo-liberalism. Starting from April 1953 step by step the nature of the planning was transformed from that of directive centralised planning by Gosplan, that of planning as law, to the decentralised co-ordinated planning of the Union Ministries, the Union Republics (from 1955) and their planning organs. The powers of the directors of the enterprises were expanded at the expense of Gosplan and centralised directive planning in 1955. Necessarily these developments which paved the way to expand the role of commodity-money relations in the Soviet economy implied that the gradual transition to communism was now retarded if not terminated. The plan to replace Soviet trade with products-exchange, to gradually transform the collective farms into the socialised property of the whole people in the form of Agricultural Communes which is evident in Stalin's 'Economic Problems' and in the Soviet economic literature in the months after its publication was terminated after the death of Stalin from April 1953 and substituted by a renewed emphasis on Soviet trade. Mikoyan as is clear from the draft manuscript of his memoirs had resisted the intervention of Stalin to introduce products-exchange into the Soviet economy. The Draft Political Economy Textbook of Political Economy of March 1953, which may be located in the Stalin collection in the former Central Party Archives, carries an extensive discussion on the need to raise collective farm property to the level of the property of the whole people to eliminate the essential distinctions between town and country. The establishment of a single all-people's communist property in the means of production would strengthen the existing social property of the state sector and prepare the way for the co-operative collective farms to rise to the level of the all-peoples' property. This was essential for the transition from commodity circulation to a system of products-exchange. These two measures were essential for the transition to

communism.<sup>8</sup> In the 1954 edition of the political economy manual the importance of replacing commodity circulation by products exchange was dropped<sup>9</sup>. This deletion was retained in the 1955 edition. The transformations in Soviet economic policy were reflected, then, in the 1955 version of the textbook of political economy in the interstices of the sections on the socialist mode of production and the transition to communism.



Soviet Project  
Socialism Betrayed,  
Behind the Collapse of the  
Soviet Union, book by  
Roger Keeran and  
Thomas Kenny



1725-1945: 220 years of the  
Academy of Sciences of the  
USSR

The neo-liberal transformation of the Soviet economy accelerated after the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU. Commodity

<sup>8</sup> Politicheskaya Ekonomia, Uchebnik, Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1953, pp. 520-535, Printed manuscript.

<sup>9</sup> Akademia Nauk SSSR, Institute Ekonomiki, Politicheskaya Ekonomia, Uchebnik, Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, Moscow, 1954, pp. 520-535.

production and circulation now came to be the norm in the Soviet economy. This is evident in the actual implementation of ‘market socialist’ policies by the government and Gosplan. In May 1957 a number of centralised sales organisations were established under Gosplan to vend the industrial goods of Soviet industry thereby ending the system of planned allocation of the products of the state sector. Four months later on September 22<sup>nd</sup> 1957 the Soviet Council of Ministers through Resolution Number 1150 directed that enterprises were required to operate on the basis of profitability. This had been preceded in July 1957 by Gosplan order number 663 where an organ was created, *Glavavtotraktorbitsita*, which had the responsibility marketing the machinery produced in the state sector to the agrarian enterprises. This implied that the industrial sector producing agricultural machinery was now engaging in commodity production for the collective farms and the state farms. All this suggests that by 1958 generalised commodity production was dominating in the Soviet economy. In such conditions labour power automatically became a commodity. The Third Edition of the ‘Political Economy Textbook’ which appeared in 1958 accurately reflected the new economic system by stating that the means of production circulated within the State sector as commodities<sup>10</sup>. The manual did not, of course, depict labour power as being a commodity in the Soviet Union despite the fact that the means of production had been thoroughly commodified.

Despite all its omissions and defects the Textbook of Political Economy, which is printed in India for the first time, informs us of the dynamics of capitalist society and is a monumental depiction of the first phase of communist society, the socialist mode of production, which was on the brink of entering the second, higher, phase of communist society. This manual enables all students and practitioners of Marxism to discover for themselves the vast achievements of the Soviet Union and the People’s

Democracies. This is especially important in the current situation as the work of socialism and the democratic camp has

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<sup>10</sup> Ostrovityanov, K.V., *et al*, ‘Politicheskaya Ekonomia, Uchebnik’, 3rd edition, Moscow, 1958, p. 505.

essentially been destroyed by the implementation of the economic policies informed by neo-liberalism which were enacted in the post-Stalin period. The end of socialism and democracy enabled the theorists of capital, the 'social market' and '21<sup>st</sup> century socialism' to join hands to demolish Marxist political economy. And yet it lives. The revival of the communist movement in the former Soviet Union and the ex-people's democracies as also around the world indicates the beginnings of the second wave of revolution which is once again engaging in an examination of the political economy of capitalism and socialism.

21<sup>st</sup> December 2015.



# Italy

## **Communist Platform**

### **The Modern Proletariat and Internationalism**

#### **The Division of Society into Classes and the Proletariat**

The most important social differentiation of human beings is their division into social classes, connected to particular historical phases of the development of production. This division has its origin in the social division of labour and in the development of exchanges, which gave rise to the birth of private property and the inequality of wealth.

According to Marx and Engels *“Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other – Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.”* (*Communist Manifesto*, 1848).

Engels explained in the footnote n. 1 to the Cap. I of the English edition of 1888: *“By bourgeoisie is meant the class of modern Capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labour. By proletariat, the class of modern wage-labourers who, having no means of production of their own, are reduced to selling their labour power in order to live.”*

Later, Lenin pointed out the essential features of the class differences:

*“Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and their mode of acquiring it.”* (*A Great Beginning*, 1919).

So, according to scientific socialism, the proletariat is the social class that, lacking the means of production, is obliged to sell its labour-power to the capitalists in exchange for a wage in order to subsist.

The peculiar feature of the proletariat is to add value to capital in the real process of production (production of surplus value), as a class subjected to capitalist exploitation.

The exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie is the principal characteristic of capitalism, and the antagonistic relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat is the fundamental class relation in the capitalist system.

The particular relation of the proletariat to the means of production possessed by the capitalists defines the position and class role of the proletariat, it determines its interests and distinguishes it from the other labourers, making it the most advanced and most revolutionary of all the classes and strata of the society that face the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie cannot exist, cannot accumulate capital and obtain capitalist profit without the exploitation of the proletariat. Consequently, it is the development of capitalism itself that confers a character of continuity to the existence of the proletariat, that produces it and makes it progress as a special class, with its own interests and its historical-universal function.

### **A “Disappeared” Class...**

One characteristic aspect of the ideological offensive carried out by the bourgeoisie against the workers’ and communist movement in the last decades is the negation not only of the historical role of the working class, but of its very existence.

The economists, sociologists, professors and other bourgeois intellectuals do not cease to chatter about the “extinction of the working class”, of its “residual character” owing to technical-scientific progress.

They claim that the limits of industrial society have now been overcome and that society today has become an “information society” in which industrial production will be replaced by “non-material” production.

From this they conclude that the working class has disappeared or at least has been significantly reduced as the fundamental class of society and has lost its determining role in the development of society.

This type of theorizing – considered by some people as un-touchable dogmas – is not founded on scientific bases, but on

mystifications, on unfounded, false sociological criteria, on partial observations limited to the “most advanced countries”.

Besides, the bourgeois specialists, in order to justify certain theses, strive to exclude from the proletariat a large number of workers subjected to the relation of capitalist exploitation, assigning them to other “categories” (mainly to the so-called “tertiary sector”).

This is an ideological attack that tries to deny the existence of the working class as the fundamental class of society and as the determining historical and political force. The complement of these theses is the negation of the necessity of an independent and revolutionary party of the working class.

In fact, if there were no wage-earning workers, there would be no production of surplus value; and without surplus value there would be no capitalist production. In this case, the apologists of capital and all their mystifications would disappear!

### **...in Rapid Growth at the World Level**

The official statistics about labour, although distorted for sociological and miserable political purposes, cannot fully conceal the reality.

Although it is not possible obtain from them an exact measure of the reality of the working class, we can anyway draw from the same statistics some data and dynamics that resoundingly refute the thesis of the “disappearance” and “marginality” of the proletariat.

Let us consider, for example, the data provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO), an agency of the UNO, about the world labour-force.

The data of the 2014 ILO report shows that the percentage of workers receiving a wage or salary is about half of the economically active world population, that is, about 1.6 thousand million exploited workers.

Moreover, one can see that both the number and percentage of workers compared with the economically active population have been continuously increasing since 2000.

In 2000 there were 536 million industrial workers. In 2013 there were 724 million (about 250 million of whom were in East

Asia and 145 million in South Asia). In that period, the growth in the number of industrial workers was about 35%.

Also relatively, namely in relation to the total number of the occupied workers in the world, the industrial working class is growing; it increased from 20.5% in 2000 to about 23% in 2012.

Within the proletariat we have to consider also a relevant part of the workers in private services. This sector, which is rapidly growing, includes, among others, services external to the enterprises, logistics, transportation, telecommunications, branches in which the engaged labour-force creates surplus-value that is appropriated by the capitalists.

To this we have to add the industrial reserve army in its different forms, which, with 200 million unemployed, is a permanent part of the proletariat.

As a whole the proletariat is an enormous and growing social force, consisting largely of young proletarians who are steeling themselves in the economic and political struggle against capital.

The chatter of the petty bourgeois and bourgeois intellectuals is not backed by facts. Capitalism is increasing and not decreasing; it socially concentrates and does not separate the army of wage workers, which is the essential and specific product of the capitalist mode of production.

The material result of capitalist production has developed the productive forces, it has created new productive spheres and industrial branches, even those not yet totally controlled, it has in-



creased the mass of social production and the export of capital looking for maximum profit in every corner of the planet.

The inherent tendencies of the actual mode of production have reproduced the capitalist social relationship on a broader level. In the last decades, an increasing number and new categories of workers have been subjugated to the capitalist relationship of exploitation.

Marx and Engels were absolutely right when they stated: “*In proportion as the bourgeoisie, i.e., capital, is developed, in the same proportion is the proletariat, the modern working class, developed – a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital.*” (*Communist Manifesto*).

Contrary to other social classes, the proletariat not only continues to exist, being the social class that produces all the social wealth and the real pivot of the world economy, but it develops itself on the international level: quantitatively, as its mass significantly increases; technologically, as it is tied to the most advanced forms of social production; in its specific weight, being concentrated in great masses in the industrial centres and districts of the metropolises and cities.

The temporary defeat suffered by the working class has not changed the fact that present-day society is characterized by the existence of two fundamental classes: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Just as in every antagonistic social formation, the revolutionary class struggle is the only way that leads to the resolution of the contradictions and problems put forward by social development, to assure the inevitable victory over the old bourgeois world and the establishment of a new and superior social order.

### **The Working Class and Proletarian Internationalism**

The proletariat is an international class whose interests are in an irreconcilable contradiction with the interests of the bourgeoisie.

The proletarians of all countries have in common not only wage slavery and poverty, but also their hatred towards the exploiters and their institutions; they share the need for emancipation, for liberation from the society of private property, from ex-

ploitation, social and national oppression. This is the basis of their brotherhood and solidarity.

The understanding of the proletariat of all countries as the only class with common interests and aims is the foundation of proletarian internationalism.

The international character of the working class is today more evident than in the past and includes the five continents.

The factors of this clear internationalization are: the expansion of the centres of the production and circulation of commodities and services beyond the “North Western” regions, particularly in the so-called “developing economies”; the creation of the modern world market in which the capitalist monopolies have eliminated every national character of wage labour; the growing proletarianization of the world population and the creation of an international reserve of labour-power; the growing flow of migration; a complex international division of labour and a “chain of surplus value” extending and spreading in every country; the development of the means of communication, of mass transportation, etc.

The international position and policy of the working class are therefore based on objective conditions that are now present as never before.

In contrast of principle with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalism, the class consciousness of the workers is the understanding of the movement for proletarian emancipation, which leads them to recognize themselves as an international class, struggling in order to overthrow the relations of capitalist exploitation and build the planned society of the associated producers. It is the understanding of the need to have a special tool to lead this great task: the communist party, which acts and struggles as a detachment of the international working-class and communist movement.

The international class solidarity of the proletariat proves the theory and practice of unity, of sincere cooperation and mutual support among the organizations of the workers’ and communist movement of all countries in the struggle for emancipation from wage slavery and the liberation of the peoples subjugated by imperialism.

In order to achieve the “*co-operative society based on common ownership of the means of production*” (Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*), the dictatorship of proletariat is indispensable just as is proletarian international solidarity and the internationalist aid of the workers of the whole world.

Proletarian internationalism corresponds to the general historical objectives of the working class, to prepare for the future union of the workers into a single world economy, to overcome the national boundaries following the complete elimination of classes and of the State, which can only be established under communism.

### **The Development of Internationalism**

Historically, the starting point of proletarian internationalism is the publication of the “Manifesto of communist party” (“*The workers have no country... Workers of all countries, unite!*”) and the subsequent foundation, by Marx and Engels, of the First International (1864-1872), which set the basis for the great work of the proletarian revolution, for the substitution of the capitalist system by a world communist system. It had a daughter: the Paris Commune.

The Second International (1889-1914) had the merit of developing and broadening the international organization of the workers, but it lowered its revolutionary level which facilitated its opportunism. Its internationalism, based only in words, was abandoned in practice and replaced by the collaboration of the working class with the bourgeoisie of each country.

The first world imperialist war gave proof of the abandonment of proletarian internationalism by the opportunists, who supported their imperialist governments. This led to the bankruptcy of the Second International and the total break between the communists and the social-chauvinists.

In the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences the Bolsheviks laid the bases for the rebirth of the international association of the revolutionary proletariat, free from imperialist and chauvinist influences.

The Third, Communist, International (1919-1943), born after the October Socialist Revolution, declared war on opportunism, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois social-chauvinism, beginning to

put into practice the slogan of the proletarian dictatorship, in which is summarized the development of socialism and the workers' movement.

Lenin brought profound innovations to the content and practice of proletarian internationalism, on the basis of some fundamental demands:

a) to struggle incessantly against the bourgeois governments and "great power" chauvinism, typical of the opportunists of the dominant nations, and against "national" particularism, typical of the "socialists" of the oppressed nations;

b) to bring closer, to unite the proletariat of the imperialist countries and the proletariat and oppressed masses of the dependent and colonial countries, in order to overthrow the common enemy, imperialism;

c) to subordinate the interests of the proletarian struggle in a single country to the interests of this same struggle in the whole world, as ***"the interests of the world workers' revolution (is) higher than the integrity, security and peace of any national state, and of their own in particular"*** (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, published in *Pravda* no. 219, October 11, 1918).

d) to understand the victorious revolution and the building of socialism in a single country, or in several countries, as a means ***"for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries"*** (*The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, pamphlet, written between October and November 1918), even if this means great national sacrifices in order to overthrow international capitalism.

On these bases, Lenin clarified the essence of proletarian internationalism in the epoch of imperialism and elaborated a mature formulation of it, characterized by a conception of the world revolutionary process founded on the participation and collaboration of the broad exploited and oppressed masses of all countries.

### **Communists and therefore Internationalists**

In view of the above, it is clear that proletarian internationalism is not a minor issues of the theory of the emancipation movement of the proletariat, a secondary aspect or an "optional" position of the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution and



the dictatorship of proletariat, or a romantic supplement of revolutionary policy.

On the contrary, it is a fundamental and integral principle of revolutionary Marxism, an essential characteristic of the workers' and communist movement and a paramount task, since it reflects the conditions of existence, the character and the common interests of the international proletariat, expressing, beyond the differences and specific national features, its historical-universal revolutionary function.

Communism appeared and developed as an international force, reflecting the nature and character of the proletariat. The real movement of the revolutionary proletariat is by its very nature internationalist, since it is the expression of a class that abolishes one mode of production – the capitalist one – which is also an international force. Consequently, the struggle against this barbaric system cannot be limited to a single country or several countries, but it is an international struggle.

From this perspective, the struggle of the working class of a particular country against its own bourgeoisie is just an aspect of the international battle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and the conquest of power by the working class in one country is just an aspect of the development of the world proletarian revolution.

Proletarian internationalism is one of the most important weapons of the social revolution and an indispensable condition of the struggle for the complete and definitive victory of the proletariat against capitalism and the bourgeoisie, an aim that cannot be achieved on a national scale, but only on an international scale.

We are internationalists because we are communists. We cannot be communists without being organically and coherently internationalists.

### **The Revisionist Betrayal and the Struggle of the Marxist-Leninists**

The revisionists and the social democrats have always tried to attack, distort and water down the conception and practice of proletarian internationalism.

We have mentioned the shameful betrayal committed by the opportunists of the Second International. In the second half of the 20th century we saw other betrayals and disavowals of the cause of proletarian internationalism.

We recall the bourgeois nationalist positions developed by the Titoite clique; the revisionist Khrushchevite-Brezhnevite degeneration which established “peaceful coexistence” in place of proletarian internationalism as the fundamental principle of the foreign policy of the socialist countries and communist parties; the revisionist policy of the abandonment of support for the revolutionary and liberation movements of the oppressed peoples; charity or threats in place of fraternal and internationalist aid; the chauvinist great-power intrigues of the Soviet and Chinese renegades; the renunciation of the education of the communists and working masses in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and solidarity and friendship among the peoples.

The abandonment of Marxism-Leninism necessarily implies the falsification and rejection of proletarian internationalism. This is also what happened with some “new” anti-communist theories such as the “three worlds theory”, “euro-communism”, “21st century socialism”, “populist pragmatism”, in which there is no trace of proletarian internationalism, but there are, on the contrary, strong aspects of nationalism, chauvinism, localism and narrow-mindedness.

The revisionists and social democrats, all the opportunists, have always fought with all their might and means to eliminate internationalism among the proletariat and to replace it with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalism, of which they are the spokespersons in the ranks of the working class.

The ups and downs of the international communist movement show that the disastrous pressure and influence of imperialism and its opportunist agents do not manifest themselves only from outside, but also from inside the communist parties, and in the same sphere of proletarian internationalism, of its actual conception and practice.

Sometimes this destructive attitude is expressed with explicit ideological and political manoeuvres, characterized by the vulgar rejection of proletarian internationalism, the passage to counter-revolutionary nationalism, to surrender to imperialism. In other

cases, it is manifested in a more subtle way, in less evident but no less dangerous forms.

For example: placing the interests of the international proletarian revolution below that of the interests, tactics and immediate tasks of this or that section of proletariat; restricting the conception of proletarian internationalism and limiting its range only to some areas of the world (provincialism); proclaiming faithfulness to internationalism, but offering a poor contribution to its living practice, where it is most necessary; evaluating “progressive” bourgeois governments as a useful support to the struggle of the working class and peoples; being unwilling to adopt an international organization and discipline of the Communist Parties; taking, step by step, the road of approach to and friendship with the social-liberal and opportunist parties, etc.

The Marxist-Leninist communists must defend proletarian internationalism, in every phase making an analysis in order to discover how, with the sharpening of the fundamental contradictions of our epoch, currents hostile to internationalism appear and reproduce themselves within the bosom of the revolutionary proletariat itself.

Thanks to the collective experience, we are now in a better condition to understand how, where and in what forms the revisionist-imperialist pressure and influence manifest themselves in the revolutionary Parties of proletariat, in order to unmask this influence and resolutely fight these dangerous phenomena and positions.

In the present conditions of revival of the international workers’ and communist movement, it is absolutely necessary that the Communist Parties raise everywhere the glorious banner of proletarian internationalism, raising its level.

The loyalty to the principles of proletarian internationalism, its consistent implementation in every party and organization of the workers’ and communist movement, the consolidation of the unity, solidarity and collaboration among the Marxist-Leninist forces, are more necessary than ever and are a fundamental task for the preparation of the revolution.

The achievement of this task is carried out through concrete actions: to further engage our Parties and Organizations in the propaganda and practice of real proletarian internationalism; to

strengthen the bonds of solidarity of the working class and to organize common actions in different countries in order to pursue our aims; to develop fraternal relations and cooperation with communists who have not abandoned the principles of Marxism-Leninism; to integrate the communist militants who live in other countries in the work for the construction of Marxist-Leninist parties, organizations and currents; to contribute to the ideological, political and organizational development and strengthening of the International Conference of Marxist-Leninist Parties and Organizations (ICMLPO) with the perspective of a new Communist International, in order to create a single guiding policy for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples.

The events, the unavoidable evolution of the class struggle, will contribute to these developments.

**Communist Platform – for the Communist Party  
of the Proletariat of Italy**

January 2016



# Mexico

## *Communist Party of Mexico (Marxist-Leninist)*

### **Merge Marxism-Leninism with the Working Class and the Popular Masses**

A fundamental task for those of us who raise the banners of socialism and communism is to merge these banners with the proletariat and the broad popular masses. The victory of the tactics and strategy of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat is in direct and dialectical relationship with this merger in the economic struggle, the theoretical-ideological struggle, the political-military struggle, etc. the struggle for power. Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin systematized this in a scientific and practical way: “Theory becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses.” This is the fundamental task of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party.

To be clear about the dialectical relationship that the communists should have with the mass movement it is necessary to make certain aspects clear: the revolutionary role of the masses in general and the proletariat in particular; the role of the communists in merging the science of Marxism-Leninism with the proletarian movement; and the specific tasks that we must develop in the class struggle today.

#### **I. The Masses Are the Makers of History**

The classics of Marxism-Leninism (Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin) not only defended but also scientifically demonstrated the reasons why history must be considered as the history of class struggle, and that the modern class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class inevitably leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat. In this the motor of history – the class struggle – the exploited and oppressed classes play the progressive and advanced role.

Our knowledgeable teachers found that, throughout the history of mankind, the individual is the synthesis of communities, because he lives and develops in them. And the collectives are groups that are always in movement, where the individuals that

stand out correspond to the general or specific conditions of such movements. After primitive communism, these collectives are grouped into social classes, which are in constant clashes with each other to represent different interests in the production process and in the political struggle for the liberation or enslavement of humanity.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels expressed it this way in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary re-constitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.” Applying dialectical and historical materialism, they discovered the general laws of development of human societies and, in particular, the laws of capitalism, such as those that arise from this and give rise to socialism, as was demonstrated by Lenin and Stalin with the building of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). In the development of these laws, the classics found the role that the popular masses have played and continue to play, as actors of these processes: under slavery the slaves, under feudalism the serfs and under capitalism the proletarians.

The popular masses are then the exploited and oppressed classes in general – seen as a whole – moving peacefully or violently, bringing together the principal productive forces and that are constantly acting, creating material and spiritual progress; who constantly struggle to defend their interests and constitute the main actors of history.

In modern times, the bourgeois revolution in France that began in 1789 and the proletarian revolution in Russia in October 1917, are two of the best-known examples that demonstrate this. These revolutions show that even when the masses make the revolutions and the great social transformations, the content and scope of these revolutions is determined objectively by the development of the productive forces and subjectively by the class or classes that lead the revolution. In this subjective aspect, the masses made the French Revolution, but led by the bourgeoisie,

which gave it the character of a bourgeois revolution. In the October 1917 revolution in Russia, it was also the masses who rose in revolution under the leadership of the proletariat, which gave it the character of a proletarian revolution.

## II. Proletarians and Communists

In what relationship do the communists stand to the proletarians as a whole? Marx and Engels asked, and then responded: “The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties [referring to the party in the broad sense]. They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.... The Communists are distinguished from the other working class parties by this only. In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality.... The immediate aim of the Communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat.”

So we communists cannot replace the role of the masses as the makers of history, nor can we assume an attitude of intellectuals alienated from the concrete struggles of the proletarian and popular masses. The proletarian revolution, which is called on to overthrow the bourgeoisie, will be the work of the popular mass-



es led by the working class. Among communists, we often fall into another severe mistake, we often think that Marxism-Leninism is a lofty theory that is not at the reach of the average worker, we refuse to raise the class consciousness of the proletariat, and then instead of putting forward to the masses the necessity of taking power, the necessity for proletarian revolution, the abolition of private ownership of the means of production and the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, we are often contented when the immediate economic struggles of the popular masses, and thus consciously or unconsciously we contribute to prolonging the exploitation and oppression of the working class.

This very fact – believing that revolutionary theory is not within reach of the masses – leads other comrades to only study, write and discuss Marxism (academic Marxism) apart from the concrete struggles, which also does not help to increase the class consciousness and organization of the proletariat.

In any case, we Marxist-Leninists must become ambassadors of the historical interests of the working class, in its permanent struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism, before the working class itself and all other social classes. By being clear on this, we would avoid many of our comrades vulgarizing the revolutionary science or, using Marxist phraseology, actually becoming representatives of the interests of the petty bourgeoisie or the bourgeoisie itself.

Hence the fundamental role of the Communists is to merge Marxism-Leninism with the mass movement.

### **III. Merging Marxism-Leninism with the Mass Movement is the Main Task of the Communists**

Marxism-Leninism is the conception of the world that, in opposition to all idealism and metaphysics, studies nature, society and thought through the prism of dialectical and historical materialism; thus in the present era – the era of the capitalist-imperialist system – Marxism-Leninism is the science of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Historical materialism is the synthesis of the experience of the whole history of humanity to this day; and since society was divided into social classes, it is the history of class struggle.



The proletariat in the capitalist production system is a class in itself, that is, only as part of society, as the producer of social wealth appropriated by the bourgeoisie; but to become a transforming agent of the conditions of exploitation in which he lives he must acquire class consciousness, that is, he must become instead of a class in itself, a class for itself; this step, in which the proletariat acquires class consciousness does not occur spontaneously, this is where we communists intervene, in fact it is our reason for being.

But what is the class consciousness of the proletariat? Although for revolutionaries and Marxist-Leninist communists it is a question on which we are very clear, it is worth pointing out that the class consciousness of the proletariat is its ability to understand the reality in which he lives, the exploitative nature of the system of capitalist production and understand his historical role as the class called upon to destroy this mode of production through their conscious, organized and planned intervention through the proletarian revolution, to establish his dictatorship and build socialism, leading the process until the abolition of private property of the means of production, the elimination of social classes and the state. That is, until communism.

The importance of emphasizing this is that, often, class consciousness is understood only as the ability of the working class to know the degree of exploitation in which it finds itself, to fight only for better pay, etc.; only pushing forward a movement of opposition to the regime, a movement of resistance and rebellion, opposing the most reactionary part of the financial oligarchy, fascism, worshipping social democracy and reformism.

But the class consciousness of the proletariat is not acquired only by the sum of knowledge; it is only acquired by the fusion of Marxism-Leninism with the proletarian movement, with the mass movement; revolutionary theory is the synthesis of the experience of the class struggle of the proletariat, but it is not applied mechanically to the present time; the conditions of capitalist development in our countries, the development of the proletariat itself, have their own characteristics, therefore it is impossible to imbue revolutionary theory without being part of that movement; nor is class consciousness acquired automatically, by being part of the workers' and mass movement, even if it is the most power-

ful movement, as we have already noted: “Without a revolutionary theory there can be, no revolutionary movement,” as Vladimir Ilich Lenin stated in his important work *What Is To Be Done?*

Revolutionary theory raises the class consciousness of the mass movement, but also the struggle for the revolution and the concrete experiences and practices of the proletariat will feed back upon the revolutionary theory; both elements are closely related, revolutionary theory cannot survive without revolutionary practice.

#### **IV. To Consolidate the Process of Revolutionary Accumulation of Forces Is the Central Task of the Proletariat in the Current Stage of the Class Struggle in Mexico**

To effectively play our historic role, it is essential for us communists in Mexico to be clear that the current stage of the proletarian revolution is characterized by the accumulation of revolutionary forces. In our country the general crisis of capitalism is deepening; the recent cyclical crisis that the world experienced starting in 2007-2008 has caused untold havoc, which has been placed on the backs of the working class, the broad popular masses and the peoples of Mexico. We have seen the continuation with the neoliberal reforms that have been adopted in the



period of Enrique Peña Nieto. The dynamics of the world economy and therefore of the Mexican economy (which is an economy dependent particularly on U.S. imperialism) is heading toward another crisis that threatens to be deeper than the previous one.

Amidst this situation, that is, of the approach of an economic crisis, which is accompanied by growing popular mobilizations, conditions are rapidly being created that can lead to a political crisis and even a revolutionary crisis. This situation demands that we communists be aware that the revolution in our country can pass from this stage of the revolutionary accumulation of forces to a pre-revolutionary stage. Of course, history does not move in a straight line, nor have revolutions been produced automatically each time. The proletarian revolution will also not be the simple or spontaneous result of the natural course of our history, especially when imperialist reaction and the national financial oligarchy seek to prevent at all costs a revolutionary solution of the current crisis. In fact they seek to impose a fascist solution to their crisis, without ruling out the social democratic or populist solution, which they might find useful to pacify any revolutionary outbreak. But the actual outcome will depend on the relationship of forces that will be able to develop at the time between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

So the present task of the Mexican proletariat and the mass movement is to consolidate the process of accumulation of forces, to be in a position to seize power in an eventual revolutionary stage, which will come sooner or later!

What does it mean to consolidate the process of the revolutionary accumulation of forces? Clearly we are saying that we will not start from scratch; we have before us an active movement of the masses, which now erupts here, now there. Every day new discontented sectors join in the street; although slowly, the working class is incorporating into the mass movement. Yes it is a spontaneous mass movement, but it is very active. It is not difficult to list examples, that took place in the two months of this year; there have been major strikes, such as of the workers of the U.S. company Lexmark on the northern border and those of Section 271 in the Proletarian City of Lazaro Cardenas in Michoacan, of the Miners' Union; or the peasant and indigenous

movements, such as the rebellion of the indigenous people in the town of Oxchuc (in the extreme south), the mass mobilizations against Governor Graco Ramírez in the state of Morelos (in the center of the country), the caravans of the Parents of the families of the disappeared student teachers of Ayotzinapa, who traversed more than half of the country, the mobilizations from January 26 to 29, the demonstrations of the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE) and in particular those of sections 7 and 40 in Chiapas, in opposition to the education reform.

There is a mass movement that threatens to become generalized. It is largely influenced by unionism, economism and regionalism, but therefore it is essential that we communists and revolutionaries act within these movements. But we must not intervene in them with voluntarism, it must be a systematic and planned work, it must persist until there is not a single mass movement in the country which lacks a Marxist-Leninist perspective, even in the field of bourgeois electoral democracy, as that of 2016.

Another element that we take as a very solid point of departure in order to advance in the consolidation of the revolutionary accumulation of forces, is the generalization of the slogan: Not one more isolated struggle! within the organized movement. In the country, there are no longer popular organizations or democratic unions that deny this necessity. In addition, in the last 10 years of the history of the mass movement, we have gone through enough trial runs of multiple initiatives of the unitary processes that anyone more or less involved in the national struggle can remember without problems; the groupings and regroupings of the various unitary processes in the country have led to what we have today: a Popular National Assembly (ANP), with the leadership of the Parents of the disappeared of Ayotzinapa, a Broad Social United Front (FASU), headed by the Telephone Workers Union of the Mexican Republic (STRM) and the Union of Workers of the Autonomous University of Mexico (STUNAM), a process of the Citizens and Peoples Constituent Assembly with personalities such as the priest Raul Vera, the collective of progressive intellectuals and personalities "Mexico Today," the movement For a Democratic and Popular Constituent Assembly for the City of Mexico, the already historic and exemplary process led

by the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, the Good Government Boards and The Other Campaign; the set of practical initiatives that has pushed forward the National Coordinator of Education Workers; the Popular Militias in the form of Community Police and Popular Self-Defense Units; and various similar local, sectoral and thematic forms. Each one has its own profile, but all are calling for unity, of course, each with its distinct logic that must lead to a serious and profound debate.

We have a first more or less unitary plan of action in the country, which ends in May, and consists of national and centralized actions, on the 26th of each month, on March 17 to 20 on the anniversary of the San Quintin Strike, on April 10 that ends with widespread actions between April 24 and May 1.

Therefore, to some extent it is very natural to conclude, that to combat the dispersion, disparity and spontaneity of our mass movement and to strengthen this stage of the revolutionary accumulation of forces, we need to draw up a single plan of struggle for the whole country, we need to build with all the movements, peoples, unions, processes, collectives, etc., a great National Assembly of the Proletariat and the Peoples of Mexico, that will establish a unified command, to give it a sense of organization, structure, progression, generalization, centralization and planning for the whole mass movement throughout the country, a United Front of Labor against Capital.

And to combat the dispersion of the blows that each of us strike against the regime, in isolated strikes and actions, we urgently need to win the will of the mass movement for the outbreak of the First General Political Strike in the country.

A unified strategic program, which raises the seizure of power by the proletariat, which in turn contains a program of demands such as the repeal of the neoliberal counter-reforms of Peña Nieto, the presentation of the disappeared alive, the freedom of the political prisoners, justice for those assassinated, among other demands, is another of the indispensable needs to consolidate this process of accumulation of forces of the Mexican proletariat.

We communists must be the spearhead to achieve these objectives, therein lies our true militant work at this juncture; to be consistent with this perspective is what must differentiate us from

the representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, who worship the spontaneity of the masses and place themselves at the tail of social democracy.

### **V. We Communists Must Lead the Masses Along the Road of Proletarian Revolution.**

In determining the class character of our political tasks, as communists, as revolutionaries, as Marxist-Leninists, there is no middle ground: we recognize that it is the masses who are the makers of history, we struggle to abolish private ownership of the means of production and we want to lead the working class to the seizure of power, objectives that can only be achieved through a proletarian revolution.

Indeed, the proletarian revolution may not be just around the corner, as they say, but our role lies in preparing the working class politically, ideologically and organizationally for the revolution. We must be bold and intelligent, not mechanically transferring experiences from other times and places as other voices say. That is true, but we communists cannot renounce our historical role, to lead the working class to the seizure of power. Tactics can vary from moment to moment, in 24 hours they can change radically. We can use the most peaceful forms of struggle, which may correspond to a specific situation, for example to participate in an electoral process, but at other times we may boycott the elections, as the masses did in various parts of southeastern Mexico in June of last year. But what we cannot do is to hide our fundamental objective, the establishment of socialism and communism in Mexico.

March of 2016

# Norway

## Revolusjon

### Xenophobia and How the Working Class Should Respond

The ruling class is trying to blame immigrant workers and refugees for the ongoing disintegration of social security and workers' rights, claiming that social welfare will be "unsustainable".

With the appointment of Sylvi Listhaug (Progress Party)<sup>1</sup> as immigration minister, the most reactionary forces now have a mouthpiece who supports racial and cultural prejudices with an impact that the untalented fascist and racist organizations could only dream of. Migrant workers and refugees are blamed for almost everything.

Allegedly, social security, welfare and social rights "will be unsustainable" in the future. In this way the ruling class is trying to divert the people's resistance to the systematic liquidation of social security standards that the different governments have channelled since the beginning of this century, that is, long before the "refugee crisis".



<sup>1</sup> The Progress Party (Fremskrittspartiet) is in a government coalition with the Conservative Party (Høyre). It is an ultra-liberal, right-wing populist party with a xenophobic rhetoric.

The danger of the fascist and ultra-reactionary forces is that they appeal to real concerns and popular “common sense”. They do so by finding a grain of truth and blowing it out of proportion. Nonetheless, it has an effect. And the forces of the left will be swept away if they simply repeat robot-like that mass immigration of refugees or labourers does not represent any problem whatsoever. The problem is real and multifaceted. It requires a concrete and progressive response.

Facts show that the refugees from the Middle East and Africa so far have not played any significant role in lowering the standards for wages and working conditions. Instead it was the extension of the EU/EEA<sup>2</sup> in 2004, which took effect in Norway starting in 2009, that gave impetus to social dumping. A significant reason for this is that many Eastern European workers do not find a reason to organize in trade unions and pay membership dues, or they do not want to risk losing their jobs. A preliminary solution to this has been to make collective bargaining agreements (CBA) universal<sup>3</sup> in some of the most vulnerable sectors, a measure that objectively further reduces the immigrant workers’ imperative to get organized.

The impact of this measure when it comes to limiting wage dumping has also been relatively minor, according to a comprehensive report from 2015. The same report also shows that the level of organization is on the decline (especially in the building and construction sectors), and that the bargaining power of the workers thus has been considerably weakened. This has severe implications.

The entire working class has the international bourgeois class as its enemy. At the same time, the working class in each country is fighting against its “own” bourgeoisie. Under pre-revolutionary conditions the class struggle manifests itself as a guerrilla war in

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<sup>2</sup> The European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement is an extension of the European Internal Market (including free migration of labour) to non-EU countries such as Norway and Iceland.

<sup>3</sup> Due to the traditional strength of the trade unions, there is no minimum wage legislation in Norway. It is the minimum CBA standards that in some sectors have been universalized.



which the working class achieves economic and social concessions from the bourgeoisie for shorter or longer periods. These concessions, which will always be of a temporary nature, are recognized within the framework of national laws and in collective agreements.

Only through a strong class community, in practice through determined unions which are able to negotiate the price of labour power with the monopolies in certain industries and companies, is it possible to prevail and defend victories like these. Groups of migrant workers, who are accustomed to far lower standards and worse conditions and are willing to sell their labour power at a lower price than that of the country's own workers, thereby undermine the agreements and accords achieved. Herein lies the dilemma for the national workers' movement, a dilemma that capital of course is eager to exploit.

How the working class of a country responds to this challenge depends on the degree of organization and on how developed its class consciousness is. On the one hand, the number of workers organized in trade unions in Norway is quite high (totaling more than 50%, and higher in the industrial sectors); on the other hand their class consciousness has become increasingly reduced as a result of class collaboration and the economic and political hegemony of reformism. This low class consciousness is further reduced when the working class grows with new groups of workers who come from countries with few and weak organ-



ized labour traditions.

The progressive response from a class-conscious workers' movement cannot be the unrestricted "open borders" as preached by the ultra-left and Trotskyites. That is naivety. Solidarity is something that needs to go both ways. The answer can only be to welcome all class brothers from other countries, but under the condition that they show mutual solidarity and not allow themselves to be used to weaken the social and labour rights that have been achieved.

In practice this means that they must be part of the workers' collective. The political demand can therefore be nothing other than that a work permit should be authorized only to those who are employed in businesses with a CBA. This must apply regardless of whether the work force comes from the EEA/EU area or not, and it must of course also apply to the temporary work agencies. It is urgent to implement such a line, before the union movement is so weakened that it is not able to enforce it.

Editorial in *Revolution* No. 48, Spring 2016.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This editorial deals mostly with immigrant workers from the EU/EEA Area and their effect on the labour market, and less with refugees seeking asylum under international laws and conventions. The level of trade union membership is high in Norway compared to most countries in Europe. For this reason, Marxist-Leninists in other countries may have a different approach to the question of immigrant workers.

## Peru

### ***Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist)***

### **Position of the Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) regarding the Elections of April 10 and June 5, 2016**

The CC of the PCP (M-L) addresses itself to the working class, the peasantry, the youth and the peoples of Peru, to express the Party's position regarding the presidential and congressional elections of April 10 and June 5, 2016. Also, we give general guidance to the membership as to the task of educating the working people based on their own experience of struggle, to rid them of their parliamentary illusions, getting them to know the program and policy of the Party, whose prominent members take part in the electoral process through alliances based on principles and program as a form of struggle subordinate to the insurrection.

Lenin said:

“The party of the revolutionary proletariat must take part in bourgeois parliaments in order to enlighten the masses; this can be done during elections and in the struggle between parties in parliament. But limiting the class struggle to the parliamentary struggle, or regarding the latter as the highest and decisive form, to which all the other forms of struggle are subordinate, is actually desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.” (“The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat,” Lenin, *Collected Works*, English edition, vol. 30.)

The need for us communists, Marxist-Leninists, to participate in the general election actively is based on this understanding, without being the tail of the demagogues of a sector of the so-called “left,” which defends the interests of the bourgeoisie and whose representatives sow illusions in the working people. They maintain that social change must make the first step the winning of the majority of the seats in the bourgeois parliament and gradually, peacefully, they will arrive at socialism. We note that such arguments, mainly spread by Khrushchevite revisionism and the followers of Teng Hsiao Ping, are false. The Chilean experience with Salvador Allende and the so-called alternative gov-

ernments in Latin America, to which they refer in particular, have shown this. In this regard Lenin wrote:

“Only scoundrels or simpletons can think that the proletariat must first win a majority in elections carried out under the yoke of the bourgeoisie, under the yoke of wage-slavery, and must then win power. This is the height of stupidity or hypocrisy; it is substituting elections, under the old system and with the old power, for class struggle and revolution....” (“Greetings to Italian, French and Germans Communists,” Lenin, *Collected Works*, English edition, Vol. 30.)

We state that the path of the revolution in Peru is the revolutionary armed struggle, which in the current context takes the form of armed popular insurrection that is a product of the sharpening of the class struggle, the mobilization, organization and politicization of the working class, the poor peasantry and the popular sectors that come together in the need to solve the social problems afflicting the Peruvian people. Under the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party they will advance to build socialism, to abolish the exploitation of man by man and head toward the classless, communist society.

### **The Context of the International and National Economic Crisis in Which this Electoral Process Is Developing**

An international economic crisis is unfolding which, coupled with the effects of the general crisis of capitalism, is exacerbating the fundamental contradictions of our epoch, among which are: inter-imperialist contention for a new redivision of the world



market, territories and spheres of influence; the contradiction between the dependent peoples and nations and the imperialist powers, and the contradiction between capital and labor.

This international crisis directly affects the economy of the country and the region, which has not left the framework of the capitalist mode of production, and whose effects, as always, they are trying to place on the backs of the working people.

The Peruvian scenario is affected by the fall in the price of minerals in general, particularly copper, whose prices have been falling since the middle of 2014. This has led the government to push more strongly its **anti-crisis plans and structural reforms** that have been systematized in the so-called “National Plan for Diversification of Production.” This has established as its principal lines: “Adequacy of Regulations and Administrative Simplification” and “Increased Productivity – Competitiveness.” This means: **first**, despite the name of the Plan, refocusing the economy on raw materials and the expansion of mining, which will directly harm national agricultural and livestock production and the development of the peasant and indigenous communities. This is since it establishes as an immediate objective the reduction of the time for the evaluation of the Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) by up to 50%. This is why they have enacted laws that undermine the poor environmental regulations and that also violate the institutional autonomy and right to ownership of the peasant and indigenous communities. In this regard they have approved: Supreme Decree 054-2013-PCM, which undermines the protection of the archaeological cultural heritage and the right to ownership by the indigenous peoples in order to favor the mining investments; Supreme Decree 060-2013-PCM, which reduces the time for the environmental impact assessment from 120 to 83 days in the energy and mining sector; Law 30230 which states that they may hand over communal lands, among others, to investment projects wherever and as many as they require for their activities by means of “special procedures”; Supreme Decree 001-2015-EM, which authorizes the Administrative Board of the Commune or a part of it to dispose of communal lands, bypassing the General Assembly of the commune members.

**Second**, it implies greater job insecurity and the creation of new labor regulations and the maintenance of others, which do

not recognize labor rights, with the supposed “increased productivity” that has always meant greater exploitation and “reduction of costs,” among which labor has always been the most affected, with layoffs and violations through the following measures: DS 013-2014TR, which facilitates collective dismissals whose complement is Bill 4008, which allows for layoff of 10% and 5% of their workers respectively, if the enterprises show a decline over a period of three quarters or simply based on projections. There is also the “Law of Agrarian Promotion 27360,” passed during the Fujimori government and extended until 2021 by Toledo, in which labor rights are cut, the vacation period is reduced to 15 days, overtime and bonuses are not paid, ignoring the Compensation for Time of Service (CTS).

**For their part, the mining transnationals,** with the fall in mineral prices are seeking by all means to expand the extraction of minerals, to exploit the working class in a more bestial way, in order to replace the costs of the expansion of their facilities; developing more projects at the headwaters, which increases the pollution of agricultural and livestock production regions. Thus they seek to make up for their lost income through greater exploitation of labor, more destruction, more looting, more extraction in order to obtain maximum profits.

**They have been killing off the main productive sectors of the country,** through the Public-Private Partnerships and direct sell-off of the industrial centers and national enterprises. In addition they have increased the external debt this month, with two loans totaling \$2,500 million, whose financier is the World Bank, an institution involved directly in the main mega-mining projects; for example it has 5% of the shares in the Yanacocha mining project in Conga. This loan assures the World Bank that the next government should impose more violently the implementation of the copper extraction projects “Las Bambas” in Apurimac, “Toromocho” in Junin, “Constancia” in Cusco, “Cerro Verde” and “Tia Maria” in Arequipa, “La Granja,” Galeno” and “Michiquillay” in Cajamarca.

Faced with these problems, the majority of the candidates and particularly the two entering the second round of elections, Keiko Fujimori and PPK [Pedro Pablo Kuczynski], have expressed themselves in favor of mining extraction and the policy

developed from the time of the fujimontesinista [from former President Fujimori and Montesinos, the head of his intelligence service – *translator's note*] dictatorship, which ensures that the country will continue to be immersed in neoliberal policies, have a high degree of social inequality, the most precarious working conditions in Latin America and the world, greater dependency, and increased levels of social conflicts, corruption and crime.

The government of the bourgeoisie and its representatives have shown in this election that they are unable to solve the most burning problems of our country; they will ensure the continuity of neoliberalism and militarization in order to raise false solutions to social problems. In one of his articles Engels stated: "... we have attempted to show that the capitalist class had also become unable to manage the immense productive system of this country; that they on the one hand expanded production so as to periodically flood all the markets with produce, and on the other became more and more incapable of holding their own against foreign competition. Thus we find that, not only can we manage very well without the interference of the capitalist class in the great industries of the country, but that their interference is becoming more and more a nuisance.

"Again we say to them, 'Stand back! Give the working class the chance of a turn'." [From "Social Classes, Necessary and Superfluous," in *The Labour Standard*.]

### **The Country Is Undergoing an Accelerated Process of Moves toward Fascism**

We are witnessing an upsurge of the popular movement. The main social forces have revived, in a context in which they have had to oppose the constant government attacks that have violated the few labor rights and have taken away the rights of organization and ownership in the peasant and indigenous communities, directly benefiting the U.S., Canadian and Chinese imperialist powers, as the main ones.

These processes of popular resistance have been accompanied by repressive measures, which have been legalized with measures that allow the killing and injuring of people who take part in the popular struggle, with no criminal sanction for the police and military who carry them out, according specifically to

Legislative Decree 1095 and Law 30151. These should be repealed, restoring the right to organize and popular protest. There have been cases of murders by the mining and hydroelectric companies, which use members of the National Police and hired assassins as shock troops, against social and environmental leaders such as Hitler Ananias Rojas Gonzales, a leader who was recently assassinated for opposing the pollution from Odebrecht's Hydroelectric Project Chadin 2, located in Cajamarca.

### **The Manipulation of the Bourgeois Press Prepares the Conditions for an Onslaught of Reaction**

The role of the bourgeois press, which daily publicizes murders, robberies, kidnappings and extortion and puts on the same level the so-called "attacks by neighborhood residents on police officers assigned to areas of conflict" has created a climate in which the people support the proposals and actions for militarization and the declaration of "emergency zones" to "do away with crime," which have failed in practice. The Callao Region has been declared in a State of Emergency, and after a month in this situation, the death toll from clashes between criminal gangs and hired killers has remained the same, with 23 dead; therefore the government has extended the emergency period for another 45 days.

This response of the population to the media manipulation is a danger to the increase in the popular struggle; it is creating a climate in which people falsely believe that the armed forces, the mainstay of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, can do away with these social ills. This is being reinforced with demagogic proposals that are welcomed by a large sector of the population who will vote for Fujimori, with a legacy of targeted killings, genocide and violations of human rights. However, the manipulation of the media and the purchase of headlines in the "bought press" has proclaimed that the fujimontesinista dictatorship had "done away with crime" or "put an end to terrorism." These issues must be made clear to the popular movement and the actions of the paramilitary Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), which was part of the same plan that the fujimontesinista dictatorship carried out, must be unmasked. The ones who defeated the Shining Path paramilitarism and the human rights violations of the Army and



Police were the organized peasant movement, which put an end to the reactionary forces that tried to crush them.

It is our task to show the population that the problems of crime, extortion, robbery, kidnapping, drug trafficking, among other crimes, are not military problems but socio-economic problems, which the bourgeoisie and its capitalist system are unable to solve. This is because they base their existence on robbery, looting, exploitation and, with their policy of privatization and commodification of social rights such as education, health care and constant job insecurity deprive young people of the opportunity to improve their material conditions of existence, driving them directly into criminal activities in order to survive. The solution of this problem is based on the elimination of the system of exploitation of man by man itself and of the private ownership of the means of production; that is, these social problems will be resolved comprehensively with the overthrow of the bourgeoisie from power and the establishment of socialism.

### **General Orientations to Deal with the Electoral Process**

Our participation must further unmask the shady deals of imperialism and the local bourgeoisie, which hopes that the working people will lose interest in the struggles that are developing, by the coming into office of a new administrator of their class interests. Therefore, they are promoting their “outsiders” and the series of criminals who have embezzled the national treasury and plunged the country into greater dependence, as technical staff of great experience and value, who with their wealth of experience can bring the country out of the quagmire into which these same characters have led it.

“...participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but actually helps it to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be dispersed; it *helps* their successful dispersal, and helps to make bourgeois parliamentarism ‘politically obsolete’.”(Lenin, *‘Left’-Wing Communism...*)

The candidates of the bourgeoisie use demagogy and populism in order to continue implementing the neoliberal packages and advance the rise of fascism, attacking and slandering the popular sectors that are in struggle.

The epithets of “terrorists,” “anti-miners,” “radicals,” “anti-system,” etc. are common. We are speaking specifically of Keiko Fujimori who with her talk and action supports the 1993 mafia Constitution and the implementation of the neoliberal policies and processes of militarization of the social conflicts. Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, the lobbyist of U.S. imperialism whose interests he represents and defends, began the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with the U.S. and it was he who laid the bases for the legislation that violated the rights of the working class and of the peasant and indigenous communities. Alan Garcia, during whose second term the FTA with the U.S. was ratified, sent people to kill the residents of Bagua and, due to the high levels of corruption, set free the drug traffickers and criminals, extortionists, etc., whose criminal networks are now plaguing the country. Julio Guzman, the self-proclaimed outsider, with his fuzzy speech and pawn of Israeli Zionism, agrees with the ratification of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) Treaty and the procedures to impose projects for mineral extraction.

All these forces are in agreement with the criminalization of protests and social organization; they raise the need to create elite groups within the Police and for the participation of the Army to “fight crime,” destroy the popular organizations and restore “order” in areas where social protest is developing.

Among the sectors that take up the defense of the popular interests, some with more or less proven consistency, the proposal of greatest impact is the need for constitutional change to put an end to neoliberalism and to lay the groundwork for independent devel-



opment with full recognition of the rights of the peoples and nationalities of Peru, as well as full recognition of the rights of the workers that have been violated. We join this program, also stating that the fight against neoliberalism must be the fight against capitalism, for the dismantling of the plans of the bourgeoisie and imperialism that are advancing fascism in the country. We are spreading among the people the need to identify the class enemy and preparing to fight him. On the economic side, we propose the planning and diversification of the economy. On the political side we raise the need for active participation of the popular sectors to control and guide the political life of the country.

For this purpose we must accumulate forces, guiding and organizing the anger of the people and calling on them to organize and make the revolution; this is the task of the Marxist-Leninist Communists. For this purpose we must change the opinion of the majority of the working class, peasants, youth and peoples in favor of socialism, about which Lenin wrote: “revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses, and never by propaganda alone.” [*“Left”-Wing Communism...*]

### **Regarding the Latest Election Results**

The Peruvian Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) states that the two candidates who going into the second round, Keiko Fujimori with 39.85% and Pedro Pablo Kuczynski with 21.01%, are enemies of the working class and the peoples. They are part of neoliberal continuity and the reactionary-fascistic onslaught against the people. Therefore, we call to organize throughout the country popular opposition in a powerful Popular Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Front, with the streets as the main arena of struggle, in order to defend the rights of the workers and peoples against the onslaught of the structural reforms in the making and to prepare them as historical actors to be masters of their own destiny.

***Let us forge organized popular resistance!***

***Long live the struggle of the working class!***

Central Committee of the PCP (m-l)  
April 2016

# Spain

## **Communist Party of Spain (Marxist-Leninist)**

Raul Marco

### **Is There a Need for a Marxist-Leninist International?**

There is no meeting or gathering of various parties that does not end with “long live proletarian internationalism.” The beautiful slogan “*Workers of the world, unite!*”, first used in the *Communist Manifesto*, is shouted and repeated, but are we really aware of what these words mean? Marx and Engels opposed these words and slogans to the idealist slogan used until then: “All men are brothers,” which obviously did not correspond to reality. To read and consider the ideas of the *Communist Manifesto* (considering that on some issues there is a logical gap) has always led to the need to materialize the slogan, to put it into practice.

Marx insisted that we not forget that:

*“Past experience has shown how disregard of that bond of brotherhood which ought to exist between the workmen of different countries, and incite them to stand firmly by each other in all their struggles for emancipation, will be chastised by the common discomfiture of their incoherent efforts.”* [Inaugural Address of the International Working Men’s Association]

Solidarity among the proletarians of the world and its peoples is the soul of **proletarian internationalism**. We communists all refer to it and try to apply it in our relations, not always successfully and often superficially; however we take up that principle as a vital necessity and we try to give it meaning to the extent of our forces. The ICMLPO from the beginning, since we founded it over 20 years ago, insisted in the Communist Proclamation (August of 1994),

*“We reaffirm our decision to hold high the banner of Marxism-Leninism, to fight for its application, to transform our parties and organisations into political, social and organisational alternatives, nationally and internationally. Our parties and organisations reaffirm their decision to fight together with the working class and peoples, with the democrats, patriots and*

*progressives, to oppose the struggle for the social revolution of the proletariat to capitalist domination.”*

We have made progress, in some places or countries more than in others, but we are still very far, not only from achieving our strategic objectives, that is, the revolution, but from the unity of action that goes beyond the framework of our meetings and conferences, which are really an important step, but, in my judgment, one that is no longer sufficient; it remains a little narrow.

*“Proletarian internationalism is, above all, the scientific ideology of the community of interests of the working class of all countries and nations. Secondly, it is the feeling of solidarity of workers of all countries, the fraternity of men of labor. Thirdly, it is a certain type of relationship between the national detachments of the working class. These relationships are based on unity and harmony in action, on mutual aid and support. They are based on the principle of free acceptance, of the consciousness that such relationships correspond to the vital interests of the workers of all countries.”* (Otto V. Kuusinen, “The historic mission of the working class.”)

We have always maintained the idea of the need to advance towards the formation of the International. We have set it as a necessity, as a valid objective for the building and development of the workers’ and people’s movement. As a pending task that we must address step by step, without rushing or improvising, but without putting it off indefinitely.



Of course one cannot skip steps; we are faced with complex international and national circumstances, with great differences from one region to another. The circumstances are not the same in countries like Germany or France as those in Morocco, Ivory Coast, Ecuador or Turkey. These differences in circumstances, if we analyze them concretely, show **particular** characteristics that must be taken into account in order to implement **general** resolutions. The Seventh Congress of the Third International (Comintern) specified the need to “**...start from the concrete conditions and particularities of each country in order to resolve all issues.**”

However, it seems to me that a cursory analysis of the current world situation and the degree of development of the ICMLPO, the uneven development of its components, which is logical and inevitable, leads us to ask whether there are already some conditions to take more decisive and concrete steps toward that goal that is so far, unconsciously, abstract.

We communists must take into account our past, to see the pros and cons of the trajectory of the international communist movement, to make use of its experiences in just measure, both positive and negative, but always bearing in mind that we are working for the present and the future, and that the past is just that, the past.

For example, it is interesting to see how Lenin<sup>1</sup> defined each of the Internationals and some of the conclusions that he drew from this analysis:

*“The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for socialism.*

*“The Second International marked a period in which the soil was prepared for the broad, mass spread of the movement in a number of countries.”<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> “The Third International and Its Place in History,” V.I. Lenin, 1919

<sup>2</sup> “The Second International (1889-1914) was an international organization of the proletarian movement whose growth proceeded in *breadth*, at the cost of a temporary drop in the revolutionary level, a temporary strengthening of opportunism, which in the end led to the disgraceful collapse of this International” (ibid.).

*“The Third International has gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, discarded its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and has begun to implement the dictatorship of the proletariat [Lenin’s emphasis].*

*“...The epoch-making significance of the Third, Communist International lies in its having begun to give effect to Marx’s cardinal slogan, the slogan which sums up the centuries-old development of socialism and the working-class movement, the slogan which is expressed in the concept of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This prevision and this theory – the prevision and theory of a genius – are becoming a reality.... A new era in world history has begun. Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist, or wage, slavery.*

*“...How is it that one of the most backward countries of Europe was the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to organize a Soviet republic? We shall hardly be wrong if we say that it is this contradiction between the backwardness of Russia and the ‘leap’ she has made over bourgeois democracy to the highest form of democracy, to Soviet, or proletarian, democracy – it is this contradiction that has been one of the reasons (apart from the dead weight of opportunist habits and philistine prejudices that burdened the majority of the socialist leaders) why people in the West have had particular difficulty or have been slow in understanding the role of the Soviets.*

*“The working people all over the world have instinctively grasped the significance of the Soviets as an instrument in the proletarian struggle and as a form of the proletarian state. But the ‘leaders’, corrupted by opportunism, still continue to worship bourgeois democracy, which they call ‘democracy’ in general.*

*“...Leadership in the revolutionary proletarian International has passed for a time – for a short time, it goes without saying – to the Russians, just as at various periods of the nineteenth century it was in the hands of the British, then of the French, then of the Germans. ...it was easier for the Russians than for the advanced countries to begin the great proletarian revolution, but it will be more difficult for them to continue it*

***and carry it to final victory, in the sense of the complete organization of a socialist society***” (Lenin’s emphasis).

To emphasize the importance of the great work carried out by the Comintern (or Third International), it is not necessary to know a little of the history of the international communist movement. It was created for a specific situation, by the need to break with the opportunism and social-chauvinism into which some members of the Second International and its leaders fell, “philistines” as Lenin often characterized them. That is, it was not created for its own sake, but because it was necessary to develop and promote the struggle and work of the parties of the proletariat, in a concrete reality and situation, it had to give concrete answers. And the Third International did this dutifully. It put forward and promoted the formation of popular fronts. It is worth recalling that at its Second Congress, the Third International adopted 21 conditions to be fulfilled by the parties that wished to join it.

Why were those conditions adopted at the Second Congress and not at the First?

***“When the First Congress was convened, only communist trends and groups existed in most countries. It is in a different situation that the Second World Congress of the Communist International is meeting. In most countries, Communist parties and organizations, not merely trends, now exist.... The Second International has definitely been smashed. Aware that the Second International is beyond hope, the intermediate parties and groups of the “Centre” are trying to lean on the Communist International... they hope to retain a degree of ‘autonomy’... The desire of certain leading “Centre” groups to join the Third International provides oblique confirmation that it [the Third International]... is becoming a more powerful force with each day. In certain circumstances, the Communist International may be faced with the danger of dilution by the influx of wavering and irresolute groups that have not as yet broken with their Second International ideology.”***

These considerations should make us reflect. It is not about establishing parallels, let us say historical ones, because although there are similar situations that could lead us to compare them, the conclusions cannot be the same, given that the situations, alt-



though similar, are not identical. If we do not analyze them concretely, in practice, we cannot draw correct conclusions.

Keeping the above in mind, it is worth taking a look at some of the 21 conditions for admission to the Third International:

“1. ...Propaganda must be carried out in such a way that its necessity is comprehensible to every simple worker, every woman worker, every peasant.... The publishing houses must not be allowed to abuse their independence and pursue policies that do not entirely correspond to the policies of the party..

“3. ...the communists can place no trust in bourgeois legality. They have the obligation of setting up a parallel, clandestine, organizational apparatus which, at the decisive moment, can assist the party to do its duty to the revolution.

“6. Every party that wishes to belong to the Communist International has the obligation to unmask not only open social-patriotism but also the insincerity and hypocrisy of social-pacifism, to show the workers systematically that, without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, no international court of arbitration, no agreement on the limitation of armaments, no ‘democratic’ reorganization of the League of Nations will be able to prevent new imperialist wars.

“8. ...Every party that wishes to belong to the Communist International has the obligation of exposing the dodges of its ‘own’ imperialists in the colonies, of supporting every liberation movement in the colonies not only in words but in deeds...

“9. ...must systematically and persistently develop communist activities within the trades unions and other mass workers’ organizations.

“11. ...have the obligation to subject the personal composition of their parliamentary factions to review, to remove all unreliable elements from them and to subordinate these factions to the party leadership, not only in words but also in deeds.

“12. ...the communist party will only be able to fulfil its duty if it is organized in as centralist a manner as possible, if iron discipline reigns within it and if the party center, sustained by the confidence of the party membership, is endowed with... the most far-reaching powers..

“13. The communist parties of those countries in which the communists can carry out their work legally must from time to

time undertake purges (re-registration) of the membership of their party organizations in order to cleanse the party systematically of the petty-bourgeois elements within it.

“16. ...the Communist International and its Executive Committee must take into account the differing conditions under which the individual parties have to fight and work, and only take generally binding decisions in cases where such decisions are possible.”

These aspects contained in the 21 conditions are interesting. But, we repeat, we must use them as a guide and orientation, but we must avoid mechanically copying them since the present circumstances are not the same as in 1919.

Clearly the Comintern or Third International played an important role generally. It is no accident that reaction and the various opportunist and revisionist trends vilely attacked and slandered the International. One must recall how the Chinese revisionists ended up declaring that the Chinese revolution took place against the opinion and even pressure from the International. We have personally heard it said that Stalin advised them to unite with Chiang Kai-shek, and they devised the formulation that, **despite everything**, Stalin was more positive than **negative**, to disguise their anti-Stalinism. That way they demarcated themselves from the Khrushchevites, but only in form.

The revisionists in Spain, France, Italy, etc. developed in their own way policies that are essentially the negation of internationalism, of all that the Third International advocated. What else are the vaunted “national roads”; “national reconciliation,” in Spain, “peaceful coexistence”; what is Eurocommunism, but reducing collaboration, in words, to one part of the world? What is the whole of Togliatti’s theory of “historic compromise” with its bourgeoisie? They all attacked the Third International, in which they had participated and availed themselves of its help in all fields. Those opportunists and renegades ended up claiming that the International was good for nothing. The evolution of these revisionists and their cliques is very instructive, from fighters for “freedom, peace and social justice” they became champions of bourgeois democracy. They abandoned Leninism, in a word, they betrayed it. What is not very clear is whether their trajectory was the result of a degeneration, or something premeditated and im-

plemented gradually. The case of Santiago Carrillo in Spain is classical: he was making his way up to become Secretary General of the Communist Party of Spain, eliminating all obstacles to this, even physically, as Enrique Lister denounced in his book “Basta!” [Enough]

Was the dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 correct, or was it a mistake? There are serious doubts about this. It is true that World War II, the struggle against Nazi fascism, against Hitler’s empire, etc., did not facilitate the functioning of the leadership of the International. It is a matter to analyze, however one thing is clear: its dissolution had very negative consequences, such as the attitude of some parties, after the war and the defeat of Germany, to postpone the class struggle for the reconstruction of the country, that is, for capitalist reconstruction (in the case of France and Italy, for example).

And the revisionist degeneration. Could that ideological degeneration that so severely struck the international communist movement have been avoided? It is difficult to say one way or the other. The International was not a vaccine, it was not a guarantee against ideological and political deviations, it could not assure that no deviations, factions, revisionists manifestations, etc. would arise. But we can also say that the ideological dispersion in no way favors the communist detachments, quite the contrary.

It is not easy to make judgments after the fact, but we must



bear in mind that the existence of the International, led by the communists (Leninists) creates an obligation for all its components, to take a clear stand on important issues, which helps to break the resistance to change. Periodic conferences that set global tasks can break with the indifferentism [the view that differences between political trends are of no importance – *translator's note*] of the opportunists.

The ICMLPO is advancing, taking very positive steps and the plenary meetings are good political and ideological platforms. This is evident and it is already being felt. But precisely because of this we can say that the discussions, meetings and conferences of our parties and organizations, cannot take the place of an International. It is good to have discussions and draw conclusions, internal and public. But that is no longer enough. Practice demands more efforts from us, **more work in common to build a real and iron unity.**

Throughout these years of rupture with and struggle against revisionism and opportunism, of much talk of unity, etc., we have seen how in practice some parties imposed their points of view drawn up unilaterally. It is true that at the beginning of the 1970s, the parties with more experience took on excessive responsibility, while those that were ideologically weak fell into confusion and tailed after the strong ones.

Can one say that if there had been an international, that could have been avoided? Possibly, because having a collective leadership, the whole necessary organizational framework, the problems would have been kept in check. The dissolution of the International, despite the existing conditions in the world in 1943, can be considered an error.

The resolution of the Presidium of the International of May 1943, states:

***“Guided by the judgment of the founders of Marxism-Leninism, communists have never been supporters of the conservation of organizational forms that have outlived themselves. They have always subordinated forms of organization of the working-class movement and the methods of working of such organizations, to the fundamental political interest of the working-class movement as a whole, to the peculiarities of the con-***

*crete historical situation and to the problems immediately resulting from this situation.....*

*“Taking into account the growth and political maturity of the communist parties and their leading cadres in the separate countries, and also having in view the fact that during the present war some sections have raised the question of the dissolution of the Communist International as the directing centre of the international working-class movement, the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, in the circumstances of the World War not being able to convene a congress of the Communist International, puts forward.... The Communist International, as the directing centre of the international working-class movement, is to be dissolved...”*

The situation hampered the functioning of the Comintern, that is undeniable, but it did not justify its dissolution. The argument of the maturity of the parties, of their leading cadres, in this case made it possible to keep alive the internationalist spirit in that situation of world war, but later it was generally diluted to a bourgeois nationalism. That same argument was used in the years 1970-80, by those who opposed multilateral meetings and managed to put off the unity achieved today, sowing division among the Marxist-Leninist parties, practicing a lamentable tailism, which subsequently led some to disappear.

It is necessary, with all necessary prudence, to propose taking firmer and more concrete steps towards an international body. We are conscious of the difficulties, there are many aspects to be taken into account, organizations to be set up, etc., etc. including statutes or rules, including a geographical center, as well as ensuring minimum finances.

All this has to be prepared thoroughly, without improvising. It is not a simple task of some weeks or months. It will take time, a long time, but we must begin by deepening the unity of thought and action, linking theory to practice, of all the parties and organizations that make up the ICMLPO. And the new ones that will be coming.

In today’s world, in which the inter-imperialist contradictions are growing, in which the proletariat still is not fully consciousness of the historic role it has to play, the active unity of the communists and therefore of the international organization that

succeeds in unifying platforms and positions, becomes more urgent. It is not a matter of returning to the past, but of dealing the present looking towards the future with determination, clarity of ideas, organizational firmness, concrete functioning, with determination and a new discipline. And to give no quarter to those persistent vacillators who still cannot decide, and who can sow demoralization.

***“Revolution is a great and terrible thing, it is not a game for dilettantes or a romantic adventure”*** (Gramsci)

March of 2016

# Tunisia

## ***Workers' Party of Tunisia – PTT***

*Hamma Hammami*

### **Some Questions about Tactics**

1. In our country, the conditions, which are both complicated and complex, are evolving rapidly. This demands of our Party a continuous and rigorous observing to avoid being overtaken by events and to be able to respond tactically to these situations. Lenin considered that one of the criteria to judge events in a Party is its ability to quickly adapt to the changes in reality and to take up the appropriate tasks as required. So we have to be aware of the developments that occur, whether in relation to the ruling sectors and the authorities or with respect to the popular classes and sectors, including the situation at the regional and international level and its relation to the national situation. We must also take into account any new elements to incorporate them quickly to our tactics.

2. After the terrorist action by a fundamentalist Salafist group that caused fear and panic among the population, the right-wing coalition government took advantage of the opportunity to declare a state of emergency, to criminalize the social struggle, to unleash an offensive against trade union work and freedom of expression and to attack the democratic and progressive opposition, accusing it of “treason to the fatherland.” It also used the situation to present a bill on “economic reconciliation” in order to grant amnesty to those responsible for major corruption: businessmen and officials of the deposed regime to rehabilitate them in order to put them back in the political arena; and thus bypass the process of transitional justice, ostensibly in order to “revive the economy” and strengthen “national unity.” This constitutes a threat to the ongoing revolutionary process and an attempt to crush it to ensure the definitive rule of the reactionary forces over the population.

3. In this situation, our analysis must be precise and relevant, in order to avoid any deviation and mistakes that can isolate us from the masses or place us behind events, with the risk that the popular movement places itself at the tail of the bourgeoisie. In

fact, the terrorist threat is real; it is a threat to Tunisia and to the whole region. If one does not take this reality into account one may appear to the vast majority of the population on the margin of events and indifferent to the future of the country. But on the other hand, the right-wing coalition government seeks, as do all reactionaries the world over, to exploit the phenomenon of terrorism in order to abort the revolutionary process and impose their reactionary thesis, knowing that the coalition alone is not able to repel the terrorist threat, but rather that it creates a favorable field for this threat to proceed.

Even more, this coalition or some of its components would be interested in the existence of this “phenomenon” and its continuation in order to use it to its advantage.

Based on these facts, we have to find the balance that that will allow us to avoid deviations to the right and left and present ourselves as a real alternative to this reactionary power.

4. To do this, we must first deepen our understanding of the terrorist phenomenon, of the groups that make it up, to know its leaders and the organization of groups such as the Islamic State (DAESH) or similar movements such as “Ansar al-Sharia” (Supporters of Islamic Law).

Actually we are not dealing here with groups such as those whom we have known before, that is, small, clandestine and radical groups that carry out isolated actions but cannot overthrow the regime or change it. (One may recall examples such as the “Red Brigades” in Italy, “Direct Action” in France or the “Baader Meinhof gang” in Germany. Rather, we are dealing with a fascist, religious movement that uses terrorism as the primary means to achieve its objective. Despite its former existence, this movement appeared especially after the emergence of revolutionary revolts and uprisings with democratic and social characteristics in various Arab countries that endangered the interests of the imperialists and the ruling reactionary powers; that opened the horizons of a true Arab renaissance that could break with the dictatorships, dependency, the ferocious exploitation, corruption and obscurantism, and create favorable conditions for the liberation of Palestine from the Zionist yoke.

The appearance of these fascist movements (as well as of the “Muslim Brotherhood”) is part of a clear plan to make these up-



risings and social movements fail and make them change their character: from a political struggle of a national, democratic and social character to a religious, ethnic, racial or tribal one, leading to destructive civil wars.

5. This fascist movement has a coherent ideology (extremist jihadism), and a political project (the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate). It also has a vision of the economy, society, religion and culture and a position on women. In addition, it is a pan-Islamic movement, which has branches in all the Arab countries as well as in many Islamic countries.

It has an organized and well-trained military force that can confront States with their regular troops. This movement was able to create its own State in Iraq and Syria with an area the size of a country like Great Britain, in which more than fifteen million people are under their rule. Its “actions” are characterized by promoting reactionary civil wars or organizing deadly terrorist attacks in other Arab countries. This movement recruits its members in different countries, among the youths, the poor and marginalized and in middle-class and even upper-class circles, facts that reflect a reaction to an uncertain future and the absence of a national project that responds to the aspirations of the peoples.

6. This movement has strong ties with the imperialist forces in general and with the most corrupt and reactionary sectors of finance capital, that is, those related to the criminal economies that do not recognize borders, laws and that are trying to plunder the wealth of the peoples and put their hands on the markets freely and undisturbed.

This movement thus responds to the interest of this section of finance capital and of the imperialist forces in general, which utilize it to further divide the region through despicable actions of barbarism relying on religious, ethnic and tribal factors. This really is the collapse of the national state, the destruction of its accomplishments and the denial of civilization and the cultural heritage of the peoples in order to impose a reactionary obscurantist culture. All this in order to install puppet States instead of the national State. It is a new division that is trying to impose itself on the Middle East, 100 years after Sykes-Picot (the partition of the Middle East with artificial borders imposed by the victorious countries of World War I).

This would involve the burial of the project of the Arab Renaissance and the diversion of the Arab insurrections and revolutions in order to perpetuate the subjugation of the peoples of the region and strengthen the Zionist State. This would lead to the possibility of creating a racist Jewish state on the stolen land of Palestine after being threatened by insurgency and the Arab revolutions, but which were in their great majority aborted, degenerating into destructive civil wars.

7. This movement receives the political, material and military support of the most reactionary Arab regimes that are most submissive to imperialism, especially Saudi Arabia and Qatar. These regimes have a great interest in aborting the Arab revolutions and insurrections in order to save their substantial fortunes. Their interest coincides with those of imperialism and Zionism.

As for Turkey, it also supports terrorist groups such as the “Muslim Brotherhood” in order to expand its influence and revive its dream of the “restoration of the Ottoman Empire,” on the one hand, and to avoid the creation of a Kurdish state on the other. It also uses these forces to weaken the countries in their region in order to emerge as a powerful force in the region. These are the objectives expressed in the writings of Ahmet Davutoglu, the Turkish Prime Minister, the ideologist and theorist of the AKP (Justice and Development Party).

For its part, Iran has continued to intervene in the region. It is present in Iraq, where it supports the terrorist Shiite militias. It is also present in the civil war in Yemen together with the Houthis



against the “Arab coalition” led by Saudi Arabia. In Syria, Iran stands on the side of Bashar al-Assad in order to safeguard its presence in the region and to save one of its few allies in the Middle East, together with the Lebanese group Hezbollah. Like its neighbor, Turkey, Iran wants to appear as a regional force that has weight and influence in order to be considered in everything that has to do with the present and future of the region.

Moreover, this terrorist movement is not against the Muslim Brotherhood, which finds support and aid from the same reactionary Arab and Islamic forces (Qatar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries in general) and internationally (the United States, etc.).

8. Fascist terrorist groups have developed in Tunisia especially in the period of the government of the Troika, led by Ennahdha (Islamic Party), which created favorable conditions for them to organize, strengthen and consolidate themselves in different regions of the country, places where they armed and trained themselves. It is clear that the Ennahdha movement has used these groups as its armed wing, against the democratic and progressive movement, against the trade union and social movement and against its political opponents. The Ennahdha party and the Congress of the Republic (of former President Marzouki) devoted itself to covering up the actions of these groups. They always sowed doubts about any information related to its criminal activity, any opinion warning of the danger that they pose and of the actions that they are preparing. Similarly, both parties publicly encourage the departure of young Tunisians to the centers of tension in the region (Libya, Syria and Iraq), where they can train and participate in the ongoing civil wars, before returning to the country to take direct action and organize assassinations and terrorist attacks against democratic activists, police, soldiers and civilians. Our party was right when it said that “Ansar Sharia” (Supporters of Islamic Law) and other parts of the counter-revolution represent the most reactionary and bloodiest forces against this revolution.

9. The terrorist groups in Tunisia are an integral part of the Arab and global terrorist movement that we noted above.

They have strong relationships with these movements, both in personnel, material and military. Today thousands of young

Tunisians are recruited for war in Libya, Syria and Iraq. These movements recruit mainly in the popular sectors severely affected by poverty, unemployment and exclusion, but also by the cultural gap and the crisis of values. And, despite the blows that have been dealt them (especially the Okba Ibn Nafaa Brigade and Ansar Sharia), they still have a certain presence and influence in some sectors, especially among young people, who see them as representatives of a “project” that can meet their aspirations. Now we cannot foresee what will happen with these groups in the future since their evolution is linked to the conditions inside and outside of the country, particularly in Libya and Algeria, which are direct targets of the forces of imperialism and the reactionary Arab regimes, which crave their energy riches. But in any case, one must say that this also depends on the preparation of the revolutionary forces to thwart the plans of the counter-revolution.

10. The right-wing coalition government is incapable of confronting the fascist and terrorist movement. This coalition is undermined from within by the presence in it of the Ennahdha party, which is not fighting against this movement but rather encouraged its development and has ongoing ties with it for many reasons, both ideological and political, despite small differences along the way, which could confront them.

In addition, the coalition has no plans to allow the country to get out of the crisis and put it on the path of development; this creates fertile ground for this movement and allows the mobilization of certain social strata to benefit from it. The policies of the right-wing government not only increase poverty and unemployment and deepen the social and cultural crisis, the crisis of values, and the submission to imperialism. All this is an advantage that benefits the extremist groups that could, under certain conditions, attract to their positions some factions of the Ennahdha and al-Tahrir parties. One might even ask: to what extent would it be beneficial to certain members of the coalition for terrorism to exist and continue?

For Ennahdha, that would allow it to appear as a moderate Islamist party and be accepted and finally close the chapter on the “revolution,” to rehabilitate the old regime and reestablish the dictatorship.

11. In such a situation, what should we do to defend the interests of the workers and people? How should we find the balance between the fight against terrorism and the fight against the right-wing coalition in power?

Our response is not to minimize the Salafist Wahhabi danger, which is terrorist and bloodthirsty and can attack the country and the community at any time, taking advantage of any internal situation or dangerous changes that may occur in the region, in the east or in the west.

But does this mean that we should conciliate with the right-wing coalition under the pretext of fighting terrorism and external threats? The balance point is to convince the working class, the laboring and popular classes that the coalition government is unable to confront the Salafist danger and that the Workers' Party and the Popular Front are the only ones able to fulfill this task, because they are the bearers of an alternative that can save the country. It is on this basis that we must develop our tactics, in order to inscribe them in a program of struggle. Based on this, we believe that the fight against terrorism cannot be reduced to a single aspect, that of security, as the coalition government argues. It is, in fact, to oppose to its obscurantist, reactionary and fascist social project a patriotic, democratic, progressive and social one. The victory over terrorism depends, as we have said many times, on the realization of the objectives of the revolution. To be brief and precise, we must conclude:

There is no effective fight against terrorism without fighting against the right-wing coalition government, and there can be no effective fight against the right-wing coalition if we are not at the forefront of the fight against terrorism, or rather, against the obscurantist project globally.

12. In this context, we have to continue make our message known in favor of our already established tactical program, in which our political response to the right-wing coalition government stands out. However, in the immediate future, we must oppose all the decisions taken by the coalition government in the name of the fight against terrorism, such as: the state of emergency, criminalization of the social struggle, attacks on freedom of the press and expression, rehabilitation of high officials of the former regime, subjection to the dictates of the IMF, direct or indirect

membership in regional military alliances, concessions to the imperialist forces for the establishment of military bases on Tunisian territory, which would be a violation of national sovereignty.

This can be achieved not only by pushing forward the popular demands but by actively participating in the struggles of the masses in order to convince them of the existence of a real alternative, against the coalition government, able to save the people and the country. The next few days may be important in the activities of the social movements in more than one sector: we must prepare ourselves, both in the Party and in the Front. We must also act through our parliamentary group and in the streets against all the anti-popular economic and social measures, against any attack on the freedom of the press, human rights (cases of torture, etc.).

We must also provide the necessary support for the efforts of our women's organization, for the mobilization of women in the country against terrorism and against the right-wing coalition.

Similarly, our youth organization will launch an initiative in the same direction. Members of the Party and Front should not neglect the work on the cultural front and should participate in the all actions against the obscurantist forces.

13. However, the victory over terrorism and the reactionary obscurantist project in Tunisia cannot succeed without a victory in the Arab world. We are confronting a common enemy in the region and therefore it is essential to unite the patriotic, democratic and progressive forces in the region. This issue was raised seriously because of the remembrance of the second anniversary of the assassination of Haj Mohamed Brahmi, a statement of principles was published in the "Tunis Declaration," and it is our responsibility to make a plan of action to achieve it.

14. Similarly, the fight against terrorism and the obscurantist project in Tunisia cannot be isolated from the fight against colonialism and imperialism in the world. Hence the need for an international coordination with the revolutionary forces. In this sense we must pay attention to all the proposals suggested by our comrades and friends....

Tunisia, August 2, 2015

# Turkey

## *Labour Party (EMEP)*

### **A Global Perspective on the Middle East**

Talking about the Syrian crisis and the Middle East, where all attention is focused, it is essential that we begin with the main aspects of the present chaotic situation in the world in general for clarity.

#### **A World War?**

Just before this year's Munich Security Conference in February, the International Syria Support Group met and agreed on a ceasefire to be implemented within a week. At the Conference, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said that the world has entered into a "new Cold War".

However, even after the ceasefire, we saw a continuation of the tensions which once took the form of Turkey shooting down a Russian fighter jet, or another time overt or covert armed interventions, jet, missile or shell attacks especially by Iran, Russia and Turkey.

Even though a general calming of the situation has been seen, different parties almost escalated armed clashes instead of ceasing them, especially Turkey with its shelling of the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria, who are fighting against Islamist terror organisations such as ISIS, Ahrar al-Sham and Jaysh al-Islam.

With all these events, especially after Turkey tried to get NATO involved, there emerged a general apprehension about the likelihood of "the outbreak of a Third World War", which was more than just Russian tactical threats. Strong mutual statements fed this concern.

In a region where almost every big power has set up its own military bases and where a ruthless war is being waged, it is understandable that there is fear of the possibility of "a world war being sparked by a provocation". This is especially so considering the extent of the perception that "the Ottomans were the sick man of Europe, but the Turks are now the mad man of the re-

gion”, fed by the tensions, polarisation and war, both internally and internationally.<sup>1</sup>

However, it must be stated that, in their classical forms, world wars do not usually break out from an unexpected provocation. Provocations such as the murder of the Austro-Hungarian prince by a Serbian assassin, which is said to be the cause of the first imperialist war, are in fact mere pretexts. Therefore, to avoid crude interpretations in this regard, one must take into consideration the existing interests and tendencies of the main actors of a world war. Clearly, a world war is not possible in spite of or without the big imperialist powers. In this case the question arises whether the **present** state of inter-imperialist relations and the **real** level of contradictions among them are at such a stage to seek an excuse for **such wars**. Clearly, they are not at that stage yet.

However, the fact that the conditions are not ripe enough for a world war should not obscure the fact that the imperialist capitalist world has for some time been losing its ability to solve its problems caused by the inevitable competition and rivalry for world hegemony through ordinary means; that this rivalry for a bigger share of the world has escalated after the collapse of the USSR and now has a tendency to go beyond what is called a “**proxy war**” or “regional” war and an armed intervention, and has moved to a stage of armed conflict in which the parties take an active part in the war, although this is only the case in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Ukraine for the time being. What is happening in Syria can be described as a basic example of this.

Due to their nature, the imperialist states are in constant struggle for world hegemony. They fight each other for spheres of influence and shares of the market, and they do this not only in the economic, political and ideological-cultural sphere, but they also resort to armed clashes, military coups and proxy wars in certain countries or regions.

This is a general rule which is also valid today; however, what is different today is not that there are clashes and wars

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<sup>1</sup> In this context, the biggest concern was that the “*new Turkey*” (!) would provoke the US and Russia into a conflict!



(waged in great number and intensity) but the fact that they cannot **close a deal** under the present conditions of inter-imperialist balance of power. The UN was formed in accordance with the power relations following World War II. NATO was a response to the advent of the “*Cold War*”. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was the product of a period of imperialist rivalry between the USA and the USSR for world hegemony. It was followed by a period of disorder when it was actually claimed that a “**New World Order**” was being formed on the wreckage of the USSR, with the promise of an eternal capitalism with “*peace, prosperity and no exploitation*”. Following the collapse of the USSR, a “unipolar world” emerged with all its institutions, rules and regulations revised and renewed according to the changing power relations, just like NATO’s extension in line with its “*new role*”. All this is eroding the imperialist “world order”, making it disorderly and characterizing it by constant changes in accordance with temporary agreements and conciliations, but mainly with contradictions and conflicts.

Russia’s changing power and position under the Yeltsin and Putin administrations made it necessary to have joint meetings with NATO, but this could still not prevent a de facto situation in Georgia and Ukraine. The People’s Republic of China first had to be admitted to the UN Security Council and later to the World Trade Organisation. Germany attended the UN Security Council



meetings with the formulation “5P+1” during the nuclear negotiations with Iran; the Munich Security Conferences, G-20 summits, etc. are all a reflection of new players, of shifts and renewals in power relations. In line with the erosion and disorder caused by changing power relations, every new conflict has the potential to go beyond the main area and dynamics of that conflict, and evolve into something that limits possible solutions and conditions such developments in a certain direction.

There are different adjectives used to describe the present world order, such as “uncertainty”, “interim”, “anomaly”, “multipolar”, “non-unipolar”, “without poles”, etc. This is because the present conflicts and wars are elements of such a process. In other words, they form a new dynamic process in terms of the connections between the accumulated elements of conflict. However, this process, despite its visible dynamism, has not yet formed its own order in the international arena – with its institutions and rules – that reflects the present power relations. Undoubtedly, despite its obstructed and eroded state, the existing world order has not yet collapsed; it carries on as a product of the old power relations but it is also getting old. It shows symptoms of a terminal illness. However, a new order has not yet emerged clearly.

Two things need to be emphasized here: First, many examples show that, just as the imperialist states and their forces are not static but in constant change, the inter-imperialist relations also change. Therefore, in speaking of “*a given state of relations of power*” or of the “*old*” or “*new*” imperialist “*world order*”, clearly, one can only speak about a relative “old” or “new”, considering the continuity of change; and in every given situation or specific moment, these relations and “orders”, with their various specific institutions and rules, have a transitory character from the earlier to the future form, that is, they co-exist in this disorder conditioned by rivalry and conflict.

Second, the changes in the inter-imperialist relations of power, together with their expressions in the re-division of the world, do not lead to easy acceptance by the other parties, especially those who had the lion’s share in the past. Therefore, a new imperialist capitalist world order, on the basis of new relations of

power, could only materialize through **war**, since the parties involved are imperialists armed to the teeth.

### The Question of Blocs

It is obvious that if the world order is still ambivalent, then for the time being one cannot speak of any finalized blocs among the imperialist powers – despite signs of some crystallizations here and there – although it may seem logical to have the opposite perception on the basis of some existing “unions”.

Yes, some ideological patterns belonging to the old and dying world order (the alliance of “*the West against the East*” or “*the Cold War*”, referring to the past, etc.) are still in use and have a function in the realization of this or that move towards hegemony. However, these have long ago ceased to be the ideological patterns of a real bloc.

There is no doubt that **opposing** blocs will be formed among the imperialists sooner or later, but we are not at that stage yet, despite certain clear signs or tendencies in that direction.

What is present today is not this or that power from certain blocs cooperating with the members of the opposite bloc. It is that every imperialist power fighting for hegemony and spheres of influence is able to form alliances and cooperate in the areas of their own aims and needs.

For example, when it was possible even in the blocs formed during the First Imperialist War that they were not rigid enough to stop Italy from changing sides, under the present conditions changes in alliances are even more likely.

In this respect, the fluctuations in financial and economic cooperation are at present more possible and broader compared to the past. Moreover, even though fluctuations in political alliances, described by some as the “*tilting of the axis*”, are not as easy<sup>2</sup>, we can still see Turkey playing around with the idea of what is called by some as “*Eurasianism*”, and by the ruling Jus-

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<sup>2</sup> Ukraine’s shifting and fluctuating relations prove that a “change of axis” is hard but possible, since this country turned to the “West” under Yushchenko, to the “East”/Russia under Yanukovich, and to the “West” again having lost Crimea and its eastern territories following the fascist coup.

tice and Development Party (AKP) of membership or an observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

The closeness and distance determined by the rivalry and conflicting interests among the imperialist capitalist countries are not set in stone, nor are their inter-relations which are shaped by alliances and contradictions. Therefore, under the present conditions, when the imperialist groupings have not yet taken shape, it would not be surprising to see fluctuations in relations and changes in “ranks”.

The book “*Choices for America in a Turbulent World*” published last year by the RAND corporation, one of the prominent US think tanks, has interesting analyses:

*“In today’s hyperlinked world, few challenges are amenable to unilateral responses. American involvement will be essential to the resolution of the many challenges outlined in this book, but it is seldom sufficient. Slowing climate change is only the most extreme example... Partnerships are essential. Coalitions are the norm. One cannot afford to be too choosy about the company one keeps. Russia is needed to help prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. China is needed to restrain North Korea. Iran is needed to fight ISIS. Both Russia and Iran will be needed to end the war in Syria. Stemming climate change will require almost global efforts. Partnerships in this era are not just about friends confronting enemies.”*<sup>3</sup>

Let us give a current example before moving on to the economic aspects which constitute the bases of this ambivalent structure of the world order. In line with its quest for world hegemony, the US has shifted the centre of gravity of its political strategic concept to the Asia-Pacific region because of China. However, this country recently took part in the negotiations between the government of Afghanistan and the Taliban, together with Pakistan and the US – just as what happened between the US and Russia on the question of Syria. The four countries

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1114.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1114.html)

expressed their agreement on a plan regarding negotiations with the Taliban.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Economic Bases for this Contradictory Structure**

This could be explained better with a few current examples. In February of this year, in order to prevent oil prices falling even further, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Venezuela, three OPEC members, made an agreement with Russia, which is not a member, to freeze oil output. With their vast oil reserves an approach to Iran and Iraq was important. Iran had recently started to increase its oil production after the embargo had been lifted, and it thought that it would further increase its output, thus causing prices to fall even further. As expected, its initial reaction to this agreement was that Iran would not give up its share of the oil trade. Iran's oil minister said that he would speak with the representatives of Venezuela and Iraq separately. As one can see, Riyadh and Moscow, which are in opposing fronts on the question of Syria, could agree on the question of oil production, which is an important source of income; however, Tehran found that this agreement was not beneficial and is looking for another solution.

Another example is the extent of China's capital export in recent years. If we look at its investments in the last few days we can get the picture: the real estate giant Wanda buys one of the



main Hollywood studios; another Chinese monopoly Hai buys durable electric products from General Motors; ChemChina, China National Chemical Corp. buys the Swiss firm Syngenta for 43.7 billion euros, the biggest acquisition price paid by a Chinese firm.

Kai Strittmatter of *Süddeutsche Zeitung* explains these developments: *“It is clear that there is a new period in the making. Chinese capital is opening up to the world. This country’s international investments have grown tenfold in the last decade, reaching \$100 thousand million dollars per year. The direction of the money flow is shifting: for a long time China focused on raw materials and energy resources in Africa and South America. But recently its investment in the US has surpassed that of the US in China. Similarly, Chinese investment in Europe (22 thousand million euros in 2015) dwarfs that of Europe’s in China (9 thousand million euros). Also, China is moving its investments to different sectors such as bio-technology, entertainment, food and agriculture. And Chinese private firms are leading these sectors rather than the state companies.... It seems as if they are just starting. Merics [Mercator Institute for China Studies], China studies institute in Berlin, estimates that China’s global wealth could grow threefold by 2020.”*<sup>5</sup>

All this does not need any explanation; maybe only one thing should be added, that capital accumulation in China was already leading to capital export, but this trend is becoming increasingly stronger than economic growth, which is falling.

In addition to strategic investments by state-run companies, this increases the appetite of the capital accumulated in private hands for a bigger share of the surplus value created in other countries. The nature of capital necessitates this and it would naturally spark counter measures in other countries.

However, the tendency of this accumulated capital to be exported demands that China follow a policy in favour of an open market and multilateral cooperation. But the stagnation of this country, which is trying to reshape its economy, is that this capital export and expansion may increase the risk of being dragged

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<sup>5</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8 February 2016

into conflicts without being prepared or earlier than expected. China knows that its interest is centred in capital export, foreign investment and expansion on the one hand, and in delaying the conflict with US imperialism on the other. Thus, for quite some time, it has been observing a balance in this regard.

One final example is with regard to how the contradictory position of the world order provokes tendencies to decentralisation in the European Union, which has a relatively advanced level of economic and political integration.

At the World Economic Forum in Davos this year, Damon Wilson, Executive Vice President of the Atlantic Council, presented a statement entitled “Europe: What to watch out for in 2016-2017”. In an interview he explains the “five key themes” in this document which is described as “a road map for Europe”: *“the economy, digital Europe, migration, geopolitical risks and the Brexit”*.<sup>6</sup> His analysis about Europe is this: *“For Europe to be relevant in the world today it needs unity. The ability to address borders, open markets, create a common digital platform requires more integration, but it is swimming against the political stream right now.”*<sup>7</sup>

Undoubtedly, the gap between what needs to be done to maintain and advance the EU and what is actually happening is widening. With the critical state of the European banks, especially Deutsche Bank, the risk of a “Second Euro crisis” is increasing. Added to this is the “Schengen crisis”. The Brexit poker game played by Britain is not limited to the blackmail of a withdrawal from the EU, but it has rather become organising a demand for reform for a “union of independent states”, raised together with those countries which are discontent with the impositions of further integration, driven especially by Germany. (Also, as the “Schengen crisis” shows, the disagreements from the perspective of whether the issues could be resolved are being re-

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<sup>6</sup> Brexit: Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (*translator’s note*)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/a-roadmap-for-europe>

flected seriously in the internal politics of Germany, the driving force of the EU.)

“Euro”, “Schengen”, “Brexit”, etc. are all “challenges” not on secondary questions; they involve fundamental aspects of the EU. They all have to do with issues that could possibly risk the future of the EU project.

To sum up, in its totality, what we can see is that it is not a fully established bloc, but the fact is that individual assertive imperialist powers have to manoeuvre within a transitory contradiction in the context of the existing world economy and old “order”, one that is muddled but with initiative for renewal. These powers are taking a strategic position that is still a meandering road ahead, with zigzags on the tactical level; the developing ones still need to lean on the stronger ones.

However, the opposite is also true: those that are ahead in the game need to make use of the developing powers both to maintain their positions and to be advantageous in their interrelations. Therefore, rather than dissolving the old origins of the present tendencies in the formation of blocs and their replacement with different ones, what seems to be logical for both old and newly developing powers is that the “new world order” reflects the new power relations that are taking shape from within the existing one, up to the point when the new ones do not need the old ones anymore.

And now, bearing in mind this complex international situation, let us look at what is happening around the Syrian crisis.

### **Patterns of Alliances and Disharmonies**

What is of note in the Syria conflict, as well as in others, is the gradual manifestation of the “*proxy war*” in ways that do not fit the usual patterns of alliances. Examples include the frictions between the US and Turkey<sup>8</sup>; Russia and the US adopting, with-

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<sup>8</sup> We should actually say frictions between the Obama administration and the de facto Erdoğan regime. From this perspective, it is possible for the direction of this conflict to change with a change in the political regime in Turkey or the leadership in the US. However, the factors in the background indicate that this is not solely an issue of leadership.



out abandoning opposing positions, a clearly temporary political solution – expressed by the ceasefire and the Geneva agreements – as they both want to avoid, **for now**, a “*prematurely*” widening conflict; or the US agreement with Iran which they had until recently labelled as “*a rogue state*” – while having unpleasant disputes and disagreements with their own allies in the region such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia. These “disharmonies” and their manifestation in the attitude of the US cannot be a coincidence.

Two facts have become clearer today: a) The unique strategic significance of the Middle East in the eyes of the US and other imperialists has not changed in terms of control of global energy resources, their routes of transport and the need to encircle China – with constantly increasing energy needs; but “*the place of the Middle East in the global dominance strategy of the US is not the same as before. Having changed its strategy of hegemony, revealed its shift of focus to Asia-Pacific, and having secured a new position through access to its own petrol and shoal gas, the US is the most powerful imperialist in terms of choices in the Middle East and flexibility in tactics.*” Today the US can be flexible in the Middle East and make temporary agreements to serve its interests, without disrupting the competition with its rivals in the struggle for global domination. b) The obviously reactionary coalition against ISIL established by the US is “*a coalition of restriction and punishment of all the alternative tendencies in the region.*” The US sees and uses ISIL as a tool for “*adjustment*” in “*reducing the tendencies to hegemony by the countries of the region*” and “*those that need to be disciplined and brought into line include Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar!*”<sup>9</sup>

When these two facts are taken into account, the US is trying to resolve the problem with Russia through a political solution – established at Munich and Geneva –repeating statements of its support for the PYD/YPG (Democratic Union Party of the Syrian Kurds/and its armed forces People’s Protection Units) as if to drive its “*strategic ally*” Turkey mad is understandable. The present interests of the US do not require a war with Russia. This is

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<sup>9</sup> See Labour Party, Press Release (<http://emep.org/tr/ortadogudadugumlenme-ve-cozulmeler/>) 23 October 2014.

taking place in the context of Turkey openly “*disagreeing*” with the US over the PYD, while trying to do all it can to drag NATO into a conflict with Russia in Syria, and the political-strategic attitude of the de facto leader of NATO forcing the errant Erdoğan to ask “*Am I your ally or the terrorists in Kobani?*”

An article by Tolga Tanış, a Turkish journalist specialising in Turkey-US relations, summarises the latest situation in this way: “*Washington’s rebuttal of Turkey on three issues*<sup>10</sup> *meant the end of an urban myth in Ankara: ‘The US needs us more than we need them’...*”

In an article for the Middle East Institute, Robert Pearson, a retired US ambassador to Ankara who follows Turkish-American relations in Washington closely, said this: “If 2015 was a year that saw Washington and Ankara drift further apart, 2016 might be the year the United States shapes its view of the Middle East with less reliance on Turkey.”<sup>11</sup>

At this point we should mention that the disagreements between the US and Turkey are not solely based on the “*Kurdish phobia*” of the Turkish government. Currently the “*Kurdish phobia*” is the mortar of the “*coalition*” between those “*newly developed*” capital groups – supported by the ruling AKP government using state resources which back the AKP in return – and the government (military and bureaucratic instruments); uniting the most regressive, nationalist and racist forces in the country around it.<sup>12</sup> Turkish capital – primarily the “*newly developed*”

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<sup>10</sup> In regard to these three issues, the US insists: “*We are not convinced that the YPG were responsible*” for the 17 February attacks (against the military shuttle busses in Ankara), “*your right to self-defence is valid in your own country, stop shelling targets in Syria*” and “*we will continue to support the YPG*” (see [http://sosyal.hurriyet.com.tr/yazar/tolga-tanis\\_322/gercekler\\_40058032](http://sosyal.hurriyet.com.tr/yazar/tolga-tanis_322/gercekler_40058032))

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.mei.edu/content/article/moving-ahead-united-states-and-turkey>

<sup>12</sup> The Kurdish struggle for liberation is held responsible for the bankruptcy of regional politics which have no objective correlation, aiming to make the struggle against their demands for freedom a requirement to protect the existence of the “*nation*.”

ones – want this coalition, at odds not only with historical development but also with the clear period of unravelling in the region, in order to lead to bigger actions and increased influence in the Middle Eastern market; this was also the desired outcome of the “*peace process*”!

This strong materialisation of the regional expansionist tendency<sup>13</sup> in Turkey is no surprise; having increased its capital accumulation to a considerable level compared to its size, it has become one of the strongest and most advanced countries in the region – along with Israel – in terms of capitalist development. Furthermore, the expression of this tendency in a thoughtless and reckless manner that will not be tolerated by the US, taking a provocative stance in trying to shape the relations between the imperialist powers vying for global domination against each other, trying to realise dreams of serving only its “own interests”, the reckless attitude that the “*New Turkey will do whatever is necessary for its national interests and security*”; none of this can

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<sup>13</sup> Without ignoring Iran and leaving Israel aside, along with its close allies Saudi Arabia and Qatar, with their dynasties based on monopolies and big reserves of capital obtained through oil and natural gas (a considerable amount of which is invested in Turkey as well as in the US and Europe), Turkey (with a different historical development as well as level of industrial development) has been a prominent country both in interventions in Syria, Iraq and Yemen as well as directing its accumulated capital towards other pursuits in the region. This accumulation has aggravated its tendency to refuse to be the crutch or be content with what is given it by the imperialist powers. Not limited by this, but especially in terms of these countries, it could be said that the bloc discipline in international relations has been removed and that the advances in economic levels increased its policy options. However, the fact that the “freedom” and “abundance of options” provided by this is limited and misleading and that the big imperialist powers, led by the US, will not tolerate and punish any “tactless outbursts” can be seen in the Middle East today.

be seen as rational or realistic. At best it can be explained by a post-empire syndrome!<sup>14</sup>

The eroded position of the Obama administration adopted in the face of increased tensions with Russia can possibly lead to an armed conflict and the damage that this would cause the interests of the US; this made it possible to have a clear, temporary and open-ended political solution with Russia on the civil war in Syria. This was influenced by the strength of Russia with its hawkish attitude – withdrawing its ground troops while reinforcing its special forces – as well as the US flexibility in the Middle East as a part of its global strategy. In reality, the US and its Western allies wanted to keep Russia – just as they did in Libya – out of their intervention in Syria and remove Russian influence not only in Syria but also in the whole of the Middle East and the Mediterranean.

Later, in the Baltic countries, they attempted to do the same as in Ukraine but without success. Following their failure, in order to succeed and stop the undesirable escalation in the armed conflict, they sought to secure temporary agreements. What is being played out today is an attempt to have negotiations for a “*peace agreement*” – despite the fact that these are regularly violated – without removing their fingers from the trigger. The struggle is continuing and the division of Syria – in proportion to power – is proceeding. Nothing is certain yet; the discussions and conflicts continue side by side and undeniably together with covert attempts by all parties to dig a hole under each other.

The same does not apply to the plans and demands of the US allies in the region and in Europe. The European imperialist pow-

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<sup>14</sup> They are trying to realize the new fictional story of a “*New Turkey*”, which goes beyond an obsession on the presidency: a strong leadership as the only way to fight against those “*forces trying to divide Turkey*” (the US, Russia, Iran, the Kurds); that is, a presidency as a system that will unshackle the hands of the leader of a new “*national liberation*”! This way, the propaganda for the presidency will be portrayed not as an obsession of the AKP but it is moved as the axis of a solution to “*defend and save the country and the nation*”; therefore making it preferable for a wider section of society!

ers, primarily Germany, in opposition to the eroded and conciliatory stance in Ukraine, want the US to be more active in the region against Russia and especially more energetic to prevent the spread of the crisis from Syria to Europe.<sup>15</sup> From this perspective, the imperialist European states and the assertive “*pro-West*” countries of the region (such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia) are colluding.<sup>16</sup> With one difference; the former are saying to the US “*please continue to take the chestnuts out of the fire for us*” – attempting to enforce their priorities in opposition to Russia and landing the US in trouble – while the latter are saying “*I’ll take the chestnuts out, as long as you stand behind me!*”

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<sup>15</sup> It is not only Turkey that has lost patience with the US strategy in Syria. Lauren Fabius, former Foreign Secretary of France, has strongly criticised the “*ambiguity*” of the Obama administration toward Syrian President Assad. As Reuters reported, Fabius said “*There are ambiguities even among the actors in the coalition... I’m not going to repeat what I said before about the main pilot of the coalition. But we don’t have the feeling that there is a very strong commitment there*”. And according to the German ambassador to Washington, the US has been “*slow*” in understanding the scale of the disaster in Syria. “*The United States has been slow to recognize that this is a much bigger thing than anything else we’ve experienced since the beginning of the European Union,*” Wittig said in his statement to the *Washington Post*. “*We didn’t see it earlier, we were totally unprepared... We’re not blaming the United States. It takes time for this country to realize that it’s really that serious.*” (See [https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/syria-already-a-catastrophe-seems-on-the-verge-of-an-uncontrollable-disaster/2016/02/09/c7fc3e90-cf5b-11e5-b2bc-988409ee911b\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/syria-already-a-catastrophe-seems-on-the-verge-of-an-uncontrollable-disaster/2016/02/09/c7fc3e90-cf5b-11e5-b2bc-988409ee911b_story.html))

<sup>16</sup> Undoubtedly the refugee crisis is a recent example of this collusion of interests. At the latest EU Summit there was a call for “*creating secure areas in Syria*”, citing the Azaz area as an example. On the other hand, the US authorities were content to repeat the question “*who will ensure the security of these areas?*” The Europeans, aware of this, did not forget to add a clause stating that these areas should be “*agreed to through negotiations!*”

It is easy to see that meeting all the demands is not a priority for the US when one looks at Obama's last "State of the Union" address. According to Obama "*The Middle East is going through a transformation that will play out for a generation, rooted in conflicts that date back millennia.*" And "*We also can't try to take over and rebuild every country that falls into crisis... That's not leadership; that's a recipe for quagmire, spilling American blood and treasure that ultimately will weaken us. It's the lesson of Vietnam. It's the lesson of Iraq, and we should have learned it by now.*"

*"Fortunately, there is a smarter approach, a patient and disciplined strategy that uses every element of our national power. It says America will always act, alone if necessary, to protect our people and our allies, but on issues of global concern, we will mobilize the world to work with us, and make sure other countries pull their own weight. That's our approach to conflicts like Syria... The point is American leadership in the 21st century is not a choice between ignoring the rest of the world, except when we kill terrorists, or occupying and rebuilding whatever society is unravelling. Leadership means a wise application of military power, and rallying the world behind causes that are right."*<sup>17</sup>

In short, when diplomatic veils are removed, the Obama administration is saying to the Europeans: "*The times where we took the chestnuts out of the fire for you are behind us. In the face of the challenges that our global leadership is confronting, you need to abandon this 'hand to mouth' attitude. It is time that you got your hands dirty for the geopolitical wealth that you benefit from!*"

To the regional allies in the Middle East he is saying: "*You should not draw the wrong conclusion from the fact that I'm not as visible as I once was in the region. And you definitely should not attempt any action that disturbs my peace. You can continue to act along the lines I have drawn for you. Your task now is to*

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/transcript-state-of-the-union-2016/>  
[transcript in English]

*stop fooling around in Syria and join the fight against ISIL with all your might!*"

Of course the US does not want to lose its allies in the region. As we have seen in the example of Turkey, it pays particular attention to separating, and acting accordingly towards, the allied *countries* and their *governments* or current tendencies; it makes this distinction clear in official statements about Turkey and the AKP government. It should be emphasized again that the success of this flexible tactic is not entirely dependent on the US.

In the eyes of the US, the "*fight against ISIL*" as the "legitimate" platform to re-organise the region requires supporting the secular forces, balancing Shiites and Sunnis and bringing alternative tendencies under control in the region. Taking the Russian intervention into account, the freeze in the Syrian civil conflict with a ceasefire – that will also attempt a possible political solution – has become a precondition for the realisation of this platform. The interpretation by Erdoğan of these as "*attempts to imprison Turkey within its own borders*" is correct from this perspective. However, regardless of how "*laughable*" President Erdoğan finds these attempts, it should be added that unless it can overcome its "*Kurdish Phobia*", it seems that even accepting "*imprisonment within its own borders*" will not be enough for the Turkish government!

### **War and the Social Struggles**

According to the 2011-2015 report on world arms trade recently released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the biggest arms purchasers, in order, are India, Saudi Arabia, China, United Arab Emirates, Australia and Turkey. In other words, in the last five years, countries in two regions have heavily armed themselves: in Asia and the Middle East!

These two areas, besides being areas in which the imperialist powers are squaring up against each other, both tactically and strategically, are where there is the strongest challenge from the current alternative tendencies to the "world order" and hence to the power relations and conflicts of interest among the imperialist powers. In other words, we can measure the pulse of the "world order" not only but mainly through developments in these areas.

The overwhelming armament in areas where the alternative tendencies testing the world order are concentrated; this is not a coincidence or a promising gathering of the elites, considering that they are the ones that are arming and trading in arms!

It is clear that the Syrian conflict that we are trying to analyse in relation to the current “world order” is not a reason for the disintegration and re-organisation of the region but is an objective of this. Even the cessation of the conflict through a – not very likely – **permanent** ceasefire will not mean a removal of the deep-rooted factors and conflicts that have caused its rise in Syria.

This is the Middle East, where alliances, new axes and collaboration of countries in the region among each other and with the big powers are changing and will continue changing much faster than yesterday. Many predictions regarding this region can become meaningless right away – examples of this are abundant.

Therefore, putting aside speculation, we should conclude this article by drawing attention to another dimension of the economic basis that we have highlighted; the situation of the peoples, workers and labouring masses. In the final analysis, this dual factor of its base will determine the course.

The social and political conflicts that led to the Arab uprisings that shook the region are yet to be resolved. Despite the great differences among countries, this period has not come to an end. The social and political demands of the Arab peoples, of the workers, labourers, youth and women continue to be burning issues. Today – besides the imperialist interventions – the biggest threat facing these struggles are the meaningless, diverting wars that can be provoked and waged among ambitious but economically and politically troubled reactionary governments of the region.

On the other hand, the situation in the world economy seems to have ripened the conditions for a fresh economic crisis. One sees the fall in prices not only of petrol but of raw materials in general. The energy and steel monopolies, significant in terms of industrial production, are reporting losses one after another. The negative effects of the situation can be clearly seen in world trade and in banking. The Baltic Dry Index, which provides transport prices for raw materials (wheat, iron ore, coal, etc.) can be seen as an early indicator of the worldwide conjuncture of development that is al-



ready below the 2008 level<sup>18</sup> – the year when the world economic crisis was revealed with all its symptoms.

We can start from this premise; the social results of the economic crisis that is fast approaching the point of explosion will be much greater than those that preceded it. As the world will be caught up in this crisis at a time of a marked difference in the tendency of growth between the US and European economies, the conditions for cooperation in financial policies are increasingly narrow and the debt burdens carried by the governments are spectacularly high.

It will not be a surprise if the destructive waves of a new global economic crisis deeply affect the Middle East which is already showing signs of a crisis. From this perspective, we can say that the Middle East is moving towards a period of increasing social upheavals, popular uprisings, mass struggles and internal conflicts as well as political and regime changes. This will be a period of social struggles on one side and wars on the other, one preventing the other, or one concealing and suffocating the other or diverting it from its path.

If its existing political line and actions are not revised, instead of staying outside of these developments, Turkey is a candidate to be one of its centres. It seems that Turkey, having accumulated all the contradictions of the region within itself, will be a “*model country*” of the Middle East in every sense of the word.

February 2016

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<sup>18</sup> Prices have actually shown a downward trend since 2008. Nevertheless the fall in the last half year has been phenomenal. The index was at 1162 points in August/September 2015 and has dropped to 290 points in February 2016! (Before the crisis in 2008 the index was at 1793!)

# Venezuela

## ***Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Venezuela*** **– PCMLV**

### **It is Necessary to Face the Present Political Moment with Revolutionary Energy and Boldness**

#### **1 – The contradictions are being sharpened to the extreme**

The moment in which we live is one of extraordinary complexity; the general crisis of capitalism and the economic crises are wreaking havoc, causing the various contradictions, situations and threats to become intertwined and sharpened; they make things risky and at the same time present a fruitful future for revolutionary action. In the present circumstances, the ruling classes are trying to curb the revolutionary threats and remain in power by increasing the exploitation of the working class as a way of recovering from their economic crises.

In some scenarios, the contradiction between imperialist powers is on the agenda; the U.S. is playing a role on the world scale, on every continent it is trying to impose its hegemony by establishing imperialist alliances, mainly with Canada, Japan, Australia and countries of the European Union. Generally they are trying to halt the advance of the emerging imperialist powers such as China and Russia, rivals that act as imperialist blocs, certainly with internal differences, but that complement themselves on the basis of common economic and historical-strategic interests. The inter-imperialist struggle is evident in the Americas in the confrontation between the China-Russia bloc and the U.S.-EU bloc to control the wealth of Latin America. The sharpening of this contradiction is increasing and is preparing for a clash together with their local pawns.

The contradiction between the imperialist powers and the dependent countries is pushing the former to take possession of the resources, labor power and markets through blackmail and violence. In Latin America this contradiction is seen as a struggle between the various powers which are struggling to expand their ad-

vantages, for which they take advantage of the sectors of the local bourgeoisie close to them, consolidating one section of the local bourgeoisie subordinated to the China-Russia bloc and the other to the U.S.-EU bloc. This contradiction is expressed in the struggle for control of the state apparatus and the acute confrontation over the government in Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela, among others. In Venezuela the emerging bourgeoisie controls the executive, while the traditional bourgeoisie won the legislature in the elections of last December 6 and from there it is working to increase its control over the judiciary by passing a law that increases the number of justices of the Supreme Court in its favor.

The contradiction between capital and labor pits the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in all its forms, as each of these supports its way of life through the exploitation of wage labor in order to obtain the highest rate of surplus value, expressing the legal, shameless and daily theft by the owners of capital of the workers. We the Venezuelan working class, peasants and the people are fighting every day against the bourgeoisie, against the big landowners, against the hoarders and monopolies, each of which takes the lion's share due to the weakness manifested by the government and the paralyzing confusion that still envelops much of the popular movement. This allows them to hoard goods, increase prices, form cartels and create shortages, increasing their profits and worsening the living conditions of the workers with complete impunity.

## **2 – The United States seeks to consolidate its hegemonic role**

The U.S. is seeking to strengthen again its hegemonic role in the whole region and it seems that the policy of the big U.S. monopolies, in this final stage of the Obama administration, aims at regaining its exclusive economic control in Latin America. This is beginning with not allowing Cuba to become the major port for China to export its commodities to the region through the deep-water port of Mariel, the establishment of which, together with the inter-oceanic canal in Nicaragua, would give China a significant advantage to negotiate with this part of the world.

For this reason the State Department has decided to push ahead with its “good neighbor” policy with Cuba, making offers to remove the blockade while the big U.S. monopolies see busi-

ness opportunities with the island. While Cuba is not the most desirable market in itself, its strategic position in the Caribbean would make it an ideal jumping-off point to reposition itself in the region. Meanwhile the stars and stripes would wave along the Cuban seashore boulevard to show the “good intention” of the U.S. to reduce hostility and try to end the insurgencies through good business deals, especially in Colombia, since many areas with mineral wealth that are today inaccessible could be opened to Yankee investments.

This intention is confirmed by the statement of a high officer in the U.S. Army, who declared the need to confront the political penetration by China and Russia in the region, putting in the first place the inter-imperialist contradiction between the two blocs, which should be taken into account by our parties in the near future.

The combination of all these elements places the revolutionary forces in a new situation; at a time of confusion and reactionary offensive it becomes difficult to explain to the masses the approaches of the Cuban government towards the U.S., of the Colombian insurgent forces (FARC and ELN) that are now walking along the path of the “peace accords” and are negotiating with their main aggressor and enemy. This is an undeniable reality, but always it conceals the hope that is only a clever ruse and not the irreversible path that the Central American insurgency took.

### **3 – The fight against the U.S. is the historical line of resistance in Latin America**

From the time of the Latin American anti-colonial wars for independence from Spain, the U.S. has intervened in the economy and politics of the region; its imperialist role has been manifested in all areas of life and, despite its great power, it has led to a history of popular resistance. Since the birth of these republics they have been subjected to the great Yankee club, which has also led to the widespread revulsion of the working class and peoples who, in one way or another, have led opposition to the U.S. monopolies.

At a time when the U.S. government is trying to sell itself as the great friend of the region, the “guarantor of peace” and har-

mony, it is developing a policy of trying to weaken the strong anti-imperialist resistance; it is looking for allies and making special efforts to recover its “back yard.” Its leaders are fully aware of the difficult times that are approaching, due to the effects of the economic crisis, so it is launching its diplomacy and using its businesses to regain its hegemonic role with a smile and a Nobel Peace Prize, while it is augmenting its bases and its fleet to attack those who do not accept its “policy of peace.”

The Venezuelan government, with all its contradictions and weaknesses, remains in words an opponent of the major imperialist power in the world, making it one of the few governments that are now denouncing and speaking out against Yankee oppression. However, in reality it is developing practices of submission, with ministers and high officials who also dream of peace accords in order to prevent crashes, to preserve their privileges and stay in the game of the tolerated opposition. They are trying to become a government that is a “friend to all,” that is, one that is dependent on the various imperialist blocs.

It is clear that within the Venezuelan revolutionary process the Bolivarian bourgeois democratic period has shown some democratic and popular elements, positive and advanced elements, which have an insurmountable limit due to the class structure leading it. Its petty-bourgeois nature makes it permanently



vacillate between advancing towards a true independence, which it can only achieve by breaking with imperialism and creating a process of economic sovereignty, or constantly renegotiating its dependence under totally capitalist schemes of submission to the large transnational companies and imperialism. The expression of this ambiguity is seen in actions such as the handing over of the natural resources to the big monopolies, showing the abandonment of its “nationalist” program and the bankruptcy of the so-called 21st century socialism, in its unwillingness to advance to true national independence.

#### **4 – The contradictions are leading us to a turning point**

Our analysis leads to the conclusion that we are going through a period of sharp contradictions, with great revolutionary possibilities, which to become a reality requires revolutionary energy and great boldness, as well as a practical sense as defined by our party at its First National Conference of Cadres. This was convened by the need to adjust our tactics to the temporary situation of an ebb in the popular movement and the need to revive the working class and the people on the path of a counter-offensive which would permit the transformation of the confusion and discontent into revolutionary actions.

“The leading bodies of our party have concluded that we are rapidly approaching a turning point, a situation that can dramatically change reality by the inescapable momentum of the class struggle. The traditional bourgeoisie, the emerging bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie are radicalizing their struggle for the power of the bourgeois state apparatus, the first under the shadow of U.S.-EU imperialist bloc, and the second under the China-Russia bloc. In this struggle the proletariat is still timidly manipulated by the two sections of capital, one totally reactionary and the other reformist, but in the end both are defenders of capital and are involved in maintaining capitalist relations of production and programs of handing over the country’s wealth to the big international monopolies and their local partners. “

### **5 – The end of the bourgeois democratic period is approaching**

The current Venezuelan crisis reflects the disenchantment with populism, which together with liberalism has been the “alternative” form of government of the bourgeois democratic period in Venezuela. Such populist experience was possible, in the different opportunities that appeared, thanks to high oil prices. The theorists of the government refer to the worn-out “rentier model,” defined by its intellectuals as based solely on the export of oil, a model that they are contradictorily trying to relaunch, although they deny it. Now they want to replace oil exports with the export of precious metals in partnership with the large transnationals, blatantly handing over the mining arc of the Orinoco and other “special zones.” This is an action that certainly repeats the practices of the governments of the bourgeois democratic period of Democratic Action and the Social Christian Party, which in 1995 tried to violently displace the artisanal miners and residents of the area, resulting in dead and wounded, which was stopped by the popular struggles and reversed by the Chavez government. It does not have a serious mining policy, so that it enthroned mafia criminals, paramilitaries and corrupt governors in that region who, together with elements of the armed forces, profited from the looting and collected bribes in the region.

The impact of the oil crisis on the Venezuelan economy is a fact of the first order; the low price of a barrel of oil has led to the lowering of incomes, the fall of the GDP, a fiscal deficit, international reserves of less than US \$13,500 million, the lowest in 17 years, a shortage of basic products due to a lack of hard currency to import consumer goods and capital, high inflation, low purchasing power of wages, difficulty in meeting contractual commitments to the workers by the government, stoppage of programs for handing over of lands and nationalization of companies. All this indicates the existence of a very complex situation for the executive branch, leading to internal government struggles, bringing out the contradictions between those who prefer to open up to big transnational capital and the local bourgeoisie and those who defend the so-called development within the country. This shows that the moment for the offensive of the leftist ten-

dency within the government has slowed and the consolidation of the reformist conciliatory positions is taking place. This expresses a new turn to the right that is finding it difficult to carry this out because it conflicts with popular demands for social benefits.

### **6 – We are going through an ebb period that can be long or short depending on the action of the revolutionaries**

In this atmosphere of political crisis the discontent of the population is increasing due to the complex reality that is seen in the decline of popular participation in political activities, in a certain rejection of the proposals of both the government and the opposition, a lack of interest in participating in revolutionary events, as well as the huge abstention of December 6, after years of high political participation by the masses. This ebb is still at its beginning stages and can be the gateway to a rightward movement if we the revolutionary elements are not able to reverse this tendency. This tendency is advancing as a form of rejection of a government that is not resolving the basic problems and an opposition that is also not seen as providing a favorable solution by the majority.

The proletarian proposal has not yet been able to become a reference point for the vast majority. Given this situation, an important part of the population, believing in the “democratic game,” is opening the door to the right, primarily thinking that it could eliminate the shortages and lines in the immediate future. This shows the influence of petty-bourgeois political thinking with its trust in “democracy,” the “alternation in government” and the “game of the powers” that is fostered from both sides.

We understand that it is necessary first to stop the ebb among the masses, to carry out an intense campaign of agitation and mobilization that will allow them to understand that the only positive outcome for the exploited is in struggle. For this we must pass over to the counteroffensive, trying by all means to make use of any course of action depending on how the scenarios develop, always with the view of achieving the accumulation of forces and putting forth our program as a real option for the broad popular masses. This demands that we rapidly push ahead with the revolutionary tasks.



We consider it necessary to promote the Popular Front of struggle against the bourgeoisie and imperialism whatever its banner. To work to stop the offensive of the right-wing demands an active popular front, making preparations to resume the counteroffensive in better conditions for the working class and peasantry and, if we can use the time remaining until the turning point, we will have a sure possibility of advancing in a new revolutionary situation.

All this leads us to evaluate each day more clearly what is happening on the internal and the external front to push forward all our forces and alliances, the unity and agreements in the sense of the accumulation of forces by the proletariat to become a real choice of power.



Banner reads: Workers and Students United in the Fight for the Building of Scientific Socialism!

The phenomenon of an ebb in the mass movement due to the impact of an economic crisis, which they wanted to deny, and of reformist politics, calls into question the “progressive” proposals and 21st century socialism. This, instead of moving towards people’s democratic governments, has remained within the framework of bourgeois democratic governments, seeking alliances with the big bourgeoisie in order to try to legitimize its role as an emerging bourgeoisie, instead of with the popular majorities. Their reformist essence leads them to try to balance the conflicts between antagonistic classes and between imperialist blocs, ra-

ther than pushing forward the class struggle. These 21st century reformists are unfolding a program of total conciliation in order to try to preserve their privileges based on populism and demagogic maneuvers maintained with the money from the economic boom, which the oil crisis took away.

The class character of the “progressive” governments is seen in the policies that they carry out; it is seen when they avoid at all costs affecting the interests of the big local and imperialist bourgeoisie. On the contrary they are trying to win them over to their project, which they rejected since they have their own extreme right-wing parties, leaders and programs. In this struggle within the bourgeois the proletariat temporarily placed itself on the side of the emerging, “progressive” bourgeoisie, which at one time assumed an advanced role in confronting the pro-Yankee bourgeois elites in power. However, with the falling prices of raw materials the impact of the crisis is becoming evident and it cannot maintain the social programs, subsidies or privileges, causing a weakening of these parties. This is leading to a more open fight between groups for state funds, making clear and obvious the populist scheme and the corruption that has surrounded these governments, but which in previous years, due to their large incomes, they could hide and reach out to everyone.

A real program leading to national independence and sovereignty has to start from production in one’s own territory of the goods necessary to meet the basic needs of the majority. This fundamental law of socialism should ensure that any investment and action should seek this objective at all times. For this, the first thing is to focus the national effort on production, breaking with the actual international division of labor, advancing under the leadership of the real producers who undoubtedly are the workers and peasants, not the bourgeois.

***Let us confront imperialism with revolutionary energy and audacity.***

Central Committee of the PCMLV  
Caracas, April 2016